Being, Becoming and Potential

Thinking coproduction and coexistence in early childhood education

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Submitted in total fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

May 2016

Melbourne Graduate School of Education

The University of Melbourne

Abstract

This thesis explores how disparate ideas of being, becoming and agency can be reframed to decolonise early childhood education and care contexts. It asks questions of multiple childhood perspectives to denaturalise accepted and dominating early childhood discourses. It does so by pursuing a variegated understanding nested within three questions. First, what ideas of childhood and development compel and inspire the framing of educational objectives in current policy contexts of Australian early childhood reform? Second, what can contemporary challenges to the nature of subjectivity offer for rethinking assumptions of being, agency and development in early childhood? The third asks, what non-dominating perspectives reframe ideas of becoming and potential within the context of early childhood education and care? In addressing these questions, the thesis draws on humanist, post-humanist and postcolonial theory, Indigenous and early childhood policy to examine intersections of childhood and being as colonised subject.

Theoretically this thesis grounds itself in critical ontology, emerging through a range of theories on concepts of governmentality, power relations, self and subjectivity. Foundations of critical ontology are challenged by ideas of colonised-coloniser relationships, processes of subjectification and their relationship to the child. This positions the study's contribution to emerging postcolonial reframing of early childhood education. Methodologically, the thesis utilises an approach drawing from interpretive, deconstructive and critical methodologies of education. It draws on critical discourse analysis of philosophy, reform policy, and narratives of experience, overarched by a relatedness ethic, in which a space is held open to contradictions and disparity in theory and thinkers.

The study comprises five streams of knowledge about the child. The first explores the idea of childhood as a European foundation of early education discourse. The second explores contemporary critical challenges to the nature of being and the subject. The third stream explores the shaping of docile bodies as refracted through Australian early childhood policy frameworks, and the fourth takes this further to present a genealogy of discourses intersecting child, potential, and education. The fifth stream explores Indigenous Australian perspectives and postcolonial challenges that highlight the ongoing processes constructing the colonial subject.

The thesis contributes to understanding how early childhood education might enable difference as multiple manifestations of being. It suggests the ongoing colonial processes of control over childhood calls for the paradigm shift needed. It produces three main theoretical contributions. First, it produces a conceptual possibility of early education and care as a platform for coexistence. Second, it offers concrete and symbolic beginnings for decolonial coproduction. Third, in order to break with childhood as colonised subject, and children as deficit beings, the thesis develops an understanding of emergent being-becomings and becoming-relations, highlighting potentiality as existing in confluence with being. Overall, these can offer directions for unearthing colonial foundations of childhood in reviewing policy and rethinking directions for early childhood education and care.

Declaration

This is to certify that

i. the thesis comprises only my original work towards the PhD,

ii. due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used,

iii. the thesis is fewer than 100 000 words in length, exclusive of tables, maps, bibliographies and appendices.

Suzan Ann Mentha

Acknowledgements

The germination and the writing of this thesis has sprung from the lands of Wurundjeri people of Kurnai nations in the southern parts of the country, and Yirrkandji Bama and Wulgurukaba people from saltwater countries in the far north. Time and again I sought solace and spiritual strength from their countries. Without it the words would not have been written. This is both acknowledgement and dedication, which I cannot express enough.

My thanks to my supervisors, Jane Page and Johanna Wyn, for their patient and continued support while I struggled to articulate the vision and ideas behind it. In truth, there are few who heard it as I meant it, but your patience and understanding was enough. I would also like to thank the Melbourne School of Graduate Research at the University of Melbourne for the three-year APA scholarship that placed me in what I acknowledge as a privileged position of completing this thesis full time.

Most patient of all, my families. The support of Harry and Janette Mentha who gracefully abstained from questioning about 'what it all means' and allowing me space to do what was needed. Brothers and sisters for being the storytellers they are: The stories told around the table, the laughter that comes so easily. I thank Lyle Johnson, and Alec, for their support during my back and forth visits to the northern shores- we are survivors. I also acknowledge the support from friends and colleagues who listened- and waited- no matter how inarticulate I was: Carol, the delight you take in children gives me constant insight. Millie, you understood! I miss you; and Nico, for giving a damn about the workings of power- you got me through the last of it.

And always, to my children: Marundjana, Dingwudji and grandchildren. Words can never speak what spirit- wawu- feels. The threads that bind last forever, timelessly, endlessly.

Dedication

For Marundjana, rain woman, giver of water, and for Dingwudji, rock fig, finding life in hard places. Your strong and gentle spirits continue to leave me speechless. Walk softly through life: giving and finding, finding and giving. May you always need each other.

Don't you dare believe other people's stories of you.

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Abbreviations

ACECQA – Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority

DEEWR – Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

EYLF – Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia

NQF – The National Quality Framework

NQS – The National Quality Standard

Chapter 1

Introduction

> *Now there are knowledge structures about salt water and there are knowledge structures surrounding fresh water. And there is a point where the two streams meet, the fresh water and the salt water, and where the two streams meet is brackish water. But that water is drinkable. And where the two waters meet is the place where two knowledge structures meet* (Yunupingu in Shoemaker, 1994, p.38).

1.1 Source

Two strong hands, and two eager steps up, that's all it took. Clay climbed the fence. Off he went. Clay was a Preschooler, and at that time in Queensland that meant a 'schoolboy', most preschools being attached to state schools. Clay would, with his sister and cousin, come to childcare once a week after their day at school had finished. The boys resented having to come to a 'babies place', although they would make do and get on with their own business together, generally impressing the younger ones in the process. This particular day Clay did not want to move inside with the rest of us. He dug his heels in the soft dirt. No. His place was not with the babies- he certainly did not think it was 'time to go in', 'time for a wash', and 'time for rest', - he put his foot down and decided to go home. So, over the fence he went, starting off down the road. The competing roles I held kicked

in: Director, Carer, Aunty, Surveillance officer. *Director: Clay, what's happening? C'mon now, some of us can stay outside after lunch. Clay. Clay. Clay!* No good, still walking. The Room Leader in me was thinking ratios and if I should just jump over myself. As Aunty I thought I could cajole with a lunch. Still no good, still walking. Realising there was no official way of doing these things, I went with the heart, and with family ties: *'Oh well, I have to call Grandad, e'll come. Oh, look there, 'e's coming, Grandad's comin!'*

Of course, it was Grandad's power that turned Clay around, not my role as room leader, or as director. In this brief story, there are negotiations on multiple levels –roles, regulations, personal and professional ties, child-adult distinctions, and relationally, the working out of status through stand-offs and playing of roles. This playing of roles crystallised as a split, an internal chaos between lived reality (in this case kinship) and professionalism expected in an early childhood setting. The chaos?

I was proud of Clay, for dealing with this falseness, with his own hand, his initiative and acting for himself: a choice that seemed most sensible at the time. In other words, he stood strong for himself. Who was I to argue with that? How could I not be proud?

Some childhood development discourses in early childhood might articulate Clay's actions as defiant or non-compliant (McMahon, Long, & Forehand 2011), a problem, a 'runner'[1], and wonder about the style of behaviour management in centre policy or the lack of practitioner knowledge and qualification (Ronnenbeck, 2003). Critical theories might look to factors of the environment, of marginalisation and identity- pointing to Clay's cultural affiliations as Aboriginal- and questioning relevance for his identity in the program (Bamblett and Lewis, 2006; Mac Naughton,

[1] A colloquial term I heard used a number of times during my two years as an aide in a special education unit (SEU) of a local State primary school. Runner referred to students who would leave school grounds when faced with stress or authority-like overbearance. At these times a staff member (usually an aide) would be called on to keep an eye without approaching. I had observed a head teacher chase a 6 year old up the large and steep hill backing onto the school grounds, and bring him back, arm gripped firmly.

Hughes and Smith, 2008). Yet to borrow from the narrative, Clay stood strong for himself. As a practitioner in early childhood settings, in multi-age occasional care, kindergartens for four-year-old children, and as an aide within a state primary school, I often wondered about the extent that dominant developmental and quality discourses of childhood closed off the potential of children by positioning a narrow set of talent and skill as optimal. For Clay, would his actions be interpreted as problem behaviour as he went to school? The western trope of much-prized autonomy and independent thinking folds back on itself when faced with opposition and dissent by those who are meant to follow authority- such as children. In the community environment where Clay took his leave momentarily, the 'freedom of childhood' was heartily encouraged by the population, the island environment playing a large role in children's growing up. The streets off the main island road were the place for play and exploring, neighbours the place for minding children, young children in friendship groups often at the swings or the waterfront amongst the rocks and bush nearby. Even with the best intentions, the intervention of the institution can be a false claim in comparison to autonomies experienced elsewhere in children's life-worlds: from freedom to surveillance and locked gates. In terms of early childhood education and care, the field is moving fast into established boundaries for practice, without stopping to stand still, dig our heels in the dirt for a moment and question the need, purpose or meaning of regulation and intervention for very young children. This thesis aims to provide space for such standing still to consider some concepts which are yet to be deconstructed in discussions of ECEC policy and practice.

The words 'being', 'becoming' and 'agency' have become increasingly visible in Australian early childhood literature, influenced by rights-based arguments responding to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). The view of the child as capable, creative communicator also has been influenced by philosophical discussions from within early childhood education such as the perspectives and practice from Reggio Emilia in northern Italy. Posited in learning frameworks, they are more than merely words, but interrelated and complex concepts

stemming from multiple philosophical traditions. In this thesis I draw upon philosophical arguments to understand further what these terms might be saying for the early childhood education and care context. Clay's narrative highlights the extraordinary early childhood context children and adults dwell in- recognising and honouring being and agency within highly regulated, standardised environments that struggle with the notion of difference. Yet the narrative highlights further layers of struggle. It crosses fences. The fence crossed by Clay crystallises on-going colonial presencing in Indigenous being. Early education and childcare sites can represent symbolical and physical boundaries between colonial forces and other existences. Clay's jumping the fence reflects literal, historical, and symbolic action for Indigenous Australians[2] in response to exclusion, segregation and ongoing colonial presencing. Much of Indigenous methodologies, particularly the embodied, the spiritual and the oral connections to knowledge remain unacknowledged in the education environment (Nakata, 2008; Kerwin, 2011). In education, such ways of being, teaching and learning are considered artefacts, stories to tell about a group of peoples without consideration as true methodologies and ontologies (Kerwin 2011). It is hard to grasp why one people's being, and expressions of that being, are inferior to another. Yet I have observed this attitude across different environments, cultures, and social classes.

The idea of 'choices' (DEEWR, 2009) for young children is complex and challenging, situated within boundaries and such fences. For example, *Belonging, Being and Becoming: An Early Years Learning Framework for Australia* (DEEWR, 2009) states children's social and emotional wellbeing is supported when they are able to "make choices, accept challenges, take considered risks, manage change and cope with frustrations and the unexpected" (p.31). In practice, the boundaries of behaviour within constraints of regulation, group management and closed fences emphasises a dominative understanding of choice that follows the adult preference. Making decisions about when to go to sleep or when and what to eat is negotiable. Difference of opinion and ways of being is a different matter. My interpretation of

[2]I use Indigenous, Indigenous Australian and Aboriginal throughout the thesis- Indigenous is used as more inclusive of the large Torres Strait Islander populations across northern Queensland in particular.

this for the narrative is that Clay took all that suffocation and put it together in a simple act of desire- to cross the lines and breathe some *freedom*, if only for a small moment. The lesson: for children, too, making decisions within the everyday is intrinsic to looking after one's 'self', to 'stand strong', and that sometimes to do so means to be in opposition. Like other moments across the years spent in early childhood educative settings, the narrative strikes a resonant chord about the devaluing of young children as valid actors and contributors while *getting on with the business* in early childhood education. Clay and I (and others at the centre) were related. Our way of life seemed to stop at the gate of this centre, and even though our small childcare team considered ourselves a 'barefoot' service, relaxed about routines, with surrounding country as the basis for our program, we were leaving something of ourselves behind each day to take up the discourse of 'childcare', with its regulations and roles, and unwittingly, the dominative discourses. Perhaps the issue was that I was not really competent in *childcare* culture. I had no interest in training children to *do what they were told*. These thoughts were many times mulled over as I saw repeated disparity between what I considered solid and strong contributions of children, the narrowing expectations for them in their schooling, and the resultant loss of interest and engagement. The short narratives in this thesis tell the story of some of these contributions. In terms of Clay's narrative, one message to take from the moment is this: What is it about our educative institutions that we have to leave our ways of being at home?

A decade later I wrote down the experience, which was after all a small and unremarkable moment, but a lesson and story nonetheless. Embarking on a doctoral venture, I had some words with which to understand deeper the influences in what went on in that moment, in the interplay of agency, ascription, and being. To draw on Yunupingu's metaphor at the beginning of this chapter, certainly there were two streams of knowledge at play in Clay's narrative: that of western childcare and Indigenous being. There were also more stories to tell that crossed lines other than Indigenous and non-Indigenous. My interest is in education's colonising of children's being and their expressions of that being. I had over some years reflected on the colonial forces at work in education, seeing it manifested towards my own

children, their cousins, and myself and others as parents. Emerging from this was the germination of an idea about colonisation of children and childhood: the construction of the *types* of people that children should be or could be, the knowledge necessary to attain the ideal and the labelling of children who *fail* to live up to it. Where was Clay's future in this? What about my own children? Education colonises, and I want to highlight this in order to offer decolonial alternatives.

From this small and everyday moment came a number of stories clamouring to be told; stories of different knowledge structures, the foundations and the emergent. From these I sourced four lines of inquiry to reveal the forces at play: discourses of *childhood*; ideas of *self and subjectivity*; the role of the *institution in governing people's lives*; the driving *discourse of human capital*, and social and cultural *dreams and realities* for being. This thesis presents these as separate knowledge streams, and these are explored for the force of their flow, and how each might trickle into the other. The power of the given perspective is illustrated through the insertion of short narratives and anecdotes. It is these narratives that colour and ground the theoretical exploration. They are stories of potential, of being and becoming.

1.1.1 Convergence

Alongside these ideas of colonised childhoods was a growing interest in children's rights and the debates growing from the UN *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (UNCRC, 1989). My thoughts repeatedly veered to the early childhood education field's growing interest in young children as capable social actors. On the other side of the coin, assumptions, ascriptions and assessment of children's capacity, was consistently elided in almost all discussions, yet the idea is most salient given the child-adult relationship. As Schapiro (1999) has noted, the idea of *child* as a distinct status sits in an uncomfortable space because it "necessarily chafes against the modern principle that all human beings have the same moral standing" (p.716). My early thinking of the philosophical nature of these concepts – having become a string of thinking about childhood, agency, subjectivity, being

and potential- crossed social, political and personal lines taken by Rousseau, Kant, Foucault, Butler and Deleuze. These often disparate ideas flowed through social ascriptions, powers of the psyche, and limitations of the political agency of society. Together they crossed an intersection of forms of power.

Finding these somewhat lacking in non-European ontologies –and acknowledging my linguistic limitations- my reading traversed colonial humanism, the postmodern decentred self, postcolonial emergent methodologies and research on Indigenous knowledge systems and methodologies. This study recognises the shift in poststructural terms to decentre 'agency', and the contested nature of multiplicity in identity politics. However, I also acknowledge such discourses elide various cultural perspectives of personal powers of the child in formations of conscious and spiritual capacity.

Acting on and into one's world in response to the implications, constraints, determining and unpredictability of existence is intrinsic to our continual response to the making up of us. Although it may be desired, needed and useful at times, the assessment of myself from another is hardly the sum of who I am or what I can be. Drawing on these incongruent perspectives, I was becoming more alert to the convergence of agency with being and becoming, colonial processes of subjection, and its role in ascribing capacity and potentiality. These "constant negotiations" (Deleuze, 1995, preface) are the source from which the core arguments of the thesis spring.

1.2 Assemblage

Underlying the emerging convergence of these concepts was the persistent role of ascription in relationships and power (Butler, 1997). Working at both the political level as attributed capacities of particular groups of people, and in the relational aspects of daily life, ascription seemed in constant attendance as I explored the emerging constellation of being-becoming and potential in early childhood education:

> *The key idea is that "speaking for oneself" depends on other people: whether I am autonomous doesn't just depend on how I think of myself, but also on how others understand me, that is, what kind of status they ascribe to me...There is a complex interrelation between acquiring the capacity for responsible agency and coming to be recognised (in one's closer and wider social environment) as capable of being responsible* (LaVaque-Manty, 2006, p.369).

Young children have not always been recognised in western literature as agentic beings, and this is still often the case in discussions of development of autonomy or morality (Schapiro 1999, 2001; La Vaque-Manty 2006, 2011). Early childhood settings have traditionally been sites of observation and assessment of competence, yet historically children themselves have had little or no say in the interpretation; both these points place young children in a lesser position in early childhood settings. The convergence described above of agency, being, becoming and colonial subject was emerging as a discursive knot rather than research clarity. My early understanding across the first years of research thus clustered as an assemblage:

Childhood* Agency* Will* Choice* Ascription* Autonomy*
Status* Citizenship* Identity(ies)* Multiplicity(ies)*
Subjectivity(ies)* Desire* Ethics* Freedom*

Discourse - Power/Knowledge – Subjectivity
Colonial discourse of control

BEING-BECOMING-POTENTIAL

Alongside these historically placed contexts, the current social and political emphasis on standardised quality, along with demands on early childhood practitioners to learn the languages of new curriculums and regulations, is creating a contradictory picture of who children *might be* within such highly regulated and managed

environments. This is nested within a knowledge base which is overwhelmingly influenced by Anglo-American and European theoretical traditions.

I also draw upon knowledge from the intellectual periphery (in terms of western grids), in order to open different conceptual arguments. With education as a technology for normalisation, what passes as optimal development and potential can be based upon ideas of superior knowledge: the teacher's knowledge of the purpose of schooling over the child's, and an overwhelming imbalance of knowledge systems. These ideas are important in liminal times. In using 'liminal' I am referring to the context of an ever-changing society, in which the movement of peoples and mixing of experience brings with it emerging, and merging, frontiers of knowledge and creativity. Sites for care and learning for young children could open to a transformative and becoming-society, promoting a "non-divisive sense of belonging" (Nsamenang, 2008b, p.16). In early childhood education and care contexts, the conditions we provide can be limitations or possibilities in generating such transformations.

As a conceptual exploration, the discourses which have constructed the child and shape how the education of children is framed are under study, not children themselves. In the context of this thesis, speaking of the idea of *'child'* attempts to acknowledge the "heterogeneity of situated processes at work in the realisation of differentiated bodies" (Castaneda, 2002, p.169) recognising multiple realities, rather than deterministic lifeworlds. The *idea of child* is already reified and refigured but as embodied beings, *children* also realise the complexity of existence through a situational reshaping and bending of the limitations of social and ancestral expectation. Following Castaneda (2002), I use the term 'child' as multitudes of possibilities, which are realised through a continual and situated *open* knowledge "of how a body is lived" (p.168). As James, Jenks and Prout (1998) have summarised, our thinking of the child, children and childhood are embedded and polarised by our own histories, challenges and imaginaries. Where the term 'the

child', or 'child' is written in this thesis (such as in chapter three on childhood), I mean the *idea of the child* as situated in the respective theory or perspective in discussion. Socially, biologically, and scientifically, child as a category of being is located within a number of connecting trajectories that organise and find use in malleability. This finds its expression most visibly in developmentalism, and its dual assumptions of progress and the expression which it takes. The tension that resulted in Clay removing himself from the boundaries of the centre reflects the greater lines drawn across the landscape of his life-world. While I cannot *know* that Clay felt this, I can be certain it was my lesson to learn.

The parameters of this research are bound by researcher experience in the early childhood education and care sector. The internationally agreed age-range of early childhood spans to eight years of age, recognised as a compromise for many signatory nations (Nsamenang, 2006) of the United Nations' *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (UNCRC, 1989). This is reflected in Australian early childhood development strategies (DEEWR, 2009b), regulatory and learning frameworks (DEEWR, 2009a; ACECQA, 2009) and State and Territory learning frameworks (for example, Queensland's *Building Waterfalls* (C & K, 2006) and the *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework* (DEEWR, 2016). The bulk of my early childhood employment has been pre-compulsory school contexts in multiple sites in Far Northern Queensland and urban Victoria, two very different sites of experience, at a distance of four thousand kilometres, across fifteen years in various settings before moving to teach with pre-service early childhood teachers. This experience has influenced the selection of the 0-8 early childhood education care context as a parameter for my study. The early childhood documents I draw from have a birth-5 focus as prior to school development and learning. These are, the *National Early Childhood Development Strategy* (DEEWR, 2009b), the *National Quality Standard* (ACECQA, 2009) and *Belonging, Being and Becoming: the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia* (DEEWR, 2009).

The greater political and social context is a reform agenda for early childhood education in Australia, as represented in the three documents. This positioning of the study around Australian localities/agendas is due to my location within

the Euro-American tradition that the Australian academic and education context continues to draw upon. Such a context lends to a development of knowledges within the colonial cultural and hegemonic reach.

Finally, my position as researcher is within a literature heritage which is solely English-language and relies on translations of primary philosophical sources. Although my aims include localising knowledge, there are foundations to be acknowledged along critical efforts sourced from within colonial traditions that are also decolonising in effort. Postcolonial theory has varying viewpoints and methodologies, to be expected given the greater anticolonial project of contextualising local issues and theorising from within (De Lissovoy, 2010). The use of European critical ontology could be considered in conflict with its own origins in colonising society. However, with roots in processes of empire and efforts in decolonisation this knowledge, critical ontology can be relevant to decolonising purposes (Bignall, 2008). This is where I take up particular poststructural and postcolonial discourses which recognise power, politics and empire as pervasive and diffuse as well as hegemonic (Hardt & Negri, 2004). The foundations of early childhood education are informed by developments in psychological, economical and sociological models of childhood, each with a vestige of philosophical thought. In this thesis I acknowledge these foundations in terms of their relationship to each other as discourses of childhood.

In Australian and international early childhood education and care there is currently a dual process of reform through human capital, along with a language of the capable child and children's rights (Woodhead, 2006; Moss, 2011). Whether this proves that two disparate paradigms can meld for the best interests of children is contested. This thesis argues that, within this context, the human capital influence underlying state investment is an ominous threat to envisioning alternatives for young children's spaces. Early childhood education and care sites, in my experience, are spaces of multiple relationships across different levels, and the close relations with children places practice as ripe for focusing on relational, intimate pedagogies. The productivity argument for ECEC supports the case for a fairer start to life for children, yet this argument has also emphasised the 'failures'

of families to equip children with the right human capital.[3] This is clearly more than a question of access for all. It situates the same worldview as assumedly universal. Yet contemporary Australian classrooms and care sites are not "univocal, mono-cultural worlds" (Vandenbroeck, 2001, p.13).

Against this backdrop, this study seeks to stretch the boundaries of early childhood educational theory around concepts of being-becoming, agency and potential with a deepened reflection on these concepts as highly nuanced and contextual. Creating space for multiple perspectives to resonate has generated a flow of knowledge streams into a 'drinkable' space. The hope is to expand the visions and knowledge grids of early childhood education (Nsamenang, 2006, p.293). On a closer level, I entered this project with a desire to highlight contradiction in rhetoric about children's capacity and agency in early childhood education. How each child-being is imagined and realised will impact on how they are heard and ultimately how child's behaviour and capacity is construed. With the introduction of a *National Quality Framework* and *Standard* (ACECQA, 2009) for Australian ECEC services, agency and ideas of being and becoming have been placed as the most visible yet in early childhood education discourse. Only very recently, as this study draws to completion, contributions of philosophical reflection on the frameworks 'greater level' concepts of belonging, being or becoming are emerging (see Peers & Fleer, 2014; Sumsion & Wong, 2011). This positions this thesis in an emergent philosophical debate on the implications as well as possibilities of their importance to the field. Philosophical argument is important to early childhood education, because philosophy helps to broaden our vision of being. Ideas of being are about potential because our notions of the human will bound who we can be.

In a working paper for the South Australian government on investing in early years' programs, Mustard (2008) draws on a comment from *The Economist*, that "there is a growing shortage of talent and growing global competition for talent" (as cited in Mustard, 2008) and subsequently relates this to a "battle for brain

[3] I explore this further in chapters five and six.

power" (Mustard, 2008, p.33). At the last estimate, there were over seven billion people (U.S Gov., 2014) dwelling across the globe, with 23.6 million in Australia (ABS, 2014). Yet, the Economist argues there is not enough 'talent', an argument supported by an influential ECD researcher. What types of talent are they referring to? Which ones are left "preferably unheard" (Roy, November 4, 2004)? Given the frequent citing of productivity arguments for investing in early childhood (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2011; Access Economics, 2009; DEEWR, 2009b; Mustard, 2008; Heckman & Masterov, 2004, 2007; Heckman & Mosso 2014), where potential is measured against capital, a multitude of methodologies of being are swept under the edges of human capital versions of democracy.

1.3 Thesis overview

This thesis explores how ideas of being, becoming and potential might be re-envisioned to account for capacities ignored or positioned as problem behaviour in early childhood education discourses. I am interested in theorising decolonised early childhood spaces, suturing relational perspectives of being and potential into universal childhood and the encroachment of human capital theory. Therefore, the thesis contributes to understanding how early childhood education can enable the multivariate manifestation of being. The research is designed around questions asked of multiple childhood discourses to denaturalise accepted and dominating early childhood discourses (Moss, 2007, 2009) by pursuing a variegated understanding nested within three questions.

The thesis is driven by an overarching research problem exploring conditions for *decolonising the idea of child, being and becoming in early childhood education.*

This issue necessitates grappling with concepts of childhood, being, becoming so that a space is provided for disentangling assumptions and suturing alternatives into possibility-thinking. Therefore, childhood, being and becoming are the concepts from each perspective. Agency and potential are problems that emerge along

the journey. To drive the exploration, there are three questions nested under this issue:

- *What ideas of childhood and development compel and inspire the framing of educational objectives in current policy contexts of Australian early childhood reform?*
- *What can contemporary challenges to the nature of subjectivity offer for re-thinking assumptions of being, agency and development in early childhood?*
- *What non-dominating perspectives reframe ideas of potential and becoming within the context of early childhood education and care?*

The thesis is structured as a number of critical examinations of discourses surrounding the idea of the child, of being and becoming, from which I draw implications for potentiality in early childhood contexts. To continue the metaphor of streams and tributaries, each chapter travels a different stream flowing into the greater stem of contemporary early childhood education. Rather than one stand-alone literature review, the streams stand as tributaries of knowledge, synthesising critique of the relevant literature with analysis and narratives.

Theoretically this thesis grounds itself in critical ontology, emerging through a range of theories and research on concepts of governmentality (Foucault, 2010; 2000b; 1977; Rose, 1991; 2013; Miller & Rose, 2008), power and power relations (Foucault, 1977; Butler, 1997; Rose & Miller, 2010), and concepts of self and subjectivity (Butler, 1997; Foucault, 1997c; 1983; Deleuze, 1998; 2008; Davies, 2006), which question the nature of being and becoming human. These European foundations of critical ontology are challenged through ideas of colonised/coloniser relationships (Fanon, 2008; Bhabha, 1993) and processes of colonial subjectification (Spivak, 2006; Fanon, 2008), and extended in non-dualistic versions of modernity (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010), and emergent methodologies (Bhabha, 2013). Ideas of governance of children's spaces through policy (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005) and practice (Moss, 2013, 2006; Dahlberg, 2012; Mozere, 2008; Clark, Kjørholt & Moss, 2005), and in Australian contexts (Irvine & Farrell, 2013; Cohen, 2008;

MacNaughton, 2005; Danby & Farrell, 2002), have also informed my thinking of government and reform for early childhood education.

Methodologically, this thesis utilises an approach drawing from interpretive, deconstructive and critical methodologies of education (Jessop, 2012; Kellner, 2010; Kincheloe & McLaren, 2008; Lather, 2006; Kincheloe & Berry, 2004). It is overarched by a relatedness ethic (Wilson, 2008), with reflexive attempts (Davies et al., 2004) to remain open to contradictions and disparity in theory and thinkers. I am aware of the contradictory nature of using a "critical suspicion of hegemonic practices" (Lather, 2006, p.41) alongside arguments of tradition and culture. This is a choice in recognition of the features of minority discourses such as, but not only, Indigenous Australian self-determination and recognition. An analysis of policy and learning frameworks was undertaken in the context of early childhood and care (ECEC) reform in Australia in which I employ techniques of critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2006; Wodek & Meyer, 2001) infused with a biopolitical emphasis (Foucault, 1997d).

In the thesis I examine concepts relating to being, becoming and potential and how they are positioned under childhood. The purpose of the multi-perspectival approach is to draw out ways forward which honour the dignity of young children in early childhood education. The conceptual analysis is designed to broaden educational theory with an emphasis on early childhood. The complex, multiple lifeworlds in existence call for the paradigm shift needed.

The thesis is presented as follows. The exploration is presented in three parts. Part One contains introduction, research design and methodology. The purpose for the placing of methodology and methods at the beginning is to highlight the path constructed as non-traditional in structure. Part Two presents the five streams, chapters three to seven. These are set up as argument and analysis using text or short narratives to critically engage with the ideas in discussion. Part Three presents the penultimate and final chapters. The discussion, chapter eight is the confluence point. Chapter nine concludes the thesis. The relationship of these

streams to the typically structured chapters of introduction, research design and concluding chapters is illustrated further in the research design chapter.

1.3.1 Streams of knowledge

As a precursor to exploring ideas of self in relation to young children, the first stream explores ideas of *childhood in northern discourse*, as they have come to be constructed through medico-pedagogical and philosophical discourses as metaphor and embodiment of development and potential. The second stream takes the reader through an examination of concepts of *freedom, subjectivity and discourse* in contemporary critical traditions. I argue that thinking of the self as fundamentally unknowable and always reconstructed through ebb and flows of power relations works against the dominant educational discourse of determinable beings. The third stream explores *governance and discipline*, presenting an analysis of Australian policy, quality and learning documents representing the objectives of ECEC reform agendas and governance of the sector in Australia. I argue the dual objectives of early education and productivity create a confused ideal of the competent, socially agentic child and the determinable, biologically fragile child, limiting conditions of becoming and thus potential. This is taken into the fourth stream as a tributary exploring the human capital *making of a discursive knot*. In this stream I move beyond the thematic approach taken in the preceding chapter to examine the entanglement of discourses that have strengthened the dominant rationality justifying the 'necessary and the universal' for children. From this position, the fifth and final stream deterritorializes typical boundaries, pushing 'limit-thinking' towards possibilities as realised in a river of *dreams and realities*. This chapter, examining Australian Indigenous and postcolonial perspectives, argues that the conditions and parameters for being, imagined by child, family and community, can offer educational discourses further methodologies with which to 'see' the capable child. They challenge the ongoing dominant humanist understanding of the becoming-adult who is yet-to-be competent.

The penultimate chapter works like the meeting of waters: a *confluence* where discussion and negotiation swirls and eddies, and where the brackish water becomes drinkable (Yunupingu, in Shoemaker, 1994). Here I present themes and questions taken from each stream to discuss implications and intersections. In accountability to the relatedness lens of the study, I then draw out and critically engage with flows between each chapter. The final chapter presents the conclusion and contributions of the thesis.

This thesis traverses sites of limitation and perspectives of possibility. It offers a sustained critical analysis of concepts of being, becoming and agency to contribute to a coexistent future where multivariate ways of being form the basis of early childhood education and care sites. Seeking different forms of being and becoming, the gathering assemblage suggests how non-dominative knowledge systems "can supplement the imagination of the global" (Spivak 2005, p.484). It is my hope that in doing so, educational objectives and values of potential can be aligned, with the participation of young children, with the full dignity we accord them in rights documents. Recognition of ontological variation and methodologies of learning and being offers policy-makers and practitioners the opportunity to consider the possibilities of an enriched perception of children's contributions to society.

Chapter 2

Methodology and research design

2.1 Introduction

This thesis is about stories of limitations and possibilities for being, becoming. It explores frames of childhood and the capacity of young children by examining different structures and discourse producing knowledge about ways of being. I examine how ideas of being, becoming and agency could be re-envisioned to account for multifarious manifestations in the polyvocal, diverse populations of early childhood education. In doing so, the thesis also aims at decolonising the knowledge and evidence base drawn upon for understanding young children's capacity in early childhood education. Together these aims point to an examination of childhood, being, and becoming. The exploration relates to educational equity and the dominant knowledge traditions in policies that envision potential and talent. Therefore, the core research problem is posed as *decolonising ideas of child, being and becoming in early childhood education.* Concurrent with the greater aim of decolonising knowledge is the *expansion* of visions and understanding. In order to meet these aims, the thesis is designed and presented through a number of perspectives as knowledge streams. Methodologically, the conceptual framework brings these together in a confluence of brackish water: productive, generative and drinkable.

The employ of multiple orientations around being opened up a constellation of discourses and multiple forces at play. A relatedness paradigm (Wilson, 2008) overarches the study, resisting the dream of conceptual mastery (Campbell & Shapiro, 1999). As a conceptual exploration, the thesis is grounded in philosophical critique drawn from contemporary critical traditions, while grafting in narratives to ground, challenge or disrupt the often abstract ideas. These are purposely presented as open-ended 'subjects' and instances, unfinished and enigmatic, to rethink being and to resist the idea of universal subjectivities. The aspects of difference in the narratives or texts draw on identities as dynamic and never fully articulated (Davies & Gannon, 2012) as well as historically contingent.

In this chapter, I discuss the methodology, research design and methods. I position the work and its research stance, albeit in a "cautious, stumbling manner" (Foucault, 1972, p.18), describing methodological choices that do not fit neatly into prescribed designs. In describing methodology, I discuss the choice of relatedness as a paradigm, the concomitant accountability, my stance on decolonising knowledge, and researcher reflexivity. Following this, the research design is outlined. This section includes selection and methods, drawn from interpretive, deconstructive and critical approaches, with methods such as philosophical, critical discourse analysis and the insertion of narrative across the streams.

2.2 Methodology

In this section I describe the relationship between the research lens, focus, and methods. This includes research questions, and method-aims relationship through a discussion of the relatedness paradigm, accountability, the decolonising lens and reflexivity. This chapter positions the construction of the research and the method of mapping landscapes on various grounds, and the justifications for doing so. It positions the research as a postcolonial 'meandering', a slow and purposeful walk towards decolonising figurations of child and thus broadening the educational

discursive matrix constructing expectations for children. Such meandering was driven by multiple research questions.

2.2.1 Research questions

In order to explore the aims of the thesis, the core research issue lies in the posing of questions for *decolonising the idea of child, being and becoming in early childhood education.*

Given the nebulous nature of these concepts, and the discursive entanglements within which they sit, the exploration is driven by three research questions:

- *What ideas of childhood and development compel and inspire the framing of educational objectives in the current policy contexts of Australian early childhood reform?*
- *What can contemporary challenges to the nature of subjectivity offer for re-thinking assumptions of being, agency and development in early childhood?*
- *What non-dominating perspectives reframe ideas of potential and* **becoming** *within the context of early childhood education and care?*

The initial undercurrent of the investigation was an intuitive thread of agency. In what ways could it be understood? However, this also had to be kept 'open' to interpretation through other perspectives. This enabled the realisation at a later stage that agency was just one thread in a knot of discourses about childhood, being, and becoming and hence, potential. Accordingly, the research *design* of various perspectives as streams of knowledge, the '*holding open*' rather than pre-determining meanings, the *discussion* as negotiation of disparate ideas, should all reflect the relatedness paradigm of the research. Together these aspects of the research process formed and were formed by the idea of accountability (Wilson, 2008).

In order to begin addressing the research questions, I explored five streams of discourses which drew together the local-global context of Australian early childhood education and care. As briefly outlined in the Introduction chapter, these are Childhood in European discourse; freedom, subjectivity and discourse in contemporary critique; Governance and discipline in Australian ECEC reform; the convergence of discourses in ECEC policy; and Indigenous Australian and postcolonial theory. The question driving critique in each chapter varied and was sometimes multiple. For example, the question of 'what can contemporary challenges to subjectivity offer for rethinking assumptions of being, agency and development in early childhood?' steered both contemporary European critical exploration (chapter four, freedom, subjectivity and discourse) and Australian Indigenous and postcolonial perspectives (chapter seven, dreams and realities). The cumulative nature of knowledges built towards addressing the core research issue. The ideas, concepts and questions raised from each stream were taken into a final confluence (chapter eight) that provided a space for critical dialogue across divides and difference. In keeping with the relatedness lens, I also focused on the flows between these streams, exploring the manner of connectedness and how this could generate alternative understandings. The research consists of a critical synthesis of literature and analysis of each of these discourses, presented as streams of knowledge. The methods particular to each stream, such as critical discourse analysis are discussed in detail in the research design section of this chapter.

2.2.2 Relatedness

The aims of the thesis required listening to a number of perspectives as separate streams, and then bringing them together as brackish water: productive, generative, and drinkable. The relational stance of the thesis allows a focus on the in-between complex spaces of the personal and the institutional, using a multi-perspectival approach to gathering knowledge. Dahlberg, Moss and Pence (2013) argue that various perspectives are needed to see how knowledge is socially and culturally constructed. They suggest that in the politics of education, democracy

is ailing, and requires restoring through a "polyphony of voices and a capacity for listening" (preface, 2013). This seems an essential requirement for considering how the connections of childhood, becoming and potential might be imagined to decolonise young children's care and education spaces. Various epistemologies are yet to be included in the conceptual design of Australian policy or learning frameworks, yet could facilitate a greater understanding of socio-historically situated methodologies, and their divergences, as a basis for future education and learning theory.

The set of beliefs behind and surrounding, indeed 'holding up' the inquiry and process, are interrelated concepts that work together. The relation of the researcher to the research is a known parameter and commitment (Gregory, 2005), one that has been deepened through the research process. Wilson (2008) concludes that research is ceremony, the knowing and reinforcement that all things are relational and interconnected, and that these relationships must be respected and the researcher and methods accountable. I wish to stay true to my somewhat cautious nature, attempting to consider the ethics of interaction with moments, ideas and people by exploring its relationship to other ideas, moments and people. This ethical stance influenced the choice to work on a conceptual exploration, of concepts entangled as a knot of (multiple) discourse rather than simple entity, unable to be understood without related facets and parts.

Wilson (2008) uses the term *relatedness* approach in reference to his research into Indigenous research paradigm (see figure 2.1, below).

In this thesis I use the term to best describe both research approach and a mixed-methods process (Tuhiwai Smith, 2005) describing multiple ways of understanding. The choice of relatedness both steered and assisted in addressing the research questions, by encouraging a space for dialogue across multiple perspectives. The term mixed-methods is used most often in reference to research designs incorporating a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Tuhiwai Smith and Wilson are however referring to research by Indigenous peoples and with the communities sharing their knowledge. In this respect, for these

FIGURE 2.1: Research process as relatedness paradigm

Source: Wilson, 2008, p.78

researchers 'mixed-methods' refer to the use of methods drawn from conventional qualitative research along with those stemming from Indigenous paradigms (Tuhiwai Smith, 2005, 1999; Botha, 2011; Lavallée 2009; and Wilson, 2008). As this study is located within westernised institutions and must conform to the requirements for higher degree research processes, it must be stated that the design, however non-traditional in form, stems from qualitative practices steeped in "ultimately hegemonic modern western knowledge traditions" (Botha, 2011, p.315). The place where language and episteme meet is messy and tricky, providing conceptual rough ground where meanings are teased out and tested. The research design and methods were chosen because they best support a relatedness and ethical-seeking stance within which I could address the research questions.

2.2.3 Accountability

The relational emphasis of the thesis requires accountability to the relationships between materials and concepts (Wilson, 2008). The nature of the relatedness paradigm, and the use of narratives as method could be, as Lincoln (2002) suggests, "considered by hardline conventional researchers as anecdotal, subjective, and given to multiple interpretations' producing 'non-rigorous, non-systematic,

and therefore invalid" evidence (p.7). The politics of evidence highlights the nature of relationships between knowledge, language and discourse and what is considered the right type of knowledge. Alongside conceptual examination, the thesis uses a variety of empirical materials such as "personal experience; introspection; ... cultural texts and productions; observational, historical... and visual texts – that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p.3). These assisted in meaning making of particular lived experience, situating these within political and cultural contexts, and "how this fits into, disrupts or challenges particular regimes of truth" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p.7). Contextualisation was deepened through the analysis of ECEC documentation and critical analysis of the intersections of discourses informing the construction of child and becoming in early childhood development reform. Critical Discourse Analysis was considered the appropriate method for political and cultural contextualisation, allowing a richer textual understanding of the local-national-global movements administering such constructions. In this section I draw on three realms of the research process that assisted in strengthening research accountability to the aims and methodological connections. In keeping with the research paradigm of relatedness, the aim of decolonising knowledge, and the research design, objectives and the thread built through *researcher reflexivity* are now discussed. Together these provide a grounded accountability important in a study on concepts and discourse alongside empirical materials and narrative observation.

2.2.4 Decolonising knowledge

The underlying aim of this research, its questions, tools and analytical perspectives draws from an undeniable decolonising stance. The idea of decolonising is double layered for this research: recognising colonial processes, past and present, on lived experience for colonised and coloniser; and the colonisation of knowledge, both in the process of Imperial colonisation of land, peoples and resources, and the knowledge-preferencing evident in the educative institution effected over

children. The relational nature of the methodology is a challenge to knowledge colonisation, where dominant knowledges refute or depreciate 'alternative', 'other' and 'minority' knowledge systems. Decolonising projects attend to the ongoing processes of colonisation and extend from local material projects to philosophical reconstructions (De Lissovoy, 2010). This positions the thesis as a theoretical project which aims to rethink and reconstruct "fundamental understandings of ethics and ontology" (De Lissovoy 2010, p. 285).

Anticolonial research has recognised a number of qualitative methods as proving useful in research aimed at decolonising knowledge hegemony (Spivak 2005; Nakata 2008; De Lissovoy 2014; Tuhiwai-Smith 2005). The existing knowledge informing the Australian ECEC field is narrowly constructed in terms of the perspectives, cultural and social, from which ideas of the child, childhood and ways of being are imagined. The institutions created for young children are neither created by children or community, given the reliance on outside funding. This is an international issue as early childhood is tied to globalisation and discourses of development (Dahlberg, Moss & Pence, 2013). Contemporary Australian ECEC settings are, in growing numbers urban and regional, heterogeneous in population and have the opportunity to inspire plural futures. In the remote, a proliferation of languages and practices reflect realities not accepted by policy.

Examining respective ontologies affirms a "wild profusion" (Foucault as cited in Lather, 2006, p.36) and tension between lived experience as ultimately unsingular (Lather, 2006, p.35). The colonising nature of knowledge and power relationships is apparent as a struggle for dominance of knowledge. Therefore, the respective knowledge structures in the space of this thesis (as apart from the perspectives themselves) are not aimed at a conceptual closure. The method aims for an encounter rather than discovery (Campbell & Shapiro, 1999, p.xvii). In the spirit of decolonisation, the conceptual exploration attempts to resist conceptual mastery; the narratives emphasise the enigma of subjects and instability of subjectivities as "assuming that problems are historically contingent... and that spaces need to be continually negotiated rather than physically or symbolically secured" (Campbell & Shapiro, 1999, p.xviii).

As this thesis involves Indigenous Australian research as a knowledge structure alongside others, it is important to note that Indigenous researchers argue that Indigenous research should not be subsumed within a conventional qualitative paradigm (Botha, 2011; Wilson, 2008). Lavallée (in Botha, 2011) emphasises interconnectedness, particularly the spiritual aspects connecting all living things as beings from the earth, star world and universe. I want to acknowledge these differences in part by the structure and overt positioning of knowledge streams that the thesis takes, and in part to Tuhiwai Smith's (2005) identification of qualitative research as a tool most able to take up the aims of decolonising projects: "to situate, place, and contextualise; to create spaces for decolonizing... to *create spaces* for dialogue *across difference*; to analyse and make sense of complex and shifting experiences, identities and realities" (p.103, italics added). Emphasising 'dialogues across difference' means openness to enigma, unlike constructions of a universalised subjectivity which can rule out space for difference.

The narratives play a different role than the Indigenous research, crystallising shared negotiations across multiple world views. Most sit as experience of the "in-between" spaces (Bhabha, 2013, p.107) of the traditional sense of culture, others as negotiations and grappling with tyrannical knowledge. I believe the narratives, inserted across the variant views, both challenge the ignoring of alternate (or enigmatic, oppositional or different) ways of being as serious and authentic methodologies, and highlight the interconnection of psychic, emotional, physical and spiritual realms of the human and non-human world. The use of narratives as method is discussed in detail in the *Selection and Methods* section of this chapter.

In an effort to remain open to "the irreducible heterogeneity of the other" (Lather, 2006, p.52), the terms relatedness and relational represents the intent of the researcher's positioning, while recognising the complications inherent in debates circumscribed by paradigmatic boundaries. Both the thesis methodology and aims reflect this keeping open, sourcing and considering the ECEC landscape as it is and possibilities for reconfiguring the conditions underlying our relationships and responsibilities with children. Ultimately, the thesis does not accept the current landscape as the only option.

2.2.5 Researcher reflexivity

The thesis design and approach aligns with the emphasis on reflexive accountability to the methods and analysis. Reflexivity is both process and an "attitude of attending systematically to the context of knowledge construction" at each step of the research process (Cohen & Crabtree, July 2006). One issue is whether techniques such as researcher journaling can add to the value of the study, or endanger trustworthiness (Walker, Read & Priest, 2013). Journaling brought an amount of transparency to the reasons behind the use of narratives for example, which are described further in the methods. I use the term journaling here to mean responsive, and critical, writing to make meaning of challenging ideas arising across the study or at decision-making crossroads, rather than a systematic weekly or monthly reflection. Most importantly, across four years, journaling has generated affirmations and allowed reactive feelings more clarity, thus easing initial responses to data, for example. Reflexivity can provide deeper insight about positionality and values (Lincoln & Guba, 1994) affecting decisions about data. The reflective journal was one tool used to assist in methodological decisions and the design process. It attends to researcher positioning, and issues of bias. Although journal writing is not included amongst data or explicit in findings of this thesis, the process has enlarged researcher recognition of the research process overall, such as the relationship between selection, interpretations and decisions. As this research involved in-depth conceptual exploration and examining underlying beliefs and practices (Lincoln & Guba, 1994), reflexivity proved a valuable technique for bringing a dynamic and deepening understanding of content and process to the surface.

An example of the strength that reflexivity has brought to the research is the decision to draw from Indigenous research, alongside the narratives I provide, and the evolving nature of accountability to this choice. This research is not through an Indigenist paradigm; that is, it has not been built from the ground up through the collective and negotiated voice. Researchers choosing to demarcate an Indigenous research paradigm or process almost without exception choose

empirical approaches –the personal and face-to-face- because of the accountability and permission-protocol in relationship building deemed respectful of people and process (Wilson, 2008; Tuhiwai Smith, 2005), where knowledge is built from the ground up. Martin (2003) provides a chronological phasing of Indigenous research phases in the Australian context. The emerging Indigenist phase (1990 onwards) describes processes of sourcing, producing and interpretation of studies through Indigenous researchers and community. An example is Priest, King, Nangala, Nungarrayi-Brown, and Nangala's (2008) research in which Central Desert women of numerous Anangu language groups work together to initiate and author their own knowledge through visual symbols understood and presented through Anangu knowledge systems. Such approaches would have allowed a richness of focus on one Indigenous community's knowledge and experience. However, the purpose of the thesis was to understand the landscape from a number of debates and understandings, and the indigenous research and narratives provide local and situated perspective, helping to contextualise issues and possibilities within localised relationships with the institutional in people's lives. This situates my research as mixed-method as described by Tuhiwai Smith (2005) and Botha (2011). From the research journal early in the design and selection process:

Wilson argues that for research to be Indigenous, it should start from an Indigenous paradigm and remain accountable throughout to this (which itself is the basis of a relatedness lens)... Underlying the phases of research was a continual intuitive feeling that the research remain open, which for me means considering the current landscape of Australian ECEC and dominating perspectives alongside others. This sense of 'alongside-ness' has been the consistent thread of reflective writing across the research process. Yet, should I even be paying 'homage' to the very perspectives I want to disrupt? Why not, as Wilson, or Martin, or Tuhiwai Smith argue, begin from the Indigenous perspective? This would have necessitated a major component I did not have: Time. Ethical approaches and working in protocol entail a very different notion of Time for making connection and relationships, involving spaces I believe to be inconsistent with the 'timeline' expectations of a higher degree in

research. Approaching people in community to discuss the possibilities of this important approach to research is not understood easily by those with time limits as priority, let alone the months needed to establish a collectively negotiated method. It's not impossible, however my relationships across two communities are deeply held and not to be trifled. This issue was the subject of a number of conversations with 'critical friends'. Although touched upon lightly, in North Queensland style, the yuway[1] *responses to the nature of community respect, relationship and reciprocity helped to affirm my decision not to take an approach that could be considered interventionist as an outsider. I am not a complete outsider, but I am not, blood way, Murri*[2]*. My Koori connections place me on the fringe, as a result of pulling anchor often. I have connections and am tied through my children. Together with their father, we are a Murri family teaching and learning Murri way in a world of contrasts. I am not city or country, southern or northern, or perhaps I am both. I stand in two, three, more worlds and remain keenly aware of that. I am constantly challenged by those who wish me to identify as this or that, belong here or there, those who have no idea that who I am is nothing and anything. My experience is of difference in conceptual grapples with ways of being, doing, seeing, listening, and how I 'ought' to be seeing, doing, being. It seemed to make sense to follow this through with respect to more than one knowledge system. This is my interpretation of ethical encounter in research: to leave behind the 'excitement' of field work, to stand still, open the ears, and feel the resonance of difference.*

The idea that "who one is emerges acutely out of the problems one struggles with" (Rabinow, in Foucault, 1997, p.xix), captures the essence of researcher interpretation, recognition and alertness to discourse in this thesis. It is a poignant reminder of the stammering and stuttering that *must* take place.

Reflexivity involves an active introspection, placing oneself under investigation and analysis but also on discursive constructions of the world. Reflexivity describes

[1] Agreement, yes, used in multiple languages across northern Australia, such as Waanyi-Garrwa, Gulf Country, north eastern Queensland.

[2] Northern term used by Australian Indigenous people referring to themselves and each other, usage in the region approximately from southern Queensland to the Far North. Other terms are used across different regions of the country.

the writing and analysis process where "the subject/researcher sees simultaneously the object of her or his gaze and the means by which the object (which may include oneself as subject) is being constituted" (Davies et al., 2004, p.360). Central to this aspect of reflexivity is the recognition of discourse and that "we cannot disentangle ourselves from or float free of discourse" (Davies et al., 2004, p.385). This recognises reflexivity as also a technology used in the insertion of narratives into the different knowledge streams to produce multiple analyses. It involved attempts to be open to particular ways of conceptualisation, while also aware of the greater political aim of decolonising and the affect it plays in researcher use of the knowledges presented. The style of reflexivity used in this thesis consequently involves more than singular introspection: it becomes a process and "technology of selves that is integral to the very kinds of selves made possible in the discourses through which selves are constituted and through which they constitute themselves" (Davies et al, 2004, p.385). The method of writing that constituted my interrogations and interpretations of the discourses and concepts, also interrogated my own assumptions.

The reflexive methods throughout this thesis include the following:

- Writing early in my candidature as a *thinking process* in response to what I was reading;
- The ongoing writing and re-writing of drafts and chapters from an early stage to gauge connection to developing research questions and conceptual issues;
- Insertion of reflective notes in analysis and method chapters, particularly from the early stages when decisions were to be made on choice of fieldwork or not;
- Sourcing of 'critical friends', and the sharing and discussion of ethical concerns and questions arising from the forces at work in academic research, as well as my thinking around the use of the narratives in the research;

- The use of research lens as relational, connected and requiring an ability to remain open to contradictory perspectives. The decision to take this approach was a significantly reflexive step;
- Systematic journaling for considering new landscape between each 'stream' in order to draw on questions or themes raised in discussion. These enabled renewed focus and direction for the following chapter.

The decision to be reflexive has involved constant questioning and evaluation of myself as researcher, my research approach, the themes and analysis of the data, and the directions these influenced. I do think that grappling with multiple perspectives has forced a research path with multiple stopping points for considered reflection in order to reconfigure the mapping of the landscape. This has, I believe, thickened the arguments and provided an enriched and stronger ground for analysis. The process has arguably enriched the final considerations.

Proceeding from my position as a westernised researcher, and acknowledging my mono-linguistic limitations, the discussion of researcher accountability through relatedness, decolonising knowledge and reflexivity locates my research as seeking to contribute to decolonising research. The limits and boundaries placed on the research draws a firm line between Indigenist research and a space where knowledges meet. With this in mind, I can suggest the contributions of my position to decolonising knowledge lie in the examining of practices, philosophies and possibilities offered by the encounters within the thesis.

2.3 Design: Five streams, two hemispheres

The influence and roots of the five streams sit in two hemispheres: Northern, in which many western practices and discourse are rooted; and Southern, the source of multiple, different expressions of experience from the colonised view. The overall process of the research involves separate knowledge streams flowing towards a meeting space –the brackish water- where the major theme(s) drawn from each

flow are examined with the aim of setting forward and positive steps. The reflexive writing, memory and shared narratives provided a foundation for generating a less-conventional research process. This basis allowed revisiting, rethinking, construction and reconstruction of the method as different streams were navigated. Concurrently, it enabled a knotting of the research threads. The stories they suggest of childhood, becoming and potential are each worth listening to and here stand side-by-side.

2.4 Selection and methods

This study draws from interpretive, deconstructive and critical approaches to research articulating particular principles that assist undertaking a conceptual exploration. In this section I set out the selection of sources that illustrate the methods of analysis. This thesis employs vernacular narrative, textual and critical discourse analysis, and postcolonial principles as tools, recognising the foundations of these as dissimilar knowledge streams. This is intentional and reflects the wider research lens of relatedness which pays attention to the convergence and divergences in the perspectives.

2.4.1 Purpose and rationale

The research design of utilising different knowledge in a multiple stream structure has advantages for breadth and depth of inquiry and increasing scope. Greene, Caracelli and Graham (as cited in Botha, 2011) suggest a framework of purpose and rationale for evaluation, involving Development, Initiation and Expansion. This thesis expands on Initiation and Expansion. *Initiation* explores paradox, contradiction or new perspectives, and includes the recasting of questions with one method with questions from another. This enabled analysis from different perceptions, for example with the insertion of narratives across different perspectives. The foregrounding of Clay's narrative introduced the thesis but also allowed a recasting by placing into different streams. For example, the narrative allowed

a grounding of the philosophical critique of subjectivity in chapter four, providing text for multiple layers of analysis. It also enabled engagement and further analysis in its own right. The process of using theories and practices from different perspectives inevitably throws up unexpected outcomes that encourages more creative research organisation. An intense process of writing, introspection and ethos-grappling ensued from the rough ground of disparity in theory, perspective and methodologies. The friction caused by the rub of disparity highlighted the usefulness of reflexive writing, used to question the application of theoretical positions and researcher 'natural leaning' to conquering a concept, narrative or memory through interpretation. Botha (2011) suggests that the "deliberate juxtaposition" of methodologies and a purpose of drawing on fresh standpoints and re-evaluating putative discourse can offer "fruitful opportunities for boundary-breaking practices and theorising" (p. 320). The use of creative narrative from reflections around the research process both deepened my awareness of the relationship between axiology and methodology, and also the relationship of the researcher self to the processes and concepts under study. The nature of reflexivity exposes personal factors of emotion (Botha, 2011) and identity-work and how these effect any outcomes and interpretive design. While 'self-study' and 'self-reflective data' such as memory narratives are subjective, and personal reflexive writing raises questions for trustworthiness or stability, they forced a recognition of presence along with affirmed the idea of lived experience and meaning making as shifting and empirical realities as unstable. Therefore, the mixing of methods, theory and standpoints, knitted by the reflective praxis of writing as method (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005) *initiated* possibilities for the generation of different knowledge-making.

The purpose of *Expansion* extends the depth of initiations with the "use of different methods for different inquiry components" (Greene, Caracelli & Graham 1989 in Botha 2011, p.319). Each stream has a different focus and different method: for example, philosophical discussion of subjectivity and being-becoming in chapter four sit alongside methods drawn from Critical Discourse Analysis in chapter five, which also employs conceptual tools from critical social theory, particularly Foucault (1983, 1991b, 1997) in drawing out themes of governmentality and biopower.

This produced different levels of discourse analysis which generated questions and themes, and produced nested realms of analysis. CDA is discussed further in the next section.

The placing of contradictory methods and perspectives alongside each other, in an order reflecting the questions arising from each, arose out of the reflexive approach. The overall paradigm of relatedness is reflected in the intuitive construction of the research path, the application of substantiated analytical techniques such as Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 2001; Foucault, 1981) and post- discourses of governmentality and bio-power (Foucault, 2000b, 1997d; Miller & Rose, 2008). The thesis structure of different knowledge streams flowing into drinkable, albeit murky, water enabled the research questions to be addressed, but also stands as the concrete reflection of the methodology and paradigm.

2.4.2 Critical Discourse Analysis

> *What then, is so perilous in the fact that people speak, and that their discourse proliferates to infinity? Where is the danger in that?* (Foucault, 1981, p.52).

Fairclough (2001) describes Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as analysing the "dialectical relationships between discourse (including language but also other forms of semiosis, e.g. body language or visual images) and other elements of social practices" (2001, p.231). Broadly, it is used to examine relationships between discourse and power. More specifically, transparent or opaque relationships of genre, discourses and styles, and importantly but differently, what is *not* said, elided in the process of control. The relationship of discourse to dominance and discrimination highlights the chronicles of "societal knowledge, and thus offers the means to describe or narrate 'reality' in a particular way" (Mengibar, 2015, p.39).

The beginning stages of selection of documents began with general criterion for textual discourse analysis. The extensive range of documents connected to the national ECEC reform required sifting criteria. The three documents chosen for

analysis charted initial consideration of the reach of documents (Fairclough, 2001). These followed the questions asked in selection strategies of document-based discourse analysis:

- Which documents or texts have the most reach and the widest audience?
- Which documents or texts do not have this audience and what is their role, and
- What would be the reasons for the smaller audience, if any?

The research strategy proceeded along these lines for the selection of three documents intrinsic to the current reforms in early childhood education at both State and National level. The two ECEC texts are the first aiming at achieving a cohesive nation-wide regulatory standard of implementation for early development, learning and teaching. A learning and teaching document, the *Early Years Learning Framework for Australia* [hereafter, EYLF] (DEEWR, 2009) reaches the widest ECEC audience, encapsulating desired practice through Practice Principles and Learning Outcomes. In 'childcare' services the childcare workforce was 116,000, (ABS, 2011) not including pre-school educational programs. In 2013 the ECEC workforce was 153,155 including preschool services (DEEWR, 2013). All early childhood education and care services require the EYLF as the guiding framework for practice and all practitioners are required to become familiar with the document, to share in its language, and encourage families to also share in its aims (DEEWR, 2009). The EYLF is the learning and teaching arm of The *National Quality Framework* [NQF] (DEEWR, 2009). The NQF covers an extensive range of comprehensive and detailed documentation including the source documents (ACECQA, 2013, p.5) of the *National Quality Standard* (NQS), the *National Law*, and *National Regulations*, the *Education and Care Services National Amendment Regulations 2014*. The regulations and standard support the Learning frameworks. The supporting documents (ACECQA, 2013) are the *Guide to the National Quality Framework*, a *Guide to the National Law and National Regulations 2011*, the *Guide to the National Quality Standard*, a *Guide to Developing a Quality Improvement Plan*, a *Quality Improvement Plan Template*, the *National Quality Standard Assessment*

and Rating Instrument, the *Guide to Assessment and Rating for Regulatory Authorities*, and the *Guide to Assessment and Rating for Services*. From this list, the *National Quality Standard* [NQS] was the selected document as educators and management base their service implementation on NQS principles of quality and quality improvement. Thus I selected the ECEC arm of the reform as represented by the EYLF (practice) and the NQS (quality improvement).

The *National Early Childhood Development Strategy* [hereafter 'Strategy'] (DEEWR, 2009b) provides insight into the positioning of education, and development, in policy platforms for early childhood development as an integrated field of practices. In terms of ECEC, the Strategy as a policy text does not have the audience coverage or target as the other two documents, which are regulatory documents for the administration and assessment of provision and practice. The Strategy was selected as the document shedding light on underlying processes of the arms of reform across early childhood development. Although ECEC is targeted in the strategy, the language and emphasis is distinctly different than that of the NQS or EYLF highlighted by its emphasis on change, economy and productivity.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) provides a set of techniques that match the purpose of exploring the processes of desired change and the language and practices formed and forming to reach these aims of change. Proceeding along similar lines as the initial selection strategy, the research also drew on supporting texts, chosen for their citation emphasis:

- Which supporting texts or documents seem to be given authority?
- What is the evidence base or perspective of these texts?
- How might these underlying texts or documents shape or support the policy or framework texts?

The emphasis or 'influence' was taken to be the amount of source citation along with the language used surrounding the citation and its use. As the Strategy covered the widest ranging areas of child development such as health, welfare, infant and maternal care, and education, this document provided the longest list

of sources. The document's 'Evidence Base', as its appendix, further clarifies the emphasis on sources and knowledges underlying ECEC reform.

Fairclough has recognised three forms of critique applicable to critical discourse analysis: "ideological, rhetorical, and strategic critique" (2001, p.12). The *ideological* focuses on social relations of power through semiosis; the *rhetorical* emphasises techniques of persuasion in texts or talk; and the *strategic* considers "how semiosis figures within the strategies pursued by groups of social agents to change societies in particular directions" (2006, p.12). Each of these three forms of critique are highly relevant to analysis of documents which form part of a suite of national reform. Because discourse is implicated in processes of social change (Foucault, 1981) and shifts in meaning making and practices, I wanted to explore the regulatory positioning of childhood and education in a national strategy of standardised reform processes.

The questions raised by the initial stage of selection and analysis began to provide entry points to an analysis of governance and early education objectives at a deeper critical level. Fairclough's (2012) development of CDA recontextualises Foucault's 'order of discourse' (1981, 1984). This is particularly apt for education research when viewing education as a social practice or set of practices networked in particular ways to constitute a desired social order. Fairclough's use of *discourse* refers to "(a) meaning-making as an element of the social process; (b) language associated with a particular social field of practice... (c) a way of construing aspects of the world associated with a particular social perspective (eg. Neoliberal discourse of globalisation)" (2012, p.11). The discourse aspects of social orders are the 'order of discourse' which Fairclough describes as a "particular social ordering of relationships amongst different ways of meaning making" (2012, p.11). Employing this particular version of CDA allowed the expansion of inquiry components through these different levels, but also highlighted the multiple layers of messages in the texts themselves. In this way both levels of CDA enabled drawing out of multiple levels of analysis for addressing the research questions.

Through the journey of reading both literature, research and gathering anecdotes

it became clear that for the documentation of early childhood strategy and regulation, simply seeking the construction of agency or becoming from the institutional perspective was not enough: through the use of CDA and a focus on power-knowledge-discourse this eventually crystallised in the role of the institutional in governing people's lives and how this is taken up, challenged, diverted and disrupted via different means.

The inquiry into documentary sources of reform for ECEC (Chapter five) was managed through a framework consisting of four facets of social practices for focus. The foundations of these facets grew from contextualising, representation and interests served. Three questions of context, interests and practice are drawn from critical social theory in the critique of knowledges, discourses and practices which are represented in the documents:

- What are the socio-historical contexts of the event?
- Whose knowledge and interests are represented?
- Whose interests are served by such practices (Foucault, 1977; Harvey, 2007; Miller & Rose, 2008)?

My reading of Foucault (2000b; 1997b, 1997d; 1977), Rose (2010; 1991) and also Miller and Rose (2008) had assisted an interpretation of the documents that was crystallised in a statement which I selected as an anchor for the exploration and interrogation of the early childhood documents:

> *Our society is not one of spectacle but of surveillance; under the surface of images, one invests bodies in depth; behind the great distraction of exchange, there continues the meticulous, concrete training of useful forces; the circuits of communication are the supporters of an accumulation and a centralisation of knowledge; the play (composition?) of signs defines the anchorages of power; it is not that the beautiful totality of the individual is amputated, repressed, altered by our social order, it is rather that the individual is carefully fabricated in it, according to a whole technique of forces and bodies* (Foucault, 1977, p.217).

This passage from *Discipline and Punish* came to exemplify themes drawn from early stages of selection and analysis, and it remains pierced through the plethora of literature studied. Possibly I had read it and yet not until I had decided to argue a case for the early childhood education institute as a technology of normalisation and colonisation did it hold such meaning. I had become interested in the work of Nikolas Rose (1999; 2010) and his work with Peter Miller (2008), and their compelling and detailed arguments of the production of power in contemporary societies, and these assisted in understanding the play of forces and technologies on and through individuals and populations. The recruitment of children as future forces requires techniques of determination which tend to reduce possibilities of being and potential for becoming. I began to see further themes from this statement which came to lead the second, deeper, realm of analysis which spoke to the questions of contexts, knowledge and interests:

Surveillance takes the form of *vast networks*, working "*under the surface of images*"; *investing in "bodies in depth"*, with "meticulous, concrete *training of useful forces*" (Foucault, 1977, p.217; Miller and Rose, 2008).

These provided the framework leading the second realm of analysis of the documents. The textual analysis was threaded through this second method to increase the scope of the inquiry. For example, in exploring the interplay of images on the surface –such as the capable child of the EYLF- under the surface lay clear preference for scientific and measurable evidence which often positions children as passive in their development. The first phase of textual analysis had already highlighted language use where 'talent' was positioned in 'battle' terms for 'brain power' and 'global competition'. For example:

> *...there is a growing shortage of talent and growing global competition for talent. "A key issue in the battle for brain power and talent is how to fund the early child development centres"* (The Economist 8 July 1998, in Mustard 2008, 33).

It became a method of analysing reform objectives, the underlying knowledges and forces, and ideas of childhood and being in reform and regulation of early

childhood education and care in Australia.

2.4.3 Narrative

> *From the idea that the self is not given to us, I think that there is only one practical consequence: we have to create ourselves as a work of art* (Foucault, 1984b, p. 351).

Across the thesis, in order to earth the sometimes abstract conceptual exploration I utilise narratives as examples of lived experience. Each of these are relayed as memory, and are either from personal experience in the early childhood field and community or shared by friends and family. They each relate the experience of education institutional priorities as they influence lives, and as such are instances. The use of narratives illuminates the experience of "constant negotiations" (Deleuze, 1995, frontispiece) of spaces and against the corporeal and symbolic securing of being.

In response to universal subjectivity presented across the perspectives in the thesis, the narratives and texts used in rethinking being and subjectivity "include subjects who are unfinished, ambiguously located and enigmatic so as to resist the restriction of moral spaces to a state-oriented geographic imaginary" (Campbell & Shapiro, 1999, p.xvii).

The role of memory is salient in revealing a longitudinal affect in the telling and retelling, and the re-creating of selves. Given the acknowledgement of learning as historically and culturally contingent and shared (Peers & Fleer, 2014), memory draws on the threads of being that are built, woven and strengthened over time. In order to illustrate this, I include an excerpt from Cam's narrative from chapter seven:

> *...as he spoke, we laughed, mmmed, ahhed, then slowly fell into quiet listening and drifting as we drove on. Our imaginations gave our salt-crusted bodies permission to relax into our seats, fingers catching the*

> *breeze out the windows. Travelling through that landscape of giant granite outcrops, straggling gums and soaring Hoop pines, his story wove us into a kind of dream, or at least we became part of his dream, the words wrapping around us, becoming a part of us and our collective memories.*
>
> *It began as a dream, but in the telling became real, not in a material sense, but as the fibre of our existence.*
>
> *The child! Such a weaver of stories! Today, in my memory, the image is of the people, the seats, the country as one entity, I am not separate to any of them. It was an unspoken pride that made us smile, pride in the boy with the talent for weaving fibres around our souls. Why was it unnoticed at school? Cam and his family were constantly told of his 'inabilities' with the books and with concentration. Like his older brother, they were considering holding him back another year. He was six years old. Yet the memories that tied each of us together in those times were ties of family, of love and fondness. Bound forever in a web of relationships, golden threads were woven that day.*

The sharing of it enables a deepened retelling of the experience as self-reflection. However, I want to note that the narratives have a different purpose to any self-reflexive writing undertaken as research journaling. The journaling was an ongoing activity and at different points specific to a purpose such as a decision about direction or selection. The narratives were gathered together around the same point in the research, as a 'data gathering' phase. In terms of each narrative's storytelling, whether or not details are elided or forgotten does not make data more unreliable. It is exactly what stays and is strong in the mind and body which is important and respects the storytellers' relation to the event. These narratives are taken as threads of being and refractions of the spirit. They provide not only a narrative of memory but are put to work in analysing concepts such as, in the above narrative example, institutional power and presencing in everyday lives.

Davies and Gannon (2012) use Deleuze and Guattari's view of thought in discussing the telling of memory stories: "to think is to experiment, but experimentation is always that which is in the process of coming about" (in Davies & Gannon, 2012, p.360). Although Davies and Gannon are discussing collective discussion of memory, the telling (and writing) of these memories and narrative even on paper can emerge, "and resonate affectively in the bodies of the listeners. The memory-story is, in this moment, both intensely real and de-individualised... The story telling and writing and re-writing thus take the form of an encounter" (p.360). The use of narrative in the thesis reflects an understanding of identity/ies as unfixed, open and non-determinable.

The narratives do not as a group belong to any one culture or social 'grouping'. They illustrate methodologies, or ways of being, that continue to be considered as other or alternative, rather than someone's *mainstream* that has history, methodology and reality. The thesis presents these as strengths, talents, and capacities rather than deficits (Falchi, Axelrod & Genishi, 2014). The purposeful reflexivity throughout the research and analysis process has forged a stronger relationship with the narratives, their purpose in the research but also in my own life. For example, Cam's story-weaving talent continues to exist in how I construct and gather things of salience in my life. What is important in my life? Whose stories? They have crystallised ideas of the contribution of children to relationship building, collective becoming, being and identification of one's belonging and uniqueness.

2.4.4 Postcolonial critique

A common theme amongst the different perspectives of postcolonial debate was the notion that methodologies from 'the colonial wound' will be necessarily very different to the colonial voice. This reflected a similar notion from Nsamenang (2008) and Nakata (2008) that Indigenous experiences cannot be simplified by theoretical framing. Although voices vary in their focus and often find a distinct nature to each other, Dutton, Gandhi and Seth (1999) identify a 'postcolonial

toolbox' which assists the focus of the chapter for challenging and raising questions of possibilities for being:

- Identification and critique
- Deconstructing
- Localising
- Self-critique

These ideas assisted as tools for identification and critiquing of the processes apparent in early childhood discourse of education and development. For this research, identification was not enough as it can tend to carry a pessimistic stigma. Deconstructing and exploring alternative positive views of possibility and potential offers a critical but positive challenge to rethink the limitations placed upon many children. The narratives highlight the complex interfaces between individuals, community, and political processes of institutions:

> *The lived space of Indigenous people in colonial regimes is the most complex of spaces... understandings of the Indigenous position must be 'complicated' rather than simplified through any theoretical framing* (Nakata, 2008, p.12).

In chapter seven both Australian Indigenous and 'postcolonial' perspectives are explored. While each sometimes sit in tension with the other, I have drawn from the 'postcolonial' arguments that recognise colonial practices as ongoing. I have avoided the use of 'new internationalist' (Bhabha, 2013) argument from tricontinental (Wood, 2001) literature because Australian Indigenous peoples continue to experience colonialist process and practices of invisibility, paternalism, and stereotypification. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, 'Australia' means a colonised space. This has meant leaving aside useful and positive ideas with which to understand living in multiple worlds, across culture and language, such as hybridity, or third space (Bhaba, 2013, 1996).

This thesis stands in muddy water: a silt-laden space where clarity of vision is often limited. The design has had to take account of the rough ground of cross-perspectival work that includes the meeting spaces across Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledges. The metaphor of salt and freshwater knowledge spoken of by Yunupingu (in Shoemaker, 1994) provides strong ground for a lens and method for a thesis based on relatedness. In the effort to "create spaces for *dialogue across difference*; to analyse and make sense of complex and shifting experiences, identities and realities" (Tuhawai Smith, 2005, p.103, emphasis added), the research aims and design position the thesis amongst decolonising efforts for early childhood education and care policy, practice and theory.

In summary, this research uses an approach for exploring both written discourse and 'lived experience' that could itself be termed a 'hybrid practice', drawing principles of interpretive, deconstructive and positive critique; in an effort to suture relational 'difference-thinking' into educational discourse of early childhood, development and knowledge production around childhood and being.

2.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have described the research design and methodology by introducing the five knowledge streams, outlining the overall approach, accountability, and justifying the processes and methods used. Chapter one introduced the reader to the project, presenting the source of the research impetus and positioning of the researcher. With the research design and methodology discussed, the scene is set to step into the waters: the first stream follows the flow of an increasingly globalised imaginary of childhood as waves of northern theory and philosophical traditions. Wading into the second, I explore how self/selves and subjectivities are speculated through contemporary northern critique. Following this, the study moves closer to the national and local realms.

Chapter 3

Childhood in northern discourse

> *That which each thing is when its growth is completed we speak of as being the nature of each thing* (Aristotle, 350 B.C.E., Politics).

3.1 Introduction

The journey of this study has been one of making sense of nebulous concepts such as agency, subjectivity, being and becoming. The complexity is best represented as a knot of discourse and text. Poised –entangled- at the milieu of these knotted concepts, each travelling nuanced terrain sans boundaries, is the figuring of 'child'. The thesis as a whole necessarily requires understanding how child, as idea, figure and form, has been woven through various configurations, forming a "linkage between perceptions, discourses and decisions" (Rancière 2009, p.120). In this chapter I explore *child* and *childhood* imagined as idea, figure, force and form: a state of existence drawn from particular western organising framework of the world. Politically and economically, the idea of development carries ideologies of civic participation and inequalities, each of these scattered with roots of Plato, Socrates and Aristotelian philosophy. Humanist discourses on childhood and education have shaped educational pedagogy and policy as it has evolved in western institutionalism of young children. This chapter examines the discourses and practices from which emerged a configuration of common-sense of child and childhood,

the threads of which remain in contemporary early education discourses. This provides a ground for exploring the research question, *what ideas of childhood and development compel and inspire the framing of educational objectives in current policy contexts of Australian early childhood reform?* This is nested within the thesis aim of reframing dominant ideas of childhood and being in early childhood education.

The chapter's focus is on convergences and linkages in knowledge and practice prior to the explosion of North American studies of the twentieth century. While 'developmentally appropriate' knowledge became significant to early childhood pedagogy and care in the later twentieth century (Burman, 2010; Woodhead, 2006; Prout, 2005) the roots sourced an earlier milieu of knowledge and methods from different scientific, medical, psychological and pedagogical discourses. Across four hundred years, the child has figured in European philosophical and scientific inquiry of natural order, humanity's ends and origins. Therefore, my aim in this chapter is to explore where different practices and theory converged in figuring child as individual embodiment and global formula for development. What happened, what ideas, events, ways of thinking came to define and construct this supposedly immutable form of truth imagined as 'child'? This chapter limits discussion from the latter eighteenth to the turn of twentieth century Europe, critiquing junctures, practices and modes of thinking where *child*[1] became useful in discourse of natural order, social order and human ends.

The chapter is presented in three parts. Part one examines romantic and rational philosophical discourse on the order of nature, time, and reason, focusing on Rousseau's (1755/2012; 1762/2003) and Kant's (2001; 1899/2003) respective use of childhood to illustrate their arguments. These are positioned in the tradition of Enlightenment objectives of freedom and progress for humanity and for the individual. I then examine the practice of infant biographies or diaries from the late eighteenth and across the nineteenth century in Europe and America, and the emergence of 'child sciences' in nineteenth century Europe scientific empiricism.

[1]Child and the child are used interchangeably. My use of 'child' denotes an idea, a conception or emblem in the discourses in this chapter.

The critique highlights the meeting of written, observed and measured childhoods, which together figure the child as ensign of development. The summative section draws the key themes together with questions raised.

3.2 Imagining childhood

In the twelfth century Arabic narrative of *Hayy Ibn Yaqdhan* by Ibn Tufayl, the child Hayy is raised on a desert island by a gazelle. In isolation from human society, the gazelle's death sets the child on a quest for ultimate truth on the 'conditions of possibility' for knowledge through systematic, reasoned inquiry and ultimately, self-enlightenment (Talhami, 2008). Using his intellect and the offerings of his surroundings, the growing and curious child teaches himself anatomy, ponders the origin of the soul, and learns psychology, astronomy, logic and metaphysics (Goodman, 2009). These take place through seven year phases of growth and understanding. Both the process and the possibility in Tufayl's allegoric philosophy required isolation, an unfettered mind, and empiricism. The infant provides the metaphor of the human beginning life as both empty vessel and holding innate capacity for an unfolding potential, beginning with curiosity of the child.

A number of connections have been drawn between Tufayl's interpretation and eighteenth century European texts, particularly Daniel Defoe's *Crusoe* (1719/2004) and Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Émile, ou de l'education* (1762/2003). Émile as an older child is given Crusoe as his only book. Hayy and Crusoe are isolated from society amongst nature, Hayy and Émile explore the natural environment from infancy; all three characters observe, experiment and reflect on their relationship to the natural environment and 'thingness'. For each, the capacity for truly reflective thinking makes an impact only upon gradual introduction (or in Crusoe's case, re-introduction) to the social world (Schaeffer, 2002). Each is either a child or becomes 'like a child', cultivating physical requirements of survival in order that 'true' intellectual and moral activity can be nourished later. The pinnacle of their learning is reflected in full, purposeful and rational adulthood and mastery: Hayy

attains self-enlightenment, Crusoe is master of 'his kingdom' (Schaeffer, 2002), and Émile is a citizen of morals.

In this brief composite of texts, one thread of meaning is the usefulness of nature in understanding or 'being in' society. Another is the conceptual nature of the isolated 'natural' being as a practical impossibility. What strikes me in these philosophical narratives is the idea of utility and the potentiality of the individual and humanity. Implicit in reason's narrative of the child and learning is the same question: the utility of child and childhood. What is *child's* purpose, and what is 'it' good for?

The seventeenth and eighteenth century European philosophical narratives which drew on child and childhood understood nature and time as encompassed by natural laws. In the following discussion I explore this basis and how the use of child enabled development of social contract and reform theory that could describe progress at a macro-political level.

In traditions of Empire and colony debating progress and reason, fulfilment of one's potential telos finds its tradition in classical Greece. During the eighteenth century, philosophers considered childhood in embryonic models of development, thus placing 'childhood' as a means to an end. Like Aristotle, social contract theorists such as Hobbes and Locke had little interest in the experience of being a child- it was the potential as future citizens: *The child is imperfect, and therefore obviously his virtue is not relative to himself alone, but to the perfect man and to his teacher* (Politics, Bk1, p.13). As discussed by childhood researchers (Burman, 2010; Moss 2011; Jenks, 2005; MacNaughton, 2005; Dahlberg & Moss, 2005; James, Jenks & Prout, 1998), it is a telling heritage for early childhood education. Given the decolonising aims of this thesis, I want to point out that it is not the only heritage or history of childhood and education. Parallel histories and versions of child are mostly left unheard in education's history. For example, John Locke's accounts of the child as empty vessel, in terms of knowledge, as Goodman notes, came from

his instruction under Pococke, and access to Ibn Tufayl's Hayy ibn Yaqdhan[2] (c. twelfth century) (Goodman, 2009; Talhami, 2008). Child as promise and potential is not merely a European or western narrative. However, this chapter explores ideas of the child as woven into scientific understandings of development that have informed contemporary discourse of early childhood education and care, because my focus is on convergences of theories and 'facts' explaining development. For the thesis, it raises questions of why other understandings have been left unheard.

'Development' as an organising principle of the natural sciences flowed into an imaginary of temporal trajectories in which the child became a figure of progress, embodying a linear process of development. I use the term development here to capture scientific ideas of the process and progress of the natural, organic, world. As the language of classification and ordering permeated human and social sciences, developmental*ism* also came to inform knowledge of the human role in the past and present. Classification and hierarchy however could only be imagined as narratives before material artefact allowed rational objectification. The child became an emblematic as well as embodied source for the figuring of human development across temporal and spatial lines.

3.2.1 Nature's child

Eighteenth century Genovese philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) used the idea of nature in his assaults on the state of society and the 'civilising' institutions of his era (Michaud, 2012). Like his predecessors of social reform Hobbes and Locke, Rousseau critiqued Nature's utility for human capacity for civil society, although through a wariness of reason's sovereignty. Rousseau's appeal to and use of nature has been considered ambiguous and open, the "sin in the great orators of reform" (Harris, 2003/1892, p. ix). I draw on Rousseau's discussion of nature as

[2] *Hayy ibn Yaqdhan* was a written account of an Arabic oral narrative. Tufayl's version was translated into Latin by Edward Pococke the Younger, as *Philosophus Autodidactus*, published in 1671. The Latin version contained the phrase Tabula Rasa, often attributed to Locke, although Locke wrote of 'empty vessel'. Russell (1994) discusses the Arabic influence on European philosophy and notes the possible influence on Pococke's student, John Locke, and his essay *Concerning Human Understanding* (1690) and *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693), as well as Defoe's *Crusoe* (1719) and Rousseau's *Émile* (1762).

it assists a reading of 'return to nature' and 'l'homme naturel' not often viewed in early childhood texts, but which provides a basis for reading *Émile* in a different light. Rousseau's use and meaning of nature and natural is at times nebulous. This section explores the idea of nature as imagined equivocally by Rousseau in *Discourse on the origin and foundations of Inequality among men* (1754/2012) [hereafter *Discourse on Inequality*] and its application to the social institution of education in *Émile, ou de l'education* (1762/2003) [hereafter *Émile*[3]]. Alongside one another, the two texts provide a richer indication of the connections of child and nature in *Émile*. The use of Rousseau's texts assists in understanding the use of child in eighteenth century philosophy especially as it relates to education in its modern manifestation, thus also shedding light on the research question driving the chapter's exploration.

In *Discourse on Inequality* (1754/2012) Rousseau conceptualises Nature in three realms.[4] According to Clements (2015), nature has three meanings. One is an original condition. It also refers to "humanity's nature" (p.1), which Rousseau suggests is a harmony with nature. Clements asserts it also delineates humanity "in a state of disharmony with humanity's nature". Rousseau's aim in Discourse on Inequality is to locate a condition where humanity can re-harmonise through laws and "cultivated people" (Clements, 2015, p.1) rather than over rely on excess and materialism and fall into degradation. Importantly, a pure state of Nature is entirely conceptual, but a necessary methodological step from which to proceed critiquing the states of humanity:

> *...let us begin by dispensing with the facts, for they are not relevant to the question. We must not take the investigations which one could enter into concerning this subject for historical truths, but only for hypothetical and conditional reasons, more suitable for illuminating*

[3]Where the book is referred to I use italics as in *Émile*; references to the book's child character are as Émile.

[4]Rousseau describes three interrelated states of nature, the pure, corrupted and restored. His ideal does not return to the pure natural state but denotes a state of nature being realised, i.e. the inverse of a corrupt state in a healthy, positive condition. The use of the word 'nature' is variable and is my focus here. Clements' (2015) break down of the various meanings of the term 'nature' in *Discourse on Inequality* has been a valuable source in my relating the terms to *Émile*.

> *the nature of things than for showing the true origin, similar to those made everyday by our physicists concerning the formation of the earth* (Rousseau, 1754/2012, p.9).

The pure 'natural form' is non-historical and without recourse to any society. A pure state is a pre-reflective form of being (Schaeffer, 2002), one which suggests the human characteristics of sociability as insufficient. A conceptual *pure state* of nature, and the natural state of humanity, are for Rousseau the most basic shared "architecture of human selfhood" (Clements, 2015, p.6). Rejecting both Hobbes and Locke on their ideas of the 'natural man', Rousseau strips back the human to an almost automaton-like being, "scattered among the animals" (1754/2012, p.15) a condition he does not seem to encourage a return to.

Thus the purely natural state- and original condition- is a theoretical tool only: the absence of political forms and reflective, moral sociability with which society is civilised. Clements (2015) argues that this theoretical usage enabled consideration of what types of political and social forms can answer the civilising problem that the natural state offers. It is the idea of the *civilising problem* that I consider key to the utility of child and forms the bulk of my focus of this chapter. What is the potential of humanity? How does humanity reach this end? What is a natural*ised* state as characterised not by a pure, hypothetical one but a realised, reconciled state? In other words, the progression of the human becomes a problem. In *Discourse* Rousseau drew on teleological discourse, an Aristotelian argument of the natural order of human telos, laid out in *Politics* (Aristotle, 350 BCE/1984). I believe this is at the crux of the use of child and childhood in social contract and reform discourse, embryonic theories of development, and its later appearance in medico-pedagogical sciences. The child offered a similarly innocent original state which was also viewed as a teleological *problem*. Child has transformative potential; *childhood* became a problematic state which holds its members separate from their realisable potential end.

Along with John Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690) and *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693), Rousseau's *Émile* is credited as a

key text in conceptualising the child as a source of shaping future society (Michaud, 2012; Gilead, 2012). It is also credited with the influence of the natural and innocent child in post-enlightenment discourses (Jenks, 2005). This would come to be the self-professed aim of Enlightenment: a permanent critique seeking the "possibly improved condition of man in the future" (Kant, 1899/2003, p.14; Foucault, 1994). In *Émile*, the progression of the child through sequential stages of development proved a fruitful foundation for later theorists and educationalists. The treatise popularised interest in childhood and the child with its entreaties to parents and tutors. Rousseau aligned stages of tuition to the child's different ages, a belief echoing through to contemporary early childhood education and care.

As a treatise on education, *Émile* critiques the possibilities for happiness. Rousseau equates happiness with the freedom-constraint reconciliation: that is, freedom lies in autonomous subjection to governance. Rousseau explained natural education around the child's stages of physical, intellectual and moral development. For example, foundations of physical education are essential for the self-control that must be achieved before the explorations of the intellect. Moral education must wait until gradual introduction of moments for reflection on the worth of society and nature. The individual's innate equilibrium of desires and powers is tested with the introduction to the complexities of society:

> *As soon as his potential powers of mind begin to function, imagination, more powerful than all the rest, awakes, and precedes all the rest. It is imagination which enlarges the bounds of possibility for us, whether for good or ill, and therefore stimulates and feeds desires by the hope of satisfying them* (Rousseau, 1762/2003, p.52).

> *That which lies before us becomes vaster and stretches still before us. Thus we exhaust our strength, yet never reach our goal, and the nearer we are to pleasure, the further we are from happiness* (p. 53).

Surrounded by the will of others, frustration grows and feeds misery. This describes a movement between imagination and desire, a movement undercut by

reason's constraint as we accept a compromised happiness[5] –for Rousseau, pleasure in materials and excess- and lose sight of a simplified but cultivated happiness. Thus in *Émile*, child is positioned in natural settings –the simple, the home, the garden- and Rousseau allows agency and industry as nature takes its course on development. Here, freedom takes precedence over reason's constraint. The child-governor relationship must be one of wise friendship, however this is an education built on "force or ruse" of the governor, to bind the "many new chains you have put around his heart" (Rousseau, 1762/2003, p.316). The boy Émile grows in romantic isolation, a "character in a romance rather than a real man" (Compayré, 1905, p.289). It is a child in isolation from the world, one with similarities to the only book character he may have at his disposal, *Crusoe*.

The introduction of Defoe's *The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe of York, Mariner* (1719) [hereafter *Crusoe*] is a short but significant moment in Émile. It illustrates two points for my argument. The once-social individual in reflection of society's worth (Schaeffer, 2002), and, read alongside *Discourse on Inequality*, that a natural state can only be conceptual. Rousseau's ideas of the development of moral capacities are exhibited in the growing child. Émile's awareness of himself as a physical being in early childhood is drawn to a recognition of himself as a moral being. The character Crusoe begins life as a social individual embroiled in a complex organised society. The purpose of the character Crusoe to Émile has been interpreted as a model for Rousseau's championing of self-sufficiency (Gilead, 2012) and a return to the 'natural man' (Michaud, 2012). Schaeffer (2002) suggests *Crusoe* is introduced to Émile not because the character represents '*l'homme naturel*', but because Crusoe is a socialised man isolated among nature. It provides Rousseau with the "desert island" where humanity begins its civilising mission: for Rousseau, "it is with this reference to this state that we are to appreciate all the others" (1762/2003, p.163). Crusoe cannot represent man in his natural state as he has already developed knowledge and experience in society. His reflection on the value of society is strengthened all the more for being once again thrust back into the social world when he comes

[5] I critique this relationship further in chapter seven as a continuing theme of neoliberal governance.

across footprints. Crusoe reflects on the worth of the social being and his role in society far more effectively for having been isolated. For Rousseau, this is the closest example to Émile as a child born into complex society and sequestered to sheltered existence. However, in isolation, how can the child come to know who he[6] is? It takes the introduction of an 'other', in gradual steps to society, to begin the process of self-awareness and social relationship. Rather than a call to return to a natural state, there seems to be a key message in what Rousseau shred's from Defoe's text: to strip away the 'madness' of the world, to come close to the simplicity offered in isolation, before reconciling a deeper, more reflective, and egalitarian state of engagement with society.

Rousseau's oeuvre emphasised the individual's freedom-constraint struggle with other wills. Payne (1892/2003), in his translator's preface to *Émile*, derided Rousseau's idealist sentiment: "the ideal man was the savage, isolated from human society and untainted by civilisation; the ideal life was independence of custom, freedom from the constraints of other wills, and obedience to nothing but things" (xxviii). Rousseau does defend simplicity and 'things in themselves', including the nature of childhood. In *Émile* he writes that "nature wants children to be children before they are men...childhood has ways of seeing, thinking, and feeling peculiar to itself" (1762, preface). The book Crusoe comes "divested of all its rubbish" (Rousseau, p.163) leaving only Crusoe's time on the island. Crusoe as an isolated being highlights humankind's relationship with its own progress. It allows Rousseau an orientation from which to consider how natural man experienced 'the true relation of things'; the desert island provides a state of orientation to which all other states can be compared. There is specific purpose in its utility:

> *Robinson Crusoe on his island, alone, deprived of the assistance of his fellows and of the instruments of all the arts, yet providing for his own subsistence and preservation, and procuring for himself a state of*

[6]I use the pronouns 'he', 'his' in these sections where the original texts (and their authors) have used them and as the aims of the texts clearly refer to the male citizen/child. Rousseau, Kant, Locke along with the classical writers, have the male child in mind in discussing active citizenship and the role of education. In other areas I use the terms 'she/hers' and 'he/his' interchangeably.

> *comparative comfort- here is an object interesting for every age, and one which may be made agreeable to children in a thousand ways. This is how we realise the desert island which first served me as a means of comparison. This, I grant, is not the condition of man as a social being, and probably is not to be that of Émile; but it is with reference to this state that we are to appreciate all the others. The surest means of rising above prejudices, and of ordering our judgements in accordance with the true relation of things is to put ourselves in the place of an isolated man, and to judge of everything as this man must judge it, having regard to its proper utility* (Rousseau, 1762/2003, p.163).

Stripped of unnecessary frivolities, *Crusoe* becomes another covertly placed tool in the learning environment. This short section in *Émile* assists my aim of examining how childhood became a word for conceptualising simplified natural states. The desert island, as pure state of nature, is a tool of comparison. 'Isolated man' (both Crusoe and in some respects the child Émile) must judge of his environment the original purposes, unfettered by corrupted usage. This seems to crystallise Rousseau's greater desire: to simplify life by stripping away unnecessary reliance on the crippling excesses of modern society. I suggest that the discussion so far raises another point, in that it highlights that *Émile* describes a landscape transposed onto a conceptual state of nature and not for what could actually be. There are some suggestions throughout *Émile* of the contradictory positioning of 'isolated being' as closest to representing natural man:

> *A man who would regard himself as an isolated being, dependent on no-one and sufficing for himself, would not fail to be miserable. It would be even impossible for him to subsist; for, finding the entire earth covered with thine and mine, and having nothing of his own but his body, whence would he derive the necessaries of life? By withdrawing from the state of nature, we force our fellows to withdraw from it also* (1762/2003, p.173).

The child Émile, born into complex society, could not remain in a natural state,

and to do so would cause misery. *Émile* places childhood as closest to a state of nature, and the treatise as conjecture on the impact social institutions have on society's degradation. Rousseau was aware of the limitations of any practical implications, given the basis of a natural education lies in the conceptual separation of pure nature to sociable man. Reconciling a utopian state of humankind, from the realms of natural, the degraded and the naturalised, appears an impossibility. In a telling passage Rousseau states that the treatise is not a blueprint: "*But did I tell you that a natural education was an easy undertaking? [...] I show the goal that must be set; I do not say that it can be reached. But I do say that he who comes nearest to it will have succeeded best*" (p.40).[7] As further illustration, the sequel *Émile et Sophie ou les Solitaires* (1778/1997), highlights the corruption and crushing play of social excess.

From these discussions I argue that the two treatises together can represent two of the states of nature as elicited in *Discourse on Inequality*: *Émile* as a conceptual state of innocence, gradually introduced at the last into society, and *Émile et Sophie* as a state of corruption, the characters degraded as they forget their very *natures*. Childhood therefore is more metaphor than reality in reconciling the human to a realised state of nature. *Child* is closest to the innocent state of nature, while childhood also displays a potential for reaching the actual possible states of humanity.

For the emphasis Rousseau places on the "dispensing of the facts", a large amount of the text is given to examples from "the accounts of travellers" (p.1480) that clearly compare the 'hypothetical' natural man (also referred to as savage) with the spatially distant but temporally synchronic 'savage'.

> *...he will have an extremely rudimentary sense of touch and taste, but the greatest subtlety in his senses of sight, hearing, and smell. Such*

[7]This is a telling paragraph on (Rousseau's own) general objections to implementing such an idealised course of education, for example, "but where will we put this child to raise him like a being without sensation and almost like an automaton, will we keep him on a moon's orb or on a *desert island*?" These "strong and solid" objections are answered with the quote in-text. These excerpts are from Rousseau, J.J. (1762/2010) *Émile, Or, On Education: Includes Émile and Sophie, Or, The Solitaries*, Eds. Kelly, C., & A. D. Bloom.

> *is the condition of animals generally, and, according to what travellers report, it is the same with the majority of savage people* (490-492 K.E).

While the use of savage is interchangeable throughout the Second Discourse, in his notes Rousseau makes clear the comparison between savage of the past and savage of present is entirely outside the realm of the European: "since these activities depend only on physical exercise and are not affected by any communication or any progress from one individual to another, *the first man could have been just as adept at them as his last descendants*" (p.1480 K.E. emphasis added). The first man's 'last descendants' refer to the present "barbaric and savage nations" (p.1480), and excludes the European (who Rousseau believes has lost any physical prowess) from humanity's ancestry, albeit 'hypothetical'. It was this temporal placing of primitive or early 'man' alongside the present but distant 'savage' that allowed a trajectory of humanity's progress and which child, imbricated in the savage connection and separated from the advanced state, was figured as embodying.

The discussion and analysis so far assists in building an argument on the utility of child as both metaphor and embodied representation of humanity's possibilities. Rousseau's use of nature and the natural states of man as stages of humankind illustrates the use of child as metaphor, and education as a site for a natural unfolding of humanity's potential. In this romantic metaphor, the conjectural state of child is close to a natural state but never as pure nature. Pure nature has no sociality, the key 'revolution' bringing about changes in social relations and esteem from others that Rousseau argues brings degradation. Although conjectural, Rousseau's child also embodied a developmental progression, the key to humankind's potential telos. Positioned in the thesis, the discussion illuminates connections of early social reform use of child to contemporary educational aims of reform that focus on early childhood as a key stage of human, and global, development.[8]

[8]I explore this further in chapter six as a set of convergences in discourse on development in early education reform.

3.2.2 Child, in Kantian time

The German Enlightenment philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724 - 1804) was also to draw on childhood in his work on human faculty and freedom. Kant's early works considered the nature of knowledge in terms of how we can know what we know, or the 'conditions for possibility' of knowledge. Kant's emphasis on how we can know moved beyond the search for the limits of knowledge, to the conditions for this possibility. What are the lenses people use to understand the world? In this section I draw upon the "great Kantian reversal" (Deleuze, 2008, p.vii) of time as a foundation for understanding a new sense of movement, change and development within merging philosophical and scientific discourses. With this foundation I then explore Kant's ideas that drew on childhood as a metaphor for the problem of human potential, as proposed in *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785/2002), What is Enlightenment? (1784/1991) the *Critiques* (CPR, 1781, 1787; CPrR, 1788; CJ, 1793)[9] and lectures on education, *Über Pädagogik* (1899/2003).

The three influences on the development of Kant's works also posed the problems he sought to reconcile: A Newtonian universe of causality, German Rationalism, and his own background of Pietism (Kellner & Lewis, 2007). This meant his key principles sat within contradictory spaces of Determinism, reason and morality. Causal Determinism holds that all events have antecedents, negating the possibility for 'free will'. Pietism stresses the individual's responsibility for their choices and behaviour. Kant's critical philosophy reflects this commitment to reconcile a conception of nature as a realm of causes, and a conception of morality as a realm of reason (Wood, 2001). Rousseau's argument for rights, dignity and freedom impressed on Kant to consider morality, as human freedom, at the heart of his critical philosophy (Wood, 2001). In constructing of an "architecture of the mind" (Kellner & Lewis, 2007, p.1) Kant not only explores the *how* in the struggle between the limits of constraint and freedom, it urges that we *must* as humans make this struggle if we are to prove ourselves as free beings.

[9] *CPR*- Critique of Pure Reason; *CPrR*- Critique of Practical Reason; *CJ*- Critique of Judgement.

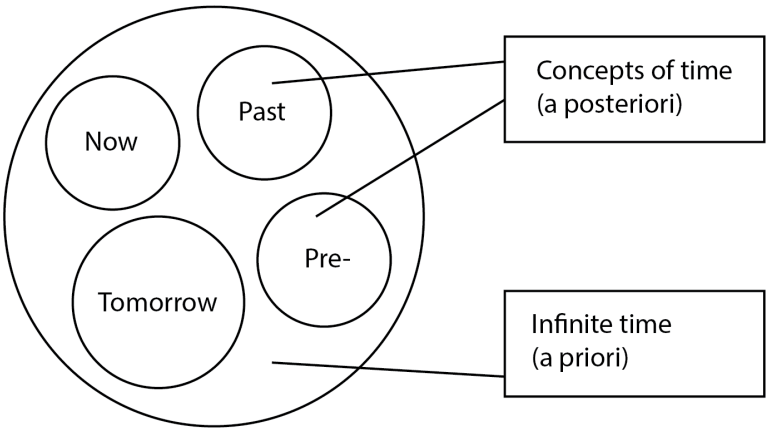
Time is essential to Kant's discussions of the mind's organisation of the world[10]. Pre-Kantian philosophy understood time as reliant on succession, activity and movement (Deleuze, 2008, p.vii). In *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781/2001) Kant's treatment of time overturned this reliance, giving the human mind control in the sense that conceptual representations where movement and succession is reliant on an a priori sense of time. A proposition is theorised as *a priori* if it can be 'known' without experience, where a proposition is *a posteriori* if it is knowable on the basis of experience. Kant argued that time, like space, must be an *a priori* intuition, "nothing but a subjective condition under which all intuitions take place within us" (1781/2001, p.51). It is a "pure form" of intuition; our many and varied *forms* of time are concepts: "different times are parts only of one and the same time" (p. 50). Kant is enabling two applications: the practical or 'general' sense and the *a priori* (see figure 3.1, below). In order to sense and describe something, we must already have set it in temporal and spatial relation to ourselves:

> *Time is the formal condition, a priori, of all phenomena whatsoever....and is so directly as a condition of internal phenomena (of our mind) and thereby indirectly of our external phenomena also. If I am able to say, a priori, that all phenomena are in space, and are determined, a priori, according to the relations of space, I can, according to the principles of the internal sense, make the general assertion that all phenomena, that is all objects of the senses, are in time, and stand necessarily in relations of time* (Kant 1781/2001, p.52).

All movement and change is in time. If we consider only external phenomena as they are, in Kant's general sense, without internal intuitions, then "time is nothing" (Kant 1781/2001, p.52). This second, practical use of time is used to understand themselves, in order to situate the self. The human use of time in the general practical aspect gives control of a practical sensibility of the world.

[10]The term the world is used literally here. Kant's critical philosophy sought to order not only the internal framing of knowledge but also the order of phenomena and the natural world as a priori. Both were applied to social and historical orders which influenced 'the world as we perceive it' translating to the world, in colonial discourse, as fact.

FIGURE 3.1: Relationship of representational (general) time to *a priori* time.



Source: Adapted from Kant, 1781

Time is a form of infinite and infinitely divisible presupposition. Because time is not an "empirical concept deduced from any experience" (1781/2001, p.49) it is not observable as itself and therefore, for Kant, taken out of the phenomenal world. Its 'thingness' is ultimately unknowable:

> *Time cannot be any determination of external phenomena. It refers neither to their shape, nor their position; on the contrary, it only determines the relation of representations in our internal state* (Kant, 1781/2001, p.51).

The qualities of intuition are inherent and are, in the a priori sense, universal. The everyday sense of time is dependent on the individual's manner of representations.

The routine or general concepts of time are used to explain our being-relations in the world: segmented, linear, cyclical or otherwise. These are always based on a foundation of intuitive time which is always there as "something real, that is, the real form of our internal intuition" (Kant 1781/2001, p. 51). The transcendental ideality of time is built into the way we perceive things:

> *And exactly because this internal intuition supplies no shape, we try to make good this deficiency by means of analogies, and represent to*

> *ourselves the succession of time by a line progressing to infinity, in which the manifold constitutes a series of one dimension only* (Kant, 1781/2001, p.51).

In suggesting the human requirement to make analogies for representation, Kant is recognising linear succession as a *concept*, an analogy rather than a real state of time. Time *conditions* movement and change, and the sense of development as a linear progression relies on the representation of time as succession, which is the second or general usage of time. Peers and Fleer (2014) note the slippage between an insistence on succession and linear time in the "psychological explanation of human consciousness" (p.917) and Kant's distinction between an analogy and *a priori* category.

The passages I have selected here amount to Kant's claim that the limits of knowledge are bounded by how we perceive the world, and that temporality conditions perception. Kant was influential in shifting the European understanding of subject-object positioning (Kellner & Lewis, 2007; Deleuze, 2008). In his discussion of time, the human is in control of the limits of knowledge, rather than passive subjection to the world. That is, the mind is actively representing the world. In setting foundations of time, space, *a priori*, *a posteriori* and phenomenon, and how these worked in the inner person, Kant is balancing the universal with the subjective. How our minds work to grasp the world, is also an important foundation for Kant's intrinsic belief in morality and the possibility of freedom. Kant's work shows he is clearly focused on universalism through natural laws, although his argument is balanced with a relative subjectivity. The discussion so far shows he is also suggesting the movement between the general and the a priori amounts to the relations of self. The actual experience of being is dependent on our manner of representations.

These discussions of Kantian time are important to how childhood would be perceived by considering concepts of change and motion which are predicated to intuitive time. Kant argues that these are only possible through the 'representation of time', in order for the understanding to grasp "the possibility of a change, that

is of a connection of contradictorily opposed predicates (for instance, the being and not-being of one and the same thing in one and the same place) in one and the same object" (Kant, 1781/2001, p.50-51). In this passage, Kant is referring to motion in relation to change, such as the passage of the sun across the sky. However, motion and change is also related to being and becoming. Kant asserts that only in time can the two determinations (the being and not-being of an object) be reconciled as "one after the other" (p.51). In a remarkable passage on the Kantian relationship of time, motion and Ego-I vacillation, Deleuze (2008) notes that:

> *...the form of time in general, which distinguishes between the act of the I, and the ego to which it is attributed: an infinite modulation... Thus time moves into the subject, in order to distinguish the Ego from the I in it. It is the form under which the I affects the ego, that is, the way in which the mind affects itself* (p.viii).

Deleuze is explaining Kant's proposition of change and movement from Ego, which is in time and thus 'constantly changing', and the act of the I which carries out a 'synthesis of time' (the incessant divisions of past, present, future). Deleuze adds that time as a "form of interiority means that time is not only interior to us, but that our interiority constantly divides us from ourselves... a splitting in two that never runs its course, since time has no end. A giddiness, an oscillation which constitutes time" (p.viii). What is important here is that, given the assertion of a priori time as universal, and our concepts of time as a work of the mind, then the idea of childhood and the developmental, linear process as *universal* collapses. For my argument, the idea of development through the imperial application was more useful as universal because it supported the colonial processes of exclusion and paternalism.

Kant's argument on the foundations of knowledge has provided much of contemporary western perception of development and progress (Wood, 2001). The discussion so far highlights that knowledge is predicated on perception, suggesting a relativism towards knowledge systems, given the role of experience in structuring conceptual representations. Yet the legacies of Kantian universalism and order

have made most impact over three hundred years of discourse on knowledge, hierarchy, and the human relationship with the world. Contemporary critique has questioned the over-reliance on linear views which have fed a perception of universal development through a "normative pathological continuum" (Castaneda, 2002, p.29) at the cost of silence given to non-linear emphasis in ways of being and knowing (Burman, 2010). The collision of the local and global in development discourse make the distinction of different assumptions of childhood starker in the wake of its impact.

Kant's emphasis on morality connected Rousseau's macro-political ideas of human freedom to the individual's responsibility to find freedom in autonomous reconciliation to universal laws. It is interesting to note, however, that in discussing the role of an education "which will develop all man's natural gifts" (1899/2003, p.9), Kant recognises that as a generational process, the individual's attainment "to the object of his being" (p.9) is impossible. To succeed in "attaining their destiny", requires the work "of the whole human race" (p.10). Thus, education and childhood are for Kant metaphors for the ideals of progress and potential in reaching the realm of ends. I now turn to examine Kant's use of childhood in the notes on pedagogy on which he lectured later in life. Kant further developed Rousseau's idea of the child representing a state closely aligned with nature, although the emphasis is on immaturity rather than innocence. Where Rousseau saw the differences between 'natural man' in a pure state and the child born into society, Kant asked 'where do we take our stand?' in development of human talents. That is, at what stage does humankind begin civilising? Following Rousseau, he concludes education cannot begin in a "state of rudeness" (1899/2003, p.12). Deleuze (2008) points out Kant's view of development as history realising a goal of freedom and good sovereign asserts "an original synthetic activity" of the human, which leads gradually toward the goal of the human 'species'. Therefore, rather than a natural progression,

> *History is this accomplishment, and thus it must not be confused with a simple development of nature* (Deleuze 2008, p.62 original emphasis).

It is the *concept* of freedom (as a work of the sensible realm) which implies the work of the human towards its possibility, rather than the work of nature. Thus although freedom is in the conceptual realm, history as development is an ongoing work of freedom.

Kant (1784/1991; 1899/2003) argued the use of reason separated humans from the animal world: "some other reason has provided them with instinct" (1899/2003, p.2). For humans, developing natural gifts requires an art to cultivate the "many germs lying undeveloped" (p.11) and which must be directed to the good through education: "Man's duty is to improve himself; to cultivate his mind; and when he finds himself going astray, to bring the moral law to bear upon himself" (p.11). Kant's purpose was to study the human mind "in parts", and "grasp correctly the idea of the whole, and from thence to get a view of all those parts as mutually related by the aid of pure reason" (1788/2004, p.9). It is reason, and the activity of judgement, that will enable humans to escape self-incurred immaturity: moral autonomy offers the path to the realm of humanity's potential. In *Critique of Practical Reason*, civil inequalities kept certain groups of humans from utilising their full capacities, and those that did, through "laziness and cowardice" rarely made use of it (Kant 1788/2004, p.1). He employs images of domesticated beasts to illustrate humankind's drudgery, and child in explaining immaturity and potential. Kant used the terms "restraint" and "support" in critique of child rearing instruments common to his day:

> *Now this danger is in fact not so great, for by a few falls they would eventually learn to walk; but an example of this kind makes them timid and usually frightens them from any further attempt...Thus it is difficult for any single individual to extricate himself from the minority that has become almost nature to him* (Kant 1788/2004, p.36).

There must be an allowance for the child's 'own efforts' to gain a sense of self as agent: a sense of control, efficacy, and the limitations of one's own actions. Kant argues that for the young child, actions are reliant less on reason and more on

needs of development. These are necessary for the experience of self-direction and taking ownership for actions:

> *The more artificial tools we use, the more do we become dependent on instruments...Generally speaking, it would be better if fewer instruments were used, and children were allowed to learn more things by themselves. They would then learn them more thoroughly* (1899/2003, p.42).

Understood as examples of constraints on children, and taken alongside his discussions on education, there appears to be support for learning that is child-centred and which allows the child to think and act as much as is possible. This appears to be illustrating a view that children have agency very early on, but that it is different from the moral agency of the mature adult.

Kant's discussions of immaturity emphasise abilities and dependence. Kant's idea of immaturity for adults has two levels: one, immaturity is self-incurred if its cause is not lack of understanding, but lack of resolution; and two, immaturity also describes dependence or tutelage (in Kant's context, child, labourer, servant, female). There is opportunity to move out of an enforced tutelage (such as the male child). This highlights the importance of education as metaphor to Kant's critique: within it lies the opportunity to realise progression of humanity, for the individual to "seek to bring posterity nearer to a state of perfection than they themselves have attained" (Kant, 1899/2003, p.18). In answering the question, *What is Enlightenment?* (1784/1991), Kant argues it is the courage for self-thinking and escape from "self-incurred immaturity". The urging of *Sapere Aude!* (1784/1991, p.1) was addressed to those with recourse to political, civic and personal autonomy. Child in this sense assumes the classical definition of *one who cannot speak*. Childhood for Kant assumes his use of immaturity. Kant urges people to "have courage to use your own understanding!" *Über Pädagogik* must be taken alongside Kant's critiques of reason, morality and human ends. Accordingly, education for is, for Kant, an important ideal as the development of a becoming-subject as an active citizen (Kant, 1899/2003).

As was beginning to be popular in the European imaginary of the global, Kant, like Rousseau, made use of the idea of inhabitants of the 'utter ends of the earth' as examples of global states of development, going so far as constructing a racialized order of human biological and social differences (Kant, 1777/2013). Natural order, time and the geospatial imaginary of colonial worlds entwined across the eighteenth century underpinned the temporal distancing (Gamble & Kruszinski, 2009) and recapitulation in the nineteenth century. These intersections found further use in the disturbance created by evolutionary theories and its application of child as evolving organism and as history. The body understood in its embryological stages offered secrets to the mind and human variance in behaviour.

3.3 Measuring childhood

By the nineteenth century, ideas of universal laws and natural states were well entwined with colonial, imperial and institutional expansion. As Rousseau had sought a conceptual state of nature in his emphasis on natural order, Kant sought order in the faculties, grounding his work by setting aside time as a priori: releasing the need to historicise, thus allowing a universal picture of development. Development as stages also played out in the body-stage of the child. It was this utility of the body- in its potential for variation and subordination to control- that became important to the scientific framework for development. In this section I examine the ways in which new modalities of power emerged with the child-figure as central. I first find linkages within the temporal distancing and baby biographies across the late eighteenth to nineteenth century Europe and the salience of the child as evidence for evolutionary development. This is followed with an exploration of methods, instruments and measurement of the actual child-body to examine the attachment of physiology, psychology to anthropology and evolution as a necessity for 'correct' development.

3.3.1 Infant, savage, primitive: child, differentiated

The concept of time was again disturbed in the nineteenth century with an archaeological find which was small in physical size but large in repercussion. I have selected the archaeological find as an example of the convergence of time, natural order, spatiotemporal analogies and scientific rationalisation in the nineteenth century. The find was in the shape of a biface stone tool in Amiens, France. In 1859, John Evans and Joseph Prestwich found the biface *in situ* in the face of an embankment, at ten metres depth and amongst fossilised remains of extinct animal. The find exhibited the four criteria needed for conclusive proof: the stone tool was "the work of man", in "undisturbed ground", amongst "extinct Mammalia" and of a "late geological period" (Prestwich 1859 in Gamble & Kruszinski, 2009, p.465). The *evidence* of human activity lay well before hitherto-known human history, shifting the monopoly on the origins of humans held by religion. A stone tool could be subjected to a rational appreciation, including new methods of dating stone artefacts. The sense of time and human history was shifting literally beyond imagination-and also being positioned in stone, a statement of pre-history and the primitive. In absentia, rational investigation of the stone's original user was not possible- imagining was, Shyrock, Tautmann and Gamble (2011) argue, an easy exercise for the colonial world. The chasm of 'deep time' which the biface established was quickly filled with stories of savages and 'stages of mankind' such as portrayed by Herbert Spencer. This was a confluence of archaeology, geology, ethnography, and biology laced with evolutionary theory. Ideas of natural hierarchy, selection and subject peoples on 'distant shores' (Darwin, 1839) could extend to the remote depths of the earth, merging ideas of time and geospatial distances. In the same year of the discovery of the biface at Amiens, the publication of Charles Darwin's *On the Origins of Species* (1859/1909) was to have as much impact on evolutionary thinking.

Temporal distancing describes a method of representing present global social order through the imagined past of the primitive human (Gamble & Kruszinski, 2009). The hierarchical imperial world, in particular the eighteenth and nineteenth century, was "filled with primitives, colonials, stagnant civilisations, and subject races" (Shryock, Tautmann & Gamble, 2011, p.31) found at the 'distant ends' of the earth. Human history was increasingly explored by a secular perspective. The evolutionary thinking that sought and found evidence of humans as existing in prior forms required shifts in the "sense of distance and differentiation" (p.23). The nineteenth century notion of evolutionary development across time envisioned prior as 'primitive'. When evidence of 'deep time' surfaced, such early human activity was outside of history: pre-historic. Childhood, whether as the primitive or the present 'savage' state, was placed as pre, prior and proto form of its potential developed adulthood.

The use of embryonic development and evolutionary theory selection in spatiotemporal analogies became visible in the emergence of infant biographies across the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Infant biographies contained empirical descriptions connecting to popular theory of the time. The emergence in child science has also been traced to the early infant biographies undertaken by Tiedemann and Pestalozzi in the late eighteenth century (Wong, 2004). In many cases the biographer was a linguist or psychologist parent, seeking the genesis of developmental faculties. This use of 'development' draws on its associated meanings of growth, evolution, progress, maturation, as well as its dichotomies of 'undeveloped' and 'underdeveloped.' These highlight beliefs of hierarchy in nature and a developmental order which holds the potential of 'others' to advance into existence. Spencer explicitly connected the primitive to the child's development in his *Comparative Psychology of Man* (1876), *Principles of Sociology* (1876-1896) and in journals such as *Popular Science Monthly* (1875). Cognitive capacities as mental development considered in a binding of physiology, psychology and evolution theory. Spencer's reference to 'savage' or 'primitive' was interchangeable as ancient human or geographically distant Other:

> *...the saying that the savage has the mind of a child with the passions*

> *of a man (or rather, has adult passion which act in a childish manner) possesses a deeper meaning than appears. There is a relationship between the two natures such that, allowing for differences of kind and degree in the emotions, we may regard the co-ordination of them in the child as analogous to the co-ordination in the primitive man* (Spencer 1875, p.336).

Infant biographies serve to illustrate the child emerging as object of scientific investigation at a time of evolutionary theories of development and change. Charles Darwin's *Biographical Sketch of an Infant* (1877) was published as reflections on notes of observation taken thirty years earlier. Based on observance of his son, Darwin's is an example of figuring the child as reflecting the development of humanity as a race, and positing the undeveloped state as both early man, and present but spatially distant 'savage'. For example, on the subject of fear, Darwin uses the example of a visit to the zoo, received enthusiastically by his son, except for the "beasts in houses" (1877, p.288). Reflecting back on this scene, Darwin notes that nothing could "account for this fear":

> *May we not suspect that the vague but very real fears of children, which are quite independent of experience, are the inherited effects of real dangers and abject superstitions during ancient savage times?* (Darwin, 1877, p.288).

In the child, science found 'evidence' of a global order and hierarchy in the natural development of species, however, the child body-mind was now also a figure which held physiological characteristics in tune with species development. Darwin's *Biographical Sketch of an Infant* (1877) was published in *Mind* in response to an excerpt from Hippolyte Taine's infant diary, *Acquisition of Language by Children* (1877). Linguists produced a large body of biographical accounts as they searched for the beginnings of speech. Taine employs temporal distancing in positioning child, an idea among popular discourse in the Victorian imaginary of time and nature, conquest and hierarchy:

> *...the child presents in a passing state the mental characteristics that are found in a fixed state in primitive civilisations, very much as the human embryo presents in a passing state the physical characteristics that are found in a fixed state in the classes of inferior animals* (p. 259).

Embryonic development, championed by Spencer, describes the process of change from simple to complex forms through differentiation. The process, repeated continuously and simultaneously over time finally produces the "complex combination...constituting the adult" (Spencer 1875/2010, p.3). Physiological changes, including physiognomic attributions, were interwoven with evolution theory in Spencerian terms as a 'law of progress' describing social and collective history. Spencer argued for a universal theory of progress describing "the history of all organisms whatever" (Spencer 1875/2010, p.3).

The short editorial accompanying Taine's record provides a nod to an emerging science of the child with the note that the "psychological value of this one is very evident" (Taine 1877, p.252). In the eighteenth century Johann Pestalozzi (1774) and Dietrich Tiedemann (1787) captured the changes in their own infants' growth and expression, emphasising respectively their sons' active engagement with their environment. The difference between the earlier two diaries and late nineteenth century biographies also illustrates the values which underpinned their reception. Pestalozzi and Tiedemann were situated in the enlightenment, fuelled by the values of freedom and family encouraged by Rousseau. However, their observations bridged a change in methods from conjectural to empirical evidence by recording observation from actual children. Darwin's recourse to temporal distancing drew on his own theories of origins and published notes from his travels to distant shores (1839/2003) supported the Victorian notion that travelling in distance equated with travelling in time. Through infant biographies, the child could be depicted as exemplar of 'human' through which an unfolding of humanity's development is told (Castañeda, 2002). As biographer's made notes, they also considered where the child could be located in the stages of mankind.

Castañeda (2002) explores this theorising of the child as invoking a colonial world order of human history and hierarchy which involves "placing chronologically contemporary and spatially distant peoples across a temporal trajectory" (p.13). This places humanity across the globe in a progressively ordered historical moment in time. Spatially distant, the 'humble creature' known as 'savage' of the present was configured as the state of the pre-historic adult. The 'undeveloped' state of the child could explain 'in situ' more about human origins but also the variations of differentiation as applied to 'stages' of culture. The intersections of evolution, physiology, spatio-temporality and direct observation I have described follows Castañeda's observation that the child-body became a "theatre where human history could be observed to unfold in the compressed time-span of individual development" (p.13). I argue it has also been the knowledge system of time as linear, and of natural laws and states, which allowed the imaginary of the temporally-invisible and spatially-distant Other to become positioned at various 'stages' of development.

The number of infant biographies across the nineteenth century produced a growing source of information about the changing mental state of infants and young children. The biographers' positions as linguists, psychologists and biologists gave access to journals such as *Mind* with a variety of readership, popularising a 'scientific' developmental framing of the child. Many psychologists, such as Preyer (1882), utilised the family and home for observation- a practice which Brian (2011) notes raised concerns for scientific procedure. Rising to peer scrutiny, observation began to be more systematic to fit scientific rigour, while it also helped to develop them (Rose, 2011; Brian, 2011). The trend was mirrored across continents. In the United States, founding member of the American Psychological Association G. Stanley Hall, (1844-1924) implemented multiple questionnaires about children's behaviour in the 'natural' settings of the home and nurseries. According to Brian (2011), Hall himself published a baby diary in the late 1800s, adding to the deluge of publications on child behaviour and development. Dennis (1936) in *Child Development* lists a bibliography of sixty-one biographies in the linguistic area alone, from Tiedemann's (1787) to Tramer in 1934. The proliferation of the practice

flourished for child psychology, allowing a "broad dissemination of baby science" (Brian, 2011, p.415) from Goltz (1847) and Preyer (1882) in Germany, Compayré (1893) in France, Darwin (1877), to Sayce (1889) in Arabic.

The amassing of information and the methods developing to gather it were enabling publications focusing on the deviations of normality. Psychology drew on physiological knowledge in emphasising differentiation. James Sully's *Pessimism* (1877) discusses the 'nature of progress' as well as individualism, abnormal and normal psychosis. His *Teacher's Handbook of Psychology* (1887) was based upon his earlier *Outlines of Psychology*. Sully's aim was to expand the practical applications of psychology to the field of education, fulfilling the 'increasingly felt want among teachers' to apply the principles in their work "of training and developing the minds of the young" (Sully, 1887, foreword). As Grote Professor of the Philosophy of Mind and Logic at The University College, London, Sully had his Studies of Childhood (1895) volumes I-XIV published almost monthly across two years from 1894-1896 in *Popular Science Monthly*. Again in 1895 Sully discussed these as "The new study of children" (1895b). The state of the child as posing potential historical as well as biological utility are exemplified in Sully's Introduction to *Studies*:

> *The most obvious source of interest in the doings of infancy lies in its primitiveness. At the cradle we are watching the beginnings of things, the first tentative thrustings forward into life. Our modern science is before all things historical and genetic, going back to beginnings so as to understand the later and more complex phases of things as the outcome of these beginnings. The same kind of curiosity which prompts the geologist to get back to the first stages in the building up of the planet, or the biologist to search out the pristine forms of life, is beginning to urge the student of man to discover by a careful study of infancy the way in which human life begins to take its characteristic forms* (Sully, 1895, p.4).

Sully was perceptive in suggesting the focus of modern science was before "things

historical and genetic". The idea of pre-history had revolutionised scientific view of the social world. "The first stages in building up of the planet", "pristine forms of life and the "primitiveness" of the infant were of use to understand the "later and more complex phases of things" of human life. By connecting the geological timeline of the planet to human lifespans, Sully demonstrated the biological and geological spatio-temporal nature of development set before the burgeoning child sciences. Gathering data on the child followed the imaginary of scientific explorers, raising popular knowledge about the child-body to the realm of 'scientific facts'. There could be little doubt of the emergence of childhood as a scientific interest and the specificity of childhood as developmental phase, organic or historical.

3.3.2 The child, as fact

Sully's contemporary Gabriel Compayré (1905) records in *History of Pedagogy*, the shift to working closely on or with the child, clinically and across all realms of children's lives, enabled collection of data with which "we leave the region of theories and enter the domain of facts" (1905, p. 501). In this section my focus is the latter part of the nineteenth century's use of child body-mind in increasing intervention by psyche-sciences. The scientific gaze on the body and its function- the problem of child as humanity's potential or degradation- was now also a problem of physiological function and psychological formation. The latter nineteenth century saw two steps in the shift in terms of theorising childhood. Researchers began working 'with' children, as objects or "co-labourers" (Pape-Carpantier, 1867 in Rose, 2011, p.372), generating recognition of the child as individualised and development as normative through differences across data. The discussion contributes to the chapter's focus on discourse and practices contributing to a contemporary use of childhood and implications for being and potential in early childhood education. In particular, it critiques the nineteenth century practices in psychological and medico-pedagogical methods and instruments, and the intersection with philosophical use of *child*.

The latter part of the nineteenth century was to usher in a turn towards understanding the 'beginnings of things' by measurement. In Europe, *la science de l'enfant*[11] used interdisciplinary approach to collect data about the child body-mind. Emerging child sciences were underscored with a range of aims. Children's personality could be harnessed through a clinical, systematic process of observation. Children's potential could be ascertained to create a better social order, if not an intellectual elite. The objective was knowledge of the development of children's faculties, but also the advancement of such knowledge to the scientific field.

In nineteenth century France, Italy, Belgium and Switzerland particularly, a combination of laboratory and social research on children emerged from the role of infant asylums and efforts of social reform.[12] Paedology is a useful example of the intersection in methods, measurement and discourse. Paedology was an early offshoot of the medico-pedagogical movement, taking root in the mid nineteenth century. In Belgium, Józefa Joteyko (1866-1929) encouraged cross-disciplinary methods in child-focused research. The activities and partnerships of scientific research in the nineteenth century were a striking phenomenon (Löwy, 2005; Rose, 2011; Gamble & Kruszinski, 2009). An advocate of physiological studies, Joteyko proposed that paedology was a mixture of "experimental study, investigation of fact, either induced or observed, but in both cases fully controlled. It is thus a true Science" (Joteyko, in Löwy 2005, p.156). Paedology aimed at precise measurement of children's intellectual 'potential' and included methods and instruments from established sciences which made for a comprehensive, if alarming, list, some of which I include from Löwy's extensive list:

[11] Also in use in the nineteenth century were scienza dell'infanzia (Montessori and De Sanctis), *paidology*, *medico-pédagogique*, *science des enfants*, *scienza della fanciullezza*, among others, indicating their scientific bent. Each of these refer to studies on infants and young people. Rose (2011) notes the term may have been first used as 'la science de l'enfant' in the eighteenth century by education reformer Johann Pestalozzi and philosopher Thierry Tiedemann.

[12] I focus on these countries as Paedology is rarely discussed in historical studies of ECEC in English-language texts. My intention is to note the convergences and divergence which highlight the medico-pedagogical and psychology's aims and methods which came to claim child and childhood.

> *...anthropomorphic measures (Broca's compass, cephalometer, pelvimeter), for the graphic method (chronograph, kymograph, polygraph), for studies of respiration and circulation (Marey's pneumograph, plethysmograph, sphyngomyograph, Verdin's spirometer), for studies of movements (dynamometer, ergograph, Marey's myograph), and for studies of skin sensations (Cheron's algesimeter, esthesiometer, Richardson's pulverisator), as well as material to test acoustic, gustative, olfactory, and visual sensations* (Löwy, 2005, p.157).

These results could then be applied to education and the optimisation of 'natural' potential. The methods and instruments of measurement from pathology, physiology, anthropology and sociology were involved in public health and hygiene. Joteyko emphasised society's progress to its potential: "the mediocrity that strangles us" (1908 in Löwy, 2005, p.160) could improve with scientific testing to specify the 'natural potential' within a child and provide a better match of education. Thus intellectual elitism could be advanced with biological determinism.

Much of the rise of child sciences, and its role in education, was influenced by ideas of reform in public health and hygiene. In France, educational reformer Marie Pape-Carpantier (1815–1878) wrote that a scientific pedagogy was needed for saving the child and society. The reformer viewed the intersection of physiology, psychology and pedagogy as a necessary development. In the nineteenth century, social and educational reformers were opening institutions which could shape upright citizens and society (Rose, 2011). Education was considered the prime space for understanding and intervention for positive development. Pape-Carpantier encouraged methods of sustained observation and clinical analysis in a variety of contexts. In the late nineteenth century, psychiatry, previously an aspect of medicine, was forging itself as a specialisation of medical science (Foucault, 1978). Pape-Carpantier sought to introduce psychology's 'facts' of intelligence development to pedagogy: only then would instruction be more responsive. *Lecon de choses* (object lessons) draw on progressive ideas of education methods of Pestalozzi and Rousseau. Rose (2011) suggests that most important to Pape-Carpantier was the active learning of the child as "an intelligent co-laborer" as "active as the teacher"

(1867, in Rose, 2011, p.372). Like Rousseau, Pape-Carpantier viewed the child as capable of driving their own learning when stimulated by degrees according to their perceived development:

> *It depends on a great and yet little known law, that there are no patients in education, that the pupil must have agency, as much as the teacher, that the pupil be the teacher's collaborator in the lessons* (Pape-Carpantier, cited in Sachs, 2007, p. 81).

I would argue that reformers of the time believed that without their medico-pedagogical intervention the evolving of the mind would be seriously compromised. Rousseau's theory of associating the spontaneous, or natural, powers particular to the individual child with careful guidance was a thread through the early days of infant education. The observation in *Émile* that "we do not know childhood" (1762, p. xlii), accompanied by suggestions to "begin by better studying your pupil, for surely you do not know them at all" (p.xlii) perhaps spurned the changes the nineteenth century, given the popularity and influence of the treatise. The gradual convergence of physiology, psychology, anthropology towards medico-pedagogical methods and intervention took knowledge of the child from metaphor to embodiment of development.

In Italy, child psychology integrated psychological, anthropological and physiological methods, including gathering data from infant biographies. Italian child psychologists Sante De Sanctis (1862-1932) and Maria Montessori (1870-1952) founded the *Associazione Romana per la cura medico-pedagogica dei fanciulli anormali* in 1898 (Rose, 2011). The institution's objective was to encourage specialists to study more closely a child's personality, thus enabling a more individual intervention plan. Direct observation was the principle method, across contexts, but encouraged experimental methods or analysis such as semiotics in order to know the child's 'personal powers'. The purposes of these *scienza dell'infanzia* were to employ the agency of the child to distinguish deficiencies from disorders, and in doing so, develop the knowledge of the physician, educator or parent. The child was viewed as active in this process, and both Montessori and De Sanctis

questioned many medical diagnoses of 'deficiencies'. This conforms to Foucault's (1984) observation of the nineteenth century trend of psychology to secure its own domain, by questioning medical application of its own knowledge. The natural development of children was no longer perceived as a trustworthy process on its own. Instead, the *correct environment* and training would correct the child's development.

Perhaps nowhere else is the division of childhood as pronounced and purposeful as in educational institutions. The discussions so far highlight that the emergences of psychology as a child science, and child's identification in education as early, middle and later were intrinsic to each other. The highly celebrated entrance to 'real childhood' is the gateway transitioning to school-child. This division of childhood owes its construction to the various disciplines which emerged through colonial spatio-temporal imaginary, theories of order and development, normative values, and the 'facts' offered by child sciences. In other words, the discussion on both secondary literature and scientific texts so far amount to different uses and constructs in a *cumulative relationship*.

Observation in clinical and natural settings influenced cross-disciplinary assistance from teachers, psychiatrists, medics, as well as parents, to gather the data necessary for correction. Neither Pape-Carpantier nor Joteyko are included in popular lists of theorists of education. Yet their drive for raising knowledge about the child's development to an evidenced-based science is an example of the shift towards working 'with' or on the child in gathering knowledge of developmental progress. The various disciplines and their tools discussed in this chapter contributed to the production of grand narratives with which European society understood itself and others in different ways; and as society began to prove the limits of its determinable existence and that of others. Perhaps this is the meaning behind the change from 'the region of theories' to 'the domain of facts'. Development, whether figured as 'child' or 'human', was no longer as much natural as "achieved through intervention" (Rose, 2011, p.377).

3.4 Childhood's value

The discussion so far can amount to claims of a convergence of discourses in which philosophical theories from romantic and rational models across the Enlightenment heightened interest in childhood in connection with education as a 'condition of possibility' for knowledge and progress. This increasing interest aligned with a turn to actual observation of children as exploration of developing faculties. The diarising of infant biographers assisted the intersecting of physiological and psychological practices in the nineteenth century and turn of century; and the knowledge each of these offered to colonial discourse of order. Colonial discourse of order refers to the manner in which colonial administration and practices appropriated philosophical and scientific debate on natural and universal laws and racialized 'stages of mankind' to subjugate. The visibility of education as a condition for drawing out potential is woven throughout each of these. Each of these are of course, adult discourses and adult purposes. The child body-mind, and 'child' as category, always already presents as incomplete but also in a functionality which "lies in the details of its material-semiotic figuration" (Castaneda, 2002, p.45).

The flows in this chapter present currents which position childhood as problem and child as origin. The first current flows from an Aristotelian view of human telos and nature in which all things can be considered as a natural state, its true nature, only as manifested in its completeness. Theorised as the journey to enlightened, or at least civilised states, childhood stood as a problem for addressing models of reason. Converging on childhood as *problem* for models of reason was the emergence of new disciplines vying for a scientific status. This view of *the problem of potential* –how to fully realise one's true end- could be theorised, and scientific inquiry was recognised as the reliable method in addressing problems.

This brief discussion of nineteenth century medico-pedagogical formations highlights a fusing of psychology with education and its mode of power for knowing the individual. *La science de l'enfant* and paedology's physiological and psychological

methods of measurement, observation, laboratory and *in situ* testing assisted a scientific status (Löwy, 2005; Rose, 2011). Foucault's ideas of modalities of power are useful in considering child's utility at this point of the discussion. While the child body-mind offered a "field of knowledge to be conquered", Foucault observed that the focus on the individual and groups to psychology was more a concern with a new "modality of power to be secured and justified" (1978, p.6). Public health and hygiene intersected with degeneracy and education. Thus psyche-science offered explanations as knowledge and, in alliance with education, methods of control and management. Within this emphasis the child body-mind offers the secrets to origins of disorder but also opportunities for potential both immanent and possible. The technologies of the late twentieth century were yet to arrive for the rational objectification of the child-brain.

There are three themes that I draw from the discussion and critique each highlighting the utility of child and childhood in their conceptual state. The first is that childhood presents as teleological problem, separated from the ideal end state of its 'perfectly formed' adulthood. In its 'undeveloped' state, both child and the state of childhood is an argumentative tool for models of reason and progress in which humanity must work towards its potential. The second is the attachment of psyche-sciences to the usefulness of the body-mind in discourses of development. The utility of child as origin of possibility and differentiation offered a claim on science and an emergence of a modality of power: science hybridisation required competition for recognition and status, an activity in which the child, as object of development became indispensable. Inspired by problems of human freedom and potential, child also came to be seen as the catalyst for social reform and public health. The third theme, I would argue, runs an undercurrent through other discourses. Through periods of imperial expansion and invasion, childhood as a pre or proto form in human telos not only informed but continues to demonstrate a colonial imaginary of global order. In particular, the discussion I have highlighted on Spencerian and Darwinian development, as suggested by baby biographers, attests to the linkages of global order and categorisation, hierarchies and order, and physiological development able to be presented in the child-figure, and visible in

contemporary assumptions of 'undeveloped' global regions. The temporal distancing interwoven in scientific and philosophical discourses used an embryonic model for development. The child body, mind, language and logic offers doorways to refinement on a physical, psychological and global scale. These themes are taken to critique in detail in the penultimate chapter of the thesis.

The category 'child' is not yet the thing it has the capacity to become. This is both potential and problem. By definition and assumption, child as potential offers itself as a possibility that returns to it as problem. The idea of utility is a thread across political and metaphorical imagination, across enlightenment to contemporary neoliberal discourse. The salience of this is with the continued inequalities which exist in the contradictions of teaching with the manifold nature of children's existences. Given the knowledge bases of various child theories, the universal normative child as fact is not easily shifted. The colonising nature of this on children's minds and bodies further illustrates the manner in which "bodies have always been discontinuous sites where fierce battles between colonizer and colonized are waged" (Shinn, 2008, p.161). The child's utility is in the production of a vast range of differentiation for these discourses of development.

3.5 Conclusion

Throughout my discussion I have attempted to draw the links between Enlightenment discourse of knowledge and human freedom, the colonial paradigm of development, physiological and psychological change, and the construction of a child-figure theatre on which multiple narratives play out. The relations at work in this construction belong to vast webs of connection, institutions and their techniques of surveillance and normalisation.[13] The individual child body-mind develops in this view towards the attainment of an adulthood which displays all the signs of success, competitiveness and advantage, performing the goals of a collective humanity. Conjectures on the nature of time, and nature itself, have had long trajectories

[13]These connections are analysed in more detail in chapters five and six.

and varied divergences contingent upon the philosophies and activities of society. The child's embodiment of progress or aberrance, potential or problem is intertwined with categorisation of peoples and groups according to racial, cultural and gendered lines. The problem presented by childhood became sciences objective, relating macro-political discourse to the individualised, hyper and hypo states of the child. *Child* continues to be idealised and utilised through an imaginary in which "humanity sees its immediate past but also contemplates the immortality of its immanent future" (Jenks, 2005, p.5-6).

In this chapter I have examined and critiqued ways in which child has come to be constituted through an accumulative multiple convergence and divergent purposes. With this landscape traversed, the following chapter takes the reader into landscapes with very different co-ordinates in terms of their orientations towards the human. Together, these two knowledge streams situate my research across disparate theoretical perspectives but which engages with the need for critical ontology of ECEC. Following this the reader is taken into local and global sites of knowledge to delve into the conditions offered for the possibility for knowledge and existence.

Chapter 4

Freedom and subjectivity in contemporary critical ontology

> *One of the greatest problems of education is how to combine subjection to legitimate constraint with one's facility to exercise freedom- for constraint is necessary. How do I cultivate freedom when there is constraint?* (Kant, 1899/2003, p.27)

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter I turn to contemporary critical perspectives that challenge humanist ideas of being, subject, and agency. I explore a stream of perspectives with enlightenment critique as its source, but with attitudes dismissive of the constraints created by Kantian legacies. They are useful for the thesis's decolonising aims precisely because the disruptions generated are within imperial traditions; yet in shaking the foundations of knowledge they have generated new ways of decolonising their own traditions and common-sense configurations.

In order to achieve this aim, the chapter is structured around the following questions: What can contemporary challenges to structure and the nature of being offer for rethinking assumptions of existence and potential in early childhood?

How do they offer a 'constitution of the self', and what might constitute the manifestations of agency, if at all? Given the manifold nature of these concepts, the focus on a small number of thinkers is also the chapter's limitations. I recognise the implausibility of a complete grasp of the wide-ranging fields of study which deal with these topics. There is also the growing body of empirical work exploring children's responses and complex social cultures in early childhood settings (see Ebrahim, 2011; Skattebol, 2003, 2006) lightly touched upon here. As across the thesis, the focus and critique is on the discourses and their implications rather than children themselves.

In this chapter I explore challenges to dominating forces shaping who we can be and who we ought to be. These analyses of self-relations are posited in waters of a different nature: rapid, dynamic, with eddies and flows negotiating suggestions of the slippery 'subject'. I draw out the debates on the self, subjectivity, discursive action, power and freedoms from the critical 'postfoundational' thought[1] of Michel Foucault (1977, 2000, 2010) and Judith Butler (1997, 2009), Gilles Deleuze (1995, 2008) and Bronwyn Davies (1990, 1991, 2006). Each offers ideas about being in ways that reject and rethink colonising forces in the search for alternative modalities of existence. For example, Foucault (2000c) asserts the question of critical thought is not to reject reason but, in asking "*What* is this Reason that we use", we might find its limits and its dangers, to "show how ambiguous things are" (p.358 emphasis in original). In doing so, the nature of our limit-transgressions might expand. The purpose in my selection of transgression-seeking perspectives is to highlight assumptions about who 'we' are. For example, the child's bodily and metaphorical configuration continues to be of specific and generous utility to multiple sectors of society. The differentiations and individuation that the body-mind-brain offers, the emblematic suggestion of undeveloped statehood, present

[1]Often grouped under the term postmodern, poststructural, posthumanist or postfoundational, I do not wish to contain these particular thinkers in 'isms'. One of the key points in critical thought is to challenge the power created by the very idea and processes of grouping and 'isms'.

problems of developmental potential. Each of these is a statement of being, alongside certainties and struggles of knowledge. Multiple expressions of 'child', 'childhood' and 'human' offer theoretical positions for the colonisation of the 'undeveloped' at local and global levels. How can discourses of "the True and the False" (Foucault 1979, p.448) be disrupted in ways that agitate the taken-for-granted claims to the 'fact' of child and its ubiquitous potentiality?

The argument is structured around issues which I came to see as a common thread: freedom, subjectivities and discourse. Discussion is presented in two parts. The first contains a brief elaboration on the freedom-constraint relationship as described by Immanuel Kant (1899/2003; 1785/2002), in order to highlight thinking on the concept of freedom as work of the human (Deleuze, 2008). The greater part of my focus however is on contemporary European critical ontology. Part two therefore examines perspectives on the relationship between subjectivity, discourse and freedom which turn to the destabilising of structure and subject. Here I draw on the idea of diffuse forms of power (Foucault, 1972, 1977, 1997, 2010) in relation to freedom's 'subject' and subjectivity. Suggesting digressions and connections with Butler (1997) and Deleuze (1995) along with Felix Guattari (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987), I then explore the concept of subjectivity and the role of discourse and discursive action. Emerging from the critique is the underlying notion of potentiality and the discourses perceived as available to subjects in self-relations and the reworking of self. Finally, I discuss undercurrents in the arguments and draw out their implications for rethinking constraints on potential.

4.2 Freedom and constraint

As discussed in the previous chapter, the consequence of Kantian ideas within later liberal humanist thought was a framing of the world which was fundamentally discriminatory. Ideas of rationality, in combination with political and economic ideology led to "elitist, colonialist, and patriarchal ideologies" (Kellner & Lewis

2008, p.3), in which the European imaginary was superior. Liberal humanist perspectives, tied to particular European value judgements, lean on particular notions borrowed from religion, science and politics at different times, justifying certain conceptions of 'human' and 'normal' (Foucault, 1972, 2006). For the *Aufklärers* and others of the Enlightenment such as Kant, the subject, as well as knowledge, was knowable. Economy, trade, land 'acquisition' and capital theory rely on skewed appropriations of knowledge as graspable, and mastery of the world.

For Kant, freedom is bound within self-constraints set by the rational autonomous agent. This rational agent acts under the idea of freedom (Barandalla & Ridge, 2011), but as a moral agent, the will must act according to law- one that is self-imposed rather than from external sources, constituting a 'free' will. Freedom is recognised as a concept; and as a concept highlights the internal work of the rational human. Kant argues that while freedom is not tangible, it must be worked toward as though it is attainable, and the individual self must overcome the fear of reaching a 'true' maturity. Maturity comes through the self-imposition of constraint according to morality-based laws fit for universal application. In terms of power, the liberal self, understood as a self-standing individual, has the capacity to act or to influence desired or at least compromised ends. The capacity to influence, which Kant terms prudence (1788/2004), must be balanced with an anti-paternalist stance. The individual's capacity to frame actions on conscious, morally 'good' or 'bad' choices underscores the liberal concept of agency. Yet to bring about certain ends –the much desired influence on the world- raises issues of equity and masked power relations. The spectrum of moral agency blurs across points of empathy, fairness and ethics. Nietzsche (1994) highlighted the "theological prejudice" in morality ideology and the 'fact' of dichotomies such as good, bad and superior, and took Kant to task: "what he wants is a piece of naiveté; knowledge of knowledge!" (Nietzsche 1994, Luisetti, 2012, p.127).

These ideas of the self and the subject set the scene for examining the turn from the rational moral actor, and from ideologies which became the dominant cultural logic within western societies. Foucault (1997a) described the distinction of the

Enlightenment as a question to be both continually critiqued and continued into various paths:

> *...the analysis of ourselves as beings who are historically determined, to certain extent, by the Enlightenment... will be oriented toward the "contemporary limits of the necessary", that is, toward what is not or is no longer indispensable for the constitution of ourselves as autonomous subjects* (1997a, p.313).

Critiquing 'autonomous subjects' in the next section positions two interdependent inquiries of self and subjectivity through the multifaceted concept of freedom.

4.3 Freedom and subjectivity

> *Do not ask me who I am and do not ask me to remain the same* (Foucault, 1972, p.19).

The thinking of possibilities rather than limits reveals a shift in attitude towards perceived limits of action and conditions in which the individual makes and unmakes herself. I draw on perspectives of freedom and subjectivity in this section as both these ideas rely on underlying beliefs of the self, subject and being. In enlightenment terms, the individual, rational adult is pivotal to the type of freedom offered as an autonomous subject. Contemporary critique moves beyond to a deeper consideration of power relations elided by liberalist autonomy. This shift grew from critiques of power structures and assumptions of correct -and correctable- ways of being. They therefore provide useful 'tools' for further interrogating notions of the becoming-being. They also assist the thesis by enabling an emerging, alternative sense of freedoms as a platform for decolonising dominating early childhood education platforms. In selecting a small number of thinkers within contemporary critique, I recognise the thesis privileges perspectives that assist thinking differently about the human as active agent. I also acknowledge I do not have the psychoanalytical depth with which to fully critique some of the perspectives drawn on here (such as Butler or Deleuze). Foucault, Butler, and

Deleuze critique the processes, categories and normative natures produced by and embedded in structural processes of governing the individual and populations, but they do so in a sometimes disparate manner. However, they each raise questions of the strategies and techniques of power relations in dominant discourses and the knowledge privileged in truth regimes. With this in mind the discussion is presented as representative of the thinkers rather than a homogenous cluster of 'poststructural' critique. Foucault and Butler critique ideas of freedom-power-subjectivity as a reciprocal, multi-faceted set of force relations in the struggle for the constructing and deconstructing of selves. This places it firmly at the centre of critical ontological dialogue: who we are, who we could be, and importantly for this thesis, issues of who we 'should' but cannot ever be (Miller & Rose, 2008; Viruru, 2005). In the somewhat nomadic journey taken through these ideas, I came to understand that this last point positioned itself as a disruption to educational discourses of possibilities and potential.

Foucault (1972) unsettles the concept of power as a seat of domination (such as sovereign power) on which many assumptions have stood. While not ignoring sovereign might, his analyses of power emphasise the emergence of contemporary power (*pouvoir*) as a relation of forces driven by contingent meaning structures. Within, constrained by and creating these relations is the self in confrontation with power (Foucault, 2000b). The idea of government as the "social practice of subjecting individuals by mechanisms of power which lay claim to truth" (Foucault, 2000, p. xxxix) is a key theme for contemporary power analysts[2]. The technologies of governmentality which "run like a thread from discipline into control" (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005, p.51), implicate relations of the self, that cover "practices that constitute, define, organise and instrumentalise the strategies which individuals use in dealing with each other" (Foucault, 1991, p.102).

Post-positivist usage of the subject as under erasure dislocate constructions of the self via biological, social and psychological truths. Critiques of the 'death of

[2]Foucault rejects the term 'philosopher', preferring 'power analysis' and history of ideas to reflect the trajectory of his work. Others who have informed my understanding of contemporary or 'modernity's' modalities of power include Nikolas Rose (1991; 1993; 2012) and his work with Peter Miller (Miller & Rose, 2008), as well as David Harvey (2007).

man' argue that such displacement has also emphasised the very categories they wish to disrupt. Adding to this, Butler (1997), hooks (2003) and others (such as MacNaughton, Hughes & Smith 2008) argue that subjectification and power cannot be theorised without the dynamics of race, class, and gender through which self-constitution is made possible. Conversely, critiques of educational theory emphasising race, class, ability and gender matters have also been used by truth regimes to reify difference as disadvantage and problematic (Kincheloe & MacLaren, 2011; Cannella & Diaz Soto, 2010). In critiques of the critical, I find a connection with the previous chapter which highlights the utilitarian manner of appropriating concepts for ideological purposes but also in exploiting notions of expertise for new modalities of power.

Further critique of power analyses and subjectivity can be found in sources outside of European traditions. Gayatri Spivak (2005, 2006), although employing Foucault's arguments of power, raises the issue of 'speaking for others'. Both Foucault and Deleuze have discussed avoidance of speaking for others outside their contexts, critiquing their own philosophical traditions (Deleuze, 1995).[3] Spivak also argues that *not* speaking includes the danger of keeping the unheard perpetually silenced, a danger she recognises in her own work on subaltern collectives. Where does one draw the line between paternalism, tokenism, and voicing protest and difference?

The sections following critique ideas of subjectivity and freedom, highlighting nuances in arguments of agency and freedom, self and subjectivities. Underscoring this is the relational paradigm of the thesis seeking to explore the relationship between perspectives. First I consider Foucault's and Deleuze's interpretations of

[3]From within their traditions however there are critiques of 'speaking for other'. Feminist critique has brought attention to Deleuze and Guattari's idea of the abstract, virtual body or body-without-organs and the becoming-woman in *Mille plateaux (A Thousand Plateaus)*. The argument is that failing to address the 'female' experience of the body while claiming knowledge of it hides the political relations in masculine normativity. Bignall (2008) is helpful in addressing these criticisms by deconstructing Deleuze and Guattari's idea of subjectivity: "this concrete form [of the body as feminine] can only be properly understood with reference to a determining abstract and virtual BwO, which guarantees that actual *conceptualisations* of female experience and 'nature' could always be transformed and become-otherwise" (Bignall, 2008, p.202, emphasis added). Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) discussion of the 'body without organs' is in chapter three of *A Thousand Plateaus*.

subjectivity through the idea of freedom and desire. Following this I explore the nature of discursive action through Butler's discussions of the subject and agency.

4.3.1 Self-relations: Changing the subject

The idea of 'the subject' is a historical construction, sitting in sociohistorical conditions. It is, therefore, a form rather than "substance" (Foucault, 1994, p.10). This sociohistorical notion sits at odds with the western philosophical tradition in which the self-standing, rational, individual being acts on the world (Taylor, 2011). When Kant wrote of using the Copernican thesis (Kant, 1787/2001) he challenged previous acceptance of subject-object positioning and thus perceptions of subjects as passive. In doing so he gave the 'rational being' the power to influence his place within social and moral constraints. The concept of freedom became something far more workable. Like other concepts, 'the subject' works within power relations. Taylor (2011) notes that the power relations producing definitions of the subject as a self-standing substance conceals the nature of the relations. Consequently, contemporary dominant understandings of subjectivity are based on enlightenment ideas –and earlier- of the subject that excluded vast groups of people and placed limits on 'the true nature' of being.

As a sociohistorical construction, the so-called subject is formed by discourse, such as the knowledge produced by the human sciences across the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As new subject categories came into being, not only was the normal increasingly informed by the 'abnormal' and delinquent, but the array of categories enabled people to also take up those sites (Deleuze, 1995, p.92). In dismissing the subject, 'subjectivity' describes the relational process rather than a product; the self is a relation to oneself, a force. In this sense, subjectivity is a process of forming a relationship of the self to itself (McGushin, 2011). If there is a subject, then it is an *effect* of subjectivity's process. If this process is an ongoing activity of self-relations confronting and constructing force relations of power and desire, it is also a *cause* (Bignall, 2008). There cannot be a subject but a becoming-subject; for such becoming is incessant. If there is no subject but

an emergence of 'virtual assemblage' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) that is both its cause and effect, how is the produced object (the virtual made actual) of social relations able to emerge as a transformative stance?

Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) notion of assemblage in *Mille plateaux* assists an understanding of subjectivity. Assemblage denotes a self as composition which also performs acts of assemblage[4] (Bignall, 2007, p.207). The relationship of assembling and assemblage as processes is where subjectivity emerges. Using Deleuze and Guattari's Spinovist idea of mind/body relationship[5], Bignall recreates the process:

> *Mind is effected as soon as there is an assemblage(n), but subjectivity is not yet active until the mind begins the act of thinking the body in relation to the body without organs. And subjectivity is enacted only through the set of practices that involve making oneself a body without organs. The mind/body then becomes a subject, through practice. Through a certain effort, the assemblage(n) becomes an assemblage(v)* (2007, p.207).

The Body without Organs is the virtual assemblage, whereas the body is the structure of composition, an assemblage as noun. As the idea of this body, the mind is "simultaneously body and non-body, structure and non-structure" (Deleuze & Guattari, p.207). I draw from Bignall's discussion a clearer picture of Deleuze's idea of the virtual/actual. In relation to subjectivity, the subject emerges as an expressive act, a "strategy of assemblage" (Bignall, 2007, p.217). Deleuze (1995) has argued, "I think subjectification has little to do with any subject... it's to do with individuated fields, not persons or identities" (p.93). The subject is an *event*, a virtual made actual (Deleuze, 1995), and an entirely different version than actualisation as a developmental goal.

[4]Bignall (2008) suggests the use of assemblage in English does not capture the original version as both verb(v) and noun(n). Hence the term for Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus* implies assembling as action and the resulting structure as assemblage. Bignall's interpretation has assisted my understanding of subject, subjectivity and self in Deleuze and Guattari's terms.

[5]That the mind is the *idea* of the body.

Deleuze (1995) situates the construction of subjectification as Greek in origin. The rule of 'free men over free men' contradicted the very honour of being 'free'; to alleviate the constraining relations of power, better to subjectify *oneself* than endure subjugation. Subjectivity is not simply the effect of oppressive power relations and discourses: "it's not enough to suffer the effects of other forces, it has to be exerted upon itself too... by bending force in a relation to itself, the Greeks invent subjectification" (p.113). In this respect there is a linkage with Kant's idea of the rational agent acting on self-imposed laws The connection comes through the force 'bending back':

> *We're no longer in the domain of codified rules of knowledge (relations between forms), and constraining rules of power (the relation of forces to other forces), but in one of the rules that are in some sense optional (self-relation): the best thing is to exert power over yourself. The Greeks invent an aesthetic way of existing. That's what subjectification is all about: bringing a curve into the line, making it turn back on itself, or making force impinge on itself. So we get ways of living with what would otherwise be unendurable... There's no subject, but a production of subjectivity: subjectivity has to be produced, when its time arrives, precisely because there is no subject. The time comes once we've worked through knowledge and power; it's that work that forces us to frame the new question* (Deleuze, 1995, p.113-114).

The rational agent however works on dualistic notions of morality and transfers these to universal laws of action. Subjectification, according to Deleuze's reading of Foucault, is an ethical and aesthetic process, a self-relational process as opposed to morality. The aesthetic process of ethics "is the considered form that freedom takes when it is informed by reflection" (Foucault, 1997c, p.284). Subjectification, then, is a work oscillating between the two interrelated dimensions of freedom and power.

The discussion so far asserts subjectivity as an ongoing process refracted through intersecting forces. The 'subject' forms through these sociohistorical contingencies

and ideologies. I would argue that reflective forms of freedom or aesthetic ethics, in whatever form it takes, cannot be assumed to be only a western invention. I take Deleuze's assertion as referring to a type of subjectification rooted in political ideology in which governmentality of self – as "existing not as a subject but as a work of art" (Deleuze, 1995, p.92)- is visible.[6] For my argument, such visibility offers possibilities of deconstructing the historically determined self. Such a practice is a lifelong work, a confrontation, of knowledge and its tyranny over us, and the relations of power that are produced.

4.3.2 Freedom and self

A focus on the relationship between freedom and self highlights points of entry to the historically determined self. The 'work of art' Deleuze refers to is an ongoing confrontation, and resistance to the self that dominant discourses and techniques of power attempt to construct. Foucault's later lectures explored freedom and subjectivity through practice as *souci du soi*, a relational aspect between the self and self-activity. Attention to, or care of, the self relates to subjectivity as an ethically focused 'making of ourselves'. It characterises the work of freedom as a deeper reflective process of self-relation, dissenting and unmaking what we find oppressive in the forms constructed in the rules of power. Accordingly, such freedom is a practice. Foucault (2000) proposed his idea of enlightenment as "a certain (*décisoire*) will *not to be governed thus*' (p. xxxix). Here is an essential distinction of contemporary critical analyses of power and governmentality that also emphasise possibilities for subjectivity: dissension from oppressive forms of control, the various *appareils idéologiques d'État*, and an exercise in self-government. If there is no subject but subjectification, then what meaning can be given to the 'self'?

The activity that Foucault suggests brings the 'self' into existence is described as a struggle of the self to work out its own freedom, through consciously and constantly reshaping, and unmaking, the image of ourselves as we find others capturing it. At another level, *souci du soi* recognises the technologies for governance over one's

[6] I return to this theme from sources outside European philosophy in chapter six.

very existence, and seeks space to reject the repressive encroaches of external governance. The idea of the 'natural', 'true' self as an internal core persists as the dominant understanding, a vestige of liberalist, colonial and psychological intersections. Contemporary critical thought challenges this quotidian assumption. This 'self', in struggling to find its 'true nature', is constantly reviewing, remaking, and thus changing the make-up of what that 'true' self might be. It is not a fixed identity, essence or a "self-standing being" (Mendieta, 2011, p.129). Foucault discusses the constructed nature of 'subject':

> *I had to reject a priori theories of the subject in order to analyse the relationships that may exist between the constitution of the subject or different forms of the subject and games of truth, practices of power, and so on... (the subject) is not a substance. It is a form, and this form is not primarily or always identical to itself* (Foucault, 1997c, p.290).

Such self-relations are composed of, and formed by a lifelong process rather than a linear journey toward self-actualisation (Butler, 1997; Davies, 1991). The subject, as a form in progress, is continually re-constituted through each discourse available to her or him. Yet perhaps the reality is that discourses are made available (or not) to us. The 'facts' of knowledge about the subject teach us to find, know, be ourselves, in a self-actualisation of self-mastery and acceptance. Thus we are swindled by the truth regime of actualisation as a pinnacle of potential.

The understanding that Deleuze and Guattari (1987) bring to thinking the self is highlighted in their concept of the subject as virtual and body as actual inscription. The subject is a relation to oneself, but also a form, and therefore subjectivity has many forms. Like other forms, subject is an *agencement*, arrangement, assemblage[7], a virtual made actual. While there is a bodily form which they

[7]Joughin's (1995) translator notes for Deleuze's *Pourparlers (Negotiations)* gives '*agencement*' as better understood as 'arrangements' than 'assemblages'. While Bignall (2011) breaks 'assemblage' down to both verb and noun in order to delineate the nuances, Joughin states assemblage "conveys neither the sense of preparation or orientation toward action nor that of reconfiguration" (p. 196 n9) so important to the relations of bodies and the BwO, and thus production of the 'subject'. Deleuze translates *agencement* as 'arrangement' in *Critique et Clinique* (1995, 27).

describe as a complex assemblage of elements, there is also a sense of the body from mind. The body-without-organs (BwO) is the site of prior conception of the body. It is not a concept but a set of practices "forever attaining" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 40). The virtual idea of the body is an unorganised, "yet to be ordered" mass, which becomes disciplined and ordered, becoming "stable relationships that bind them into complex associations (bodies)" (Bignall, 2007, p.203). 'Bodies' are not simply discrete entities but also the formation of any associations arranged into stable organisations (such as bodies of knowledge or social bodies). The disciplining and order occurs via strata and stratification:

> *This body without organs is permeated by unformed, unstable matters, by flows in all directions, by free intensities or nomadic singularities, by mad or transitory particles. That, however, was not the question at hand. For there simultaneously occurs upon the earth a very important, inevitable phenomenon that is beneficial in many respects and unfortunate in many others: stratification. Strata are Layers, Belts. They consist of giving form to matters, of imprisoning intensities or locking singularities into systems of resonance and redundancy, of producing upon the body of the earth molecules large and small and organizing them into molar aggregates. Strata are acts of capture, they are like "black holes" or occlusions striving to seize whatever comes within their reach* (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.40).

Using geological terms and the earth body as illustration, Deleuze and Guattari explain the formation of the virtual to actual. The construction of a subject is 'articulated', as multiple strata grasp and assemble (Bignall, 2007). It is through this articulation of multiple discourses that a becoming subject speaks and acts. As a social process, in that we are partly constituted through other's articulations, enunciation also "implies *collective assemblages*" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.80, emphasis added). Stratification is a process for the forming of the subject; it is the strata that describe, classify and discipline as they "capture" by "coding and territorialisation" (p.40). The virtual is made actual through stratification and articulation of the multiple discourses within which the self exists.

Power and freedom, through a Foucauldian frame, act as a mutually constitutive relationship. Subjectification, as a third dimension, is introduced as a way of "inventing new possibilities" or "styles of life" (Deleuze, 1995, p.91). Freedom is a practice, rather than an end, and analysing the workings between people and power is one step in practical critique. The possible transgression moves beyond the limitation of moral reason to expressions of subjectification.

The practice of ethics is implicit: "for what is ethics, if not the practice of freedom, the conscious practice of freedom" (Foucault, 1997c, p.284). The idea that there are a 'thousand things to be done' reflects one starting point for understanding and working on freedom through individual and collective experience. There is in this a distinction between the negative standpoint of Kant's boundaries and transgressive-seeking critique is a "limit-attitude" (Foucault, 1997, p.124). Deleuze (1995) asserts there is no return to discover a subject (that is, the subject as substance, or a return to the Greek construction) in order to "discern in ourselves an artistic will irreducible to knowledge and power" (p.92), because the relations taking shape today are not the same. The "strange, three-dimensional figure" (p.93) of freedom, power and subjectivity is constituted in sociohistorical contingency. The force relations of subjectivity and power can produce a glimmer of hope for action because subjectivity is understood as working the line, where possible, in order to resist governance that represses. The practice of freedom, by engaging in reflection of our "own historical period in its brilliant contingency" (Mendietta 2011, 122), also *produces* freedom.

If historicised freedom is exercised through thought, then the strategies used in relationship to others are exercised through expression of this freedom thinking. Much of what is done in relation with others is based on the contingency in events (and relationship) but also draws on the sense of who we perceive ourselves to be, and the contradictions offered to us by the other's apparent grasp of who we are. To grasp how these ideas might be relevant to the nuances of constraints in early childhood environments, I use the short narrative from the beginning of the thesis, in which the child Clay jumps the childcare fence and the adult falters for an 'appropriate' but effective response. Clay resists being viewed as what he believes

to be a 'baby', requiring being told what to do and when. One reading could be that Clay was positioning himself in resisting the educator's practice of what 'we do' for 'all' children. The ideas of freedom discussed so far dig much deeper to 'signs of existence' –experience rather than position-taking: "who one is emerges acutely out of the problems one struggles with" (Rabinow, 1997 p.xix). Clay's own history may have meant that he had alternative realities –signs of existence- to draw on. These signs of existence were found wanting at the childcare setting, but where could they be found? Outside the boundary. To *think* oneself, means to recognise the practices which define and organise, to *consider* the possibilities of these conditions and to *explore* our way out or across these. Yet when 'one' is spread across networks of relation and connectedness, to think is also to *feel*, as resonance, the threads that connect, pull and push and the ties they both offer and bind. In this respect, freedom is not self-mastery, nor mastery over others, although power relations are always in play. These are the forces which Deleuze describes as intensities: the folding back of forces, the force relations. The idea of self-mastery elides recognition that the "subject is always also a part-object for others" (Bignall, 2007, p.216). From this discussion, I highlight that subjectivity is process, practice and resistance, and necessarily threaded from relational moments. The relationship of the self and to others involves thinking and feeling in response to our desired being-becoming and the grasp others have of us. As an intersection of action, desire, struggles of existence and resistance, the intensity is a decision for which line to ride.

The discussion so far has constructed a perception of subjectivity as relationship of the self to itself, and the work done to forge this relationship (Deleuze, 1995). On one level this does not seem a radical departure from Kant's proposals of the work of the will towards different fields of action. Yet it is the primacy of reason and its discourse of restraint in forming 'authentic' action, and the suffocating forms of being constructed in the name of constraint, which Foucault and Deleuze have challenged. For Kant, and the humanist thinking that was to follow, reason was the path which made self-mastery possible. As noted in the previous chapter,

this extended to disciplinary techniques which trained the individual in such self-control, the rationalisation of autonomous action. The philosophical challenges to these definitive forms of existence offer but one stream of knowledge. For my argument, the stream is a multitude of dynamic, life-giving waters. Changing the possibility of self, reason and action changes the rest of the equation on what makes the subject: the self is only a (re-forming) result of discursive relational activity, with more than one possibility for action, and which can be informed by realms of resistance. Swirls, eddies, and flows. The 'self' as object and agent is "brought into existence as the upshot of some relational activity" (McGushin, 2011, p.129). As a dynamic relation of forces, it can take any number of forms, thus producing or opening up further possibilities for ways of being.

In speaking of Foucault's ideas, Deleuze (1995) shows how subjectivity is an activity lying outside of power and knowledge, activity in the sense of forces –an intensity of force relations. These forces are processes of self-relation to oneself, a "relation of force to itself... a "fold" of forces" (1995, p.92). Here, subjectivity is clearly a productive, constructive, force-full process rather than a negative sense of subordination and loss of agency. These ideas also highlight that the idea of agency, and freedom, can be thought of without recourse to humanist-thinking of the steely individual. That is, while both concepts have been used macro-politically in humanist and liberal forms to hide the constraint on individual liberties, neither are necessarily illusory when thought of through different perspectives. Changing the meaning of self and subject opens space for rethinking related ideas, and agency as micro-political freedom-thinking.

The usefulness of these ideas for this thesis is the rejection of ideas of self, subject and subjectivity as generating an essential self, identity or person. Thinking these ideas as forces, folds and relations of forces –refracted through dimensions of freedom, power and subjectivity- moves toward ideas of agency as mutual and contingent upon networks through spatial and temporal histories. The relational aspect of these ideas of freedom and subjectivity assists my understanding of the forces at work in self-constitution. Critical ontology assists in understanding agency by highlighting that subjectivity is not the individual person per se but the *fold*, the

relationship of the self as "expressive agent" (McGushin, 2011, p.128) to the self as object. This has much to offer for thinking of children's agency. The work done to forge such a relationship is not a feeding back of understanding and experiment in order to add to a fixed, permanent idea of the self, but a reworking of unfinished business of the self as an always already part-object. There is much more to the idea of agency than the observable exhibition of behaviour or expression: a basis of practice for the early childhood educator. Expression may be the manifestation of wilful desire but when or how do we ascertain the point of manifestation? That is, at which point of the relationship of the self is what we observe –see, hear- a manifestation? Is this expression a reaction to immediate events or a response from ongoing reflection? How do adults decide the capacity and normativity of children based on this? The expressive agent is hardly the sum of the observable. The model of agency as an indicator of development is problematic in education discourses due to the ascriptive nature of adult assessment of children. The social status of young children is woven in the play of power relations through which relationships form and through which we come to understand each other:

> *Power relations are extremely widespread in human relationships. Now, this means not that political power is everywhere, but that in human relationships a whole range of power relations that may come into play among individuals, within families, in pedagogical relationships, political life, and so on* (Foucault, 1994b, p. 283).

It is within this context and history of social and developmental status and political power that early childhood communities are situated. As collective communities, I suggest an *inter-subjectivity* that recognises complexity of being-becoming as *flowing through each other* rather than separate realms of existence. Being is constituted through an always unknowable present and past, through ways of knowing and relating, and power relations are a salient and present factor. There are unpredictable factors and unknowable worlds, inner knowing, difference and alterity as significant dynamics in subjectivity. In stark contrast to development theory, "subjects cannot be known in advance", the subject is not bound by rationality alone, nor is it always accessible to knowledge (Castañeda, 2002, p.168-170).

There are a number of related ideas from this discussion which are important to the thesis. A significant point is the unknowable and unpredictable contingency of events, "erratic, chaotic, and always potentially surprising activity" (Castañeda, 2002, p.168) which is consistently overlooked in early childhood development literature. The unknowable 'future' feeds fears creating need for the administration of control and techniques of determination (Rose, 2010). At the same time the processes of administration and surveillance feed social fear (Miller and Rose, 2008). These processes use the idea of the rational-calculable at administrative levels – discursive institutions such as schools, early childhood centres, welfare institutions – to apply techniques of surveillance and training aimed at the individual body-mind. This shaping of the individual is aimed on one hand at the docility to the state, and on the other, at efforts for continual self-improvement. The categorisation of subjects and surveillance of behaviour, could only be made available with a science of the normal (Miller and Rose, 2008). Errant, abnormal behaviour, to be corrected and trained to a sense of normal/abnormal, human/inhuman, civilised/savage, could be applied to individuals but also through them. Disciplinary, surveillance and control techniques of bio-political power, neatly intersect in early childhood education. Through these processes, as Vintges (2011) argues, a structural perception of an "internal "core self" is established and the autonomous subject is born" (p. 101).

4.3.3 Acting discursively

In what ways might the self act on freedom thinking, or unmake the self as constructed by others? In this section I explore and critique the idea of discursive acting, authoring or 'writing' ourselves on the world in resistance to the sciences of normality. Judith Butler's (1997) work on subjection is focused at the psychic level of powers which act upon and are acted upon by the subject. Butler argues that constitution of the subject works through acts which are continually written and rewritten into the composition. The idea of the 'discursive self' describes what it means to speak in fields which give dominant preference to the ways one should

speak and act. A sense of self is considered fragmented, an ongoing, unfinished business due to the 'multiple and contradictory discourses' (Davies, 1990, p.346) which each person may be subject to. Thus, to use 'subject' is to speak of a "linguistic category" (Butler, 1997, p.10). Butler follows Foucault's understanding of power as "forming the subject as well as providing the very condition of its existence and the trajectory of its desire" (p.11). While this statement seems to provide little movement for freedom, Foucault's analyses of subjectification and self-relations emphasised dissension from oppressive determinations of being:

> *...one of the meanings of human existence – the source of human freedom – is never to accept anything as definitive, untouchable, obvious or immobile. No aspect of reality should be allowed to become a definitive and inhuman law for us* (Foucault 1980 in Taylor, 2011, p.182).

Butler uses part-psychoanalytical, part-Foucauldian (Butler, 1997, p.11) perspective in her understanding of power and its relationship in the building of psyche. Butler posits power as both initiating and enacting: it shifts in different ways to bring the subject into being. This can be explored further through the following statement:

> *Consider that in the very act by which the subject reproduces the conditions of its own subordination, the subject exemplifies a temporally based vulnerability that belongs to those conditions, specifically, to the exigencies of their renewal. Power considered as a condition of the subject is necessarily not the same as power considered as what the subject is said to wield. The power that initiates the subject fails to remain continuous with the power that is the subject's agency. A significant and potentially enabling reversal occurs when power shifts from its status as a condition of agency to the subject's "own" agency* (Butler, 1997, p.12).

The power which is a condition precedes the subject; it undergoes a change, a shift, to a different power which is claimed; and it is this which "enacts the subject into being" (Butler, 1997, p.13). Butler's idea of power is harboured and "preserve(d)

in the beings that we are" (1997, p.2). Self-constitution for Butler is not a reflection of a determined being but rather the constitution of the character is "the very precondition for its agency" (Butler, 1995, p.46). The initiating power is not the same once it shifts to agency. Butler's psychoanalytical arguments need to be read through an understanding of the 'subject' and subjectification as the individual's relation with power.

As suggested by Davies (2006), Butler's subjects construct and rework through conditions of possibility rather than a determined constitution. Like Foucault and Deleuze, the 'subject' is not an identification of the individual person. Rather 'subject' refers to a "structure in formation" (Butler, 1997, p.10): "No individual becomes a subject without first becoming subjected or undergoing "subjectivation" (*assujetissement*)" (p.11). However, if subordination is thought of as the deprivation of agency, Butler asks, how is it that the subject is also "at the same time the condition for and instrument of agency?" (p.10). Identification of such contradictions raises the idea of subjection as a "site of alteration", and agency as "opposition to forces of subjection" (1997, p.10-11). As a force, agency is a power 'assumed by the subject', thus involved in the *becoming* of the subject.

The subject is always becoming, and is effected by the power exerted on it. The particular discussion here highlights the contradictions to be found between particular constructions of subjection and those of subjectivity. Davies (1990) suggests that when the 'structure in formation' is subjected by discourse, acting through the particular discourses available to her or him, the notion of agency is put under erasure, revealing it as "fundamentally illusory" (p.46). I would argue that the possibility for action based on self-critique highlights a subjectivity in active, interdependent relationship with discourse.

As mentioned previously, shifting the view of 'the self' has shifted how conditions for self can be thought of. Moving beyond the idea of the self-standing essential self, so too the idea of subjectivity and agency can shift. To explain further I take an excerpt from the story of Clay in chapter one:

> *This particular day Clay did not want to move inside with the rest of us. He dug his heels in the soft dirt. No. His place was not with the babies- he certainly did not think it was 'time to go in', 'time for a wash', and 'time for rest'; No. He put his foot down and decided to go home. So, over the fence he went, starting off down the road. The competing roles I held kicked in: Director, Carer, Aunty, Surveillance officer. Director: Clay, what's happening? C'mon now, some of us can stay outside after lunch. Clay. Clay. Clay! No good, still walking. The Room Leader in me was thinking ratios and if I should just jump over myself. As Aunty I thought I could cajole with a lunch. Still no good; still walking. Realising there was no official way of doing these things, I went with the heart, and with family ties: 'Oh well, I have to call Grandad, he'll come. Oh, look there, 'his car's comin', Grandad's comin!'*
>
> *Of course, it was Grandad's power that turned Clay around, not me as room leader, or as Director.*

Viewing this narrative through the perspectives discussed allows a number of levels of analysis. The interpretations are examples to highlight other ways of thinking about meaning making, and *not* an assessment of Clay, for that has to be left to Clay himself. Clay drew upon strategies of resistance to external regulation of behaviour and autonomy when he drew upon forces of family and standing strong. These techniques actually weakened the power relationship in the roles of management while strengthening familial roles by binding his actions to kinship: he demands the response by kinship through his choosing of who (that is, which role) he listens to. To break down the acts of resistance it is possible to perceive three purposeful actions that reveal the last act of jumping the fence as a boundary crossing that is not so much reactive as evaluative. The first action is *recognition*, of the contradictory nature of routines shaped around timetables for certain behaviour (eat-wash-sleep) of all children whether they are infants or five year-olds. He may simply recognise it as a practice not of his making. The second is *standing*

strong: Clay asserts his refusal in an acceptable and appropriate manner. He simply says *No*, and his digging his heels in the dirt was far more emblematic: on his country, finding comfort in country, his *No* is embodied in the safety of the warm earth. The third act is telling of the expectation for autonomy of many Indigenous children[8]: within this expectation (which I correlate with the right for dignity) he *cuts ties* with the oppressive environment. Clay was clearly subjected by regulatory discourses -as is the narrator- but the above three recourses illustrate his capacity to take away the 'constitutive force' of those discourses.

There is another, fourth act that illustrates a deeper meaning of subjectivity in post-dialogues. Subjectivity as 'a fold' of forces (Deleuze, 1995) highlights what is happening in the relation of the self to the self: the responses of the self as subject to the impressions of self as object. Through this lens, the fourth act for Clay was in *choosing to listen* only to the ties of kinship. He chose to *not* take up the practice of subjecting to dominant practices by obedience in the other's terms. Having physically acted in resistance against domination of institutional discourses and the roles played by those implicated in these discourses, his next step is to choose to respond and draw on the power in kin relationship. Whether he ignores the Aunt relationship as a punishment (Aunty and Director/Group leader are same person) is possible, but the relationship between granny (grandchild) and Grandfather is accepted as the prime and appropriate reason to choose going back. Such a reading of the excerpt illuminates the relationship to ourselves as a collective process: his actions and standing strong actually thread the subjectivities around him: his self, his self as granny, as well as that of his Aunty:

> *I was proud of Clay, for dealing with this falseness, with his own hand, his initiative and acting for himself: a choice that seemed most sensible*

[8]Objections have been raised by some Aboriginal Australian researchers to the assumption and generalisation of the much-noted autonomy of Indigenous children, particularly in the plethora of anthropological studies. Most notable in these objections are the historical connections to western perceptions of a 'lack' of parental control. These informed The Aboriginal Protection Act of 1869 and subsequent practices in which child-rearing values were considered lacking and thus families susceptible to children being taken. Still, many Aboriginal organisations and communities value the child as autonomous.

> *at the time... In other words, he stood strong for himself. Who was I to argue with that? How could I not be proud?*

Theorising agency as multifaceted and discursive opens space to reflect on the evolving capacities of young children and gives possible framings for actions which are almost always viewed, through developmental psychology, as negative, reactive and oppositional. Through a discursive actor lens, the manner in which his action drives a critical reflexive growth of the adult, illuminates the way in which agency is involved in a collective shaping of subjectivity.

Further avenues of analysis reveal more complexity at this point. According to Davies (1991), poststructural perspectives theorise the person as "discursively constituted afresh through each discursive act" which can "contradict the sense we have of ourselves as continuous" (Davies, 1991, p.49). Although stating such theories place agency under erasure, Davies goes on to suggest resistance strategies reveal "another kind of agency" in which "the speaking/writing subject can move within and between discourses, can see precisely how they subject her, can use the terms of one discourse to counteract, modify, refuse or go beyond the other, both in terms of her own experienced subjectivity and in the way in which she chooses to speak in relation to the subjectivities of others" (p.46). Moving beyond an essential sense of self this perspective reworks agency as "another kind" in which each person is subjected by discourse-acting according to discourse available:

> *Agency is never freedom from discursive constitution of self but the capacity to recognise that constitution and to resist, subvert and change the discourses themselves through which one is being constituted. It is the freedom to recognise multiple readings such that no discursive practice, or positioning within it by powerful others, can capture and control one's identity. And agency is never autonomy in the sense of being an individual standing outside social structure and process* (Davies, 1991, p.51).

This provides another lens with which to understand the capacity of young people for shaping social action and the self-relations of others. As mentioned previously,

changing the way the self is understood in creates a domino effect in the way we can understand subjectivity, resistance, influence and action.

I believe it also reveals another kind of self, which can be understood as spread across networks rather than the linear individual. Understood as *spread*, the self includes the "enigmatic traces of others" (Butler, 2004, p.46), an I-with-others and I-through-others: neither is necessarily known to a full sense nor continuous. Through this analysis, Clay drew upon these 'signs of existence' in each of his responses, which worked to pull on and strengthen the collective ties and identities by actively refusing, counteracting and modifying discourses both available and confronting him. These "mutually constitutive social acts" (Davies, 2006, p.426) situate the subject as both individual and collective in constitution. Butler (1997) describes this as a relation that brings about "a purposive and significant reconfiguration of cultural and political relations" (p.46). We are not wholly determined by structural dominance and discourses; it is the mutually constitutive acts which confirm the mechanisms of self, through resistances to the other's recognition of our subjection to particular discourse. Butler describes the subject in pursuit of existence:

> *Bound to seek recognition of its own existence in categories, terms, and names that are not of its own making, the subject seeks the sign of its own existence outside itself, in a discourse that is at once dominant and indifferent. Social categories signify subordination and existence at once* (1997, p.20).

The conditions that make selves possible are reiterated and affirmed by our choosing and recognition of these conditions as possibilities. The recognition of discourse as possibly optional and playable, is possible through tapping into 'alternate' realities.

4.4 Summary

The initial conceptualising and effort to remain open to various meanings of the ideas under discussion meant that the journey has been fraught with collections of concepts, umbrella terms, and a proliferation of tempting divergences. The relational paradigm of the study draws out a number of key points which are important to my argument: the *fold of subjectivities*; *collective assemblages* (self as spread); the *recognition, modification and resistance against constructed boundaries*; and young children *as contributors*.

Thinking the self as spread across relational networks involves attachment to myriad discourses, social environments and their exigencies, human and non-human entities, place and spiritual connections, we can further draw on the deep complexities in the nature of agency and come to see agentic behaviour as an unsteady and delicate balance of self-relationship in flux. With the narrative as example, it is possible to understand the process of subjectification as calling on some of these connections of self in response to apparent contradictions in the discourses available. The force relations of regulatory power, social relations, and the discourses of 'childcare' came to challenge Clay's ideas of who he was (a 'schoolboy', a 'nephew', a 'granny') and who he was not (a 'baby'). The forces constructing him as object, on the contrary, was as object of regulatory law, care-giving routines and subject of a greater authority. In a symbolic sense (although possibly still very real) he also draws comfort from the relation of country when the relation of Aunty is not working for him or is being ignored. The possible responses as outlined above highlight the effect of being able to access "powerful ways of being that are not the result of normative judgement from within the dominant discourses made by those positioned powerfully within them" (Davies, 1990, p.45).

In this recognition of possibilities, there is modification and disregard for both discursive and fenced boundaries. This may require a conscious recognition of boundaries as constructed: a recognition of alternatives in realities and truths. Which truth is more useful and which field of action is more authentic given the

nature of some roles as temporary and others as far more long-lasting? Different discourses provide their own "explanatory frameworks" (Davies, 1990, p.361). Davies argues the nature of positioning oneself through conversational *authoring* and being positioned as contingent in the ebb and flow of speaking. However, speaking takes many forms: in early childhood settings conversational authoring is often literally expressively embodied. We move from "one position to another, one discursive practice to another... one set of relevancies to another" (1990, p.361). This constructs a self-knowledge whose nature changes at once as we speak, reveal or recognise it.[9] In this sense, 'self' is an evolving mutual formation that cannot reveal a full self-knowledge in the remaking and shirking of the other's construction of ourselves:

> *I find that the wound testifies to the fact that I am impressionable, given over to the Other in ways that I cannot fully predict or control* (Butler, 1997, p.46).

In becoming 'known', the impressionable self is at once no longer the same because it is different somehow in the understanding of another. I believe it is these recognitions that make possible the ongoing reviewing and reworking of self through drawing on the assuming of our own agency. A theme explored further through postcolonial perspectives, in chapter six, it is the grasp taken by the other that forces our own continual response.

In speaking of freedom, subjectivity and discursive action, it has been important to highlight the critical version of 'subject' as in constant formation. Manifestations of freedom-thinking can be understood as approaching limitations of the self as perceived by others, and enacting, where possible, on the basis of our acceptance or not of the image of ourselves as object. The taking up of the discourses available to us may be multiple. These critiques highlight a discursive knot in two ways. Firstly, the knot is conceptual, as a relationship of subjectivity, power, freedom, each shifting through various forces themselves. Secondly, as a process, and a manifestation of the nexus between interiority and alterity, multiple and

[9] I explore this theme further in chapter seven.

vacillating, the subject-self moves through the struggle of discourses which tangles and knots. The analysis in this chapter highlights a discursive subjectivity which applies relational connections across multiple positions. The rational or moral actor framework of humanist paradigms in which equations between rationality and agency determine the successful agent is turned on its head. In the search for equitable educational policy, the shift to children as discursive actors highlights capacity, talent and potential in a far more nuanced manner.

If the subject is to be only understood at the observable level, such as in regulatory frameworks and assessment of learning and development (DEEWR, 2009) the individual's interiority becomes hidden. If understood at a futures level, such as in policies for reform (Council of Australian Governments, [COAG] 2007; DEEWR, 2009b), contingencies become unknowable and unpredictable, raising questions for the efficacy of prophetic strategies in nurturing wellbeing of populations. At both levels, what could be constituted as agentic behaviour is understood through a normative lens which derails the 'abnormal' and the seemingly errant or 'other' as difficult, deficit or dangerous.

The conditions for enacting through power take place within socio-historical contexts and the available networks of various spatial, relational and material dimensions. Discourse can be drawn upon to provide space, the pulling in of the line and folding it, to make a space of possibility (Deleuze, 1995). It helps slow down the speed of the world, and our need for immediate response, by tweaking the perceived limits into openings for enacting in a manner more aligned to our 'sense' of self. Foucault (2010) recognised this entails exploring being 'true to oneself' and highlights *souci du soi* as a practice of freedom. In this I recognise tremors of resemblance to Kant's critique of freedom, albeit with a deeper resonance in the ethical realm, and the difference in understanding the subject and self: "*do not ask me who I am*" (Foucault, 1972, p.19) attests to the fundamental differences. However, the connection is more than slight when considering the work of the self in active critique and relationship to itself. The self is "not merely given but is constituted" in this relationship (Foucault, 1997a, p.280). The active and ongoing critique of the self –its subjectivity- highlights Kant's concern with critique

in finding freedom through rational, autonomous agency, Foucault's productive critique of power and Butler's reiteration in subjection.

These tremors continue in the next chapter as I connect statements, ideas and underlying discourses in early childhood policy and regulatory frameworks with ideas of governance, discipline and institutional power, in order to explore the possibilities for children in education and care settings. When Kant (1899/2003) related his thinking about freedom and constraints, subjection and morality to early education, he allowed a "perfect liberty" whilst at the same time *disciplining* the 'natural unruliness' (p.57) of the child asking for obedience with a consequence of *punishment*: "Breaking a child's will makes him a slave, while natural opposition makes him *docile*" (p.57, added emphasis). At a time when discipline was becoming open to surveillance as a tool for normalisation (Foucault, 1977), the growth of an educated 'west' was based on governance, discipline, and correction of behaviours that might give hint to difference or defiance. Undesirable behaviours were understood implicitly through particular lenses that the child obeyed the adult in lieu of their own judgement (Kant, 1899/2003).[10] Echoes of discipline, punishment and docile bodies reverberate through contemporary critiques of education.

Both Foucault and Butler's ideas of 'the self' as fundamentally unknowable, a process in relation to others and within which power works back and forth through the use of discourse are, as Davies (2006) suggests, in contrast to educational discourses of the determinable child alongside their economic possibility (also Moss, 2011; Miller & Rose, 2008). Davies argues (2006) that responsibility for "examining the documents and discursive practices" of the taken-for-granted in schools must be taken by asking "what conditions of possibility" are being created and upheld "for us and for our students?" (p.436). Exploring governance through policy and regulation, and conditions of possibilities, the two following chapters take up this question.

[10]Deleuze also uses the idea of children as something other than rational when he suggests that ideas are actually "pure relations of forces... which weave a web of madness like childish vanity" (2008, p.63).

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has explored the intimations of being, bodies and agency in a torrent of freedom, subjectivity and discourse. The subject as fluid and collective, and subjectivity as an ongoing relationship in this fluidity enables a shift in thinking about the agentic child. Neither freedom, power, nor subjectivity can be removed from thinking about agency as they are imbricated through each other. The three dimensions work together implicating the exigency of circumstances, connections to and awareness of discourses and their practices and possibilities for being. The possibilities of power, reflexivity and influence of the child have been highlighted.

Tensions between the 'making up' of ourselves and reflective, conscious resistance, highlights subjectivity and agency as beyond 'freedom from' external forces of support and control. The web of influences in which we sit and which we reaffirm is, I suggest, *the very source of powers* which, when recognised as such, can alleviate the restrictive sense of boundaries of action. To revisit Kant's concern at the very beginning of this chapter –freedom's problem- moving away from structural understandings of the subject allows a recognition of these dimensions as constituting ongoing reworking. In recognising certain limitations in 'necessary' constraint as possible discourse and therefore illusory, workable, playable. Pushing beyond, moving the line- this is key to understanding and working with this complexity of the institutional and young children. While languages of the competent child are at the fore of curriculum frameworks in ECEC, the aspirations are reduced to standards and outcomes rather than the processes of actual children's learning (Dahlberg, 2012). This is accomplished through the idea of the essential, rational, self-standing, developed individual of the liberal humanist tradition. As I highlighted earlier in the chapter, the intimate relationships of ECEC environments require an inter-subjectivity that recognises processes of being-becoming as flowing through each other rather than separate realms of existence. With the idea of the relational self-as-spread rather than simply individual, agency can be understood as far more collective, mutually constructive and generative of social

forces. This becomes a force of and *for* freedom, and a source of pride in one's becoming and relational self.

Chapter 5

Governance and reform: Docile bodies

> *...we must embark on a bold new programme for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas... The old imperialism- exploitation for foreign profit- has no place in our plans. What we envisage is a programme of development based on concepts of democratic fair dealing* (Harry Truman, inaugural address, Jan 20th 1949).

5.1 Introduction

In the documentary *Our Generation: Land, Culture, Freedom*, Guymun Dhamarranydji, Djambarrpuyngu Clan elder, is talking about her concerns for the current generation attending school. Guymun's gentle voice belies the urgency in her expression. "*We don't know what direction the children are learning. Young women and young men, what good are they learning? And seeing, and listening to, and filling their heart with?*" (in Saban & Curtis, 2011).

Education systems, as technologies of normalization and production of social order, work toward persuasion of truth, transferring knowledge and methodologies. Affecting governance over the individual, schooling places a social group into the social order. Control over bodies, minds and discourse of people in this manner has been called a *governance of the soul* (Miller & Rose, 2008). Young people are

taught to self-regulate their behaviour and that of others, but are also immersed in knowledge that preferences certain 'truths' about talent, skills and potential, that is, ways of being in the world. But what of one's becomings? Where does the control of *being* through surveillance, discipline and acculturation into liberalist education systems cut off *becomings* at the social and individual level? The knowledge and methodological preferencing referred to carries messages of how one should understand the world, what success may look like and what talent is privileged in reaching such potential.

This chapter enters the waters of policy and reform in Australian early childhood development and education. To muddy the waters, however, Australian policy, government, and dominant social body, are rooted in European liberal humanist ideals and Anglo-American economic theory. These values line a northern, colonial, construction mapped onto southern spaces and intelligibilities. Education in Australia continues as a homogenous affair that seeks uniformity of policy and practice, while many classrooms reflect a "breathtaking diversity" (Genishi & Dyson, 2009, p.4). For example, there are currently 251 languages spoken in the Greater Melbourne area, with several suburbs where English is the non-dominant language (Butt & Worrall, 2 July 2014) each drawing on and constructing particular methodologies of being in the world. Indigenous populations of the region struggle daily to see their reflections across the curriculum, resources, and community structure.

Within this context, children are positioned to somehow "create a better future for themselves and the nation" (DEEWR, 2009b, p.13). Terminology such as quality standard, school readiness, at-risk, and effective intervention can impose norms and infer quantifiable certainties with which to correct, train and guard against uncertain futures. A progressively global product, early childhood education and care institutions continue to intensify as a tool for normalisation, site of measurement, and a partner in child development. According to economists and productivity arguments, child development equals human development (Heckman

& Mosso, 2014; Van der Gaag, 2000; Heckman & Masterov, 2004; Mustard, 2008). Thinking of development through temporal ordering has contributed to the conflation of childhood with education in contemporary western societies. The word *development* has accumulated power to draw upon associated and collective epistemes of superiority, and truth-bringing assumptions for a global child.

Therefore, in this chapter I focus on Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) as an institutional apparatus, the techniques adopted by those that influence or populate the early childhood institution, and the language that enables and forms certain discursive practice. In keeping with the overall argument of the thesis, ECEC and early childhood development (ECD) are conflated in globalisation discourses of development. The aim of the analysis is to explore how tensions and contradictions in discourses of education and care for the young child highlight the instability of assumptions that the increasingly globalised product of ECEC is based upon.

To achieve the aim of this chapter, I present an examination of statements and discourses in documents representing reform for practice and principles of ECEC in Australia. These also reflect intersections of various perspectives of Early Childhood Education and Care internationally. I argue that while the language of children's rights and image of the child as competent actor and contributor have emerged in curriculum frameworks, underlying the "surface of images" (Foucault, 1977, p.217) are the objectives of systemic and economic rationalism which can reduce the child as an object for intervention and investment (Moss, 2009; Cohen, 2008; Kaščák & Pupala, 2013). These strategies work at the macro and micro level to normalise or pathologise the individual, highlight group divergence and to control the social body in networks of compliance and management. The tensions between perceptions of the role of education in early childhood –the participatory and the deterministic – complicates the nature of our understanding of becoming, being and agency for children.

Specifically, I explore the reform process and product through an overarching framing of the modes of objectification that governance, measurement and surveillance

effect. The argument is illustrated through an analysis of excerpts from three documents which form a suite of early childhood reform: *The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia* [hereafter, EYLF or Framework] (DEEWR, 2009a), *The National Quality Standard* [NQS, or Standard] (ACECQA, 2013) and *Investing in the Early Years- A National Early Childhood Development Strategy* [Strategy] (DEEWR, 2009b). Selected statements are used to examine how the images and underlying discourses of ECEC highlights complexities and problems for understanding complex concepts such as becoming, being and agency in relation to learning outcomes for children. Concept dispersal across disciplines such as health, medicine, psychology and development studies and their intersection at the site of education places them as examples of "discursive formations" (Foucault, 1972, p.41). Concepts are used in relation to sequences of thought. Deleuze has argued that unless we "understand the sequence of which a concept is part, you cannot understand the concept" (November 26, 1980 in Smith, 2012, p.48). This offers an explanation for the different orientations to the same signifier 'agency' or 'becoming', and also how new words are often introduced to mark the divergence of meanings for a particular discursive use.

The analysis and discussion is presented in three parts. First, I set out brief discussion of key terms of policy, governance and governmentality, followed by sociohistorical and political contexts for early childhood reform in Australia over the 2008-2012 period. I then discuss the theoretical framework for the chapter, drawing on ideas from Foucault across a number of works and lectures (1977, 1980, 1983, 1991, 1997b, 2000b, 2000d). Nikolas Rose (1991, 1999) along with Peter Miller (2008, 2010) has developed further ideas of governing, in particular the methods of making up the citizen that implicate our compliance and co-construction of the social machine. These ideas inform and provide parameters to the analysis and discussion of this chapter. In the second section, I bring these discussions to a thematic analysis of statements from the policy and learning framework documents. In doing so I also draw on the evidence base and authority of the most commonly cited sources within the documents chosen. The themes illustrate the shaping of docile bodies in the service of a nation's productivity. Third, I summarise the

argument and draw out questions the analysis has raised. Each of these layers of analysis addresses the research question '*What ideas of childhood and development compel and inspire the framing of educational objectives in current policy contexts of Australian early childhood reform?*' In examining becomings and potential in educational possibilities and limitations for young children, this chapter also attends to the overarching research issue of *decolonising the idea of child, being and becoming in early childhood education.*

The major context for an examination of reform and underlying discourse around childhood and becoming is the political role in the escalation of institutional governance of young children's existence. What then, are the conditions of possibility for becoming in education policy within productivity and economic competition?

5.2 Context

In order to set the socio-historical landscape of ECEC reform in Australia and the values and ideology behind them, I first lay out my understanding and use of the terms which I rely on heavily in this chapter: policy, governance and governmentality. This is followed by a discussion of the flow of reform from the mid 2000's to current practice as a socio-historical contextualisation. Included in this discussion are some of the values brought to these from previous positions on childcare, education and development.

5.2.1 Policy

Rizvi and Lingard (2010) discuss the term *policy* as "the actions and positions taken by the state ... that share essential characteristics of authority and collectivity" (p. 4). Irvine and Farrell (2013) add to this by suggesting policy is "any course of action (or inaction) relating to the selection of goals, the definition of values and the allocation of resources" on behalf of the state (p.100). Building on this, 'policy' in this chapter also refers to the manifestation of these positions

in documents guiding change and practice in early childhood education and care settings. Such perspectives are reflected in reform documents with language such as 'strategy', 'blueprint', and 'principles' (MCEETYA, 2008; DEEWR, 2009b). A multi-layered understanding of the term has enabled a springboard for critiquing greater contexts of history, values, and the relations between ideology and practice, including the role of language in communicating and co-opting popular sentiment. Understanding that policy is more than words on paper, the following socio-historical positioning reviews the broader policy context alongside some vestiges of sentiment and values of the role of education and care in the ECEC context.

5.2.2 Governance

While governance and governmentality share similar characteristics, as analytical terms they draw from distinct traditions. In discussing the terms, Amos (2010) suggests the two revolve around a 'common core' of modernity's concern with regulating, governing, control of processes and outcomes, in the relation between the state, organisations, the social body and individuals (p.1). At its most basic level, the term *governance* is concerned with technical forms and processes (Amos, 2010). The processes, relationship and forms of cooperation between instruments, procedures and actors, governance as an analytical term also focuses on "the state's relations with social affairs in the broadest sense" (Amos, 2010, p.1). Governance therefore is analysed at the national and international realms, with changes and development of policy recognised as influenced by multiple layers of interest at the macro level. The processes of ECEC reform, the cooperation of national, state and local state governing bodies, and the procedures for training and compliance critiqued in this chapter are recognised as part of a greater flow of change internationally.

Governance has also been defined in terms of the systems of regulation over children's spaces. Cobb, Danby and Farrell (2005) further define governance in this sense as "complex and intersecting systems" operating at the mandated sphere

such as policy, and the informal, such as home and family routines (p.15). This highlights the intersections of governance and governmentality as different levels of governing bodies produce a power flow through the site of the child.

5.2.3 Governmentality

As a Foucauldian term, *governmentality* refers to a broader 'meta-analysis' of disciplinary power revealing the dynamics between political processes, strategies and tactics, and individual subjectivities. The ongoing "making up of people" (Hacking, 2012, p.217) presents a partial 'ready-made character' garnered from passing through the institutions of the household, school, the workplace, government agencies, medical centres (McGushin, 2011), along with the communication of mass culture (Deleuze, 1995). For Foucault, the "chief function of disciplinary power is to 'train'... Discipline 'makes' individuals" (Foucault, 1977, p.170). Governmentality attends to people as objects of control and knowledge: disciplinary power observes, records, measures and calculates (McGushin, 2011). Through organisation of time and spatiality, structures and schedules, daily life is regulated and individuals undergo normalisation. The dynamics of individualisation and totalisation are inscribed with subjectivities, objectification, and control of the social collective; the relationship between the two reveals a "correspondence between the shaping of subjectivities and the modern state" (Amos, 2010, p.1). This sense of government is highly relevant to the aims of this chapter: the production of a highly disciplined individual: docile, yet productive, one with the capacity to reach their potential and that of the nation. As Sana Nakata (2015) has argued, governmentality's impact on childhood "is not just a relation of power that diminishes freedom in liberal societies, but one that determines what claims can be made about childhood" (p.163). For the thesis overall, governmentality raises questions of the tensions of subjectivities, becomings and what potential might amount to in the conditions provided for young children.

5.2.4 Socio-historical context

Young children in Australia are increasingly attending ECEC services. In Australia, programs for under three year olds have been classified as childcare, and those over three as educational programs only where registered as such. For state purposes, any prior to school service supporting family workforce participation is viewed as childcare (as in COAG, 2007; ACECQA, 2013), reflecting the main aim as workforce participation. 'Education' and 'education and care' are used in learning and quality frameworks. The division is reflected in the Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS] records that delineates childcare from 'preschool programs' as educational. The divide suggests ongoing distinction of two objectives in the sector. The percentage of children in infant and toddler programs in formal childcare settings was 22% in 2014 (ABS, 2015); for children aged 2-3, the percentage was 54%.[1] Of the 360,600 four to five-year-old children, 83% were attending a preschool program in 2014 (ABS, 2015). As Berthelsen and Brownlee (2005) suggested, an increasing number of children spend up to 10 hours on a daily basis. Attendance for the very young in such group care programs constitutes "a unique social and developmental context" (p.50).

Forming part of the values-heritage of contemporary ECEC is the North American framework of Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997), based on cognitive developmental theories that offered an approach to "practice, training and evaluation of young children" (Cohen, 2008, p.11). In response to criticism of heavy cultural and class bias, a revised version (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997) included some socio-cultural theory drawn from Vygotskyan theory of development. While not written for Australian educators, it was the reading text for education and care courses for a number of years, produced by the dominant early childhood organisation in the United States, NAEYC (Cohen, 2008), and becoming assumed knowledge within the field. Even with the years of critique

[1] Greater numbers of children 0-2 are in informal care. The ABS (2015, 28 April) stated that "grandparents provide child care for almost one-third of children of working parents".

and change (Ebrahim, 2010; Cohen, 2008; MacNaughton, 2005), the language of developmental or age appropriateness still haunts current practice.

Age appropriateness is based on universal discourses of children's development that include behavioural norms. Development theory, in this context, refers to processes of ontogenetic change over time, segmented to particular periods of growth and learning. With these periods recognised, milestones can be used to capture the expected types of learning and growth occurring. Milestones are indicators of achievement in each developmental period and allow identification of delays or cause for concern. Rather than the actual developmental theory, it is the assumptions of how and in what form these milestones are expected that underscore critique of age-stage theories of development, particularly alongside the normalisation that accompanies socialisation within early childhood services. Relying on a universalised view of development as a process of becoming the rational, performing adult, can influence a forgetting of the child's being as equally valuable. The *Early Years Learning Framework for Australia* (DEEWR, 2009a) avoids embedding children within specific age-stage developmental schemes, stating "a range of perspectives", may be drawn on in educators' practice.[2] Nevertheless, it seems likely that a developmental perspective is one that will continue to dominate terms of reference in ECEC pedagogy due to accepted knowledge of the growth and behaviour of children. The nature of framework paradigms illustrates the power of language and the language of power. Therefore, in this chapter, the selection of texts and statements produced by discourses of assumption and truth are positioned in order to question or "deny the necessity. We must think that what exists is far from filling all possible spaces'" (Foucault, 1997, p. 139–140).

[2]One of the working parties for the 2009 learning framework has noted that the original drafts for the EYLF encouraged specifically critical approaches such as anti-bias and rights-based concepts for discussion, to much public debate and media protest (eg. "get your politically-correct hands off our children" (Mirabella, in Sumsion et. al, p.2009)). The final product is washed down to "a range of perspectives", and language such as "civic participation and contribution" became "rather vacuously that children are connected and contribute to their world" (Sumsion et al., 2009, p.7).

5.2.5 Political contexts

Australia is constituted by a three-tier system of governments, at the federal (or commonwealth), the eight state and territory jurisdictions and, within these, local governments (councils or shires), of which there are 570 across Australia (Australian Government, 2015). Representatives from each of these levels of government form the Council of Australian Governments (COAG).[3] While the state and territory jurisdictions have been responsible for education and schooling, childcare and ECEC have a history of regulation at all three levels since the 1970's. In their discussion of childcare reform from 1990-2000, Irvine and Farrell (2013) state that between the late seventies and across the eighties there was little state concern with early childhood services, many of which were private sector. However, the decade following saw no less than 32 key policy initiatives for reforming childcare in Australia (Irvine & Farrell, 2013). The authors also note the increase in market theory and consumer language across this era. For example, the formation of an Economic Planning Advisory Commission (EPAC) Taskforce to investigate childcare demand, practice and provision issues had "no early childhood content expertise" (p.104), and language across recommendations reflected an "ideology of economic rationalism" (Irvine & Farrell, 2013, p.102). Even with these initiatives, it was the latter half of the 2000's that brought international critique of Australian government lack of initiative and spending on early childhood development. Following the Starting Strong II report in 2006, the OECD report in 2008 highlighted that Australia spent less as a percentage of GDP than other OECD countries (OECD, 2006, 2008). This highlighted a slippage between Australia's ratification of the UNCRC (1989) and the lack of policy for early childhood development and learning.

Following the Starting Strong and OECD reports, a COAG agreement in 2007 announced a comprehensive rollout of reform for government investment in early

[3]COAG is a three-tiered body consisting of the Prime Minister, State Ministers and Territory Chief Ministers, and President of Local Government Association (Bown, 2010, p.62).

childhood development. The communiqué announced a COAG partnership of reform in early childhood development, education, and skills in order to "pursue substantial reform' aimed at delivering "significant improvements in human capital outcomes for all Australians" (COAG, December 20 2007). This included a *National Early Childhood Development Strategy* (DEEWR, 2009b) emphasising reform for an integrated system with the objective of contributing to the "nation's human capital and productivity" (Margetts, February 10 2004). As part of this system, working towards an integrated and 'high quality' ECEC delivery, a governing *National Quality Framework* overarches the Children's Services regulations, the *National Quality Standard* (ACECQA, 2013) and *Early Years Learning Framework for Australia* (EYLF) (DEEWR, 2009).

5.3 Theoretical framework

As discussed in the previous chapters, within the networks and convergences of trade, colonisation and expansion of empire, mechanisms of modernisation and its institutions, there developed a scientific exploration of the human. Bodies and minds, and the resulting instruments of measurement and classification involved the collision of worldviews, debates and challenges to citizenship, democracy, class, learning, being and doing. These aligned through different events but contributed to realise the child as malleable, measurable and potential productive citizen. The language of statistics, identifying with the quantifiable and the calculable, observation and norms oriented a general scientific manner of viewing the world that has "irreversibly reshaped human ontology" (Miller & Rose, 2008, p.4). This chapter examines the implications of modernity's ontological assumptions in Australian reform for early childhood development that position ECEC as an appendage for developing the nation's competitive potential.

In *Surveiller et punir: Naissance de la prison* (Discipline and punish: Birth of the prison), Foucault (1977) proposed that analysis of the workings of power between institutions, individuals and the social body required a perspective other than a

typical top-down thinking of power. The lectures of 1977-78 and 1978-79 were courses in *Security, Territory, Population*, and *The Birth of Biopolitics*, which focused on techniques of governmentality through "the organization and politics of space" (Elden, 2007, p.30). These lectures developed ideas of the connections of sovereignty, discipline and government through spatial distributions and as modes of controlling or governing populations. Rose and Miller (2010) described the term government as a relationship between entities "constituted as political" and the multiple projects, organisations and practices of administering authorities:

> *Government is the historically constituted matrix within which are articulated all those dreams, schemes, strategies and manoeuvres of authorities that seek to shape the beliefs and conduct of others in desired directions by acting upon their will, their circumstances or their environment* (p.273).

Anticipated voluntary and regulated behaviour ensues through mechanisms such as language (in its many modes), education, policy, procedures, regulation, and training, each defining the type of knowledge about facts, truth and reality. Surveillance is a key mechanism of the engineering of conduct (Miller & Rose, 2008), producing power relations between the social body, the individual and governing bodies. Foucault (1977) has demonstrated that surveillance works "under the surface of images"; behind the "great distraction of exchange"; it invests in "bodies in depth", with "meticulous, concrete training of useful forces" (p.217). Surveillance describes a micro-form of power relations produced to control through concomitant relations. In describing the relations of the individual, the social body, and the state, surveillance effects a vigilant network of gazes (Foucault, 1977, p.217). The increasing intensity of this play of forces has led to the notion of control societies (Deleuze 1995). Across these networks there is an interdependence of political logics and administrative technologies (Rose & Miller, 2010, p.273), which connect the "most fragile instant" (Foucault, 2000, p.448) in ordinary lives and organisations to "aspirations of authorities" (p.274) of the neoliberal present. Miller and Rose (2008) demonstrate how the social body itself is invested in these mechanisms, through an array of disciplinary managers throughout society -schools, factories,

offices, health and welfare organisations- involved in the disciplinary management of behaviour and normalisation. This thesis recognises ECEC's enlistment into the array which is not simply disciplinary, but also an assemblage of control.

Foucault argued that power is always present in relationships, in which "one wishes to direct the behaviour of another" (Foucault, 1997, p.11). The gaze of regulation in ECEC enlists children, educators, administration, policy-makers, local, state and federal governments, in a "dense web that passes through apparatuses and institutions" (Foucault, 1991b, p.93). The practices with which knowledge, language and entrenched assumptions work as technologies through discipline, subjectivities and governance. The production of education discourse reveals the historical associations of fields of knowledge, such as psychology and medicine, and the practices that have evolved and inform the regulation and monitoring of standards and norms. These "regimes of truth" (1980, p.132) become dominant through the discourses in our lives: it is the continual struggle to dominate and give authority to certain knowledge that describes the workings of power as power relations. Through discourse and discursive practices, social possibilities and the limits of cultural intelligibility come to be controlled and given a place in the hierarchy of preferred knowledge and ways of being (Viruru, 2002; Kincheloe & McLaren, 2007; Cohen, 2008; Kerwin, 2011).

This chapter is positioned as a torrential stream of discourses within policy for early childhood education and care, conflated in dreams for early childhood development. The torrent is given place in the thesis overall in order to, through analysis, introduce a stammer in the confident common-sense of dominance. To consider what seems unquestionable, as current wisdom. Ultimately, it supports my objective of standing against the incoming tide, to make explicit the encoding of such discourses "and making them stutter" (Rose, 1999b, p.20).

5.4 Docile bodies: themes for analysis

In *Über Pädagogik*, Kant (1899/2003) viewed education as a space for producing docility in students. While "breaking a child's will makes him a slave" (1899, p.57), natural opposition and negative training (intervening only when obliged to) produces docility. The space and gaze of the education space enables the managed production of bodies and minds, persuasion of truth, and enlisting compliance. Both Rousseau and Kant viewed this as the role and technique of education, although it had been noted much earlier by Demia (1719): 'it will be very beneficial, when the teacher is obliged to use punishment, to *win the heart of the child* if he can before doing so' (as cited in Foucault, 1977, p.180, emphasis added).

The spatial management and coercion of bodies is a disciplinary technique employing separation and segmentation for management of bodies. This idea has been related to schooling, briefly by Foucault (1977, 1983), who argued the disciplinary system as seen in prisons were drawn from schools and the army. These ideas were developed further as technologies and methods of governing by Miller and Rose (2008), and have in a few instances been related to childhood (Nakata, 2015; Rose, 2013), ECD and ECEC (Cohen, 2008; MacNaughton, 2005; Millei, 2005; Cobb, Danby & Farrell, 2005). Early childhood settings are sites of control as they draw heavily on "educational psychology and utilise its power and immanent knowledge to 'discipline' early childhood agents through classroom practices" (Millei, 2005, p.128). Alongside practices, the spatial management of ECEC services are rarely questioned: the layout of rooms for a particular number of children, each separated and partitioned from the other, as set out by regulation of physical space and ratio (ACECQA, 2014; Education and Care Services National Regulations, 2011, p.125-126). This appears an inheritance from the tradition of schooling environments, and is related to paternal protection in keeping children safe:

> *As the NQF progresses, every service in the country will be assessed to make sure it meets the new quality standard. In the meantime, as*

> *safety is paramount all day and every day, every service must comply with rigorous health and safety requirements* (ACECQA, 2014).

It is also, I suggest, an example of the strategies of what is thought to be 'necessary'.

The critique and analysis in this section is scoped by four interconnected 'themes' drawn from my reading of the Strategy, the NQS and the EYLF. These highlight the conditions of possibilities and limitations that policy influences in a Foucauldian frame. The triumvirate of freedom, power and subjectivity are illuminated all the more against discourses of neoliberal productivity that elide discussion of ideology and values.

If Foucault's influence is highly visible across the thesis, it was a small section of text that provided direction for an exploration of which strategies of governance and normalisation combine forces across ECEC:

> *Our society is not one of spectacle but of surveillance; under the surface of images, one invests bodies in depth; behind the great distraction of exchange, there continues the meticulous, concrete training of useful forces; the circuits of communication are the supporters of an accumulation and a centralisation of knowledge; the play (composition?) of signs defines the anchorages of power; it is not that the beautiful totality of the individual is amputated, repressed, altered by our social order, it is rather that the individual is carefully fabricated in it, according to a whole technique of forces and bodies* (Foucault, 1977, p.217).

Miller and Rose (2008) discuss the idea of 'vast networks' of governing bodies. These authors argue that networks are not nets cast over society (Rose, 2013; Rose & Miller, 2010). Working on the analysis I pictured an image of mapping moving landscapes in which the entry points to power relations are random. In order to set parameters around analysis, I then summarised the above passage, enabling a framework of analysis crystallising some of the forces at work across reform documents:

> Surveillance takes the form of 'vast networks' (Miller & Rose, 2008), working 'under the surface of images'; investing in 'bodies in depth', with 'meticulous, concrete training of useful forces' (Foucault, 1977, p.217).

Using text and images from the three main sources for reform in ECEC, the following analysis is synthesised under the four realms or means for power in institutional governance of behaviour and lives. These are *vast networks*, which collaborate or have as their focus the period of early childhood and inform ECEC; the revealing of knowledge and discourse *under surface images*; the effort and reasoning of *investment in bodies in depth*; and the co-opting, on-going meticulous *training of forces* with which children and adults are involved at various levels of the power networks. The critique is presented as a thematic analysis of statements, evidence and citations from the selected documents.

5.4.1 Vast networks

> *2020 Vision: Australia has a strong evidence base that is readily available and informs policy and practice in early childhood approaches. There is a national data system and a national evaluation plan which supports monitoring and accountability under the National Strategy and continually expands the evidence base about what works to improve child outcomes. There are effective partnerships between policy, research and practice* (DEEWR, 2009b, p.21).

ECEC settings and other children's services do not work in isolation, although spatially they segregate children and adults from the community. Preschools, schools, community hubs, Maternal and Child Health centres, hospital and other medical sites of management (health, nutrition, wellbeing, research), intervention services, welfare and NGO's, psychologists, speech therapists, parenting programs, local government networks, state and federal government assistance and policy, are some of the networks of support and governance in the lives of children.

The Strategy (2009b) states the early childhood workforce includes:

> *...a range of professionals, paraprofessionals and staff with and without formal qualifications. These include, for example, early childhood teachers, child care workers, midwives, child and family health nurses, general practitioners, Aboriginal health workers, paediatricians, social workers, speech therapists, occupational therapists and physiotherapists* (p.20).

Each role, and the concepts of child behind their aims and purposes, has an implication in the direction of becomings (Deleuze, 1995). Mass media, including social media networks, communicate implicit information about cultural ways of being, and are also a source of specific information to families about child-rearing and community safety. Media in all its forms (screen, print, ICT, radio) creates a dependency on expertise (Cobb, Danby & Farrell, 2005). The network for disciplinary techniques is both local and macro: funders of development and globalisation are an enormous influence on what counts as knowledge and potential: the IMF, WTO, and World Bank (Harvey, 2007). In the Strategy's *Evidence Base*, a summary of the benefits of early childhood programs is drawn from Van der Gaag's (2001) work in a World Bank funded publication *From Child development to Human Development*, emphasising the connections between early childhood development and human capital. I highlight here a section in the Strategy that includes Van der Gaag's benefits of "linking ECD to Human Capital" for society:

> *Greater social cohesion; less poverty and crime; lower fertility rates; increased adoption of new technologies; improved democratic processes; higher economic growth* (DEEWR, 2009b, p. 34, from Van der Gaag, 2001).

While I am not critiquing the benefits of social cohesion or less poverty, I do question the summary as what it is *not* representing. That is, eliding the issue of social conditions which exclude groups and individuals from accessibility to resources, and why people's resilience is broken down rather than highlighting individual failures. How greater human capital actually improves "democratic processes" is not

explained, and what democracy might look like in a 'better' society under human capital theory is questionable and entirely under assumption in the text. The links between international economic organisations and federal government highlight an economic imperative for development, and emphasise failings of groups as suboptimal performance. In turn, languages of child development, human development, economic development, evolutionary development have become intertwined and haunt notions of what is optimal and essential for the universal human.[4]

Sites of authority cited across the three documents, include most cited and the evidence base (appendix of the Strategy) highlights the networks and chain of knowledge. For example, the Strategy's emphasis is on evidence and evidence-based research, and in this emphasis highlights an elision of any education literature, except for the few targeted interventions that have also been cited across international sites of ECEC policy (such as EPPE, Head Start and the North Carolina Abecedarian projects). The Strategy provides an Evidence Base and notes to citations, foregoing a bibliography. The NQS provides a list for Further Reading, according to each Quality Area, and a glossary of mainly administrative terms. The EYLF provides a glossary and a bibliography of mostly early childhood education and care literature.

An exploration of the citations from the Strategy highlights the networks for gathering, describing, and screening the 'knowable' (*connaissable*) individual. The following are representative of the knowledge base of networks:

Biological

Taking a principal position in the 'Evidence Base' for the National Strategy are the knowledges emerging from scientific disciplines about biological embedding, neuroscience (brain development), and human genome research. The Strategy states that:

[4]I return to this discussion in the summative section in this chapter.

> *...since the completion of the mapping of the human genome, the study of gene-environment interactions has cast a whole new light on the early year's environment in the origins of health and some of the most burdensome adult diseases* (DEEWR, 2009b, p.32).

In biological embedding, experiences are "programmed into the functioning of developing biological and behavioural systems" (p. 32). The case built from neuroscience for early intervention is highly visible across the Strategy. Reflecting this is human capital argument which cites neuroscience and brain development, particularly Shonkoff and Phillips (2000) as sites of authority, but also providing possibilities for sites of measurement which can "screen and intervene" (Rose, 2010, p.79).

Medical

Although connected with the biological sciences, not all the medical references are brain development based. The Centre for Community Child Health (CCCH) is a hospital-based research centre in Melbourne. It produces research-based policy briefs on various issues on children's wellbeing, health and also education and care. The inclusion of education and care has a medical lens, giving authority to encourage 'better quality', and raising access to childcare. This is also noted by Bown (2014) in discussion with EYLF draft working group colleagues, who found that "not only were medical discourses influential but that they were more influential when disseminated by medical professionals than educationalists" (p.55).

Education

Families are considered the foremost teachers of children's learning however, in some sources with citation in the Strategy, families are likely to be viewed as sites of possible misuse of care (such as Heckman & Masterov, 2004);[5] Teachers, specialists, therapists, administration and managerial personnel record the

[5]I explore this theme as discourse in Chapter six.

child's personal, biological and behavioural details. As discussed in chapter four, the practices and methods of observing and gathering data on children began with the medico-pedagogical marriage in the nineteenth century, as exemplified by practitioners and psychologists such as Pape-Carpantier, Joteyko, Montessori and De Sanctis in Europe. While practitioners and personnel actively gather data, families comply- one practice lost from the early methods is the family actively observing and recording children's behaviour.

Early childhood education and care

In the Strategy, qualified teachers are viewed as necessary for high quality in early childhood education and care (Strategy, DEEWR, 2009b); the regulatory framework in the Australian reform context includes the *Education and Care Services National Regulations* (MCEECDYA, 2011), *Education and Care Services National Law* (MCEECDYA, 2011); NQF and NQS (ACECQA, 2013); the EYLF (DEEWR, 2009) and relevant state learning and curriculum frameworks. Every three years, teachers of children in the first year of school gather information on selected children for the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC).[6] On the AEDC website, investment and economics is placed at the forefront, citing Economist arguments:

> *American economist and Nobel prize winner James Heckman argues that once children fall behind in their learning, they are likely to remain behind* (AEDC, 2015, para. 6).

As Bown (2015) found with medical discourse, even arguments about teaching and learning from economists are more influential than from educationalists. The list of authoritative knowledges, organisations and individuals create a network of normalisation which disciplines, and surveillance that records and maintains

[6]The AEDC questionnaire is completed by teachers of children in the first year of school. The AEDC website suggests a "population measure places the focus on the population or groups as well as the individual." In keeping with the theme of vast networks, the site suggests the Census can be "used by communities, schools, policy makers, early childhood educators and health services, local councils and governments in conjunction with other resources (such as state and national statistics) to plan and evaluate" for optimal development.

vigilant observation. Rose (2013) discusses the idea of "governing at a distance" as a method of government operating through the use of "techniques like audits and standards and other kinds to shape the conduct of entities without actually having formal control of their decision" (p.442-3). These techniques are clearly evident in ECEC. However, the networks of governance still weigh heavily and inscribe on the child at the site of the body. The body as a site of objectification is created through training the body, language and what we might seek to manifest in expression as acceptable or not. Discipline operates as a "political anatomy of detail" (Foucault, 1977, p.139). Surveillance requires high visibility, and "operates upon individual movements and gestures until it eventually builds them into a recognisable shape" (Holligan, 1999, p.139). For early childhood education and care services, the forms of socialisation desired by surveillance requires classificatory discourse of deviance as belonging to a category of abnormal or atypical and subject to individualised forms of correction (Falchi, Axelrod & Genishi, 2014; Cohen, 2008; Holligan, 1999). Although advanced liberal and capitalist societies are moving towards techniques of control (Deleuze, 1995), the education institution still provides a site for disciplinary techniques. The early childhood workforce as stated by the Strategy form a network of surveillance and correction under which the child body is trained and disciplined to a 'correct form'. The young child who is viewed as underperforming, or not quite ready for school, is impacted because the 'at-risk' category separates children through their performance according to mandated curriculum or latent perceptions of correct ways of being as "natural or neutral" (Falchi, et al., 2014, p. 346). Furthermore, as these authors argue, the services that "developmentally vulnerable" (AEDC, 2015, key findings) children are sent to, or the intervention received at services may further alienate from socialisation and learning time with peers (Falchi, et al., 2014, p.347). Building on this, my argument is that as very young children are drawn into the networks of control and surveillance, the disciplinary 'subject' constructed as 'at-risk' already awaits them, and consequently may continue to shadow future performance. In this manner the flag of colonisation (in this case, of paternalism to childhood) blocks the emergence of child's possible and experimental being-becoming.

5.4.2 Under surface images

Across the three reform chosen documents, language presents a face of reform underscored by objectives of intervention and investment. While these are the objectives in the Strategy the terms are not used in the learning or quality frameworks or their guiding documents. The document with the greatest coverage across the social body of early childhood education, the EYLF has a very different language to that of the Strategy or the NQS (a step from the ECD strategy into ECEC contexts). The EYLF presents a competent child citizen[7]. The image of the child as strong, capable and active in their learning sits uneasily alongside some basic assumptions of educational discourse. Cannella (1999) argues that "institutions, capitalist business practices, even discourses on democratic schooling reinforce our present day acceptance of learning, thinking, education, advancement, privileged knowledge, and human inferiority" (p.40).

Images of the child as economic subject, or services as supporting adults as economic subjects, are not easily visible in the EYLF. Overall, the language within the vision and the introduction of this document displays the child's experience of learning and being in the early learning setting. Adults are 'educators' or 'teachers', children are 'learners'. The image in this framework is of learning and teaching in a co-constructed, child-oriented environment. This is exemplified in the phrase "Being, Belonging and Becoming" (DEEWR, 2009). In contrast, the agenda of strengthening human capital on the basis of productivity is exemplified in the phrase "*intervene early, intervene often, intervene effectively*" (Ludwig & Sawhill, in Mustard, 2008). Both are cited in the Strategy and NQS.

Productivity is only mentioned once in the National Quality Standard; however, it is positioned clearly in its objectives:

[7] Although the word 'citizen' was washed out of the final product, according to the draft working party. Sumsion et al (2007) suggest political risk played a role in the watering down of most contentious content. It could be argued that such content also highlighted greater possibilities for positive change.

> *The Australian government and state and territory governments recognise the importance of increasing their focus on the early years to ensure the wellbeing of children throughout their lives and to lift the productivity of our nation as a whole* (ACECQA, 2013, 7).

This positions children as important in their present and as becoming producers of the nation's wealth. It aligns closely with the COAG[8] statement that "*Schooling and skills development must be improved now, and must start early as children are the nation's future*" (Productivity Agenda Working Group -Early Childhood Development Sub Group, 2008, p. 2).

There is no reference to productivity in the Early Years Learning Framework. The surface image of the capable, active child in the learning framework and quality frameworks sits at odds with that of advanced human capital. The question this raises for this study is why the two can sit together- rather than presenting as a complex arena with multiple perspectives, the contradictions can also be understood as appeasing the aesthetics of the early childhood workforce. If the early childhood education and care site was openly encouraged as an industry, a technical process, if children were overtly calculated as merely future compliant producers, the ECEC workplace would be a mere mechanical process. Instead, the learning framework educators work with, and the quality standard, provide narratives of hope for the child and for the field (Sumsion et al., 2009). Narratives of hope are also utilised in control discourses:

> *If power were anything but repressive, if it never did anything but to say no, do you really think one would be bought to obey it?* (Foucault 1980, p.220)

Underlying the surface image of the capable child in the learning framework, a number of the sources informing the Strategy use remarkably different phrasing, revealing a starker picture of the values base in human capital objectives. Heckman and Masterov (2004, 2007) consistently maintain that early intervention saves money in the long run- not investment in schools but in enriching environments in

[8]Council of Australian Governments

the early years, targeting families, particularly the female parent, who have "failed to perform" (p.1) the task of producing the 'skill set' necessary for productivity. The authors of the working paper argue that "education and skill are central to the performance of a modern economy" (2004, p.8), and technological change "magnifies demands for educated workers". The economic view of schooling as a "technology of human skill formation" (2004, p.21) is used in support of the argument that policy should be focusing on the early environments "of the children sent to them" (2004, p.8). The State must intervene in the *preparation* of children for school, because schools "work with what parents give them" (p.5). Each of these statements highlight the authors' views that families are failures. Adverse family environments ("out-of-wedlock" births and single parent structure) and events such as "the accident of birth" (2007, p.2) effect unreliable skill growth- the statements are clear middle-class and religious values. These texts highlight that optimum development maintains the middle class value of the individual growing in 'enriched' conditions who is at once normalised yet extraordinary in their race to the top (Kaščák & Pupala 2013):

> *Failed schools deal in large part with children from dysfunctional families that do not provide the enriched home environments enjoyed by middle class and upper middle class children* (Heckman & Masterov 2007, 3).[9]

On the other side of this assumption are self-evident truths such as "*out-of-wedlock*" and the "*accident of birth*", and non-married family structure as risks for society. Illiterate and innumerate workers are "*a source of social and economic problems*" (p.10), and only the middle and upper classes of society 'enjoy' the conditions of their existence. These terms are repeated throughout the *Productivity Argument for Investing in Early Childhood* (Heckman & Masterov, 2004, 2007). A well-respected economist, Heckman's report is cited across policy in Australia. Moss (2011) critiques the emphasis on families as failures in emerging

[9]This excerpt is taken from a lecture presentation of the Productivity Report by the same authors. The content is mostly the same, however some statements such as 'families have failed' and the repeated use of 'drag' are omitted in the presentation paper.

early childhood policies rather than the reasons for conditions of poverty or extreme disadvantage families may experience. Following this point, my argument here is that focusing on productivity, and policy informed by economists and market theory narrows expectations for children caught in circumstances of social exclusion and disadvantage. In this discourse, children of the 'failed' -unmarried, raced, gendered and classed- family are always *already* constructed as "*a drag on productivity*" (Heckman & Masterov, 2004, p.1).

In a more oblique manner, the Strategy (DEEWR, 2009b) appears to be upholding some of these values by including statements and conclusions of this argument in the policy. For example, it briefly mentions that:

> *In what has been described as the 'paradox of progress', social inequalities across many indicators of child development have actually increased rather than decreased with increasing wealth in Australia* (p.10).

The Strategy does not discuss this further or suggest reasons for the continuing inequalities, or that previous policies have failed to alleviate them. In terms of population, there is clearly a narrow type of becoming imagined by human capital. *Becoming* in the human capital argument is, simply, becoming middle and upper class.

5.4.3 Invests in bodies in depth

The previous section critiqued perspectives that outline evidence for investing in bodies, suggesting the failed productivity of particular groups and individuals. The spatial management of bodies is a disciplinary technique employing separation and segmentation through particular environments. Contemporary forms of disciplinary power work through ideologies to govern the soul (Rose, 1999), using techniques of surveillance at the micro-level. The processes of bio-power at the level of the individual and the population involves gaining knowledge and targeting 'problem' groups for specialised control. This justifies tracking, predicting, measurement and comparison, policing and monitoring. The spread of power

is reflected in the many points of entry to knowledge about the individual, the body, the mind, and the soul. As Foucault (1980) demonstrated, this is power represented by:

> *...its capillary forms of existence, the point where power reaches into the very grain of individuals, touches their bodies, and inserts itself into their actions and attitudes, their discourses, learning processes, and everyday lives* (p.39).

The analysis to this point highlights the extent of early childhood services as compliant in the conditions provided for young children, the emergence of new becomings and any possibility for their desired maintenance. It also highlights the modes of power as situated in-between nodes of contact, similar to the passing of information as electrical transmission through nerve centres.

There are twelve instances where the Strategy speaks of investing and investments, and another twelve as citation. The references to financial investment are alongside suggestions for investing in the further use of screening and measurement of bodies and brains, because knowledge of brain development, plasticity, and the human genome are allowing scientific frameworks (Shonkoff, 2010) the possibilities for early and effective intervening into bodies and lives. I highlight some of these emergent knowledges and the authority they bear in arguing for in-depth investment through screening the body-mind:

Neurosciences

Brain development receives almost a full page summary, from sensitive periods of brain development, foundations built in early childhood, to consequences of healthy brain development for later academic success. It also summarises the proliferation and pruning process in the first few years of life, sourced from the well-known U.S. research report *From Neurons to Neighbourhoods* (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). The section discusses 'sensitive periods' in development of neural pathways, highlighting 'emotional control' and 'acquisition of language'. It highlights that

the social aspects of young children's experiences 'powerfully influence' the healthy development of the young brain, taking the chain of knowledges from neuroscience to genomics and biological embedding.

Biological embedding and genomics

Studies of gene-environment interactions receive half a page summary. The section begins with "since the completion of the mapping of the human genome, the study of gene-environment interactions has cast a whole new light on the importance of the early year's environment" (DEEWR, 2009b, p.32). For my argument in this section, the intersection of measurable effects of the social on the biological is an important juncture for the future of ECD and ECEC, and importantly, for the control of bodies through the grouping of peoples and the control this 'justifies'.

Nikolas Rose (2013) has identified a "belief that advances in neurobiology are central to understanding individual conduct, both normal and pathological" (p.80). The belief has increased with continuing emerging knowledge about brain structure and activity and its relationship with environment. Furthermore, the possibilities for predicting and identifying precursors brings a growing hope that emerging technologies will identify "*future riskiness* in advance", in order to "identify a 'susceptible individual'" (p.80, emphasis added). Interestingly, and alarmingly, the language and emphasis on biological and behavioural indicators recalls Josefa Joteykyo's work in nineteenth century Belgium on biological determination of intellectual capacity.[10] The weight of neurobiological knowledge in education policy highlights a similar hope for determining outcomes of individuals, by identifying susceptibility and monitoring responses to correction and discipline. This emerging image of susceptibility relies on a mix of hope and fear. Hope: that early identification of biological 'types' can enable intervention and modification of early environments. Fear: from political authorities and policy makers influencing policies of mass screening on behalf of "public protection" (Rose, 2013, p.96). The possibilities that lie in new and emerging technologies takes governing techniques

[10] As discussed in Chapter Three. With Joteyko, paedology's methods crossed into the physiological and used an extensive list of measurement tools.

further into the body-mind and soul. What then for new *becomings* as society changes and offers new ways for human *kinds*?

As control weakens the possibilities for creative existence (Deleuze, 1995), resistance to becoming-subject must struggle against the vigilance of remarkably in-depth and technical investment in bodies. Jack Shonkoff's (2010; 2000) repeated call for connecting scientific frameworks of knowledge to investment in human capital is taken up by economists involved in Australian early childhood development:

> *In a recent review of early child development, Ludwig and Sawhill (2006), in their paper from The Brookings Institution, outlined three important principles to improve early child development:*
>
> - *intervene early (at least at the time of birth)*
> - *intervene often*
> - *intervene effectively* (In Mustard, 2008, p.17).

5.4.4 Meticulous, concrete training of useful forces

Adults as well as children are implicated in the shaping of compliant workers. While docility may give an impression of passivity, individuals and collaborative groups are active in the creation of the selves as viewed by policy and framework processes. Training (particularly for change) includes lifelong learning, professional development, reform implementation, and the training and retraining of professionals in gaining necessary qualification. What counts as knowledge is also implicated, because particular knowledge trains useful forces. For example, ideas of 'best practice' are scattered throughout the EYLF and is one of the principles behind the NQF and the Quality Standard. The reform is continuing to roll out: a corpus of training programs such as Professional Learning Program

(previously VCAA; now an ACECQA role[11]) a series of vignettes for viewing, reflecting and discussion by practitioners, newsletters, country wide seminars and workshops post-implementation of framework and NQS and ongoing ACECQA updates. The ongoing training through professional development, meetings with educational leaders, and the self-reflection process, can amount to a professional 'normalisation' process. The policy and guiding documents which educators and administrators adhere to (in the process of quality assessment and rating) bind communities of practice to regimes of disciplinary knowledge which have a "vested interest in social formation" (Holligan, 1999, p.139).

Young children also have a part to play in shaping optimal selves. The National Strategy's vision statement is about what 'children deserve'. The 2020 vision states that: "By 2020 all children have the best start in life *to create a better future for themselves and the nation*" (DEEWR 2009b, p.13 emphasis added). Children are implicated as subjects of care, and objects for measurement, and at the same time must also produce themselves as *creators* of a nation's future. In this vision, early childhood education trains, and corrects, future useful forces. Children who will, upon reaching school, sit nicely in groups, preferably in their own space and not bother others, will know the discourse of obedience to the teacher (MacNaughton, 2005), regulate their behaviour and body clocks, and know that finishing tasks in as short a time as possible is preferable to being slow (Robinson, Eickelkamp, Goodnow, & Katz, 2008). The intention is that intervention at the earliest point of existence will assist in reaching the outcomes of "increased productivity and international competitiveness" (DEEWR, 2009b, p.13). Framing investment for long term and ongoing futures, children are important for workforce participation by virtue of their attendance in ECEC programs, both as a foundation for future success, and as enablers of their parents' workforce participation:

[11]VCAA- Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Association. The National frameworks for ECEC under 'The National Law' and 'Education and Care Regulations' are now overseen by the Australian Children's Education and Care Authority (ACECQA). This body has the role of training accreditation and implementation of the National Quality Framework, and ongoing assessment of services to "ensure consistency" (ACECQA 2015, p.3).

> *The Economist magazine (18 July 1998) concluded: It is perfectly possible to devise a system that will produce more children and still keep women at work* (Mustard, 2008, p.33).

The images of childhood, becoming and potential sit at very different coordinates in the mapping of reform in early childhood education and care. Layering the NQS over the Strategy, and the EYLF over both, the glossy, bright, clear images of child and educator are, if examined underneath, a palimpsest. Each layer reveals further discursive alliances in the weight given to particular research upholding the policies. It needs to be acknowledged that without taking into account the underlying evidence base and citations of the Strategy, the analysis may have looked very different. I suggest that this highlights the importance of examining the discursive formations, local and international, underlying texts and events.

Training individual and collective selves

The idea of training comes in both organised and passive forms. Compliance through comparison is extended through levels of self-performance. Self-reflecting on practice is required but is not submitted as part of the assessment. The purpose is to "examine strengths and weaknesses" (New South Wales Children's Services, 2015) and to prepare for the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). The QIP outlines which areas of the National Quality Standard services need to improve. Services are required to submit the QIP annually. Reflection is on self and centre practice rather than on frameworks, regulations and policy. Moss (2007) suggests that "neoliberal discourse prefers technical over critical questions" (p.5). In the quality improvement process, critical questioning is focused on the self as practitioner and the centre as service provider. There is no mention of critically questioning frameworks and regulation. Complex assemblages are bound up "with a particular vocabulary or language that circumscribed what could be said or what could be done in ways that were meaningful" (Miller & Rose, 2008, p.3). The EYLF asserts a common language with which to use among educators, families and other professionals. The National Quality Standard Professional Learning Program vignettes

of quality practice emphasise the "common language about children's learning" (DEEWR, 2009, p.8). Self-reflection for the QIP and consequent submission for the rating assessment encourage the "language of the framework" to "improve communication" around children's learning and the ongoing learning of practitioners (DEEWR, 2009, p.8). To achieve a standard practice and maintain an existing rating, practitioners must continually submit to self-assessment (individually and collectively as a centre) and through the regulatory body of ACECQA.

5.5 Summary and conclusion

To return to the research question driving the chapter: '*What ideas of childhood and development compel and inspire the framing of educational objectives in current policy contexts of Australian early childhood reform*', I argue that the analysis demonstrates that ideas of economic theory and neoliberal positioning of the subject clearly inform the educational objectives presented in the texts. In relation to child and childhood, child is a period subsumed under the paternal protection of the state where failings of families require intervention and investment. Investment in early childhood development and education is earmarked as economic development, highlighting the weight of the role of economists in early childhood policy. Unlike some of the research informing the policies, these Australian reform documents are amenable to a balance of universal and targeted approaches to investment programs, recognising that "all children and families require some support at different times and the largest group of vulnerable children, in terms of actual numbers, is in the middle of the social gradient" (DEEWR, 2009b, p.9). The Strategy argues that universal programs may help to reduce stigma, create greater access, and assist in "assessing and referring" (p.9) for additional support.

The increasing 'necessary' control over young children's lives raises contradictions for supporting young children's becomings in such settings. However, this is an issue of perceptions of what it means to be becoming: as discussed in the two previous chapters, the dominant understanding of becoming is the linear, progressive

development toward the rational individualised adult. This has implications for other facets of being, such as agency as an observable manifestation[12], or assuming the reality of potential. Standardised quality becomes measurable and requires inspection systems. Assessment in the early years also requires a continual 'checking' of the child through observation and reflection. The danger is that when accountability underscores daily practice, the sense of the local child, "sustained [within] a web of relational structures" (Papatheodorou, 2010, p.5) becomes lost.

To return to an earlier point[13] about democracy: What is democracy when linked explicitly to Human Capital, and is this democracy based on capital and market forces? Critical positions raise the question of choice and a consumerisation of 'democracy' (Davies, 2010; Moss, 2014; Dahlberg & Moss, 2005). The increasing use of consumer-led practices, in the context of vast materialism, gives clues to the lens which views agency as choice and how this informs an understanding of children's "influence on their world" (DEEWR, 2009a, 2009b), and becoming as becoming productive adult. The tightening of surveillance and governance over being raises concerns for the weakening of creative existence, instead emphasising compliance and skillsets for workforce participation. The danger of accepting gradual changes in concepts such as democracy is in the conflation of the term with universalisms and ideology such as capitalism:

> *All aspects of social behavior are now reconceptualised along economic lines - as calculative actions undertaken through the universal human faculty of choice. Choice is seen to be dependent upon a relative assessment of costs and benefits of 'investment* (Rose 1999, p.141).

The danger of human capital is the assumption of the universal, along with reduction of existences into a prefabricated form of subject. Universals such as globalisation and development, are based on dominant ideologies often hidden "behind the

[12]The EYLF and NQS include supporting agency in Learning Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of Identity. Outcome 1.2 states 'Children develop their emerging autonomy, interdependence, resilience and sense of agency' and educators 'support' this growing sense.

[13]Page 18 of this chapter in 'vast networks'. In a statement in the strategy, suggesting the benefits of linking child and human development to human capital, one area is 'improved democratic processes'.

great distraction of exchange" (Foucault, 1977, p.217) of markets, consumerism and materiality. As Rose (1999) further argues, "all manner of social undertakings –health, welfare, education, insurance - can be reconstrued in terms of their contribution to the development of human capital" (p.142). Democracy is still in the process of figuring itself out, in the process of becoming, as much as society is always in a becoming. It should never be unquestioned because political ideologies create limitations for 'truth' and existences.

With the analysis discussed, the question remains as to the conditions of possibility for potential, becomings and agency in complex contexts and palimpsest policies. Selected statements and passages from texts have, on analysis, revealed the underlying discourses of productivity and human capital. The overarching research problem of *decolonising ideas of child, being and becoming* can be partly addressed at this stage and only with further questions. The critique of the currents and flows of this stream, urges the question 'how do the parameters of policy *constrict* conditions of possibility for becomings, beings, potential in all viabilities?' Policy constricts because it must reduce existence to calculations and determinants, without reference to values of the making up of 'human'. As educators, we must recognise the assumptions of the human, in our actions toward children. We must also, as Bronwyn Davies (2006) argues:

> *...understand our own contribution to creating and withholding the conditions of possibility of particular lives. We must constantly ask what it is that makes for a viable life and how we are each implicated in constituting the viability or non-viability of the lives of others* (p.435).

The questions raised amount to my argument that between the extraordinary and contradictory meeting of individualisation and totalisation, there is an urgent need to ask, what space this leaves for the multiplicities of existence and honouring self-determination of becomings? If potential is reaching the nation's goal of competitive development, how then, can creative existence compete with policy laced with human capital understanding? How do we work with the contradictions of

totalisation and individualisation? How does the suppression of desired becoming manifest itself in sickness, yearning (a 'homesick' for self) and wellbeing?

Such questions are taken to the next chapter which examines the emerging forms of power and discourses on the constitution of individuals and groups, to justify greater governance over the soul. The consequences are the loss of one's self-determination –and constraints of ever knowing what that means- for a nation's always-future happiness.

Chapter 6

Human capital, child and potential

> *There's no democratic state that's not compromised to the very core by its part in generating human misery. What's so shameful is that we've no sure way of maintaining becomings, or still more of arousing them, even within ourselves. How any group will turn out, how it will fall back into history, presents a constant "concern"* (Deleuze, 1995, p.173).

6.1 Introduction

This chapter uses a method of eventalisation to examine "regimes of practices" (Foucault, 1991, p.75) as intersecting discourses surrounding the Australian reform agenda and the ECD/ECE policy. Practices, in the sense Foucault refers to them, are sites of intersection: discourse around what is and can be said, and done, "rules imposed and reasons given", what is planned and what is taken-for-granted (p.75). The analysis in the previous chapter presented findings of a thematic approach that highlighted the disciplinary networks and relations shaping docile bodies. Moving beyond the networks, images and forces constituting the conditions for the shaping of docile bodies, this chapter is concerned with how statements from different discourses came to be bound in a particular rationality justifying the necessary and the universal for children, for ECEC and for a nation. Focusing

on a succession of 'events' or set of statements, archaeology shows how these "become an object of discourse, to be recorded, described, explained, elaborated into concepts, and provide the opportunity for a theoretical choice" (Foucault, 1972, p.185). In other words, I examine the "knots of discourses" (Rancière, 2009, p.119) making up early childhood education and care through the modalities of power created in the entanglement.

I use 'eventalisation' as an analysis "according to the multiple processes constituting an event" (Foucault, 1991, p.76). It examines the multiple relations and connections that have constituted "a reality and a history" (Cohen, 2008, p.11). For my purpose, I am interested in 'the event' as a set of statements or texts, the discourses produced, and how these have come to be entangled as statements of truth, both universal and 'necessary'. One of the questions leading this examination is my interest in why early childhood development and education not only became a scientific problem at a certain point, but has intensified as a global, universal problem with necessary and acceptable intervention methods. In chapter three of this thesis, on Childhood, I argued that particular practices and disciplinary knowledges opened possibilities for new techniques of power to emerge. For this chapter, the knowledges and evidences of the early childhood reform documents, come into focus. This assists an exploration of the influences on policy and processes at the federal level of government, by critiquing the knowledge and ideas that come to be accepted over others. The analysis also assists in further examining the evidence for the research question that seeks how '*ideas of childhood and development compel and inspire the framing of educational objectives in current policy contexts of Australian early childhood reform*'. The positioning of this chapter in the thesis is to understand the conditions faced for decolonising 'educational possibilities' for potential. In highlighting the self-evidences that justify theoretical choices, the chapter also highlights both "precariousness... and complex interconnections" (Foucault, 1991, p.75) of historical and recent processes. This also partly enables issues of decolonising concepts and practices to be addressed, by first illuminating the acceptability of self-evidence.

In discussing his sense of 'events', Foucault outlined two functions of eventalisation, consisting of an examination of knowledge and practices as a *breach of self-evidence*; and examining the "blockages, play of forces, strategies... *establishing what counts* as self-evident, universal and necessary" (Foucault, 1991, p.76). The first section of this chapter concerns itself with these two functions. The multiple facets of concern that come into focus –for this thesis, early childhood education, development, economy, psychology, sciences and their practices- highlight the nature of eventalisation as a causal multiplication, or "pluralisation of causes" (Foucault, 1991, p.76). For example, the nature of multiple knowledges, practices and values converging by the turn of the twentieth century can attest to the accumulative and varied nature of ideas converging on 'childhood'. The analysis differs from cause-and-effect logic (Bown, 2014) because the emphasis is on the multiple relations across varied domains. That is, causal multiplication understands concepts, statements and techniques as multifaceted and unable to be bound to a singular salient event. Events are analysed with regard to the multiple processes constituting them. For this thesis, the change sought by government reform, from a strategy for early childhood development [ECD] to learning framework for early childhood education and care [ECEC], is taken as multiple 'events' constituted through multilayered processes and represented through a number of policy documents, frameworks, underlying evidence and veridiction. They represent intersections and tensions of different discourses, some which have bound together, a knot, creating in its visibility a seemingly impervious argument for an improved nation.

The chapter then turns to an analysis of the targets of these discourses. That is, the *relations* of the discursive formations, their *strategies* for establishing truths, and the knowledges which give these authority, to the conditions this provides for becoming and being of children. The analysis considers how discursive events have "determined what constitutes our present, and what constitutes ourselves" (Foucault, 1983). Determining the modes of objectification through which these discourses speak, the analysis presents statements from the authoritative texts that have been discussed as influential knowledges. These are the *National Early*

Childhood Development Strategy (DEEWR, 2009b), *A Productivity Argument for Investing in young children* (Heckman & Masterov, 2004, 2007) and *From Neurons to Neighbourhoods* (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). Further, the analysis highlights reasons for the problematisation of early childhood, the knowledge producing modes of power, and the tightening of a discursive formation.

6.2 Self-evident truths

One of the first steps in eventalisation is to question how the power-knowledge-discourse triumvirate operates to support justification of events (Bown, 2014). For example, for this study, how is intervention and investment in ECEC validated? What ideas are given as self-evident, or claimed as a truth that works where others fail? I draw upon two self-evident ideas used in the Strategy: the relation of poverty to developmental problems, and the performance of verbal language acquisition. Both imply the failures of families, disregarding actual experience of poverty and reasons for disadvantage such as prejudice, 'superior' forms of knowledge, classism and racism.

6.2.1 Families as failures

There are statements in the Strategy suggesting that poverty in childhood increases likelihood of later delay and dysfunction. The image of the child is at once both vulnerable and risky (Rose, 2010). Of the three key documents examined in the previous chapter (EYLF, NQS and Strategy), the Strategy is the only document with this argument, and it is one which is supported by a number of research findings. The breach of self-evidence here is in the assumed 'truth' of this as a social equation of developmental delay. In the Strategy's Evidence Base (DEEWR, 2009b), in particular the productivity reports (Heckman & Masterov, 2007; 2004), poverty and disadvantage *equals* later 'suboptimal' performance. The language used in catch phrases is proverbial:

> *Skill begets skill; learning begets learning. Early disadvantage, if left untouched, leads to academic and social difficulties later in life. Early advantage accumulates, just as early disadvantage does* (Heckman & Masterov, as cited in DEEWR, 2009b, p.8).

Peter Moss (2011b, 2011b) questions the visibility of individuals and groups as the cause of their disadvantage, and the invisibility of the reasons for poverty as dysfunction of social body. This creates a mismatch of policy that emphasises ineffective parenting over *causes of* disadvantage such as poverty. Given the aggregates of data (Heckman & Masterov, 2004; Glassman, 2011), actual children's capabilities are left unnoticed. Possibilities are limited by the preference given to human capital understanding of talent and skill-set. In relation to the chapter's focus, both being and becoming here are seen as capabilities or failings. Certainly some of the evidence base of the Strategy take this argument, such as productivity platforms for EC intervention programs (Heckman & Masterov, 2006; Mustard 2008), and some of the neuroscience arguments (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). The Strategy makes similar conclusions. However, there is very brief statement, almost lost in the 'overwhelming evidence' that states:

> *...all children and families require some support at different times and the largest group of vulnerable children, in terms of actual numbers, is in the middle of the social gradient* (DEEWR, 2009b, 9).

The strategy is discussing universal and targeted programs. The information this reveals should refute any stereotypes of the relationship between "vulnerability and family income", as also found by Mustard (2008, p.13) which is discussed in his Australian report.[1] In the Strategy, no more is made of this, except to briefly state that it supports universal programs. Besides this small excerpt, citations and examples of research across the Strategy all emphasise the stereotypical picture.

[1]Mustard reports that in Canada and Australia, there are significant numbers for 'poor development' on school entry in the highest income group, and the majority in the middle income bracket- reflecting DEEWR's statement. Mustard highlights that 37% poor development in lowest income group also means 63% 'did well'. These figures "refute the stereotype that the majority of children with developmental problems are from poor families" (Mustard, 2008, p.13).

Language, knowledge and power work in relationship. In policy, this is visible as expertise and the authoritative voice. These are drawn from the scientific disciplines and inform the regulatory practice: thus implying or stating what best practice is not or what behaviour needs to be modified in children. For example, the ECD Strategy suggests that:

> *...children's acquisition of language is highly associated with their mothers' speech and interaction with them. By two years of age, children whose mothers speak to them the most have vocabularies up to eight times greater than those whose mothers speak to them the least* (DEEWR, 2009b, p.31 emphasis added).

The overarching assumption here is the priority of verbal language over other vital forms of communication. This is clearly a cultural-class influence from a western lens producing evidence of failure in those who *do otherwise*. The importance of non-verbal communication across contexts is missing from any of the evidence cited, and this excerpt highlights this.[2] Besides the assumption of the verbal, the expert voice is reinforcing the idea that the optimum performance of two year olds should be fit to the North American perspective of quantity and speed as a performance indicator. The message in this excerpt is that young children should perform to adult expectations, and that the female parent drives this learning. It takes as an assumption the dyad mother-child as universal, that mothers often 'fail', and that spoken vocabularies have a numerical norm.

The Strategy also reports longitudinal results (three years) from an intervention program, Communities for Children, a project that resulted in "improved receptive vocabulary and verbal skills in children from low-income households or where mothers had Year 10 education or less" (as cited in DEEWR 2009b, p.11). An unquestioned assumption is that 'well educated' mothers *are* better in their role of raising the skill set of the nation than mothers with less education. These ideas can create the possibility of targeting intervention policy to particular groups such as parents with 'low levels' of formal education. However, the value base is a

[2]The narratives and analysis in chapter six explore non-verbal languages in more detail.

middle to upper class, romantic family model and practice exemplified in Anglo-American and European child-rearing as optimal for healthy development.[3] In this example, clear guidelines regarding behaviour modification and normalizing techniques target child and mother. The two above examples also highlight the ongoing assumption of education of superior knowledge practised over the (classed, gendered, raced and aged) other.

While the focus of my analysis in this chapter moves beyond the three main texts of Australian reform, I believe that doing so highlights the very values and ideologies that remain de-identified in early childhood development and education policy. The model of ideal child-rearing is highly visible across Heckman's arguments, such as the highly cited Productivity Argument (Heckman & Masterov, 2004, 2007). This model is associated with terms such as "the accident of birth", "out-of-wedlock", and "families have failed" which are repeated throughout the report. While the Australian policy texts avoid any use of such terms, it does cite the axiomatic "skill begets skill, learning begets learning" (as cited in DEEWR, 2009, p.8). As discussed in chapter five, the Australian Early Development Census website highlight's Heckman's status as economist and links to his statements on learning. Heckman and Masterov (2004) link this to a statement on the "enriched environments enjoyed by the middle and upper middle class families" (p.5). These statements make clear the productivity position on the need for measurement, modification, and monitoring particular groups through integrated disciplinary models including early education and care.

The discussion so far has built an argument that human capital perspectives consistently blame individual failure, and continue to perceive social 'groups' as problems. Grouping, in the same way as categorisation, assists the processes of governmentality by attributing particular characteristics to gendered, classed and raced and aged groups. The practices of individualisation place children further into

[3]It is not the research involved in projects such as Communities for Children that I am critiquing here, rather the value base underlying the implications drawn in the Strategy and other evidence based citations.

classification such as, for example, dysfunctional or delayed. Grouping and individualisation are related practices, and, when working as exclusionary strategies, interconnected with colonial techniques of dominance.[4]

Digging deeper, Heckman's argument is visible in early childhood policies across a number of OECD countries (Stuart, 2013; Bown, 2014). Bown's Australian study included interviews with politicians and ECEC participants discussing the reform process, revealing that Heckman was named "by many politicians and ECEC participants as a significant influence on the Rudd government's policies" (2014, p.58). For example, his conference appearances and meetings with government officials in 2006, were followed by a large number of citations across pre-election policy papers for ECEC and post-election discussion papers on the National Quality Framework (Bown, 2014, p.58). While Bown's study focuses on influences in policy process and decision-making, her findings affirm my focus on examining 'under the surface' to expose discursive positions. These highlight what counts as authoritative knowledge influencing policy and what possibilities or limitations are produced with the creation of discursive regimes. Therefore, a great deal of my analysis emphasises the Evidence Base of the Strategy and the weight of economic arguments from the U.S.

The evidence base for reform carrying the authoritative modality as analysed here highlights convergences in scientific knowledge base and human capital. Self-evidence creates discourse with a perception of impenetrability, communicated to justify theoretical choices for expected performance of child, child-rearing environments and the form of future adult. Knotted around other knowledges from medical, biological, and psychological sciences, a constellation of facts enforces a language of expertise in the place of asking why a great number of people experience poverty and disadvantages produced by the "paradox of progress" (DEEWR, 2009b, p.10), or why even this has not ceased to be the case. They contain axiomatic 'truths' based on statements that hide values and ideology around the optimum type of childhood within which a child should be socialised into a perfect existence.

[4]I explore colonial process and techniques in further detail in chapter seven.

6.3 Establishing what counts

The levels of bio-power converging at the intersections of governance and governmentality use strategies that Foucault suggested establish "what counts as self-evident, universal and necessary" (1981, p.6). Amos (2010) argues that governance and governmentality intersect at the level of the individual. That is, the "correspondence between the steering and governing structures of the state and the individual come into view" (p.4). However, as Miller and Rose (2008) have argued, contemporary forms of governing now also take place 'at a distance' beyond the state. The policy directives and the communication methods of the reform agenda, the NQS and the EYLF are not simply a one-way flow to individuals and groups. Discussion papers, working groups, travelling seminars and workshops, practitioner and student submission and surveys, have been brought to the process of comprehensive changes to sectors. Although the final product of the EYLF may be watered down from the consultative and draft process, mostly in response to perceived "political risk" by politicians (Sumsion et al., 2009, p.7), images, texts, and language of the ECEC sector are mapped onto the cartography of control. From the analysis of these last two chapters on policy and reform, I would argue that governance *already* assumes the self-evident truths, provides calculative evidence of what is necessary (such as the universal), and what risks are best avoided (such as themes of social justice). Early childhood professionals work within conditions of continual assessment of themselves and children in an increasingly overwhelming recording of practice, observation and assessment. Techniques of governmentality shape the worker as compliant, and the child as object of adult measurement, becoming subject to insistent stories of who they are. The regulatory mechanisms have become tighter at both levels of the system and individuals (Amos, 2010). Following Gutiérrez et al., (2002), Falchi, Axelrod and Genishi (2013) term this a "tight-tight culture" (p.346) for children whose multimodal practices do not fit the normative of curriculum, are submitted to tighter regulation, and who are likely to 'underperform' as a consequence of a restrictive, dominant discourse of learning. As the different levels of analysis demonstrated so

far, there is a wide gulf of assumptions, values and language between the agenda for reform as demonstrated in the Strategy for early childhood development, (productivity and intervention) and as presented in the education and care sector's EYLF (child as capable being).

To pick up the thread of the chapters so far, the drive for early childhood development at local and international levels is based on the idea that Child Development connects to the greater context of Human Development, as seen in texts produced by the World Bank (Van der Gaag, 2000), WHO (2016), UNESCO, and the OECD (2006). The term 'human development' is often suggestive, if not interchangeable, with global development and the relation between the 'developed' and the 'underdeveloped'. The equation Child Development = Human Development is also the basis for the globalised version of economic growth for 'developing' countries. These assumptions echo early philosophical and scientific ideas that the growth in body/mind of the child to the goal of maturity "materialised a continuum of normal and pathological development that simultaneously told a story of human history" (Castaneda, 2002, p.41). Furthermore, Human Development equals a nation's happiness when productivity counts as wellbeing at the national level (Glassman, 2010).

The logic of universalisation constitutes political action at multiple layers of local, international and global levels. Early childhood has an increasingly global concern as 'problem'. The globalisation –and universalisation- of a particular version of childhood rests on the early notion of a hierarchical world order that "in its inception was bound up with figurations of the child" (Castaneda, 2002, p.44). The logic of universalism crosses boundaries where policy is often assumed to be local. This places early childhood development and education policy and product as part of a "global education policy field" operating "across the local, national and global" (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, p.13).

To demonstrate the process of a norm-stating logic (child, to human, to global development) reaching popular compliance to decisions made by values and judgements:

The Early Years Learning Framework, the face of ECEC national reform, is layered, along with the governing policy of the NQS, over the Human Capital standpoint of the National Strategy. Seen as a formula, the networks and nodes for measurement, calculation and conscription supply the pulse of power, including popular and individual compliance. <<< Governance intersects with Governmentality. >>> Governance makes a norm-stating 'logic' (the logic of presupposing the norm) justifying intervention (such as 'children are our future'). Popular compliance and populism forwards action that might otherwise be seen as negative or questionable (such as an overt productivity standpoint and values of families as failures).

Knowledge is central to the administering the lives of others, as are values. As seen in the human capital texts, behind the investment arguments are values of what is "good, healthy, normal, virtuous" as well as "efficient or profitable" (Rose & Miller, 2010, p.273). Knowledge is intrinsic to 'political rationalities' and the expertise that justifies acting on the conduct of others: as Vandenbroeck, Coussée, and Bradt (2010) contend, "the meaning of early childhood education has been and continues to be constructed outside of the early childhood field, identifying its societal function not in early childhood, but rather in an imagined future" (p. 140). The particular type of rationality, and the tactics, approaches and framework argued in the texts such as the Early Childhood Development Strategy, accompanied by its evidence base, reflect what counts as knowledge and who counts as expert. There is little early childhood education and care knowledge in these documents: child care is a technical site for provision of workforce participation, and early education a 'safe', controlled environment where expertise replaces the family space.

6.4 Modes of objectification

The notion of disciplinary technologies has been applied to early education sites and schooling (Cohen, 2008; Dahlberg & Moss, 2005; MacNaughton, 2005). Objectifying practices are employed (and taken up) through the education apparatus which views bodies and minds -individual and of populations- as concomitantly malleable and determinable. One of the techniques, the enlisting of forces, uses assumptions of certain knowledge as superior. Etienne Balibar (1991) has noted this as an invisible colonization for supply of labour and 'embourgoisement':

> *...schooling at least in the 'developed' countries - is constituted both as a means for the selection of managerial staff and as an ideological apparatus well suited to naturalizing social divisions 'technically' and 'scientifically', in particular the division between manual and intellectual labour, or between the management and the performance of labour* (preface, p.12).

Disciplinary technologies are employed to produce bodies that yield to discourses created through institutions such as education. Foucault (1983) proposed three forms or "modes of objectification" through which individuals become subjects. I develop them here as relevant to the environment created for children in which agency, becoming and potential are proposed to be supported. Fenech and Sumsion (2007) discuss these with reference to early childhood regulation. First is the 'discourse of science and inquiry', via preferred disciplinary knowledge and methods (for example, psychology or neuroscience). Second are 'practices that divide'. For example, the expert opinion, the voice of authority, on what is best practice or quality care and education for young children. Third are the 'means of becoming-subjects'. In the following section I use these analytical concepts to draw out an analysis of selected text from the policy documents, their authoritative sources and evidence base.

6.4.1 Mode of objectification I: discourses of Science and Inquiry as preferred knowledge

Theories of growth, intelligence and behaviour as a universal set of truths have a long tradition of partnership with education and early childhood development, and also a tradition of critique amongst those wishing to reconceptualise or decolonise dominance of paradigms (see for example, Viruru, 2002; Woodhead, 2006; MacNaughton, 2005; Kincheloe & McLaren, 2007; Moss, 2007). For example, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) described the effect of dominant discourses of normalisation on young children through control and reduction of child's rhizome. Deleuze (1995) described the "awful misery of psychoanalysis" (p. 14) as an influential discourse expressed in child analysis. The "ready-made tracings" of analytical theory, would leave the child under observation making "a desperate attempt to carry out a performance that the psychoanalyst totally misconstrues" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.13). Mapping the child in this case traces the *ready-made construction* of reified knowledge, while the child's desire is bound and blocked: "they kept on BREAKING HIS RHIZOME and BLOTCHING HIS MAP, setting it straight for him, blocking his every way out, until he began to desire his own shame and guilt, until they had rooted shame and guilt in him" (p.14, capitalisation in original). Deleuze and Guattari's critique calls for reflection on the unquestioned heritage of accepted practices of observation and assessment, in early childhood education and care and the interpretations which can ensue. As critiqued in chapter two, psychological-based understandings of the child are the basis of early childhood development and education knowledge. It is also sutured into the fabric of the socially and scientifically figured child.

In terms of modalities of power, newer forms of knowledge within a scientific evidence-base are stating their case for early childhood development and learning environments. *The Strategy* (DEEWR, 2009b) includes emerging knowledge and arguments from neuroscience and brain development. The report *From Neurons to Neighbourhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development* (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000) is cited 4 times, however the authority given is unquestionable,

and unquestioned. The Strategy lists brain development, biological embedding, and the discovery of the human genome as enabling more knowledge of the gene-environment and bio-environment relationship (DEEWR, 2009b, pp.31-32) The comprehensive report is highly visible across ECEC policy, in Australian and international reports and policy, such as Starting Strong II (OECD, 2006) including the weight of human capital arguments (DEEWR, 2009b; Heckman & Masterov, 2004, 2007; Mustard, 2008). There is less reference to developmental psychology in the evidence base for intervention, although it is visible through assumed acceptance, a foundation of knowledge of the child. Far more visible are the facts, the measurements and the calculations informed by the fields of neuroscience, such as early brain development. Perhaps this is revealing a new set of force relations in early childhood development knowledge. The increasing power of the authority given the bio-environment argument (rather than the large corpus of research in the social sciences) is heightened by the truth of *efficiency* they offer along with knowledge.

Efficient, scientific-based frameworks

Jack Shonkoff (2010) discusses the opportunity for a more comprehensive and united science-based framework approach to "co-ordinate action between agencies and sectors" (p.263) in order to more effectively close gaps between knowledge and policy in early childhood sectors. There are thirty-four instances in which 'science' and 'scientific-based' statements refer to *more efficient* knowledge, and I include an example that highlights Shonkoff's argument for:

> *..the need to overcome the persistent fragmentation that typifies health, education, and human services systems by leveraging an integrated, science-based framework rather than negotiating interagency agreements among conceptually disconnected programs* (2010, p.363).

The purpose of including Shonkoff's text is not to disagree with his overall push for integrated policy delivery, or the important point that delivery depends on conceptual understanding. My argument here is that it highlights a new modality

of power forming, based around knowledge and expertise. In similar manner to psychology's convergence with education in the nineteenth century, by distancing itself from its subsumption under medical knowledge and practice, and becoming the source of expertise where medical practice on aberrance or dysfunction had failed (Foucault, 1978).[5] In chapter three I noted that while nineteenth century practices in Europe were underscored with a need to be seen as scientific, as exemplified by Pape-Carpantier, Joteyko and Montessori, success was more about the emergence of a new modality of power as a "science de l'enfant" (Pape-Carpantier as cited in Rose, p.371). In the twenty-first century, the "science of early childhood and brain development is strong and growing" (Shonkoff, 2010, p.365). Early childhood science informs policy with evidence of neuroscience, the human genome and biological embedding that can answer questions of both biological and environmental contexts. It may also be evidence that neurosciences, as a 'strong and growing' frontier, is replacing psychology's truth regime. Science, in this case neuroscience and brain development, provides an 'integrated', evidence-driven, universal framework with which all other knowledges can be subsumed; therefore, control over knowledge about environmental factors and genetic embedding provides a modality of power between 'integrated, science-based' knowledge (a framework) and 'conceptually disconnected' practices. As a preferred method and knowledge base for educational policy, scientific and quantifiable evidence-based discourse is a mode of objectification under which people 'become subject'.

In order to illustrate how children become subject under frameworks and political-bound discourses, I use a narrative of a different flavour. Unlike the short narratives involving children across the thesis, I include this text as a reflective construction of some of the discourses involved in the passage to school.

Getting ready for school

Once upon a time getting ready for school was learning how to listen to the teacher, sit together long enough for a story, and see ourselves as we's, learning the days of the week and the seasons, that we must

[5]This is discussed in chapter three, Childhood, on the rise of status in medico-pedagogical practice as 'science of the child'.

wait for our turn, that we must not share our food or touch too much. Then we went to school. Then one day the government said 'e was disappointed in the children and the teachers, for not reading or writing well enough (and our sums were all wrong), so before school was the time to get some foundations, or society would go to the dogs. Strayuns just weren't up to world standard. So getting ready for school now is about building blocks and construction, but not in the way blocks used ta be. The teachers buildin' our literacys and numeracys while we all play and pretend. That's not all though. We got new blocks! Gotta build into our future more outcomes: identity, wellbeing, communication- don't forget contribution- and our learnin' about the world. Too many blocks! It's okay though, because the government said he'd –wait- no, she'd make sure the children were turning out right by sending proper quality standards for everyone. Quality standards, y'see, straight from the city. Check, check, check, oh wait, this child is Aboriginal, why isn't there traditional stories in the bookcase. Oh no good that one, teacher gotta get cultural capacity, child gotta have cultural literacys, 'cause he, well, maybe, don't get it at home? Children's potential and all that.

Story doesn't end there, now she –wait- no, he thinks (because the scientists told him, and the moneymen agreed) our brains might not be wired properly, meaning we could end up unemployed or hopeless citizens – in a country where we all get a proper voice! So even before we're born better make sure we're growing right, in fact, pity we can't erase each other and start again. Draw the charts, draw us in. Then figure us to how we could be: layer upon layer, line across line, dot to dot.

Used to be I was the only one in my street went to kinder. Now we've all gotta get some potential.

The narrative is a rhizome, wrapping around multiple layers of meaning amongst

the storyline of early childhood reform in Australia, including paternalism, the confusion of stereotyping towards the undeveloped, and the idea of children as pretenders rather than members of society. The early memory of 'kinder' as socialisation gradually changes to a sense of failure, on the part of teachers and children. Blocks become conceptual, constructing ideas of child and the body-mind stratification (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Strata describes the construction of body-mind as multiple discourse, frameworks of knowledge about the child gather to grasp and make the subject.[6] Thus, the scientific frameworks and knowledge that objectify constructs a subject that comes into existence through the modalities of power: in this case of 'kinder' and 'school' child, through intersecting scientific, economic and political interests in maintaining visibility in global orders as a 'developed' country. The tempo quickens pace towards the end, towards a frenzy of competition for knowable knowledge, and thus power. In order to imagine a future prosperous, happy and competitive nation, the line of potential is placed back on the child. With every line, chart and drawing representing the state of the child, actual children seem to disappear from the picture. With each cycle of government leadership, reform agendas are reformed themselves- child, however, remains the underdeveloped hope and fear.

6.5 Mode of objectification II: Practices which divide

Dispersal of concepts in policy and reforms requires the strategic employ and management of language. Rather than simply being a vehicle for human thoughts, language is a site where "agreements and/or struggles over how to give meaning to and learn about what we call reality take place" (Quennerstadt, 2010, p.620). In this thesis, such struggles are recognised as the basis of power struggles and knowledge dominance. Language and discourse includes while it also excludes and divides, labels and categorises. In ECEC reform, the idea of change in practice

[6]I explore the idea of stratification in chapters three and seven.

is also produced around what is considered 'normal', 'real', 'correct', as well as 'innovative', 'productive' and 'performing'. For example, that a nation should be globally 'competitive' is almost universally unquestioned. Language and concepts form around political and administrative power in the "endeavour to administer the lives of others in the light of conceptions of what is good, healthy, normal, virtuous, efficient or profitable" (Rose & Miller, 2010, p.273). Under the sense of the normative and common-sense is a set of choices based on ontological limits of intelligibility. As Quennerstadt (2010) argues, normalities provide points of orientation for thinking and acting. The creation of discursive positions creates, when taken up and reified as the truth, political power. As Deleuze and Guattari (1987) have argued, "there is no mother tongue, only a power takeover by a dominant language within a political multiplicity" (p.8).

Language, and discourse, play a major role in practices that divide. Signifiers informing practice such as 'education and care', 'childcare', and 'learning' are used strategically by different sectors and government. For example, policy and statistics use 'childcare' when referring to workforce participation of parents (DEEWR, 2009b), 'educational programs' in discussion of funded programs such as Kindergarten (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2014), and 'early child development' when conflating services (Mustard, 2008; DEEWR, 2009b) to support intervention for future workforce participation. These choices reflect the priority for early childhood programs as supporting current and future workforce. The separation of 'childcare' and 'education programs' are divisions alluding to one as a technical service and the other as a learning and ready-for-school program, and also implies levels of capacity of practitioners in each. Technician, worker, or educator and teacher. In the Early Years Learning Framework (DEEWR, 2009) those in ECEC environments are educators or teachers; in the Strategy and all of the selected supporting documents, early childhood services are run by workers or 'staff.' This reflects a long-running divisional space between care and education in Australian ECEC, but also mirrors perspectives of policy-making about workforce participation and future productivity as merely technical procedures and problems.

6.6 Mode of objectification III: means for becoming-subject

Nikolas Rose (1999) has argued that "childhood is the most intensely governed sector of personal existence" (1999, p.123). As I discussed in chapter two, children are born already pre-made as 'child' into a developmental framework through which the health, welfare, education and care organisations measure, compare, record and report to databases and indexes. For example, since the introduction of the Australian Early Development Census, every three years teachers of children in the first year of school will complete a census on selected children's performance and development. In interpreting children's behaviour and academic performance, teachers and administrators are placed as gatherers and governing 'judges' of children for the state.

The process of judging also works in an informal and everyday sense where individuals will submit to the gaze of peers and 'superiors' such as child to adult, or worker to supervisor. Judging, even informally, relies on positions of expertise. When expertise, authority or facts present as knowledge and evidence and internalized as truth, individuals will regulate their behaviour in line with these truths. In the same manner, roles and expectations (such as educator, parent or child) reinforce the truths in managing and normalizing others. In terms of early childhood education practices, where the "educator-judge" is required to seek assistance on behalf of a child who displays challenges or difficulties to normalisation, the "doctor-judge", therapist-judge, "social worker'-judge" (Foucault, 1977, p.304) may inscribe the child with the individualisation necessary to describe treatment and correction. In order to highlight the normalising process, I turn to an analysis of two of these means for effecting the subject of objectification highly relevant to ECEC, and the implications of these for children's possible being-becoming. These are the co-existing techniques of *describability* and *knowability*. The discussion is presented as a synthesis to reflect the co-existence.

The writing of lives, Foucault (1977) has argued, through observations, records, and statistical data, "functions as a procedure of objectification and subjection" (p.192). This is easily related to practices of early childhood education. Writing practices provide the 'knowability' of the individual, able to be compared with others, and described through a "disciplinary rubric" of individuality (Chrostowska, 2006, p.336):

> *Knowable man (soul, individuality, consciousness, conduct, whatever it is called) is the object-effect of this analytical investment, of this domination-observation* (Foucault, 1977, p.305).

Chrostowska's use of the 'disciplinary rubric' is useful and salient in relating means for becoming-subject to practices in ECEC that are based on assumed truths of observation, when placed alongside the networks of measurement and calculative information. Traditionally, observation tended to emphasise where the child could progress through developmental markers. The National Quality Standard (ACECQA, 2013) instead focuses on observation as integral to the practice principles and evidence of Quality Area 1: Educational program and practice, "Each child's learning and development is assessed as part of an ongoing cycle of planning, documenting and evaluation" (ACECQA, 2013, p.17). Nevertheless, any observation is based on partly ready-made interpretations. For example, the Early Years Learning Framework describes Learning Outcomes for children, each identifying lists of markers and indications, such as "*this is evident, for example, when children...*" (DEEWR, 2009, p.21). The idea of *judging*, a word avoided in ECEC documents, policy, and practice, is especially relevant for my argument across the thesis. Interpreting, comparing, writing, assessing of the child are all practices which constitute the child as endorsed within the ECEC space by educators, families, guardians, colleagues, and management, in discussions, reflections and reports on the child. Ascription, description and assessment are judgements, and perhaps it should be a term given greater visibility as a means of placing stutters and stammers in practice and policy.

In terms of the purposes of reform, the networks of health checks, the medical and

developmental screening, referrals and risk assessments, the underlying discourses of preferred truths that provide ready-made mappings, and the training routines submitting the body to compliance, all construct the 'disciplinary rubric' with which to write the child. The child becomes object of the normative regimes of truths and practices, to which "each individual, wherever he may find himself, subjects to it his body, his gestures, his behaviour, his aptitudes, his achievements" (Foucault, 1977, p.192).

The practices which gave rise to describing and comparing the individual were founded on beliefs of the knowability of the human, the world, and reality. The liberal humanist belief that knowledge of knowledge was possible, impelled an explosion of practices of observation and measurement, screening and analysis which began with the infant. Where this has been the realm of medico-pedagogical techniques and psychology's power over expertise, the analysis over these two chapters reveals that the knowledge base and authority is being surpassed by the facts, measures and offer of efficiency by the neurosciences. Neuroscience and brain development provide connections to a number of biological scientific facts about the child-body-mind (Cohen, 2008; Chrostowska, 2005; Castaneda, 2002).

What sort of childhood produces the modern, neo-liberal adult? Is there a difference between this child and the subject of child development? The fulfilled adult of child development discourse is ultimately, normalised. The neoliberal subject is, ultimately, worker and consumer: Self-maximising (finding your own full potential), entrepreneurial, life-long learning, rational and autonomous but, importantly, also docile. Children are in this sense a pool of future workers (Stuart, 2013, p.56). However, the entrepreneurial argument flails when considering underlying human capital perspectives. Continuing my argument that human capital theory is a dominant discourse of Australian ECEC reform, and that these discourses are directly lifted from U.S economic theory, I have highlighted the influence of a small number of texts, such as *The Productivity Argument for Investing in Young Children* (Heckman & Masterov, 2004/7) and *From Neurons to Neighbourhoods* (Shonkoff, 2000) and their authors arguments which hold high currency value in influence. Stuart (2013) also highlighted Heckman's visibility in

policy across international contexts, such as "the World Bank (2005; 2006; n.d. a,b,c,), Babies and Bosses (OECD, 2004), Starting Strong 11 (OECD, 2006) and Starting Strong 111 (OECD, 2012)" (p.53).

In terms of the authority given these sources as evidence across the Strategy and Quality framework, the argument for investment in early childhood is one of productivity, skill-set, and competition, situating it as an economic discourse. As an example I draw on a statement from an Australian Early Childhood Development report by Fraser Mustard (2008) as 2007 Adelaide Thinker in Residence, a researcher also cited several times:

> *The Economist magazine has pointed out the increasing need for talent. It made the point that there is a growing shortage of talent and growing global competition for talent. "A key issue in the battle for brain power and talent is how to fund the early child development centres* (p.33).

The gathering discourse of the socioeconomic determinants of development posits the child as neoliberal subject, an object of investment and returns (Papatheodorou, 2010). The neoliberal subject is contradictory and complex, both compliant yet entrepreneurial, an 'extraordinary' subject that may be an emerging discursive 'normal' (Kaščák & Pupala, 2013). The Strategy's 2020 vision exemplifies this becoming-subject when it states that children "create a better future for themselves and for the nation" (DEEWR, 2009b, p.13). Underlying the vision, the strategy states that the policy objectives relating to this are social inclusion, outcomes for the majority but specifically the most disadvantaged, and "increased productivity and international competitiveness" (p.13).

Children are not only becoming-subjects by normalisation but are also expected to be the agents and creators of their nation's future:

> *Children are important. They bring their own value and influence to the world, as well as being shaped by the world around them. Children give joy and purpose to the lives of many and help bring people together. Children are particularly vulnerable in the early years and need others*

> *to seek out or advocate for services or supports on their behalf. Children are also important for their future contribution to society—as the next generation of leaders, workers, parents, consumers and members of communities. Their ability to participate fully in society as adults will be largely shaped by their childhood experiences. Children who have a good start in life are more likely to develop the capabilities that will better equip Australia to compete in a global society. This will be increasingly important as our workforce shrinks due to population ageing and low fertility rates* (DEEWR, 2009b, pp.6-7).

The statement positions the child as "important", able to "influence the world", by giving purpose to many and to "bring people together"; these create an image of the child as active *being*. These first three sentences correlate to the image in the Early Years Learning Framework, of the child as 'active participant' who can "recognise their agency" (DEEWR, 2009, p.9).

On the other hand, the child is "vulnerable" and needs advocates, yet also carries an expectation of "future contribution" to society. They are required to "participate fully" in that future society, and in order to do so, must develop particular sets of "capabilities" to ensure their nation can compete globally. Therefore, child has the *future* responsibility to allay *current* fears of shrinking workforce and low fertility; these create an almost spectral image of a becoming-subject: at once both defenceless and redeemer. The statement can also be viewed as representational of the different paradigms –that of children as active citizens, and children as future consumers and producers- that have intersected as discourses of ECD and ECEC meet, and provide the tensions in discourses and palimpsests of policy.

In the entanglement of development, human capital and concepts of child, being, and becoming, the ideologies of advanced liberal productivity are highly visible. Before I summarise the analysis and argument, there is a need to pause and listen

to productivity. The discussion now turns to taking a 'line of flight' on productivity and what it might mean in its relation to this knot of discourses.

6.6.1 Line of flight: Talking productivity

What *are* the capabilities needed to ensure a globally competitive nation? According to Michael Porter (1990) in The Harvard Business Review (HBR), competitiveness is only meaningful as 'productivity'.[7] Porter explains that productivity is "the value of the output produced by a unit of labor or capital" and depends on the quality and features of products and the efficiency of production. Not only must an economy, and companies, "continually upgrade" and "relentlessly improve" to sustain growth, they "must *develop the necessary capabilities to compete*" in growing sophistication. Finally, they (the companies) must further "*develop the capability to compete in entirely new*, sophisticated industries" (Porter 1990 April, emphasis added).

In 2012, the emphasis of definitions has moved beyond the companies or industry to the "expected level of output per working-age individual", and to a broader sense of productivity because it includes expected output of "*all potential* workers" of a location: "prosperity is ultimately rooted in the ability to both achieve high productivity as well as mobilize a high share of the available workforce" (Delgado, Ketels, Porter & Stern, 2012, p.2, emphasis added). The individual can develop the same qualities and responsibilities to bring to a nation's competitiveness.

My purpose for including seemingly unrelated texts from a U.S business review and economic working paper is to examine the language between this and the previous statement in the Strategy's vision. Originally the search was to consider language of economic theory, a line of flight to random texts outside the field of

[7] I have sourced a business-based source (rather than a critically-minded review) in order to gain a sense of productivity's (and economists) language in a popular domain. Due to its age, I then sourced a later product. This effected a change in emphasis from economy, industry, company, to individual.

ECEC, and the search immediately highlighted the phrase-resemblance in Australian ECEC strategic policy. It reveals the set of capabilities required for a nation's global competitiveness, as almost word for word, in the sentence in the Strategy "develop the capabilities that will better equip Australia to compete in a global society" (DEEWR, 2009b, p.7) as linguistically based in productivity. The last two sentences of Porter's excerpt can be overlaid into discourse in the Australian documents. *Porter*: Developing "the necessary capabilities to compete in increasing sophistication"; *Strategy*: the "benefits of connecting the benefits of Human Capital to early childhood development" include, for adults long-term, "Higher productivity, increased success, (better jobs, higher incomes)" (DEEWR 2009b, p.34). *Porter*: Developing the "capability to compete in entirely new, sophisticated industries"; *Strategy*: "increased adoption of new technologies, higher economic growth" (p.34).

The change in from company to individual, even all potential workers, reflects themove to new human capital theory. Rizvi and Lingard (2010) have stated that the new human capital extends this to "the transnational context" (p.80). The authors go on to argue that the popularised form of human capital theory "considers all human behaviour to be based on the economic self-interest of individuals operating within free competitive markets. It assumes that individuals are equally free to choose" (p.80). Because it contends that success in the transnational arena requires flexible work skills and knowledge, the new theory demands policies for reforming areas such as education to better align them with the nature of economic theory (p.80).

As Rizvi and Lingard (2010) argue, education in the neoliberal knowledge based society is no longer content with learning on its own terms. Learning must now "always be linked to the instrumental purposes of human capital development and economic self-maximisation" (p.81).

The neoliberal approach to educational policy "incorporates the idea that in order to improve education you must provide evidence of increases in aggregate measure-

ments that are the direct consequence of action taken" (Glassman, 2011, p.163). Performance in education now determines a nation's wellbeing, as reflected by gross measurement taken through national and international standards. Whether action is required is taken from the gross aggregate as an expression of national wellbeing. Subjective wellbeing and happiness (Helliwell, Layard & Sachs, 2015) are now linked directly to economic theory, and the "science of happiness" and "can be used effectively to assess the progress of nations" (World Happiness report, para 1). In discussing these connections, I am not criticising the idea of happiness as criteria to guide public policy. Rather, taking this line of flight has helped to emphasise the relations between the practices, knowledges, and statements from discourses such as human capital theory and productivity, gross measurement, education policy and reform, wellbeing and gross happiness and science in its multiple formations.

Where is the child in educational discussions of aggregate measurements, performance, competition and self-maximisation? Or wellbeing and potential? I relate this discussion to modes of objectification because there is no sense of child. Rather, it prioritises the nation and its progress, wellbeing, potential, and self-maximisation. This reveals an unspoken thread running from late seventeenth century concerns for social reform; the child, the individual, sacrifices self-maximisation, potentiality, for the success of the nation's maximisation. I also argue here that the child of contemporary economic versions has far less visibility.

I also draw from this line of flight the presence of the word 'wellbeing' as happiness-the key term used in social reformers debates of the late sixteenth to seventeenth centuries. How does a people reach its potential? What is telos but happiness? Rousseau argued that the point of education is happiness (Rousseau, 1762/2003; Gilead, 2012), as did Bentham in reference to society's goal (Glassman, 2011, p.162). Contemporary early childhood education policy refers to wellbeing as including "happiness and satisfaction, effective social functioning and the dispositions of optimism, openness, curiosity and resilience" (DEEWR, 2009, p.46), and

this list of qualities reveals a large slippage between wellbeing in early childhood education and wellbeing in neo- and advanced-liberal versions of performance-based aggregates. Given the weight of human capital theory in Australian ECEC reform, I argue that potential, then, is measured by a nation's happiness, where happiness is linked to material productivity.

6.7 Summary: Potential, fear, child

"Each society has its regime of truth, its "general politics" of truth; that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true" (Foucault, 1980a, p.131).

The increasing entanglement of human capital, education and newer scientific frontiers are used to determine the constitution of the present and of ourselves. How children are constituted and childhood utilised in the production of power, and production of subjects, presents a set of worries, a "constant concern" for falling back into history (Deleuze, 1995, p.173).

The analysis in this chapter highlights a move from the disciplinary to greater networks of control based on economy, although institutionalism still has its role in the shaping of docile bodies. In analysing disciplinary systems through institutionalism, Foucault (1983) identified three ongoing concerns in the formation of systems:

> *How can we, using a certain rationality, govern other people? How can we form other people? How can we obtain that people behave in a certain way in the most economically efficient way possible?* (1983).

The third concern traces the move to the emphasis on human capital in almost all social undertakings (Rose, 1991). It is this concern that I focus on here as it is relevant to the measuring and recording of the personal and minute details of

children's lives, perceived as theoretically justifiable through scientific frameworks, psychology-based theory of development, and human capital theory.

The ideas of *child* in the discourses presented in this chapter consider its perfect existence. The 'facts' of the child as underdeveloped and problematic are entangled in equations for a local-global development problem. The intersecting of scientific discourse with human capital theory presents as the most efficient method of constructing child as universalised problem that can be remedied with close "screening and intervening" (Rose, 2010, p.79). At the transnational level, the role of early childhood education in development discourses in raising 'underdeveloped' nations and peoples to the capitalist method is evidence that child continues to be at the core of imperial control. Child is still metaphor and embodiment of hope and potential for a becoming-nation. Paradoxically, in economic arguments for investing in early childhood, failed adults are more visible than children. This places the child as representing fears for the future. How people can be governed and shaped to produce desired behaviour in the most efficient way possible is now a question of economy *and* sciences of the child. In critiquing the economic and science discourse, it has become apparent that both continue to present a child at once full of hope and carrying seeds of danger. The entanglement of productivity as potential, and potential as problem, into scientific, economic and education frameworks continues to generate a moving, discursive knot that the child figuration is bound within.

These ideas for child in its perfect, homogenised, existence feed the framing of educational objectives as represented in Australian early childhood development reform. In terms of early childhood education and care, none of this discussion seems visible at the level of the Early Years Learning Framework (DEEWR, 2009). However, some of the writers involved in drafting the learning framework (Bown, 2014; Sumsion et al., 2009) of the ECEC policy for practice disclose the process in which educational frameworks lose the potential for framing ECEC as a site of political, social and civil engagement. This point has relevance for seeking the conditions with which decolonising needs to confront dominance. What I draw from this is the heavier presencing of apparently neutral positions of the scientific

and economic perspectives dominating policy. The avoidance of dialogue around risky possibilities that might listen to or demand difference, if not co-existence, illuminates the shadow of certain flags of dominance. These are the conditions provided for beings and becomings in early childhood education.

Finally, another finding I draw from the overall analysis in this chapter is what is not spoken, but remains hidden behind the practised. What is not discussed in the convergence of these multiple discourses is that the many justifications for the theoretical choices, and evidences for intervention and individualisation, actually *rely* on tactics of exclusion for their own existence. The universalisms created by ideology of progress and production, are not, as Balibar (1991) has argued, exclusive of the hierarchies of imperial systems. Although contradictory, they are part of the same processes. These connections are also building through the thesis so far as transnational and temporal flows.

In the previous chapter I argued that the increasing grasp of the dominant discursive formation which is applied in policy is in part based around hope and fear. Hope, for new technologies identifying future riskiness. Fear, of politicians and policy around the unknown and the risky, the criminal and the 'needy', ending in rationalities of screening and intervening (Rose, 2010). Deleuze (1995) would perhaps disagree. He argues that in control societies, hope and fear are no longer necessary for power, both state and beyond the state: there is no longer a "question of worrying or hoping for the best, but of finding new weapons" (p.178). New technologies and emerging modalities of power will continue to grasp child, as long as child is understood as potential, compliant producer. Yet Deleuze's point can also be a call for those who wish to work against the control of becomings, for children and also for the environments in which they are increasingly bound to. What are our new weapons? What are our alternative methodologies?

Such questions take the argument into the next stream, a stream of different coordinates altogether, but which demonstrates the effect when knowledges collide. This stream too has its hard questions and realities. We must continue to seek out and examine the assumptions behind the self-evident, the universal, and the

regimes of control. Those discourses that offer becoming and potential in terms of skill set and talent as workplace productivity. The emotions wrought during writing these two chapters has done nothing less than to further encourage the effort to "stand against the maxims of one's time, against the spirit of one's age, against the current of received wisdom ... of interrupting the fluency of the narratives that encode that experience and making them stutter" (Rose, 1999, p.20). Where is the danger in self-determination of our being-becomings? What are these 'engineers of the soul' afraid of?

6.8 Conclusion

In this chapter I have analysed the imbroglio of discourse in ECEC reform policy, with particular emphasis on the sources of knowledge providing the 'evidence base'. The direction taken in causal multiplication has highlighted certain self-evident truths that hover around the making of policy, and the play of forces that give this authority. The analysis has found that objectification and subjectivities are entangled with an incessant insistence for articulating one set of knowledges over another, and an increasing elision of children's being-becoming in its multifarious possibilities. It raises hard questions for decolonising the conditions for possibilities in the context of hope and fear. The conditions provided are but one story: there should be multiple available. Therefore, the next chapter presents a fully flowing, abundant stream, at times disparate and at others convergent, in the fight to voice what matters in non-dominant views on the possibilities of childhood and being.

Chapter 7

Dreams and realities: Indigenous and post-colonial child

> *It doesn't matter how old a person is; they could be very old or very young but they are still equal. A person is what they are, and they are all equal, and have equal rights. Nobody can make or force anybody to do what they want them to do. The other person has to agree before they will do it. A person is what he is and nobody else can change him not even a boss, unless he agrees to change for some reason* (Bromot, Maymaru, Munyarryun and Yunupingu, 1989, p.32, Yolngu Eastern Arnhem).

7.1 Introduction

This chapter shifts the focus to Australian Indigenous and postcolonial perspectives of children's being and becoming by exploring examples of children as active agents in their growing and learning. In agonistic relationship to the discourse of docility, begun in many early childhood contexts, these perspectives challenge the ongoing dominant humanist understanding of childhood as a phase of becoming-adult-citizen. They also challenge the long-held notion of 'Aboriginal', 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander', and 'Indigenous' children's education as problem rather than "valid and valuable" resources for the "the educational process for *all*

learners" (Biermann & Townsend-Cross, 2008, p.147). The separation of children and adults is both conceptual and spatial within the institutional educative space, and ensures limited participation in society. My aim here is to highlight Indigenous Australian knowledge systems for teaching and learning in growing through the cycles and circles of lifehood. They are presented as a stream of knowledge well-versed in views of the young child as capable, strong, agentic, a teacher as well as learner. In doing this, the chapter represents a river of dreams and realities: dreams of overcoming dominance, becomings, and identification prescribed by governance and colonial systems, and realities and long histories of methodologies grown from the land on which our education and care institutions stand, but do not recognise.

This is driven by, and directly addresses, two research questions. One, exploring non-dominant perspectives to 'supplement the educational framing of being and becoming to broaden ideas of potential and talent within the context of early childhood education and care'. In exploring various voices from Australian Indigenous and Indigenist research, and postcolonial interrogations of ongoing imperial assumptions of the world, the stream of knowledges here are placed in a decolonising relationship rather than collapsed together. I am mindful that there are Indigenous voices who resist theories of resistance through postcolonial frames because the Indigenous Australian experience is one of continuing colonial practices. The emphasis in this thesis is a decolonisation that recognises Australian Indigenous peoples dwell in an invaded, colonised space. It does not suggest the end of colonial processes. The knowledges here also offer further perspectives around a second research question to explore what 'contemporary challenges to the nature of being offer for rethinking assumptions of being, agency and development in early childhood?'

In order to achieve this aim, this chapter employs a decolonising perspective, coming to the heart of the ontological and epistemological standpoint underpinning the thesis. Fitting the exploration of development which continues to inform assumptions of globalism discourses, the anticolonial stance in this chapter emphasises that localisation provides untapped nuanced complexities for education

policy and practice. I employ texts and narratives to illustrate what this can look like: they are particular points of light in the constellation. Decolonising recognises the level of ongoing critique in positioning knowledge and actors and the effects of colonisation and its legacies. In writing stories and using research from particular collectives in order to present alternatives to dominant perspectives, there is the recognised danger of 'Othering' and perpetuating generalisations (Bhabha, 2013). In an effort to avoid this trap, I employ a technique of layering ordinary stories that "grapple with complexities" (Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2012, p.303) rather than dualising cultures, or representing identities as homogenous (Huang, 2013; De Lissovoy, 2010). The focus on heterogeneity, nuance and complexity remains.

This chapter builds on the previous chapters through its emphasis on methodologies that are not usually included in educational discourse. This approach challenges dominant knowledge by illustrating stories of children's being for who they are and the richness they contribute. Children's experiences as highlighted in narratives and arguments are presented as unique resources rather than problems. Through a decolonising analysis, I argue that contrary to being problematic, the very parameters of the understanding of children's potential can be widened a great deal to include both self-determination and affiliation, and that the 'measurable' needs to be rethought in much more creative ways to account for the immeasurable.

There are three spheres of knowledge flowing in this stream. First, adult (parental or familial) perspectives of children (that is, adult attitudes towards children and their activities) and community beliefs about child's being drawn from research within Australia by Indigenous researchers or organisations. These demonstrate the intersection of 'governing principles' of adult attitudes toward children, and children's being within this environment.[1] Second, short narratives from personal experience as a childcare worker, educator and director, and as assistant and co-teacher in preschools (Queensland) and kindergartens (Victoria) are used to help

[1]The reasons for the choice of data from these sources have been explained in the introductory and methods chapter.

clarify the discussion by bringing together in a tangible sense the theoretical argument. Third, I draw upon postcolonial concepts that offer ideas of subjectivities as crossing and dwelling in complex borders of experience. Together, these disrupt colonial assumptions of identity, experience and the sovereign subject. In exploring what 'possibilities' may lie in potential and talent, these provide exposition of colonialist systems and strategies, while also challenging perceived, entrenched or drawn boundaries of being.

Each of these spheres challenge the accepted discourses currently informing early childhood education and care. For example, there are patterns of care that constitute normal patterns of development "that had not been imagined in developmental theories" (Nsamenang, 2006, p.15). They are not the only perspectives of resistance to hegemony, but for the purpose and scope of this study, the latitude of sources was streamlined. Postcolonial theory from the tricontinental (Wood, in Viruru, 2005, p.8) regions of India, Africa and South America have assisted my understanding of the challenges, and challenging of, the insistence of globalised early education and of the young child's being and becoming. The experience of globalisation and complexity is, as Nsamenang (2008) has argued, multi-dimensional and experienced in different ways across societies, communities and between individuals, with 'remarkable nuances' in even similar consequences.

All societies should be viewed as complex, with a view to contributing knowledge and experience in building futures. Kerwin (2011) argues that the knowledge, intricacy and pedagogies of Aboriginal Australian societies continue to be devalued, a theme that Michael Nakata (2007) deconstructs at various levels of education and disciplines. Whether preschool or university, Nakata argues Indigenous Australians are continually devalued in terms of recognition of ways of being and knowledge. It is this knowledge and pedagogy that can also be a "force for change" (Biermann & Townsend-Cross, 2008, p.146) for the experience of all children. An example of devaluing has been the idea of 'mainstream'[2] institution's treatment of

[2]In Australian institutional context, 'mainstream' refers to the dominant administrative form of education, as well as dominant social groups. The phrase also implies alternatives and other options as existing for deficit groups. Mainstream can also refer colloquially to the greater, dominant part of society. Indigenous peoples have recognised this reference to mainstream

'Indigenous education' as other-than. Biermann and Townsend-Cross argue that this places Indigenous children in "ultimately an objectifying deficit-view that sees Indigenous students as an educational problem" (p.148). Devaluing also comes in the form of limiting expectations, judgements and assessment of children, often predicting their future success on the labelling in early years' education, beginning with school readiness, social gradient and AEDC.

The currents of analysis flow in three parts. The first explores continuing colonial discourses in postcolonial literature pertaining particularly to the Australian context, in which I emphasise the strategies that continue to colonise being. I focus on the concept of the 'colonised subject' as relationship rather than entity, and through this understanding, processes of identification and subjectification through colonialism's repetition of the stereotype. The second part of the analysis draws together data from several Indigenous studies on perspectives of children's strengths, power and place in community and child-rearing. These are placed into a thematic analysis around aspects of children's being and becoming. The summative section pulls together the analysis and discusses key points raised to take into the final confluence.

7.2 Identification, subjectification

In Early Childhood Education and Care contexts, the regulatory networks as discussed in the chapter five, and the multiple configurations of childhood critiqued in chapter three form various levels of governing the young child. From a decolonising perspective, knowledge and particular educational discourses act as a coloniser, through often 'hidden messages' to children and adults about themselves, about who they should be and the normative pathway to success which, if not followed or reached, only confirms their 'at risk' status.

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as a knowledge-power relationship, and technique of assimilation- hence Mandawuy Yunupingu (1995), Yolngu Elder, often stressed that "you have to understand, we have our own mainstream, and our own structures... we have streams, and they all carry knowledge" (in Shoemaker, 1994, p.38).

Colonial knowledge is created and maintained through constructions of stereotypical discourses (Bhabha, 2013, 1996), overlayed by liberalist versions of the successful human based on a restricted sense of intelligence. This is embodied and/or visible through constructed Othering such as race, culture, gender, and socio-economic status. Colonisation, in this sense, dictates who we are, but also who we cannot be (Viruru, 2002). Who and what is involved in the 'making up' of selves? The struggle against domination is one where both body and mind are sites of combat: the child as malleable, determinable and imperfect (yet also innocent and unadulterated) is figured through networks that colonise, prescribing borders of behaviour, and constructing certain differences as defiance, deviance and disorder:

> *Bodies have always been discontinuous sites where fierce battles between colonizer and colonized are waged* (Shinn, 2008, p.161).

Particular ways of being are constructed as preferable and desirable while others are ignored or actively deterred through the apparatus of education and the early childhood education discourses which are dominant in current Australian ECEC practice.

I have chosen 'social and cultural' to cross constructed borders of 'culture', because personal experience of the western way has shown that clearly not everyone in the western world is privileged by the dominant discourses of being. At the same time, the struggle to maintain a sense of core cultural values by many communities in Australia continues daily. Culture also diverges in varied ways, and it is this divergence, emergence, and the various flows 'in-between' that highlight the complex creative existences through which culture still speaks. I hope to avoid the representation of Indigenous research as either representative of ancient forms or missing some sort of authenticity (Kerwin, 2011). Furthermore, the idea of culture itself has been used as a divisive tactic to affirm superiority (Battiste, 2002). Balibar (1991b) has also argued that:

> *...biological or genetic naturalism is not the only means of naturalizing human behaviour and social affinities. At the cost of abandoning*

> *the hierarchical model (though the abandonment is more apparent than real...), culture can also function like a nature, and it can in particular function as a way of locking individuals and groups a priori into a genealogy, into a determination that is immutable and intangible in origin* (Balibar, 1991b, p. 22).

The notion of 'status' as fact also governs behaviour and being for many people, with the assumption that only middle and upper classes 'enjoy' enriched environments (Heckman & Masterov, 2007, 2004). As noted previously, this is a 'truth' value for which education is the vision-reaching technology. Throughout the thesis I have attempted to avoid fatalistic 'statuses' through socio-economic circumstances, a colonising practice using stereotypical discourse of capacity and deficit.

Postcolonial concepts and aims informing this chapter build upon the previous chapters through the concern with discourse, power/knowledge, and the multiplicities of history. Colonising practices of education and the discursive technologies of early childhood education have, as with other colonising discourses, been used to construct images of the 'Other' (Bhabha, 1996, p.37). Gayatri Spivak (1996) has warned of the danger that, in aiming to decolonise dominance, critical theorising sometimes further defines marginality, reproducing the scientific constructions that racialise, genderise and bestow inferiority. Multifarious in nature, and useful in their interdisciplinary application, postcolonial arguments tackle ideas of knowledge/power, governance and administrative technologies to expose the hidden assumptions of 'truth', and highlight the previously invisible. In this chapter, and also across the thesis, I consider colonisation as a knowledge takeover and the struggle for dominance of world view.

Knowledge colonisation grows around particular ideas and values, employing particular tools with which to administer governance. Language is a deceptive technology because it is the most hidden in its aim and yet the most visible in use. Language sways power when it sets itself against 'the other': other world views, knowledge systems, ways of being, and the languages which express them. The

power relation in my argument for this chapter is the 'colonial subject'. This describes the colonised and coloniser in relationship, the processes of subjectification, and any freedoms for children in the apparatuses created for management and normalisation.

The term postcolonial covers disparate noise and voices reverberating towards and against each other. Such is the nature of the hope of pluralism and decolonisation. Viruru (2005) follows Wood (2001) in recognising the resistance efforts across the three continents of Africa, Asia and South America, suggesting that the 'post' in postcolonial points to "the historical moment of the theorized introduction of new tricontinental forms and strategies of critical analysis and practice" (Wood, as cited in Viruru, 2005, p.9). I would add to this that postcolonial critique by its very nature holds, and should continue to hold, different meanings to different sites of resistance. For example, Australia is a southern continent, with its own long-standing intelligibilities and peoples, yet the nation of Australia is northern in every administrative and governing aspect, including popular sentiment. Rarely are there *images bla mefla*[3] (Yarrabah State School, 1998) in resources, media and press. I argue that this is a unique situation that also holds unique possibilities for theorising new transformative practice in education.

Decolonial theory aims to challenge and unknot dominating colonial forces at work in the processes which govern lives. De Lissovoy (2010) suggests it extends "the anticolonial project into considerations of the domains of being and knowing" (p. 280). Decolonial ideas also draw from postcolonial challenges to cultural disjuncture and imperialist dominance and violence by generating a strengths-based, localised, body of knowledges. These nuanced insights engender non-dominant alternatives to the "ahistoricity of much globalization theorizing and also its reification" (Rizvi, Lingard & Lavia, 2006, p.249). Extending the notion of colonialism to knowledge and ways of being enables further application to early childhood education and educational discourse. The idea of child continues to have utility: it

[3]Northern Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander English/Kriol term for images belonging (bla) to us (me and 'my' fellas- it means something similar to me and my people like me).

draws together the threads of imperialism, elitism, globalisation and development discourses.

Researchers such as Nakata (2008), and Martin (2005, 2007) focus on ways of being, doing and knowing of various Indigenous Australian identities. While the data from research projects in this chapter illustrate this, my focus is the emerging picture of possibilities of being. Taking cue from postcolonial thinkers such as Bhabha (2013, 1996, 1993) Spivak (2006, 1998), and Viruru (2002, 2007), and those interested in decolonising education (De Lissovoy, 2014, 2010; Martin, 2007; Tuhiwai Smith, 2005, 1999), I am interested in the possibilities that border spaces offer for co-existence. My use of border space here also includes spatial-relational systems, such as the complex border spaces created within the contact zone of ECEC. It is this arena that very young children are introduced into culturally specific educational values, assumptions and practices, and for many it is very different to what is experienced elsewhere. Taking my interpretation of colonisation as an ongoing process and play of power through knowledge, and early childhood education and care settings as the mode of colonisation for normative educational practice and knowledge, there are texts that illustrate social alternatives or experience as well as 'cultural' and are not limited to a racialised or ethnicised sense of culture. It is my aim to show these 'alternative' behaviours and ways as potential and talent, and that techniques for stereotypical discourses work to construct these as deficit while also creating an 'invisibility' in the imperial (neoliberal) educational discourses. As Nakata (2008) argues, the imaginary constructed through non-Indigenous frameworks will look very different to that which emerges from complex and multiple experiences of Indigenous peoples.

> *Yolngu education is learning to love and understand our homeland and the ancestors who provided it for us, so as to create a life for ourselves reworking the truths we have learned from the land, and from our elders, into a celebration of who we are and where we are in the modern world* (Marika-Munungridj & Christie, 1995, p.61).

A decolonial perspective uses the vantage point from which possibilities are imagined (De Lissovoy, 2010). Many of these points of difference are categorized as 'at-risk' behaviours through medicalisation and policies of the problematic, or at-risk groups due simply to colour, ethnicity, financial or social circumstances. In parallel to this, the person constructed as 'the child' is a figuration of colonisation which assures paternalism directed at the voiceless or unknowledgeable other.

Karen Martin (2007) has taken on the ideas of postcolonial theory from an Indigenist stance. Her writings are highly relevant to this chapter, and the thesis overall, as her focus is Aboriginal early childhood education, and provides a nexus of postcolonial and postmodern thought and the Indigenous paradigm. Martin terms this "Aboriginal post colonialism" (2007, p.17), recognising its roots in critical race theory. The realm of Aboriginal post colonialism challenges ongoing colonial structures but constructs a space "where Aboriginal worldviews, Aboriginal knowledges and Aboriginal realities are validated" (Martin, 2007, p.17). In this sense, my argument builds on Martin's perspective of critique and deconstruction, as well as validation and transformation. The last I relate to my use of possibilities throughout the thesis. In another sense my postcolonial lens diverges in my focus on colonial discourses. In relation to Aboriginal Early Childhood Education, Martin sees two colonial discourses at work: the discourse of invisibility and that of paternalism. Invisibility has been constructed from before colonisation with the claim of ownership by James Cook on behalf of the 'Empire', and the consequent assertion by the empire of legal right through Terra Nullius. Throughout the unrelenting claiming of land, knowledge, bodies and souls over the last two hundred and fifty years, Aboriginal peoples, law and language have been kept invisible (for example, peoples physically separated from white society on missions, banning use of language, and scientific attempts to 'breed out' physical characteristics). As Martin argues, it continues to work in contemporary times through the invisibility of Aboriginal knowledge systems in learning and teaching environments and curriculum priorities (Martin, 2007; Kerwin, 2011). Thus, Indigenous peoples across Australia continue to be forced to "accommodate other ways of knowing and take these as fact" (Kerwin, 2011, p.249). The discourse of invisibility works

in tandem with the discourse of paternalism.

Ideological views of child and childhood ensured paternalistic measures upon children, and continue to do so by regulation and constant monitoring of growth and behaviour. Viewed as *child* as well as *savage*, and thus in need of protection and regulation, Aboriginal peoples have been subjected to paternalistic measures in offensive, violent and deceptive methods (Wilson, 2008; Martin, 2007; Nakata, 2008; Tuhiwai Smith, 2005; Anderson, 1996; Fesl, 1993; Shoemaker, 1994). Education continues as a paternal measure while programs, environments, curriculum, and policies continue to keep Indigenous methodologies of teaching and learning invisible.

The focus of my argument here is on ongoing processes of colonialism, drawing from Bhabha's (1996) and Fanon's (2008) discussions of identification and subjectification. This examination diverges from, rather than disrupts, invisibility and paternalism, although these discourses are part of the same system and not exclusive to each other. For example, the discourse of stereotyping sits at odds with the discourse of invisibility, and this highlights another unstable assumption of the smooth-running colonial system running its natural course.

7.2.1 Processes of Identification

The postcolonial concept of identification includes identifying and deconstructing images and representations of peoples as positive or negative and how this continues colonial systems (Chakrabarty, 2012). For my purposes, the idea of identification is a process of colonialism, tied intrinsically to subjectivation (Bhabha, 1996) through the strategy of stereotypification (Fanon, 2008; Bhabha, 2013, 1996; Chakrabarty, 2012).

> *When studying year 11, and with an interest in history, Kai had selected Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies. One particular day the focus was on communication and values in contemporary Australia. "She reckon, 'Aboriginal people use a technique called 'yarning'.*

> *We nearly fell off our chairs. Us Murri's we were laughing up... I hate that though, making out like it's something... 'ooooooohhh'... [waving his hands around] 'yarning', technique? It's just us?"*
>
> *Something had got to him about that though, working its way through his mind and unsettling him. He later told me that when he was a young boy starting school in Melbourne for a year, he hated the way the teachers would treat him as special. 'It was like, awww, a little Aboriginal boy, how nice'.*

The above narrative highlights the discomfort of identification as a particular type. Typing as a raced, classed, or sexualised 'other' is difficult to escape, and is complex: it follows and it confronts. For Bhabha, the construction of raced, classed, gendered or ethnicised identities "cannot be ascribed to pre-given, irreducible, scripted, ahistorical cultural traits" (Rizvi, Lingard & Lavia, 2006, p.253). Instead, as Fanon's (2008) psychoanalytical arguments highlight, such unproven traits are embroiled in a melee of ambivalence. Identification involves an always-already image, thus implying an essentiality, rigidity and truth about the colonised/identified. Characterised by the notion of "fixity", the ideological construction of 'Otherness' both recognises and disavowals difference (Bhabha, 1996, p.18). Fixity remains in ambivalent relationship to the stereotype. In relationship to fixity is the need for repetition of the stereotype, as though it has to be continuously asserted and thus 'proved'. The stereotype is considered the major point of subjectification in colonial discourse. Fanon's psychoanalytical critique of the colonised subject as both colonised/coloniser in relationship highlights the profound psychological nature of identification through colonialism's "major discursive strategy" (Bhabha, 1996, p.18) of the stereotype, recognising the processes of subjectification in the relationship.

7.2.2 Processes of subjectification

Homi Bhabha (2013; 1996; 1993) suggests the postcolonial concept of identification (that is, of colonial images) is not enough: "the point of intervention should shift from the identification of images as positive or negative, to an understanding of the processes of subjectification made possible (and plausible) through stereotypical discourse" (1996, p.18). Sophisticated knowledge and the inferior child may be assumptions but they are placed over a framework of 'minorities' or 'at risk' groupings based on specific knowledge about 'the Aboriginal' and 'the' Indigenous child. This dominant knowledge draws from a database of information gathered originally by non-Indigenous scientists, anthropologists and more recently those in education, health and welfare. The continuing legacy is an oppressive corpus of problems and deficits built on social Darwinism, as education works to bring Indigenous peoples 'up' to the desired state of an unquestioned universal middle-class materialism. While veiled in language of hope and 'closing gaps', in education the idea can be dangerous due to the assumed duality of superior/inferior knowledge, and the ongoing colonial relationship of managing Indigenous peoples. Ideas of potential, talent, and being are tied to political aims and ideas of entrepreneurial success (Kaščák & Pupala, 2013) and in which creativity belongs to the realm of the supra-individual and presented in the positivist language of economy.

Through the processes of education, children such as can be constructed as at-risk and predisposed to disengage with schooling. For children such as Cam, Clay or others in the memory-narratives throughout this chapter, this comes through a predetermined but ambivalent identification of 'race', culture, status or ability. As developed throughout this thesis, children are already determined as child, and all that society has constructed predetermines their normality. For Indigenous children, all that colonial discourses have repeatedly constructed about 'Aboriginality' not only follows them to school, it is *already* there as a framework of expectations for behaviour and performance. This is not necessarily a conscious motive. Bhabha (1996) argues one of the greatest techniques for the preservation of the colonising relationship is stereotypical discourse. In challenge to this, Bhabha's arguments

avoid essentialist notions of identity, viewing essentialist ideas of difference as part of the colonial and westernised system.

This creates stifling assumptions of people as grouped or minorities, therefore posing a problematic concern requiring adjustment or training to the prime illusion of cohesive regimes of truth. Increasingly more children are thus liable to labelling. Within the assumption of sophisticated knowledge, talent is a measurable commodity and limited to the material world. Potential, a term so often used but rarely deconstructed, seems to be a veiled message for material success in the future, somewhere. We could rarely know our own potential let alone another's. These are philosophical questions but necessary to critique. Education itself is a process of subjectification that inferiorises by stereotyping: 'at-risk' children are constructed as predisposed to a problematic existence and targeted before birth.

With all this theorising of limitations and colonial processes, it seems a good time for a story:

> *The Dream*
>
> *We were driving from one end of the island to the other, taking Cam back to his place. We'd been fishing, swimming, and had collected djulgai (pippis) for dinner. Something in the conversation sparked Cam to interrupt. 'Uncle! I just remembered my dream last night...' And he excitedly began the adventure, which seemed to take gargantuan proportions as it went on. 'Does this dream end or what?' his uncle asked, to which we all laughed, including Cam. He went on with the story...*
>
> *...as he spoke, we laughed, mmmed, ahhed, then slowly fell into quiet listening and drifting as we drove on. Our imaginations gave our salt-crusted bodies permission to relax into our seats, fingers catching the breeze out the windows. Travelling through that landscape of giant granite outcrops, straggling gums and soaring Hoop pines, his story wove us into a kind of dream, or at least we became part of his dream, the*

> *words wrapping around us, becoming a part of us and our collective memories.*
>
> *It began as a dream, but in the telling became real, not in a material sense, but as the fibre of our existence.*
>
> *The child! Such a weaver of stories! Today, in my memory, the image is of the people, the seats, the country as one entity, I am not separate to any of them. It was an unspoken pride that made us smile, pride in the boy with the talent for weaving fibres around our souls. Why was it unnoticed at school? Cam and his family were constantly told of his 'inabilities' with the books and with concentration. Like his older brother, they were considering holding him back another year. He was six years old. Yet the memories that tied each of us together in those times were ties of family, of love and fondness. Bound forever in a web of relationships, golden threads were woven that day.*

The idea of power relations can be employed to consider Cam's influence on those in his social circle, in this instance some of his family, by considering the culturally safe environs within which his storytelling unfolds. There is no visible power struggle for domination in the actors' relationships in this short text. Yet it is the afterword which introduces the presencing of institutional power in their lives. It is an unwelcome cessation to the dreamlike journey, a jolt in which we remember the struggle again. Foucault (1984) wrote of power in a very explicit way: bound up in the freedom of movement/response with each other, systems, institutions and resources. Power and freedom are not opposed, but work within each other. What is visible in the text is Cam's capacity for engaging an audience and for influencing their acquiescence to his mastery in both storytelling and, I argue, for weaving an immaterial realm of shared understanding.

> *There cannot be relations of power unless the subjects are free...If there are relations of power throughout every social field it is because there*

is freedom everywhere (Foucault, 1997c, p.293).

Foucault suggests that when practice and power become stagnant, what is seen as normal or allowable becomes limited, and alternatives become deficit, criminal or non-compliant. Through an early childhood educational apparatus, young children are acculturated into a specific construction of being within social, economic and political spheres. In this narrative Cam has been subjected to this through deficit labelling. Further, an older sibling has already been labelled and further marginalised through a 'need' for repeating grades.

Using the concept of identification, there are hidden assumptions stemming from educational discourse underlying Cam's story. Cannella (1999) gives a number of assumptions framing educational discourse: two of these are particular knowledge as more sophisticated than others, and particular people as inferior within education (p.38). These exclusionary ideas are accepted because education as an institution and its knowledge as reified has become a tradition or ritual accepted, experienced and set by most of society, as have identification and stereotypification, both of which are part of the educative system.

As a greater discourse, education stems from the idea of the pupil under tutelage. In the prevailing European Australian system, the child is characteristically submissive to the adult, and the teacher's knowledge is kept under vigilant surveillance to raise and maintain standards of the discipline. There are clear guidelines to what teachers should know and teach, and what children should learn with predetermined outcomes. For example, learning narratives and writing stories is part of the literacy process in primary school. The literacy program taught to children has specific learning pathways. However, these do not recognise all methodologies. As Australian Indigenous children begin school, like Cam, it is likely they "already possess very rich cultural knowledge and understandings about what constitutes typical 'story' content, style and structure" (Gale, 1995, p.38) which does not follow the expected structure at school. As Gale's study found, some teachers find this 'other' cultural knowledge "non-varied, repetitive and "boring" stories...that display pedantic attention to seemingly unimportant detail" (p.38). Kerwin (2011)

argues that until education can be built through and from Indigenous knowledges, Aboriginal peoples will continue to be unrecognised as "a people with history" (p. 249).

Nsamenang (2008) argues that the application and policy of early childhood education and care often does not take into seriousness the consideration that children's right to education comes with the right to education through their own culture. Western assumptions of childhood draw on a particular type of lifestyle, its values and expressions as the best environment for learning and living, and thus its consequent interpretation of the rights of children. This is found in policy, for example, Heckman and Masterov's (2007, 2004) assumption of the "enriched environments of middle and upper middle class" providing better quality parenting.[4] In early childhood education contexts, many children are introduced to a particular value system and implicitly desired way of being which conflicts with family desires, socio-histories and expressions of being (Nsamenang, 2006, 2008; Viruru, 2002). Kerwin (2011) argues that in Australia, "Aboriginal epistemology and ontology are never considered as true methodologies" or ways of knowing in dominant learning environments (p.249). Yet culture is also now, a dynamic force with many facets and borders that are transforming with increasing speed. Colonial power continues its aim of assimilation, by emphasising 'successes' of Indigenous people in the mainstream, while constructing a problem of 'traditional' and homeland living.

This discussion has explored some of the complexities in postcolonial ideas and angles. Dominance, power/knowledge relations, and the colonised subject as relation, sit with issues of cultural methodologies as invisible, the traditional and the hybrid. Taking the perspective that ongoing resistance in the form of knowledge and methodologies that continues in response to socio-historical contexts, the next sections offer an analysis of Indigenous perspectives as part of the resistance that colonisation has demanded.

[4] As discussed in Chapter six.

7.3 Indigenous Australian childhoods

Australia has been constructed as a multicultural society with an Aboriginal heritage. It is imagined as increasingly diverse, especially in urban environs. Much has been written about English and European colonisation on and over Indigenous land, sea and peoples across Australia and the Torres Strait Islands, and the continuing projects of resistance (Fesl, 1993; Anderson, 1996; Martin, 2003, 2007; M. Nakata, 2008; S. Nakata, 2015). The focus on concerns such as rights, language, education, country, health and wellbeing draw upon socio-historical events and contexts inextricable to current circumstances and ongoing issues. Colonial presencing is not purely historical; it has legacies and ongoing domination in the lives of many peoples. The struggle to be accepted as equal, as having capacity to contribute in whatever way makes sense to the self and to be recognised as talented rather than deficit is a lived experience in various contexts in Australian educational settings. Through political, economic, social, and epistemological processes, colonised peoples are forced into an alienation through violations of knowledge and language, bodies and spirit constructed as "Otherwise than modernity" (Bhabha, 2013, p.108). I feel it important to accentuate the idea that 'culture' and 'identity' are tied up with colonial discourse of the stereotype; a decolonising attitude is an alertness that there is always 'something to *do*' with these dangerous ideas. Within so-called cultural boundaries, identities are confounded and also confirmed.

In Australia, educative institutions stand on Aboriginal grounds yet the 'education and care' does not spring from this ground. This is an immense disconnect which continually ensures a deficit in meaningful, spiritual, authentic content and methodology of teaching and learning, precisely because there is no "sense of ownership and purpose" for *anyone* (Kabulwarnamyo School, n.d., p.4). There is no anchor, nor is there a spring of drinkable water to return to.

This represents a European Australian tradition of devaluing Indigenous knowledges and methodologies. While Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have "since antiquity, been painting the landscape, drawing it, singing it, telling

stories about it, dancing it and teaching about it" (Kerwin, 2011, p.259), in effect, mapping out the representation, relation to and significance of it, social scientists and educationalists are still attempting to represent this association through mostly Euro-Australian lenses. Thus the Australian education system "still does not represent true Aboriginal knowledge systems or an understanding of Aboriginal people" (p.259).

Several researchers have related the Euro-American education construction to early childhood contexts (Cannella & Viruru, 2002; Viruru, 2004; Huang, 2013). As the previous chapters have shown, Australian early childhood policy and contexts are increasingly informed by the same underlying constructions, particularly the human capital productivity argument. Viruru and Cannella (2002) and Huang (2013) take a postcolonial lens, arguing that significant elements of globalised 'culture' intrinsic to ECEC are bound by "neoliberal capitalism, materialism/scientific cognition, and the student-centered approach using a technical teaching method" (Huang 2013, p.17). Thus limitations are placed on freedoms. This ever tightening discursive knot gives "pursuing freedom in the postcolonial world" (Huang, 2013, p.18) in the early childhood context a palpable urgency.

In this section I present a critique through a thematic analysis of data sourced from Indigenous and Indigenist research on child-rearing. The currents of knowledge presented here continue from ancient flows, swirling around the socio-historical boulders that have tried to stand in its way. Mostly from health and anthropological disciplines, but also linguistics, I have sourced data from research by Australian Indigenous organisations and studies. However, some useful sources are acknowledged as anthropological in nature, through non-Aboriginal researchers. While these have been compiled together with Aboriginal researchers' work, they must be read with the recognition that interpretation is filtered through a non-Indigenous knowledge system. There is little research on early childhood education contexts that is not on intervention. Therefore, perspectives on child-rearing as discussed

by families and elders provide the best source. Following SNAICC's[5] (2011) example, each source (researcher) is noted as either Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal. These perspectives provide the first sphere of knowledge in this chapter.

To provide some contextualisation for the rest of the chapter, I briefly draw together the idea of Australian Indigenous 'being' and 'methodologies' through some Aboriginal Australian perspectives. Chris Sarra's (2011) research on emancipatory pedagogy draws a number of common elements of *being* through Australian Aboriginal experience: a positive sense of being Aboriginal, ways of connecting, family, connections to land, respecting Elders, and spirituality (p.79). Sarra further demonstrates that none of these are reciprocated in the dominant view of education, and that in fact the view is still as inferior beings. The danger is that young children are growing with a confused sense of *being* Aboriginal (p. 11), which negates notions of potentiality. Biermann and Townsend-Cross (2008) discuss commonalities – although not generalised to all Indigenous peoples- of Indigenous methodologies of teaching and learning, referring to these as Indigenous pedagogies. With the broader "principles" of identity and relatedness, they include inclusiveness, reciprocity, nurturance and respect (p.150). Relatedness emphasises belonging- an "enlarging of identity" (p.150). These studies and others such as Karen Martin's (2003, 2005, 2007) highlight that both relatedness and respect for uniqueness play an important role for being-becoming that should not be understated. What I draw from these knowledges is that together the concepts as practice provide an environment for the possibilities of self-knowledge and self-learning through and in relation to others. Martin (2007) refers to "coming amongst each other", and Robbie Shilliam (2015) discusses the deepening of relations when such coming together is grounded in place and connectedness. Such 'deep relations' are profound, coming from waters "existing underneath the wounds of coloniality" (Shilliam, 2015, p.13). They are concepts and practices grounded in connections to land, spirits, and ancestors. They hold promise for finding purpose in local early childhood communities.

[5]Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care. Their compilation of research 'Growing up our way: a matrix' (2011) has been instrumental in sourcing research on perspectives of different communities about children and childhood.

The emerging understanding of the place of being, becoming and potential for young children in ECEC contexts led the reading of sources, however the reading of family and community perspectives provided the insight for which themes to use. The themes selected are *self-determination and affiliation*; *listening, learning and understanding*; and the *capacity of children*.

7.3.1 Self-determination, independence and affiliation

Much has been written about children's autonomy alongside deference for relational membership in Indigenous communities and cultures across southern regions in its various manifestations (Nsamenang, 2006b; Eickelkamp, 2011). This is most obvious in Australian literature through anthropological studies (Burbank, 2006; Brady, 1996) and recent health studies emphasising differences in mainstream health expectations for child-rearing (Burbank, 2006, Kruske et al., 2011). In this section my discussion is rather to highlight that these skills and traits become, through the dominant education system, understood as problematic. Although autonomy is itself an admired concept in the liberalist tradition, a child's self-determination when confronting adult direction is another matter. This appears to be at the crux of the contradictions and complexities in Australian ECEC environments where the learning framework encourages listening to children as active communicators and contributors, and regulatory frameworks focus on adult provision of quality environments. Children's autonomy is encouraged where it matches the educator or centre's expectations for behaviour: *do as you want as long as you obey me* (Rousseau, 1762/2003; Kant, 1899/2003) is still the hidden understanding of the education institution.

This has been noted as highly discomforting for children who have experienced the right to express themselves and self-determine their needs. At its root is the cycle of identification and stereotype repetition which labels a child as 'not ready' or fit for school, non-compliant or 'challenging'. Colonial structures construct an identity of difference which the child is born to, and through this difference places the stereotype (for example, using language of school readiness, non-obedience

or disruption in hand with 'Aboriginal') which always and already is there to confront the identified child. Yet children who come to the ECEC context may already be experienced in the very outcomes educators aim for children. They may "have engaged, and been engaged in, ever-increasing sets of relatedness, effecting agency in these engagements and in their relatedness to people, plants, animals, waterways, climate, land and skies" (Martin, 2007, p.18). Independence, self-determination and standing up for one-self are aspects of growing self-hoods that manifest in nuanced and differentiated ways:

> *When a young child shows anger or shouting or such to older members of family, 'adults laugh them off and, in fact, tend to admire the child sticking up for its rights'* (Hamilton, 1981, p.100 in SNAICC 2011) Anbarra, NC Arnhem- researcher NA.
>
> *Children are not expected to obey or respect adults by virtue of their different status* (Hamilton, 1981, p.150 in SNAICC 2011).
>
> *[There is] a policy of non-interference with a child's activities unless s/he is in distress or is causing distress to another child* (Harris, 1984, 112 in Waltja Tjutangku Palyapayi Aboriginal Corporation 2002), A/NA.

In these examples, children are trusted to know their wants, needs and opinions. Children are accorded a presupposition of agency by their relations and others, for their choices and actions often from pre-birth. The dominant system of early education, focuses mainly on care aspects and the child as more passive than the adult. In order to decolonise children's experience of ECEC, Aboriginal terms of reference must be acknowledged but also be the foundation of policy and practice. As Martin (2008) argues, "our children are regarded as capable, autonomous and active in contributing to the world. They are not helpless, hopeless and childish" (p.18).

Encouraging independence is also balanced with an emphasis on affiliation (SNAICC, 2011). Such emphasis might involve parents and family members in encouraging

young children to relate to and to nurture, to be aware of others and help when assistance is needed, and to also depend on peers. Dependency is not exclusive of independence through relatedness. However, being affectionate or helping others can be misread in the education environment where stereotypes wait for children to match the expectation. That is, the Aboriginal child, identified as 'at-risk' by virtue of colour, 'race' or heritage, is monitored for signs of the stereotyped Aboriginal-at-risk-of-failing. Helping others rather than finishing activities, informing a teacher that someone needs help, relying on peers rather than the teacher are behaviours that may diverge from child-adult relations in many classrooms. The classroom sense of routine based around time is an aspect of early childhood education that can frustrate children's developing independence and autonomy (Burbank, 2006), and forms part of a hidden curriculum. Colonial strategies can continue to oppress in multiple visible and less obvious ways, because monitoring for at-risk would not be considered oppression.

From the perspective of many Indigenous Australian methodologies of teaching and learning, the balance of independence and affiliation unfolds as part of the 'growing up' cycles. Martin (2007), Bromot et al., (1989), and Kruske et al., (2011), have explained the growing up cycles taking a person from one lifehood phase to the next from an Indigenous perspective, although each of these authors share their knowledge through different communities. A person's growing up is not linear, rather a process connecting the different circles of relatedness at different times of life and the knowledge of the meanings accorded the transformations through cycles:

> *Circles embrace through processes where relatedness to other people, animals, plants etc., is engaged and extended. Circles facilitate the coming amongst each other in relatedness* (Martin, 2006).

Through each cycle, the learning of relatedness, roles and responsibilities builds on the growing experience of reciprocity. Reciprocal obligations, sharing and showing support for others, are all encouraged and taught. For the very young child, this includes:

> *...urging children to share, to show compassion, to look after younger family members, to take risks, and the controlled teasing, scaring, and cheek pinching* (Warrki Jarrinjaku ACRS 2002, 83).

The controlled teasing and scaring teaches even very young children who they can turn to for support, who will 'be there' for them.

The idea of children's power is taken seriously and plays a vital role in the growing up circle. Power describes the desires from the innermost being (Hamilton, 1981) which are manifested in self-determination, independence, and affiliation and demands through channels of support. Children's power also manifests in the growing capacity to acknowledge relatedness and subdue "one's will in order to sustain relatedness" (Myers, in WJ ACRS, 2002, p.109). In communicating appropriate emotional states in different contexts, particularly through affiliation and kinship connections, children are considered to be showing a growth of 'understanding'.

7.3.2 Listening, learning, and understanding

Hearing, listening and understanding include generosity, which is encouraged from an early age. Generosity reflects a capacity for hearing the needs of others. Helping those in need includes responses to another's requests as well as being alert to their whereabouts. This type of hearing and listening are highly valued attributes in Aboriginal child rearing (Warrki Jarrijanku, 2002). A person's ability to understand and to think is intimately tied to their ability to listening. From the dominant perspective on early childhood learning and development, it is the verbal language that is given this high value. However, listening here is an activity entwined with thinking, understanding and response:

> *Myers comments that Anangu from the Pintupi language group perceive that the ear is the 'organ of thought'* (W J ACRS 2002, p.110).

> *When a child refuses to share, his right to do so is unquestioned, but he is described as odd, ungenerous and 'deaf'* (Hamilton, 1981, p.151). Anbarra North Central Arnhem Land.

Emphasis on generosity is intrinsic to the different and holistic aspects of learning, and doing, relatedness. For example, in relation to playthings, "*there is no concept of 'mine'... Children are actively encouraged to give away objects if another child desires them*" (Warrki Jarrinjaku, 2002, p.61). Among Pintupi Anangu, "*adults play at this with children, pleading for an item, and even the very young become accustomed to sharing*" (Myers cited in W J ACRS, 2002, p.84). It is important here to be mindful that these data excerpts are representative of particular communities and language groups rather than to be generalised to all Indigenous Australian peoples. The excepts so far discussed are from Central Desert (Anangu peoples such as Pintupi), north west Central Tanami (Walpiri) regions and Northern Australian Arnhem Land (such as Anbarra) regions.

The activity of listening and compassionate behaviour also builds a sense of agency and expectation of equal membership. To illustrate this, I include a narrative:

> *As the cousins were running through the house, young Jai, a not-quite crawling infant, was sitting on the lounge floor. As the older mob ran past, jostling to get hold of the helium show balloon from he-who-has-the-balloon-controls-play, Jai opened his mouth and exclaimed, "Aaaahhh!" The next time they came round he was ready, "Aaaaaah-hhh!" No response. Frowning, he looked at each of the adults, then to his cousins. "Aaaaahhhhhh!"*
>
> *"Hey! You kids, don't you hear, he's growling you! He wants his balloon, doesn't he?"*
>
> *The running stopped and he-who-controlled-play gave possession back to his little cousin.*

In this short text the voice of the baby is heard as equal to the desires of others; from very young age children learn they can influence matters, they can be heard. For the children in this scenario, the adult voice leaves the question as an invitation to decide for themselves what to do, the end 'doesn't he?' a common rejoinder (as also 'isn't it?') in conversations that encourages thinking for oneself and others.

From a guided participatory measure, it is also a reminder to hear the desire of others, for generous and compassionate listening. The infant is not 'whining' or complaining to get attention: he had something to say and asserted his influence as a member of the whole group. Using a postcolonial frame disrupts a dominant notion of the infant as passive in relation to those around him or her. It also connects to the issue of materialism which has become dominant in early childhood education.

The action orientation of listening is an enactment of understanding: of the rights of others as equal regardless of their age; of the right to dependency behaviour (Hamilton, 2002); and of generosity and compassion as underscoring responses to those needs when it is requested. Kruske et al., (2011) highlight that ignoring or refusal is cruel and damaging to the infant's well-being and autonomy in their Central Desert (Walpiri language group) study, a perspective echoed throughout a number of language groups across Australia. The narratives included in this chapter are from urban-regional areas of Far Northern Queensland but find some commonalities with other communities and families, especially the unspoken right to self-determination, dignity of the spirit and uniqueness of the individual. Listening to another in this sense requires a deep resonance, considerate thought, a compassionate response, "*ngaltujarra, yuwarra*"[6], and maturity is viewed as growth in understanding this significance. Relating this to the understandings of being (Sarra, 2011; Martin, 2007) and methodologies for teaching and learning (Biermann & Townsend-Cross, 2008) discussed earlier, growing up can be demonstrated by an individual's understanding for relatedness and affiliation (including people, country) and how they contribute in their own unique way (Marika-M. & Christie, 1995).

Practices of materialism

The narrative above, the data on generosity and the discussion on listening and learning negotiation draws me to consider the practice of materialism in ECEC.

[6]Be compassionate, give it to him - Anbarra, NC Arnhem Land.

Viruru (2007) argues that the globalised forces of market theory have influenced consumerism and materialism as a way of life, in the capitalist paradigm. Such pervasive influence is produced in early childhood education, underscored with westernised values of childhood. For ECEC, the "doctrine of children learning by doing", also draws on concrete materialism, and connecting back to the object lessons of Pape-Carpantier and Froebel. However, contemporary emphasis is also on the quantity of items available in order for children to have a 'material rich' environment. This continues to influence and justify a staggering array of material resources for each age-range. The "obsession with materials not only creates a larger market but also denies children the opportunity to create meaningful and self-directed social relationships among themselves" (Viruru, 2007, p.15). It is, I believe, a highly salient issue intrinsic to arguments of contemporary colonising practices. This creates a more passive role for the very young child, as self-directed interactions are likely to be interpreted as 'hostile takeovers' of resources, with less chance for the children involved to negotiate such interactions into relationships.

7.3.3 The capacity of children

In the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia, children are constructed as active beings in their learning and development, who "recognise their agency" (DEEWR, 2009, p.9). Underscoring this is a value of the adult role in providing for children's developmental needs. While children are viewed as capable, the adult is the expert in anticipating children's needs according to the developmental process rather than the child. This posits the adult as more active than the child in the carer relationship, undermining the child as being able to identify her own needs, and those to turn to for this support, such as peers or the carer relationship. The care and education environment thus becomes a space of conflicting realities for many children, including many from the southern world, such as African, Indian and Asian heritages who attend ECEC (Nsamenang, 2006, 2008; Viruru and Cannella, 2002; Huang, 2013). I turn now to this idea of wants and needs and the implications for the caregiver relationship.

Across the research data and narratives from various regions and communities in this chapter, there is a pattern of children as active in their needs/wants and the adult role as passive. The *Growing up our way Practices Matrix* (SNAICC, 2011) includes some of Hamilton's ethnographic study of child-rearing in Anbarra communities, North Central Arnhem land. I include a synthesis here of Hamilton's discussion of Anbarra perspectives which highlight children's active role in meeting their needs:

> *...the child is born with (a) set of needs which can only be supplied through social interaction; ...the child indicates these needs to others, and the duty of others is to respond...Dependency behaviour is perfectly right and proper; ... the role of the caretaker is to pay attention to the overt demands of the infant. ...the infant is active and the caretaker passive... the assumption is...whatever the child wants is what it needs* (pp. 128, 161, Anbarra, NC Arnhem, NA).

Caregiving is a 'response to' the child's requirements as determined by the child. Young children recognise their needs, and the assumption is that wants and needs are the same. Kruske et al., (2011, p.8) highlight this contrasts dominant non-Indigenous values in which caregivers 'do (something) to' children. Cannella and Viruru (2001) draw on decolonising ideas to identify the power relations in unequal and oppressive treatment of young children in contemporary Early Childhood Educational assumptions of the adult-child binary. In misreading, ignoring, or downplaying agency in an educational setting the danger is of misreading behaviour and affirming dominant discourse that label and determine identities and thus educational futures.

> *Time Out*
>
> *She was wild alright. I could tell something was brewing while we were talking on the phone, and it came finally. 'They had her on a chair, away from the others. The teacher called it a naughty chair would you believe! They put her on this bloody chair, she can't join the others. They said she wouldn't listen. She put on a turn because she didn't*

> *want to join in with something. Time out my arse, who do they think they are? And she would've howled too. Howled and howled.'*
>
> *At the time her mother shared this with me, Aly was about eighteen months old. On a time-out chair. Being naughty. Excluded. I can only imagine what she learnt that day. It was the unspoken that I digested most from that conversation. Of certain adults annoyed that a child would disobey. They wouldn't get that she might know her own mind, be trusted to decide what was best and what she needed most. Heaven forbid she would actually stand up for herself against the force of adult authority.*

The child knows her needs. Knows when she is hungry, tired, when she wants to play and when to stop. As the above example illustrates, from an Aboriginal Australian point of reference, dominant education institutions, even for very young children, can be scenes of cruelty: of undermining dignity and participation, and of not listening or accepting the child's terms of reference for being and becoming in the world. From a group management view, the child is unruly because she did not obey, and when disciplined, disrupted the group with her protestations. From the colonial subject perspective, the Aboriginal child is behaving in ways expected of Aboriginal performance in the classroom: disruptive and 'wild', requiring civilising.

7.4 Summary: Resources not deficits

One of the driving frustrations that began my interest in this study was a desire to highlight that while the dominant perspectives in ECEC and children's rights were continually debating about whether, or how much, children have capacity and agency, ironically, the perspectives that were not included seemed to be the very ones that assumed the young child as agentic, capable, and power-full. Postcolonial and other literature emerging in the ECEC field (Viruru, 2002; Nsamenang, 2006; Huang, 2013; Nakata, 2015) is highlighting the complications caused by western

products and programmes implemented which have no such recognition. Such programmes appear to have dipped into the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989), overlooking the status of each right as indivisible. Therefore, a key point from this chapter is that the right to education comes hand-in-hand with the right to culture, cultural education and culturally-based education (UNCRC 1989). There is a current force of globalising early childhood education which plays a part in "Eurocentric images of a consolidated sociality that binds diverse communities to shared and absolute principles" (De Lissovoy, 2010, p.282).

This is a situation that must be taken to account, as postcolonial theories argue, these images do not, in reality, speak for everyone. This requires critical and considered dialogue on how ECEC can be developed from the histories of the colonial experience. There does, on the part of colonialist perspective, appear to be a fear of co-existence. De Lissovoy (2010) argues that the principle of co-existence from the colonial experience would not downplay or suppress 'radical differences' between standpoints. In recognising the fact of colonial histories, nor would it continue on the path of the current face of globalisation with its suppression of cultural sovereign rights to autonomies. This can only begin with the youngest child experiencing the rights to cultural expression, to acceptance of the needs of others, to voice in whatever manner is appropriate for them, and education that actually is built from shared and negotiated values (CRC,1989; CRC/GC7, 2005; CRC/GC11, 2009) by provision of a respectful, loving environment that is curious to see the unfolding vision that each child holds.

The other impetus for the study was the recognition of the need for broadening the ECEC field's understandings of what it is to be, to become, to belong, and all that encompasses lifehood as an unfolding potential; its multiplicity, nuances and possibilities. The streams of knowledge contributing to the discussion in this chapter amount to a belief that early self-determination balanced with affiliation, a recognition in children's power, and trust in their self-awareness supports the growing person in standing strong against the tide of dominating forces. Indigenous methodologies will not subside. Yet we cannot ignore the dominant

tide of colonialist power, an insistent, washing of waves and torrents of identification, paternalism, and the strange contradictory relationship of invisibility and the looming stereotype.

Two other key points raised from the discussion are: the capacity of children, and circles of relatedness. Children are contributors. They contribute to the world around them, show a capacity to support others and a capacity to ensure others will support them. Jai's voice demonstrates this capacity but also, at a very young age, he is learning to expect membership. Cam's talent for weaving stories also wove together friends and family in joyful moments; a proper-true (meaningful, authentic, 'true' in a spiritual sense) storytelling capacity. The lesson for early childhood education and care? The idea of 'child-centred' practice breaks down when children are imagined as not-yet-capable and therefore requiring intervening in that capacity. Through each cycle of growing, then, young children could be afforded respect:

> *...to their capacity to regulate their own behaviours given certain situations and to fulfil their responsibilities to self and to others. This also means they have the capacity to ensure others fulfil their responsibilities toward them... Relatedness is the premise upon which any participation, trust and experiences can be built and then maintained* (Martin, 2007, p.18).

A key point to decolonising knowledge structures of early childhood education and care is that people of any age need to experience, be immersed in, the conditions of co-existence. Such conditions cannot simply be imagined, they require the co-operative, and the disparate, knowledges of the community in which education is sited. The rational, the irrational, the generous and the compassionate, the hurt, the angry and the experienced. The type of co-existence I am theorising requires what Robbie Shilliam (2015) discusses as "deep relation" (p.13). Only in a deepened relationship can there be an immersion into the recognition of connections through intertwined histories. Deep relation calls for profound, grounded relationship. Our relation to each through this connection, burns a

desire for compassion and working together for change, emerging as becoming-relations and relational-being. Importantly, for the Australian ECEC context, the socio-historical co-ordinates of our past and current landscape requires the foundations be built with Indigenous perspectives, for only then will the teaching and learning connect to the place it stands on.

Circles of relatedness are ongoing through a person's life journey. Pedagogy desirous of coming together in relatedness would be cautious of the violence and destruction to the spirit caused by processes of subjectification and stereotypical discourses, but encourage the wide variety of expressive modes that can celebrate and identify the individual expression of who they can be: perhaps a storyteller, perhaps headstrong, perhaps silent, but importantly, one who stands up for their rights and dignity, and that of others. Most of all, a decolonising pedagogy would be on constant vigil against destructive ideas of existence, to guard against what Fanon (2008) has described as:

> *...the idea of progress where everyone climbs up towards whiteness and light and is engulfed by a single, monolithic notion of what it means to be human. And, ... to be vigilant to the constant and perpetual refashioning of hate: hate is not inborn; it has to be constantly cultivated, to be brought into being, in conflict with more or less recognized guilt complexes. Hate demands existence, and he who hates has to show his hate in appropriate actions and behavior; in a sense, he has to become hate* (Sardar in Fanon, 2008, preface).

Given the pervasive emphasis on compassion, generosity, and listening, individual autonomy through relational affiliation that is evidenced throughout the texts in this chapter, and supported by various Indigenous writers, the early childhood education and care environment could be considered cruel: to refuse a child's wants and need is damaging to the spirit. Further, why should any child be even thought of as deficit? Why do we not ask, what is unique about this child? In what way is she or he a teacher as well as learner? Where are we in our relations? In education theory, as in early childhood education, we have constructed the adult human as

thinker, agent, scientist, subject, yet continue to limit young children to simplistic versions of our own dreams (Cannella, 1999). Perhaps, as Cannella suggests, there is no limit to the construction we can make of ourselves. Being open to diverse representations of this possibility is surely essential to equitable educational judgements and educational discourse that is non-exclusive. This means being alert to colonial discourses and hidden practices of segregation, for as Shilliam well argues, "colonial science has never been concerned with deep relations. It is only concerned with cutting the ties that bind for the sake of endless accumulation" (p. 172). Challenges to the construction of who we are and what we can make of ourselves also illustrate the importance of *unmaking* those constructions. As Karen Martin (2007, 2003) and others (Kerwin, 2011; Nakata 2008, Biermann & Townsend-Cross, 2008; Burbank, 2006) continue to argue, education needs to understand that working towards a framework of learning and teaching requires a view of Aboriginal knowledge and methodologies as authentic. As long as ways of being are limited through education constructions then not only will we continue to be colonial subjects –coloniser and colonised- but the extraordinary talent of our young people- of all of us- will remain untapped. Until then, our collective story as a 'nation', with its vision, its knowledge streams, its dreams and realities, remains an impoverished one.

This chapter has taken a passage through postcolonial perspectives and Indigenous experience to challenge the dominant discourse in education that construct the Aboriginal Australian subjectivities as disadvantaged and therefore, always-already at risk. The data has shown perspectives of children as strong and capable and as power-full teachers in their own right. The landscape has changed much from the traversing of the first stream, which, placed against this one, demonstrates entirely different perspectives of child, or being and becoming. With five streams navigated, the reader is taken now to the final meeting space, a confluence where drinkable water is sought. Freedom is what we might make of ourselves from within the parameters of a particular historical situation. What freedoms can we begin to practice in ECEC?

Chapter 8

Confluence: Meeting across the waters

> *The idea of development stands today like a ruin in the intellectual landscape. Its shadow obscures our vision* (Sachs, 1995, p.1)

8.1 Introduction

This chapter offers a framework through which distinct and discordant perspectives can speak to each other across difference. As a process of swirls, eddies, and flows rather than outline, scaffold, and structure, there is limitation in the boundaries of printed words on page. This chapter has a specific purpose as confluence: a key meeting of knowledges, alongside fissures, seams and disruptions. To draw on the metaphor of streams of knowledge structures, the aim is to explore the brackish water for the drinkable. Throughout the chapter there are numerous questions asked, yet not all are addressed. This is intentional, to acknowledge that that there are different ways forward and directions to travel in, and at the same it time highlights my attempts to theorise 'unknowable' knowledge.

In this chapter I argue that the key convergence across all streams of analysis is 'our' connected histories. The analysis reveals that rather than "separatist trajectories or parallel interpretations" (Bhambra, 2014, p.420), the histories presented here are, at some point or another, shared stories, although experiences may differ. The concept of the 'colonised subject' as a perpetual relationship attests to

this. Being shared histories, the stories require re-figuration so that numerous versions may be told, and many protagonists get to tell it. Such is paradigmatic proliferation (Lather, 2006). After all, a well-woven yarn tells the story in various ways.

A key component of my argument is that the major expression of this connection across social and spatio-temporal histories is manifested and theorised as development. I take a critical perspective on particular processes that contribute to the idea: globalisation, paternalism and the views of the subject and agency both presumed and subsumed in theorising. These concepts are key to unwrapping the veiled messages of potential in this conglomeration of concepts. My focus in drawing out these discussions is the salience they hold for rethinking becomings and therefore potentiality. Thus, my argument is drawn to early childhood education and care through the focus on development discourse as ongoing imperialism, on being-becomings, and relations, representation and self-determination. As a confluence that swirls around different voices, interrogation is not omitted: consequently, I ask, what kind of agency, what kind of subject, and *what* potential?

The chapter swirls in the following manner: I first set out and discuss the final question raised at the conclusion of each stream. While limited by the structure of the printed word, these are intended to follow a sit-down meeting of perspectives and concerns. Into these, I have placed fissures, a space for agonistic response to seep through. Fissures allow cross-over of perspectives, lines of flight or unexpected challenges to muddy the waters of assumed truths. While every society may have its regimes of truth (Foucault, 1980), the fissures or lines of flight here place stutters in those that dominate. For example, I introduce a rights discourse to challenge policy-based perspectives of the needs of children. Following this the discussion explores the flows that have formed between particular chapters, such as figurations of childhood and contemporary early child development policy agendas. Finally, I consider how these issues can provide passage to decolonise children's spaces.

8.2 Swirls, eddies, tides

In this section I set out the key questions raised within each of the streams. To remind the reader, the five streams comprise chapters three to seven: childhood, subjectivity, docile bodies, human capital, and indigenous postcolonial dreams and realities. The manner of argument in this section requires a brief explanation. The discussion is not kept entirely within the bounds of the perspective in each stream. To illustrate as an example, Stream two (freedom and subjectivity) raises questions of the subject and agency. I introduce into this discussion a fissure of Indigenous perspectives that appear to clash with critical theoretical positions of the erased subject. The tension created by insertion of other perspectives, like the disruption of narratives of difference, allows further theorising of being-becoming.

8.2.1 Stream one: Childhood in European discourse

Discourses of the rational, scientific and technological framework of knowledge and truth seeking as critiqued in chapter three, raised two questions. If a being –and knowledge- is determinable, *what does this allow for becoming?* In what ways can the agency of nature provide disjuncture to determinism?

The idea of *becoming*, I argue, in this stream is one of the adult subject. The child, in this formulation, is always already constituted as a site for the subject's origin. That is, child is a prior, proto or pre-form of the formed adult subject. At the nexus of philosophical, scientific, psychological and pedagogical knowledge and practice, the child remains a theoretical resource for knowing how adult subjects are made. The specificity of the child body-mind as relevant to the actual world of children is less visible than the theorised trajectory as a set of subjectifications. Consequently, through this argument, *being* as 'child' is an established set of 'possibilities' embodied in a biological and psychological formation of indicators.

The set of disciplines and practices that drew on the utility of 'child' in enlightenment times to the beginning of the twentieth century, are not alone in viewing

child as theoretical resource for understanding the origins of the adult condition. As noted previously, the North American discourses of the child and development came into full swing in the twentieth century, in its interpretation of European psychological understandings of development in thought and language (such as Jean Piaget, 1959) and the U.S. based behaviourist theory of John Watson and B.F. Skinner. These fields of thought could both be said to continue the tradition of the liberal adult subject. The taming of the unruly child body-mind appeared hardly liberalist in its ethos, and this is a further suggestion to the extent that the child was not seen as fully 'correct' until the shaping of docility and reason took its course. Only the rational, reflective adult could, in its judgements and constraint, ever be free-thinking and self-representational. Working back from the normalised adult state, the child was thoroughly knowable in its becoming.

The theorists I have explored in chapter four (freedom, subjectivity, discourse) challenge structural determinations and are adamant that multiple discourses and experience highlight the ambivalence of becoming. As Claudia Castaneda (2002) has argued in her book *Figurations*, these theorists also claim the child as originary. Originary in this sense refers to the use of 'child' as a theoretical point of origin-looking to the child for beginnings of development or latency of concepts that manifest later as 'problems'. Whether Butler's subject-in-formation, Deleuze and Guattari's becomings, or Foucault's child as deviation of the normal, the child is theorised as a site of differentiation ("the abnormal child", Foucault, 2006, p.222), or site of divergence ("weaving a web of madness like childish vanity", Deleuze 2008, p.63)[1], and therefore theorised as non-subject. While I agree with Castaneda that the child is pre-subjective in these theories, I would add to this that knowing the child is not an emphasis of these theorists. Rather, the manner in which subjectification individualises and normalises produces a disciplinary matrix of certain discursive formations, one of which is the culturally preferable expression of child. The objective of responses to structural determination and categories has been to challenge and disrupt the idea of knowledge of knowledge, and the

[1]Deleuze here is discussing Kant's critical philosophy. The phrase 'childish vanity' is also used a number of times by Kant (1899/2003). Neither philosophers explain this as a concept, rather it is added in as an assumption to 'clarify' other concepts.

totalisation of the human. Is it really possible to know the child's (or any entity) alterity, interior existence and experience? Is it right to continue to see child as separate to adult experience, or is a child's existence so especially different to adults that a theory of child-subject is required? How is it possible when the realms of childhood have been left behind? To further complicate these questions, why do we believe we have left 'childhood' at all?

A further question raised through my analysis of humanist discourses is why liberal rationalist discourse would be still apparent in contemporary forms of education and governance. The enlightenment discourse of the necessity of *reason's constraint* is the perfect medium for (neo)liberalism's ideology – the trope of possibilities of freedom in return for government of one's desire for happiness. Happiness, and satisfaction, is perceived in the form of competition, circuits of exchange and distractions (Focuault, 1977). Themes of happiness, freedom and excess are also articulated by Rousseau in identifying the social origins of inequality (1754/2012). The control of governance is diffuse, and like Rousseau's governor, a ruse, continually managed while maintaining ambivalent 'wise friendship' and allowance. For the acceptance of governance, in the form of asymmetrical relations, the discourse of freedom and its possibilities must be more visible than reason's constraint on desire and happiness. Neoliberalism's catchcry of Freedom's primacy, far from being reality, is a dream, a conceptual *potential* state, while reality's progressively greater limitations are placed on individual and collective being. As Ranciere (2009) has stated, "Ideas always are material realities, taking over bodies, giving them a map of the visible and orientations for moving" (p.114).

The west's contemporary rational, scientific, and technological advances constitute a different form of imperialism, where the developed 'give to' or 'take from' the underdeveloped, rather than consider the idea of self-determination or self-representation. When Truman's inaugural speech of 1949 labelled the Majority World as "under-developed" (Truman, Jan 20th 1949), he invited more prosperous nations to assist in bringing "these people" to the light through "capital investment" and "productivity". The not-yet-developed were offered the route to advancement into western paradigms such as capitalism, couched as the path to

democracy. I include Truman's speech as an example of temporal context of political paternalism and the explicit linking of development discourse which knots together nations, peoples, and the idea of the Other. This can be related easily to the intersection of the education of children, of colonised subject, and ongoing metaphor of child. It also illuminates an underlying hope and fear. Where dominant frameworks of childhood consider children's futures, and at the same time ignore certain methodologies and ways of knowing, there is a question of what potential? Across the eighteenth century to the turn of the twentieth, young children were both metaphors and assemblages to explore such a question. In contemporary society, newer modes of power and technologies have drawn the child as responsible. As discussed in chapter five, on governance and reform, children must now unfold their own potential as well as that of the nation. If potential is always in the future, a telos, and therefore an unfolding unknown, how is it young children are held responsible for reaching it?

An undetermined set of forces: rethinking potential

Using a viewpoint from another stream provides a fissure in the walls of structural frameworks. I draw on discussion in chapter four on Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) concept of the Body without Organs to rethink ideas of the 'undeveloped'. The concepts of rhizome and Body without Organs (BwO) can assist to represent an *undetermined* set of forces. In relation to young children, I relate these concepts, as imminent becomings, possibilities of expression, thought, meaning-making, and the multimodal expressions of creativity and emergent thought. They are experimental, multidirectional possibilities for actualisation. The concept of rhizome in this way brings 'potential' to a more present and ambivalent realm of possibilities. Potential is always already present in the multiple possibilities of becoming in the present. Although Deleuze and Guattari (1987) do not implicate child in discussing the Body without Organs, their discussion of the virtual-actual movement between the mind-body crystallises, in my view, the possibilities for engaging multivariant modes of being-becoming in relation to child and development. The BwO represents mind's idea of the body in the process of becoming-subject.

The idea of stratification (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) exemplifies the processes of construction of the body-mind through discursive power relations. The geological reference to creating form is highly relevant to constructions of the child. It is the process of grasping the body by multiple layers of discourses, such as psychological knowledge, evolutionism or neurosciences, which shape and articulate it as an arrangement (*agencement*). Stratification can be seen clearly through the discourses of childhood and development that understand the child as a being born into a developmental sequence, through biological, psychological and environmental processes. These provide a framework through which knowledges articulate child, capturing and bringing the 'self' into existence. The capturing in this case is continual but also already captured in databases of knowledge about the newborn, infant, toddler, child.

As experiments of existence, becomings are insistently 'blocked' and trapped in an always-already framework of development embodied as becoming-adult, becoming-ordered, becoming-normal. My argument here is in becoming's relation to potentiality. There is little freedom of and for becomings in such a framework. This makes 'potential' a misguided and dangerous concept to guide a life.

Ultimately, the hinge with which concepts of being and becoming fluctuate is the sovereignty of the subject at the foundation of liberal humanist ideals. This structured subject, based on the childhood-adulthood dichotomous relationship, sits in a contradictory relationship of the universalised and differentiated. The autonomous/dependant, rational/irrational, developed/underdeveloped subject can thus be imagined at the multiple levels and hierarchies of 'humankind' across a temporal past-future trajectory.

8.2.2 Stream Two: Freedom and Subjectivity

The theoretical orientations of Foucault, Butler and Deleuze considered in chapter four, raised a question of agency, although only Butler, along with Davies' (2006; 1996) empirical analyses, specifically considers agency and the powers of

the subject. The ideas of freedoms and subjectivity continue to raise for me the consideration of the power-freedom-subjectivity relationship. In this, I see four facets of what could be theorised as agency and its role in self-determination. The first three can be summarised as a subjective or interior/exterior process, a social engagement, and a political question: who gets to have a say about their life? In the struggle of determining and individualising bodies and being, how much more are children governed through this process of subjection than adults? To weave a thread through these perspectives, subjectivity is a social, cultural and historical ongoing process, but the positions available to us are also taken up and occupied: "subjects are not only made, we make ourselves" (Taylor, 2011, p.7). What does this mean for young children, who are continually assessed and subjected? What kind of subject? What kind of agency?

What kind of agency?

The fourth facet I consider in theorising agency of existence follows Donna Haraway's (1991) notion of the agency of the world, and Claudia Castaneda's notions of the agency of nature (2002). Both of these are influenced by debates surrounding the privileging of human activity and rethinking agency in relation to non-human entities and human-material relationships. Haraway's argument is that the shaping of worlds is not without the participation, activity and disruption of the world itself. Furthermore, Castaneda argues that nature, as existence, itself cannot be predicted. In this perspective, nature has agency in that we cannot predict existence and its "erratic, chaotic, and always potentially surprising form of activity that animates us and our worlds" (Castaneda, 2002, p.168). Following these lines, I add that the 'our world' as a multilayered, interconnected space of relational, spiritual, material and environmental forces cannot be mastered, and in consequence has a flow of agency that impacts quotidian existence and interrupts the neat ordering of frameworks for becoming. This network of agency "realises bodies and embodiment" (p.168) in multiple ways by shaping our understanding and experience. In this I draw connections to the idea of the Body without Organs with which the mind's idea of the body processes from the virtual to the actual.

The implications of this are the *always unknowable* forms of being and existence, and therefore, to lose control of the mastery of the world and knowledge. Perhaps to lose control is too much to ask of scientific or technological frameworks, for they are the machineries of control societies (Deleuze, 1995).

Another idea of agency can be found in discussions of some Indigenous knowledge systems. I draw in these ideas here as a disruption to contemporary critique that continue to debate the existence of agency. Although chapter seven, Indigenous dreams and realities, did not emphasise the extent of complexity in kinship and social systems found in different communities across Australia, relatedness includes human and non-human entities, spirit, land and country. Like the other components of kinship, country has agency and sentience:

> *People talk about country in the same way that they would talk about a person: they speak to country, sing to country, visit country, worry about country, feel sorry for country and long for country... country knows, hears, smells, takes notice, takes care, is sorry or happy... Because of this richness, country is home, and peace; nourishment for body, mind and spirit; heart's ease* (Bird Rose, 1996, p.7).

Along with the extensive and complex relationship with living kin, ancestors and non-ancestral spirits, and the ownership these entail, these connections give a far deeper sense of what agency entails. Eickelkamp (2011) makes an interesting observation about different understandings of agency across place and peoples. In her research, involving Central Desert communities in Australia, children's play demonstrated agency is more a sense of influencing and participating in continuation and maintaining relatedness through this continuity. Relatedness enables a sense of "social effectiveness" (2011, p.507) and one's unique qualities are strengthened through this capacity. Observations of older Central Desert children at play emphasise empirical matter-of-factness rather than fantasy play (Eickelkamp, 2011). I am wary of placing a western argument of structure and agency onto Indigenous methodologies, however what I draw out from this brief discussion is that relatedness is at the basis of understanding one's self. The idea of continuation has also

been discussed by Indigenous leaders and elders, as key to a creative-consistent process of cultural expression:

> *...a good dancer, who knows his connections to his land and understands his rom (law and culture), can produce his own galtha. This is what we are aiming for in Yolngu education.... He can act intelligently as an individual because he knows and respects the background to what he is doing. He is a unique individual... He isn't just keeping Yolngu culture unchanged like a museum piece. He has learnt to create something which is uniquely his own, but quite consistent with the past... He is a modern Yolngu keeping his culture strong* (Marika-Munungridj & Christie, 1995, pp.61-62).

These different aspects and understandings of agency illustrate the importance of remaining open to differences of acting, influencing and personal powers. Relatedness and kinship demands a regard for others wants and needs, but does not rule out individual creativity and expression of uniqueness: "When he is galtha-ga: nangumirri [literally, 'possessing a different and distinctive galtha'] he is loved and admired" (Marika-Munungridj & Christie, 1995, p.62). Agency of the world does not rule out the influence of nature as a 'wild card': it confirms the impossibility of total knowledge claims of what is real or not, and what form a body, mind, and its intelligibilities must take. Furthermore, viewing 'nature' as biological conveniently separates the idea of human from its connections, reliances and flows with the environment, materials and non-human entities existing as multiple unknowable 'worlds'. Agentic nature then, precludes our full claims to knowledge and mastery, disrupting the desire for totalisation. In the early childhood space, can we understand child as "contingent and partial" (Castaneda, 2002, p.166), as much as reality is contingent and partial? If so, we might be more attuned to a commitment to an immediate sense of collectivity that occurs in our environments thus respecting the relatedness in our connected realities.

What kind of subject?

Asking 'what kind of subject' for children in an environment of control may be missing the point, if 'subject' is the very concept that needs to be shifted. Focusing on the relational-self as a starting point for imagining being with children in a collective space may shift the understanding of the depth of our interactions and relationships and the forces of power in between.

Children are intelligent beings, and express their activity in their own ways-through the limits of cultural intelligibilities, emergent and hybrid methodologies, and each person's unique capabilities and meaning-making (Genishi & Dyson, 2009) that may or may not be expressed through the logic or priorities of the given learning frameworks (Falchi et al, 2014). The good child, the timid, the naughty, the loud, disruptive or shy child. The intelligent, the gifted, or observant learner. The active, the cautious, bold, creative or bookish child. Reflecting on such descriptors raises the question of how educators might take such descriptors into thinking of individual children. Acting on judgements, such as interpreting children's behaviour, takes away the existence of children's agentic expressions. I use the term agentic expression here as the multivariate ways children express their intelligibility and motivations, although these expressions are not necessarily observable. Assuming the 'knowable child' elides any alterity or interior existence as unknowable. It also, I argue, takes away the power of silence and dissent as agency. That is, ways of being using silence as choice and expression, and dissent as equal to expressing the right of choice, are not generally included as agency in ECED literature as positive attributes (Nsamenang, 2006) or power-fullness of children (Skattebol, 2006) because these expressions are often construed as challenges to adult status and demands.

Without the shadow of development hanging over 'child', what might the existence of young children be? Existence as being-becoming could be an undertaking of the present, a moment to moment understanding reflected in the early childhood education and care context, in which children are met as companions and learner-teachers.

8.2.3 Stream Three: Governance and reform: Docile bodies

To begin this section, I include a statement from the end of chapter five on docile bodies. The questions and issues raised continue the thread of being-becoming and potentiality. Between the extraordinary and contradictory meeting of individualisation and totalisation, there is an urgent need to ask, what space this leaves for the multiplicities of existence and honouring self-determination of becomings? If potential is reaching the nation's goal of competitive development, how then, can creative existence compete with policy laced with human capital understanding? How do we work with the contradictions of totalisation and individualisation? How does the suppression of desired being-becoming manifest itself in sickness, yearning (a 'homesick' for self) and wellbeing?

One way in which these questions can be threaded together is through a rights-based context, and the tension between a society's view of children and the level of seriousness given children's rights concepts in policy. My argument places this in context of education institutions, the site of such daily contradictions. The principles that have been almost reified as 'protection, participation and provision' rather than social, civil and political (Quennerstadt, 2010; Hammarberg, 1990), are reflective of the hesitance to view children as fully human in terms of rights claims. Quennerstadt argues this has both emphasised the idea of child as passive and fragile, and requiring protection by the state (rather than from it, as in adult civil rights). The notion of provision also assumes child as less agentic and passive, whereas 'social rights' of human rights is couched in access, a more active and two-way process. The dominant view of childhood as a developing/under-developed state continues to drive the progression of children's rights internationally, including the provision of education. The slowest progression is in the discourse of 'participation'. This concept, along with protection and provision, are constructions of theoretical interpretations of the Convention. Initially, the terms were used to articulate the principles of the Convention by Hammarberg (1990) and evolved to an articulation of categories by Gerison Lansdown (1994). By the early

2000's these categories were increasingly used in the literature as the language with which to refer to "the three main types of rights" (Smith 2005 as cited in Quennerstadt, 2010, p.623). When seen as types or categories, the majority of actual Articles are grouped as 'protection' and 'provision', leaving lesser priority for 'participation'. Still, children's rights to self-determination and influence are the most contentious, revealing the hesitancy of some state parties to recognise children's autonomous powers through a political frame, as the example of the National Early Childhood Development Strategy (DEEWR, 2009b) highlights:

> *The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child spells out the basic human rights that children everywhere have: the right to survival; to develop to the fullest; to protection from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation; and to participate fully in family, cultural and social life* (p.7).

The principles of civil and political rights are kept, ideologically, from children's existence and experience, and remain so as the discourse of liberal freedoms are based on political exclusions. As Quennerstadt (2010, p.619) asks, "children, but not really humans?"

What space for the multiplicities of existence and honouring self-determination of becomings? While reform frameworks critiqued in the thesis make statements of the rights of the child, the right to an education based on the "spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin" (Article 29) (UNCRC, 1989), and the right to one's own expressions (Article 13) and non-discrimination (Article 2) are palpable in their elision. In fact, no specific articles are mentioned. As General Comment 1 (UNCRC, 2001), Article 29 is explained as encouraging an education designed to promote "a culture which is infused by appropriate human rights values" (GC1/29 UNCRC, 2001). Is self-determination, for children, an 'appropriate' value or expression of the human? One of the areas with the slowest progress is what has been termed participation, autonomy or

self-determination rights. To highlight why this might be so I extract a statement from UNICEF's own summary of Article 12, respect for the views of the child:

> *Children's ability to form and express their opinions develops with age and most adults will naturally give the views of teenagers greater weight than those of a preschooler, whether in family, legal or administrative decisions* (UNICEF, 2014, p.2).

Negotiation and resistance are two aspects of expressing views and difference. Furthermore, both are indicators of developing agency (MacFarlane & Cartmel, 2008). Nsamenang (2008) argues for the visibility, and right, of deference and dissent as culturally-located indicators of autonomous agency. As active, thinking and reflective beings, young children can draw from funds of knowledge, growing socio-historical identities, and identities constructed in the ECEC context, and their own unique multimodal expressions. In resisting adult roles, expectations and demands, they may or may not match the expectation of growing compliance in their ECEC-based relationships. The terms protection and provision can further place the accountable adult in an asymmetrical relationship over children, highlighting the importance of keeping the principle of indivisibility at the forefront of rights-based discussion of child-adult relationships.

The connection I have made to rights-based concepts here is to highlight the relationship between reifying terms and language in the process of popularising children's rights, and the image of the Convention's child in the policy and learning documents. As mentioned previously, there remains a tension between society's child as fragile and needy first and foremost, and the level of seriousness paid to children's rights and children's multiple experiences of being. Nonetheless as GC1 elaborates, we should be aware to the role of education, and responsibilities as educators, to "reconciling diverse values through dialogue and respect for difference" (UNCRC, 2001). Furthermore, as I have discussed previously, there needs to be more recognition of the contribution young children make to their worlds, 'our' histories.

8.2.4 Stream Four: The Making of a Discursive Knot

The analysis in chapter six, highlighted the making of a discursive knot of childhood and policy. It found that overwhelmingly, the contradictions of universalisms in discourses of science and economy behind policy and reform restrict 'possibilities' to an atmosphere of universality. In such an atmosphere, I asked, 'what space for localised intelligibilities to be sutured into the conditions for possibility'? In this section I argue that economic globalism continues to negate localised knowledge in its universal productions, reflected in the mirror of the 'global' child.

The nexus of globalisation and colonial projects is highlighted in the growing acceptance of early childhood development, human development and global development as a common-sense equation. The use of ECEC as the technology for Early Childhood Development = Human Development/Global Development forms part of an economic globalism, funding support for westernised products, resources and curriculum programs for the development of children and countries. The analysis has shown the arguments for this support a productivity version of childhood. Early childhood development policy reveals pathways from ideology to reform that draw on the same discourses of human capital and economic theory as globalisation. These links form a mapping of bodies and minds taken from child sciences to 'developing' countries.

One of the challenges of postcolonial studies is to disrupt the logic of continuing colonialist effect and neoliberal universalisms. Rizvi, Lingard and Lavia (2006) argue that "there has in fact been very little written that takes up the position of postcolonial studies in relation to globalization" (p.255). However, Battiste (2002) highlights the postmodernist argument that ideas of 'culture' itself are tied to Eurocentric positions:

> *Postmodernist scholars have noted that culture is often viewed as what*

> *the inferior "other" has. While some peoples have civilizations, philosophies, romance languages, or cultured societies; other peoples have cultures, dialects, worldviews, and tribal knowledge. Peoples with "civilizations" are regarded as inherently superior to peoples with "cultures"* (Battiste, 2002, p.16).

In relation to my discussion, an anti-colonial view sees the ties between development, globalism, and new imperial assumptions of superior knowledge. The threads across this thesis highlight that early childhood development discourse, and the arm of early education and care in development of a nation, sits atop of the globalisation/colonisation relationship. Versions of the child were bound up in the very origins of colonial and imperial projects. Consequently, deconstructions of early childhood education and its 'child' are imperative to decolonial projects.

My discussion and argument across the thesis has been that contemporary versions of child and early education remain entangled with multiple versions of imperialism and paternalism. Contemporary discourses of globalisation also follow this pattern. Globalisation cannot be disentangled from its roots in "European projects of Imperialism" (Rivzi, Lingard & Lavia 2006, p.255), even if forces of globalisation have emerged in newer forms, beyond previous borders. It is this relation to the imperial projects of the past, and colonisation in the governing projects of the present, that reveal the control of the few- behind the elite financial and multinational projects. Neo-imperialism, liberalism and human capital theory are bound closely with elitist multinational projects of control. Control of the few is made very clear in the case of exporting particular version of ECEC programs, and therefore versions of child, child-rearing, education and methodologies, to 'underdeveloped' countries. Nawale (2012) describes the term postcolonial as centering on the effects of colonialism, and the effort to decolonise "the mind. It challenges the received and ideologically determined paradigms of power relationships and frees the colonized self from gaze of colonizer" (Kirpal as cited in Nawale, 2012, p.341). While I agree with both Kirpal and Nawale that to decolonise is to challenge and remove ideologically determined power, in terms of the Australian context where Indigenous peoples remain in colonisation, decolonising efforts are

yet to 'free' the colonised subject from the gaze that follows and confronts. Amitav Ghosh (2008, 2005) demonstrates this in his characters who see the gaze of both coloniser and colonised in their mirrored reflections- a gaze that both fascinates and repulses. As Arjun recognises in *The Glass Palace* (2008), "We can't destroy it without destroying ourselves" (p.518). The decolonial message from Ghosh is that changing the colonial subject-relationship means taking steps into new forms. I would argue that when the child is imagined, increasingly across the globe in ECEC curriculum, the forces of the local, national and global versions of development come into vision and are reflected through an increasingly globalised mirror.

8.2.5 Grafting the vernacular

Connections between national education policy, greater level discourses and the forces of education and globalisation critiqued in chapter six can be decolonised by introducing narrative and vernacular of micro and local experience into a universal logic that assumes child-human-global development.

> It's just like the bunyip, she said. 'The bunyip?' 'You know, the Bunyip of Berkeley's creek'. The boy looked puzzled, perhaps making connections between the bunyip of his grandad and her storybook version. 'He's looking to know what he is, and what he looks like, and no-one can tell him anything that he can accept. He's told he has 'horrible hair' and 'even more horrible feathers'. It makes him sad, but he doesn't believe their stories'. She looked at him, the small boy who that morning was vilified while playing sport. He'd almost cried, and her heart had fractured a little more. 'And then he met the man'. He sat up straight. 'I never like that man' 'Nope, me neither!' The scientist, his machines and screens. 'He looked right through the bunyip and said 'Bunyips simply don't exist.' But he didn't have to hang around those mob who told stories of hatred. He found his own, and he found his own story to tell'. It's just like the bunyip, son. Don't ever believe their stories of you'.

The narrative above encloses two forces at play in dominating discourses in education. Firstly, the reference to the bunyip draws on versions of indigenous teaching methodologies (Kerwin, 2011) and a westernised storybook of a particular bunyip's experience. These layers highlight techniques of identification, stereotyping and invisibility. Secondly, resistance tactics against questions of domination. The Bunyip of the picture book by Wagner (1973) has a bunyip mirror, but uses it to be 'as handsome as he likes', rather than believe the versions given to him. While shaken by the scientist's declaration of non-existence, the bunyip continues resistance through his silent bunyip routines, the billy-tea, the comb and the mirror, albeit in a more uncertain ambience. In *The Location of Culture*, Homi Bhabha (1996) argues that resistance "is the effect of an ambivalence produced within the rules of recognition of dominating discourse as they articulate the sign of cultural difference" (p.221). I use this narrative to reflect the strategies of vernacular (even double layered versions) in resisting domination by typing and denigrating, relegating to an 'other', or devolving to the invisible. In this case, the figure of the Bunyip holds sway as a message from a grandfather, and the westernised storybook figure is subverted to carry a resistance tactic.

Sources from within postcolonial studies suggest Australia as an independent and therefore post- colonised country (Rizvi et al., 2006; Sharma, 2012). I argue against this, and follow Indigenous writers in reminding 'postcolonialism' of Indigenous continuing experiences of colonial strategies, that, like new imperialisms, take many forms. The roots in sovereignty cannot be forgotten, for to forget is to weaken one's own power-knowledge relationship. Neither can our place in the networks of discipline and control be swept aside as trivial, nor the implications of drawing very young children into these networks without questioning the limitations of existence placed upon them. Decolonising policy requires co-production, decolonising pedagogies require co-existence. What I am theorising, in offering a framework for dialogue across difference, is the decolonising of the very idea of the

chain of development, and all that it grasps as the arm of totalisation. Decolonial pedagogy works beyond hate, the hidden force behind objectifying discourses (De Lissovoy, 2010; Fanon, 2008). Critically, as Nikolas Rose argues, to stand "against received current wisdom, to always refuse to reduce the irreducible to calculative measures" (Rose, 1999, p.20), and to recognise but refuse dominative power wherever possible:

> *To respect strength, never power. Above all to watch. To try and understand. To never look away. And never, never, to forget* (Roy, 1999).

That we are complex, complicated, contradictory beings is the joy, frustration, and violence of our existence. In accepting human capital and discourses of the universal and reductive as the primary received wisdom for early childhood sites of care, the field continues to be an enabling site for future compliance, docility and oppression rather than creativity, free-thinking and self-determination in the becomings of children as they negotiate their multiple worlds.

8.2.6 Stream Five: Indigenous and postcolonial dreams and realities

> *The OECD says that we are a high equity nation in terms of our students... I don't believe there is an equity problem in Australia* – Education Minister Christopher Pyne, 26 November 2013.

The critique in chapter seven, a river of dreams and realities, discussed Indigenous Australian and postcolonial perspectives. These highlighted the disparities between constructions of being-becoming of children as members of community. In these differences, the nature of child also provided a stark contrast in the representations of possibilities for constructing ourselves. The discussion raised issues of self-representation, self-determinations and what type of freedoms can not only counter dominating discourse, but begin to break down colonial processes. Freedom is what we might make of ourselves from within the parameters of a particular

historical situation. What freedoms can we begin to practice in Early Childhood Education and Care?

One of the freedoms immediately available is to recognise that the dominant frameworks of knowledge for ECEC practice are not the only story to hear, nor are they an ultimate, or superior, truth of child and childhood. The second part of that sentence might be harder to shift in an education policy environment where 'what works' is underscored with transferability. The dominant discourse is simply a "perspective privileging certain interests" (Moss, 2008, p.233). A decolonial pedagogy would work with the immediate context in recognising the dangers of the decontextualizing that dominating perspectives have brought. In early childhood the close relationships with increasingly diverse families can be one space for the meeting of knowledges where we begin to 'graft in the vernacular' of multiple ways of being. In other words, it is possible to find small spaces to begin suturing differences into paradigms that seem no longer relevant to the diverse ECEC context. What I am envisioning from this is the meandering towards co-production of spaces and co-existence, beginning with both concrete and symbolic steps. I use the term meandering in the sense of walking and working slowly in directions as needed in order to acquire the experience to coexist in plurality, but also as resistance to the ideologies of speed in control societies which, in the rush to compete for space in the global, can often 'forget' to notice realities and dreams of the localised. Bhabha (2005) has suggested meandering recognises that slowness is a "deliberative measure" that "maintains tension rather than resolves it, a deliberatively ethical and political reflection" (p.375). In the continual unmaking of ourselves, and of humanist constraint on beings, Spivak (2006) argues the need to learn to read (and re-read) again. Following this, I add this requires an 'equalising' of language, injecting vernacular throughout to disjunct and break the power in language values. Turning the language of control to the advantage of those concerned would be another effective aspect of decolonising children's spaces and a concrete and symbolic non-dominative method for acknowledging the existence of multiple methodologies. Concepts, names, goals, purpose and philosophies, if constructed in a manner respecting egalitarianism, shy away from 'modernity's'

version of the globalised by rebuilding a "co-existence which respects sovereign rights to political, cultural and epistemological autonomy" (De Lissovoy, 2010, p.282).

What might be the vantage point from which possibilities can be imagined? The educational possibilities might for example begin from the core (the land a site stands on) and ripple outwards. I follow De Lissovoy's arguments for decolonisation of education in the context of globalisation, however my focus here is on injecting the localised to better root the connections between land, country and knowledge. To get to such a starting point, it is essential to understand the shaping of different and connected histories, our implication in the stories, so that the foundations of rewritten educative frameworks can begin on an equal and equitable foundation. Only then can decolonial pedagogy build on unmaking "the political, cultural, economic, and epistemological processes of domination that have characterized colonialism and Eurocentrism" (De Lissovoy, 2010, p.279).

One process of colonial authority that continues in reconstitution is the mechanism of the stereotype. Following Bhabha, Agrawal (2012) states that the mechanism of power control is intrinsic to the disciplinary gaze. However, it is not a supreme power because the psychological processes between colonised subject –coloniser and colonised- require continuation. Bhabha (1996) employs the terms "fixity" (p.18) to explain the identification of the colonised in typing as a supposedly fixed, rigid condition. The 'native', the 'Aboriginal' is this, or that, such as the trouble-maker, and will always be, due to colour, 'race', appearance, 'wildness', difference, resistance, or inability to be white. The contradiction around the supposedly fixed state is that it needs to be continually re-identified, re-constituted, reprised and repeated. The incongruity creates an ambivalent relationship that, far from proving the superiority of the colonial, "suggests the lack of colonial identity" (Agrawal, 2012, p.487-488). Adding to Bhabha (1996), who is following Fanon's (1965/2008) psychoanalytic argument, I argue that in the Australian context, this ambivalence is a reminder of the violent and shameful points of connection where our histories became shared and hidden, and thus continues as a lack of identity: where do we place ourselves? Who are 'we'?

The Kabulwarnamyo School's (Nawarddekan Academy, 2015) declaration of the need for Aboriginal schooling based on the connection to land/knowledge/culture reveals the complex nature of recognising these relations of power across socio-histories:

> *...we must take account of, and never lose sight of, the influence exerted by the extraordinary social, cultural and physical environment within which the school is proposed to operate. We should also never assume that we have an adequate understanding of this environment. The complex natural environment, which in reality can be decidedly hostile, is complicated further by the rapid and irreversible social change that has been visited upon Aboriginal people. This has not however been allowed to overwhelm the recognition by Aboriginal people that their obligations to protect sacred places and to teach their children about their values, ceremonies, language, country, law and kinship systems remain largely intact* (Kabulwarnamyo, 2015, p.4).

As I noted in chapter seven, Australian Indigenous methodologies and ways of being will not subside and the identity surrounding such obligations has not disappeared. As the discussion paper from Kabulwarnamyo argues, a school (or young children's space) that is built from an understanding, and with the knowledge of, the country it stands on will have something no other education spaces have: a sense of ownership of and the purpose of the knowledges taught. In short, a growing sense of identities. Emerging from this sense of purpose and greater self-awareness is a chance for more profound, deeper relations.

8.3 Flows

In this section I draw out and discuss the flows that analysis found between particular streams. As noted previously, the key convergence across the streams has been the realisation that rather than being parallel, our histories are shared by interactions and entanglements. I use 'our' to emphasise the relationships this

convergence reveals. This is not to repeat further colonialism by subsuming various histories and stories under one flag. Rather I am arguing that in this there is a message of hope in recognising in a more profound sense our responsibilities and relatedness towards each other. To move beyond paternalistic notions of 'responsibilities', I use the term as taking stock of differences and complex, multiple experiences that mark the practices and presence of colonialism.

8.3.1 Shared histories, multiple experiences

Shared points in histories is an important co-ordinate from which to begin transforming educative spaces, including the ECEC space. The connections and convergences of societies being celebrated in globalisation discourses are not necessarily new, rather they have mostly gone on unacknowledged (Ghosh, 2014; Bhabha, 2013). I would argue this is a liminal position for recognition and acknowledgement, to review the wariness, to recognise the connections of histories, of hurt, of humanity, so that the desire for change burns strong. While versions of the human and of being may remain contested, a more compassionate understanding of our historical encounters might invoke the collective becoming-relations for a new early childhood community.

The discussion so far has built toward an argument that the first point of connecting back to a 'human community' lies in the recognition of *interdependence* on each other's existence. Another recognition would be to commit to stand clear of interdependencies that relied on asymmetry and subjugation. I liken this to the use of the coloniser/colonised mirror, in which, for the first time, we recognise the desired and the repulsed in one countenance, the dreams and reality of repressed identities crossing spatio-temporal histories.

8.3.2 Relational-being, becoming-relations

The second major flow between all the streams is the question of the thesis around ideas of being, becomings and the potential implied. The flow has been unfolding from the sovereign subject's being and becoming to a thread of relational-being/becoming-relations. Woven throughout is the recognition or not of agency, and whether this itself is a constraint on how the human is constructed. Being, and becoming, are philosophical questions about the nature of the human. For my argument, this cannot be deconstructed without a recognition of the roots of such thought, neither can the horizons be broadened without stopping to listen to conceptions that have been excluded as 'other'. When asking what a human is, what being is, how limitations of becomings can be shaken, is the need to recognise that humanism was a "fabrication of the human being according to a certain model, and that humanism does not work as a liberation but...as an imprisonment of human into types of moulds controlled by the 'sovereignty of the subject'" (Foucault, 1983). Consequently, the struggles of power and subjectivity are problems of limitation, exclusion, and of subjection.

In the introduction chapter I argued that ideas of being are about potential because our notions of the human will bound who we can be. Can we continue to rely on one notion of the human in education? Colonialism's truths about the correct way to grow children (and indeed the very idea of child) has been so intrinsic to the notion of world order that it "permits no questioning" (Viruru, 2005, p.16) of development, childhood, or the imposition of these truths on peoples for their own progress. Colonialism is often understood as ruling from a distance, yet the unhesitating imposition of childhood truths occurs daily at 'home'. Childhood truths are interlaid with trajectories of "uninterrogated identifications" (De Lissovoy, 2010, p.281) that place obstacles to relationships. Currently, early childhood environments are mostly a diverse population with a number of languages spoken amongst families and increasingly across staff. Indigenous families seem to have to accept 'integration' or invisibility rather than authentic equality. Across

the multiple differences of ECEC communities, lies an unconscious repetition of identification of the type of relationships one needs to progress the 'other'.

Suggestions of being-becomings that are drawn from analyses suggest 'potential' as an end is self-destructive of its possibilities for becoming. Being, continually, and insistently, changes or is *understood differently* in terms of our changing self-knowledge and capricious nature of the other's gaze and ascription. The practice of relationship with others is inscribed by forms of being. A focus on more compassionate, generous and profound orientation to relationships and difference, might then produce in this relationship a more productive sociality of beings, a higher sense of relationship. In this sense, becomings are experiments with being, and therefore in inseparable relationship. This relationship suggests a living, extant potentiality rather than a gradual unfolding towards an end actualisation.

Truman's use of 'underdeveloped' (1949) with reference to the 'transactions' and gifts from the rich to the poor was not the first time certain peoples became defined as children. However, I argue that it is an example of the increasing interceptions of rational liberalist/technological advancements, economic intensities and an assuredness, an unthinking confidence, in one's own superiority on a mass scale. Therefore, any decolonising of limitations to the people we could be includes newer forms of relationship not only with children but also the recognition of ongoing colonisation and production of the colonised subject and the assumed identifications this produces across daily lives. This I argue is a form of relational resistance, a raised consciousness of resistance, a type of ethical rather than moral agency.

8.4 Passage to decolonisation

> *We must think that what exists is far from filling all possible spaces* (Foucault, 1997, p. 140).

In this section I argue for the early childhood education and care space as a decolonised space of and for authentic co-existence. In the Australian context,

teaching and learning cannot be true to its context without the foundation of Australian Indigenous knowledges which have "always been here" (Kerwin, 2011). I relate the discussion through different versions of 'freedom'. The reader is then taken through a discussion of ideas of the human and of society, in which I argue that decolonising ECEC spaces and policy requires co-production and co-existence, through relationships of difference rather than domination.

8.4.1 What Freedoms?

Community membership, from an egalitarian perspective, acknowledges socio-historical contexts, beginning with acceptance of all members as peoples with their own knowledge streams. The slow meandering with which we could catch sight of the blockages of domination, the constant identifications, the incessant demands for sovereignty, might allow time for the awe of recognition as connected beings to develop a community of a peoples with histories, with identities and difference in confluence.

Relational, collective selves

If a self is constructed as a 'sovereign subject' existing in the context of its society, its discursive matrix, then Marshall argues freedom can never be truly attained, "since it will always reflect the bounds and conventions of its own history" (Devine & Irwin, 2006, p.13). Moving beyond the sovereign subject, and taking on the idea of identities in confluence, the relational 'self', spread across networks, highlights the idea of "collective selves" in the intimate ECEC environment (Mentha, Page & Church, 2015, p.632) as another starting point for decolonising pedagogies to work with. Freedom is a concept of compromise but also possibilities, where care for the self and others includes compassion, generosity, and acceptance that tensions between differences do not always resolve in a final truth. Perhaps, a type of shared freedom lies in seeking our relational and collective 'selves' in new ways.

Children's desire for self-determination is illustrated amply in the examples of Australian Indigenous views on childhood and children's role in society. In these cases, the acknowledgement of self-determination comes with a presupposed capacity for decision based on self-awareness of one's needs. This comes through a reflective process of self-learning. Growth in understanding is based on growing demonstration of awareness of other's needs and the reciprocal nature of relationships. Listening is the activity that generates such growth, and the action of caring and sharing recognises the right of the other to have their needs heard.

Listening

The conceptualisation of listening is becoming increasingly complex, particularly through its relation with the sonorous as explored by Jean Luc Nancy (2007). Nancy explores the idea of the body as echo chamber, and although his philosophy is explored through the resonance that music leaves in the body, the idea can be applied to the activity of listening: "What does it mean to be immersed entirely in listening, formed by listening or in listening, listening with all his being" (Nancy, 2007, p.4, emphasis added)?

A term used so often in early childhood education and care literature, listening has developed from a call to listen with ears, eyes and hearts toward the reading of text, of reading expression and nuance through a multitude of expressive and embodied languages, and understanding contexts and histories behind choices made. The Pintupi Anangu perception of the ear as the "organ of thought" (Warrki Jarrinjaku, 2002, p.110) crystallises the growth in understanding that occurs in the listening-thought-response process. Listening and response, in Pintupi perspectives, underscores compassion and generosity. The growth occurs in an environment of reciprocal and relational listening and compassion.

Listening also requires interpretation of silence as valid, productive, powerful, and an expression of personal relevance. There tends to be a deficit appreciation for silence as agentic, misread through discourses of (in)capacity. Of importance is the connection, a blurring between selves, materiality, limitations and desire, which

Davies (2010) refers to as "co-implications" (p.57), and Deleuze as "modes of intensity" (p. 99). This does not deny any ontological reality or sense of self, but asks for a listening to the immanent being: not just the reciprocated moment, the other and oneself, but also to all that is co-implicated in that moment, which Davies states, necessarily includes emergent thought. Davies suggests that it is in the "capacity to listen to emergent thought that its agency lies" (p.57).

Moving landscapes, whispering waters

Having traversed through different streams obliges the reframing of the 'conceptual net' of changing landscapes.

> *Where are we?' means two things at once: 'how can we characterize the situation in which we live, think and act to-day?', but also, by the same token: 'how does the perception of this situation oblige us to reconsider the framework we use to "see" things and map situations, to move within this framework or get away from it?'; or, in other words, 'how does it urge us to change our very way of determining the coordinates of the "here and now"* (Ranciere, 2009, p.115).

Voices of direction for education are to be found in each stream encountered in the analysis, some of which I include here. Placed together, it is worth considering the tension between them and also what this tension might generate. They are offered as food for thought on the meandering path:

Policy perspective: "Globalisation and technological change are placing greater demands on education and skill development... To maximise their opportunities for healthy, productive and rewarding futures, Australia's young people must be encouraged not only to complete secondary education, but also to proceed into further training or education" (MCEETYA, 2008, p.4).

An Indigenous Australian perspective: "The Australian education system is inherently top-down and prescriptive in ways that can be instinctively offensive

to traditional Aboriginal people. There is little satisfaction in bowing to a system that is not of one's making, bereft of a sense of ownership and purpose, is confounded by more sticks than carrots and which is essentially a 'white thing'" (Kabulwarnamyo, Nawarddekan Academy, 2015, p.4).

A reconceptualist perspective: "The hope, though, is not generated by regulatory modernity's assumption of linear and inevitable progress through finding the one true way. Rather, it lies in the possibility of a more dialogic, plural and democratic early childhood field, and more effective resistance to dominant, and stultifying, discourses: not the prospect of finding the one true way, but the possibility of finding many ways to many truths" (Moss, 2007, pp.242-243).

A decolonial perspective: "Colonialism, according to Macedo, imposes 'distinction' as an 'ideological yardstick' against which others are measured and found wanting. Schools, as Macedo points out, are often the institutions through which such measuring and relegation is done... unless the legacies of colonialism are examined within the field of education, "our minds, if not our hearts will remain colonized" (1999, as cited in Viruru, 2005, p.10).

8.5 Drinkable water?

This section turns to a final, brief, phase of discussion. For the early childhood education and care field to move towards an environment reflecting the dreams and realities of all community members, it must not only represent children but turn to them for help in understanding relationships. In the course of my research, the most poignant message has been the realisation of the contribution of the very young towards an understanding of myself in relation to the roles and responsibilities I have taken on. I cannot have any understanding of myself and the world without the contribution of others. The injection of narratives across the thesis was to disrupt ideas of children as requiring incessant adult intervention, or as disadvantaged, or in passive relationship to the adult. However, they have also constructed a sense of the timelessness apparent in the threads of past-present

becoming. The contributions of children to the construction of who I am or can be have come through the challenging of roles (Clay), the reminders of persons as uniquely talented (Cam), the rage of a young child excluded (Aly), the compassion of listening (Jai and cousins), among others. Most of all, they teach about remembering responsibilities in the old relationships, and walking side by side with new ones.

In summary, this confluence of many currents has addressed some of the issues highlighted in analysis, however not all questions have been answered. The relatedness nature of the research has not been to place perspectives in competition. As a decolonising study, a critical attitude has been placed into the effort to find dialogue across difference, to meet "across the paradigmatic divide" (Moss, 2007, p.229). How can the nature of *being* really be given a 'truth'? Across differences I have drawn out suggestions for an emerging method for meandering through disparate perspectives and knowledge systems in order to make-meaning of the socio-historical and spatio-temporality within which ECEC is situated. Furthermore, the methodology and the analysis reflect these multiple meanings of 'difference' that need to be negotiated to enter into deeper understanding of becoming-relationships. Most importantly, a deeper understanding of being-becomings requires listening to children's mapping of their selves both individually and collectively.

8.5.1 Mapping selves, mapping being-becomings

To conclude this chapter, there is one more story to tell. A story about the contribution of children, if we listen and look hard enough to understand the meaning-making behind the image. A story of possibility for ECEC as spaces where children are listened to for their knowledges and experiences and where they are asked for help in our understanding of what is needed for their futures. It is a moment within a children's centre in the city of Melbourne, a space reflective of what Genishi (1999) called the "stunning human diversity" (1999, p.345). A story about the possibilities of living in plurality, learning from heterogeneity,

before colonial processes mark us out to be whom we should be and subjugate the possibility of any emergent understanding of who we think we could be. Where children show us simplicity and complexity in one breath.

> *Song of the ocean*
>
> *Fingers poring over lines on a map. Lines of currents and swirls of the oceans. Five bodies lying around this map, heads close together, fingers poring and following. 'This is Africa! I'm from here!' At an age when children might struggle to consider connections between distance and labels, the child knows where his Africa is. 'Are these lines the paths of the ocean?' another asks. They are the currents, the movement of the ocean and the wind. Faint little lines and arrow heads. 'I will be a drummer, because that's what my countrymen do' says another. And, rising from the floor he gathers a drum and plays. Then back to the map. To his new countrymen. They are intrigued. The map has meaning. They are following the currents, from their countries, Somalia, Eritrea, Bangladesh, to Australia. They are talking fast, talking of ships, of water, of family, of countrymen. 'The wind makes the ocean move?' asks one. 'The currents' says another, perhaps to answer, perhaps not. 'The ocean brings us here!' offers another, raising voice at the end. And that's when another adds, his voice lilting the beginning of a new song, 'the ocean brings us all together'.*

In the current political climate of war and diaspora, diverse peoples seeking shelter and protection are being turned away before reaching Australian shores. Past and current leaders are proud of what they term 'stopping the boats'. Boats rather than humanity, economic migrants rather than refugees. A divisive topic, the support for the government is hardly miniscule. As Judith Butler has noted, on one hand the political stage can talk of the human, and of human rights, and on the other, point out very clearly who is not included (Butler, 2009). General Comment 1 (UNCRC, 2001) recognises children's capacity for "playing a unique role in bridging many of the differences that have historically separated groups of

people from one another" (GC1/A29, UNCRC, 2001). Early childhood education and care spaces can be the site of such bridging, as illustrated in the above story. I include this short narrative for the way it disrupts the narrow and mean notions of *being* the political version brings. Right here there is hope and possibility, of a deep understanding and acceptance that wherever we came from, we ended up in the same land. To remember and play for our countrymen, and to lay side by side with our new ones. Such is one contribution of young children to society.

This chapter has brought together issues, flows and fractures in confluence. It has offered an emerging framework for dialogue across difference, underscored with a hope for decolonisation. The discussion highlighted the directions that concepts such as being-becoming might take, that potentiality can be dangerous and misguided, or closer than imagined, bound in a rhizomic knot with being-becoming. Through a decolonising critique, these ideas have been taken as possibilities for foundations to decolonising early childhood education spaces, with suggestions for the beginnings of co-existence and co-production. The landscape, still rough and tricky, has been navigated to emerging co-ordinates of hope and plurality where socio-histories and difference are recognised as assets, and burn a desire for change from colonial relations to becoming-relations. This takes the thesis to the final chapter where the research questions are addressed with final, concluding comments.

Chapter 9

Conclusion

9.1 Introduction

This thesis is grounded in philosophical debate on which ideas of 'the subject' hinges. The implications for conceptualising being and becoming for early childhood rests on the constructions and utility of child and childhood as problems of potential and progress. The findings from negotiating multiple perspectives call for decolonial pedagogy that aims for coexistence and coproduction. This needs to happen at the conceptual level as well as finding articulation in practice and policy. The flows of reason and knowledge examined follow a thread of western philosophy on the rational sovereign being in search of human telos. These discussions of nature and knowledge provided a catalyst for an analysis of ideas of being, becoming and agency. The emerging visibility of being, becoming and agency in early childhood education literature has provided an impetus for exploring the relevance of the concepts in terms of the increasingly diverse communities in early childhood spaces. Alongside this, the impetus to pursue this thesis was the invisibility in policy of the very nature of early childhood spaces as what I have termed immediately collective. Complex and multilayered types of relationship occur between child-child, child-adult, between staff and staff-families on a daily basis and at an often intimate level and of-the-moment necessity. I argue that this context of complexity is the basis for walking toward co-existence, co-production

and recognition of the transformative possibilities for understanding being and becoming in collective spaces.

The aim of the research was to stretch boundaries of early educational theory around the concepts of childhood, being and becoming, and the impact on ideas of potentiality by a sustained, critical analysis. In following Nsamenang (2006, 2008), to contribute to the expanding of "visions and databases beyond restrictive European grids" (2006, p.293). What can it mean to be, to become, to belong, within all that encompasses lifehood's multiplicity, nuances and possibilities? From a decolonising stance, multiple perspectives are required to avoid delimiting conceptual analysis. Consequently, the research has pursued a variegated understanding. This is reflected through one contribution of the study which offers an emergent understanding of how early childhood education and care might enable multivariate manifestation of being-becomings.

In terms of broadening educational theory, a multi-perspectival approach was deemed critical. While space provided a limitation for the number of knowledges, the thesis has drawn together perspectives critical to the complexity of discourses of early childhood education in the Australian context. I came to the study recognising this local context as colonial, and therefore still chained to past imperialist projects and new imperialisms. The research topic, questions and design reflected and were driven by the overall relatedness paradigm (Wilson, 2008). Therefore, discordant knowledges of humanism, critical ontology, policy and Indigenous perspectives relate in order to create a dialogue across difference, while seeking the in-between-ness of differences.

The idea of relatedness has emphasised the relationship between five streams of 'knowledge' about childhood and childhood education. The focus has been on each perspective, yet the flows between them, their relationship to each other, are just as important and generate a deeper critical process. The discordance between humanist and critical ontological theory orient towards a different set of theoretical approaches to the subject-child. The relationship between them highlights a flow tied to the idea of the sovereign subject. Likewise, two streams of reform and

policy are heavily informed by humanist ideals of child and education, while neither specifically acknowledge their traditions. Australian Indigenous perspectives and postcolonial theory sit warily with European theory and Australian policy, and indeed each other. In drawing together these flows, the colonial relationship remains highly visible as a thread from pre-enlightenment to current experience. In this one relationship, colonialism and childhood are the fabric through which these threads run. Childhood, child, bodies and souls, have been at the centre of imperialism's projects.

In terms of the decolonising aims of the thesis, the analysis and discussion highlight the nexus of the global-local, imperial-colonial intersection at the site of the child. New forms of imperialism, liberalist projects and economic discourse, are bound very closely to investments in early childhood education. Early childhood development discourse, and the role of early education and care in national development, sits atop of the global/colonial relationship. Therefore, deconstructions of early childhood education and its 'child' are imperative to decolonial projects.

In this final chapter, the significant findings are summarised through a recapping and addressing the research questions. Following this, I discuss the wider significance of the research for rejecting theories of the subject to move towards emergent and irreducible versions of becoming-relations among collective selves.

9.2 Summary of findings: Where are we now?

Throughout this thesis I have sought to make sense of the nebulous nature of being, becoming and agency for children as interconnected and multifaceted. An unexpected aspect of the research was the increasing visibility of potentiality threaded through the different perspectives, without any actual specificity to the concept. In other words, in policy documents and humanist discussion, potential has been implied as significant to child-human-global constructions without reference to its meaning or underlying ideology.

I now turn to address the research questions, beginning with the three nested questions and concluding with the core problem. These also serve as a recapping of the main thread of the thesis.

> *What ideas of childhood and development compel and inspire the framing of educational objectives in the current policy contexts of Australian early childhood reform?*

The convergences and cumulative nature of the use of child in theory and its utility for amassing the 'facts' of development continue to impel the idea of reform and progress forward. I have argued that the rise of discourses which viewed the *problem of potential* have been able to find the child, as idea and as embodied, the perfect theatre to play out "all things historical and genetic" (Sully, 1895, p.4). Scientific inquiry was recognised as the reliable method in addressing problems. Development –child, human, global- as a problem is a thread through political and metaphorical imagination, across the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to contemporary neo- and advanced liberal discourse. The palimpsest of reform documents reveals a tension between the language of the child as capable and active in their learning, as emphasised in the EYLF, and the discourse of liberal humanism, specifically through productivity and national progress. The contradictions are exemplified in the image of the actor-child co-opted into the saving of the nation's future, as emphasised in the Strategy. Thus, with human capital arguments viewing child as future compliant worker, early education is a site for investment that imagines docile bodies and global competition. The increasing measuring and intervening highlights the intersections of governance and governmentality as different levels of governing bodies produce a power flow through the site of the child. The child body-mind has been bound by knots of discourses intrinsic to education's conditions for possibilities. Early childhood development policy in particular reveals pathways from ideology to reform, drawing on the same discourses of human capital and economic theory as globalisation. My argument is that while child continues to be an ensign of development and progress, there is limited possibility for generating conditions of egalitarianism. Concerns for potential as problem,

represented by the child, are currently addressed by newer forms of knowledge apparent in the neurosciences, genomic research and consequent ideas of biological embedding. The problem is packaged in the multiple differentiations suggested in possible transgressions from the reasonable and wholly productive adult.

Significantly, the knowledge converging at the site of the child enables various modalities of power that emerged with such knowledge of child-body-mind and worlds. Childhood is constructed as an exclusion from the realm of citizen-adult. It remains, therefore, as both potential and problem: as with all colonial subjects afforded exclusion, the category child is not yet the thing it has the capacity to become. Under the separation of childhood from the adult state, this remains so. The child's 'potential', imagined in the future, returns to itself as a problem, creating a fold of subjectivity. The child, embodiment of the discursive matrix, is a theatre where discourses play out: by their definition, child as potential offers itself as a possibility that returns to it as problem. The forces folding it are the strata, a range of discourses about the knowable child. The contradictory nature of the fold of potential is significant to my argument that potential is a misguided and damaging concept with regard to educational expectations for children. Both the NQS (2009b) and Strategy (2009c) imply children as responsible for their own unfolding potential and that of the nation. The question of ever 'finding' potential, given the political and economic status as future, reveals the contradiction in the question left suspended: how is it that young children are held responsible for reaching an unfolding unknown?

> *What can contemporary challenges to the nature of subjectivity offer for rethinking assumptions of being, agency and development in early childhood?*

From the colonial 'wound', the dominant assumptions of child, agency and development as applied in early education are highly apparent, due to elisions of non-dominant ways of knowing and being. Particularly, the idea that development is a sociohistorical cultural construction is persistently ignored. Contemporary European critique of liberal humanist 'knowledge of knowledge' offers multiple

challenges to dominant assumptions of being and agency. Specifically, Butler, Deleuze, Foucault and also Davies critique constructions of being and becomings by their emphasis on the power-discourse-subjectivity relationship. The usefulness of these theorists lies in their own 'unmaking' of the humanist subjects that are their heritage.

Critiquing the subject illuminated a notion of agency as a discursive knot in concept and process. Thinking the self-as-spread through networks of spatial and relational dimensions, I have argued that as a conceptual knot, agency can only be thought of in relationship with subjectivity, power, freedom, each shifting through various forces themselves. The idea of agency as only a human realm also delimits the nuances and levels in relational processes. I argue that agencies of the 'world', as an existence of multiple lines of assemblage and unpredictability, interrupts the idea of human mastery and determining of potentiality. As a process, and a manifestation of the nexus between interiority and alterity, multiple and equivocal, the self-assemblage moves through the struggle of discourses which tangles and knots. The humanist notion of the 'sovereign subject' collapses through an always forming, becoming-being for whom 'acting', choosing, and meaning may be visible or not, silent or not. The critique highlights a discursive subjectivity that applies connections across multiple positions but also struggles with multiple figurations as imagined by discursive strata which figure the body-mind as subject.

> *What non-dominating perspectives reframe ideas of potential and talent within the context of early childhood education and care?*

I have argued that oppressive discourses continue as new imperialisms and that colonial processes continue in the Australian context. Australian Indigenous perspectives, and postcolonial analysis revealing multiple layers of colonial processes for continuing domination. Indigenous perspectives of child and child rearing, and a stance of unwavering continuation of cultural rights to methodologies and self-determination. The notion of a discursive subjectivity arising from within connections, gains further complexity through the Indigenous perspectives. By applying relational positions through which concomitant relationships are co-produced,

even the very young can come to expect membership of community. A major divergence between the Indigenous perspectives and the others is the *presupposed* agency, capacity and membership which underlie expectations in child-adult relations. This places a distinct recognition of children as agentic, power-full, and growing in a world of relational responsibilities. Acknowledgment of the unique qualities of each person from an early age situates potentiality and talent in a frame of contribution as member of society and unique personhood. I use 'contribution' here as a present-being woven with experimental becomings.

When Jean Marie Tjibaou stated "Your flag is blocking our sun" (cited in Fraser, 1990, preface) to New Caledonia's French colonisers, he was referring to the entirety of colonial domination's effect on colonised peoples. It encapsulates the demeaning features of paternalism, the invisibility of a people's dignity, knowledge and lifeworlds, and the choking of becoming in the shadow of colonisation. For my argument, the discourses of development in its multiple guises continues to shadow over child and childhood, and more so in a colonised country. The flag must be removed for becoming to flourish on its own terms.

9.3 Relational-being and becoming-relations

Having addressed the three questions which drove the interrogation of perspectives, the co-ordinates are setting on the new landscape. Where are we now? How do these understandings address a rethinking of the educational conditions for the possibilities of becoming, and for understanding agency in the context of decolonising early childhood education knowledges? The core research problem, analysis and findings position my research as a decolonising effort situated around the core research problem of *decolonising the idea of child, being and becoming in early childhood education.*

I raised earlier the contradictions of describing the subject-child as an adult privilege also raises the question of why we believe we have left childhood. In collapsing the solitary subject and its ties with child and development, the question of what

makes an adult also needs to be addressed. Just as knowledge cannot be totalised, a "theory of the subject will fail to be effective if it claims to account specifically for the differences between entities always and everywhere" (Castaneda, 2002, p.170). I argue that a theory of 'the subject' is, for this study, asking a misguided question, for, like potential, 'subject' is based on the very discourses and their moulds that I wish to decolonise. Rather, relationships between entities and difference highlights the need for exploring new forms of relations of difference; the emergent, becoming-relation, entirely localised in its differences and meeting of unique entities. I use the term *becoming-relations* in theorising an escape from the wholly individualised and totalised subject and to suggest an always present set of concomitant processes.

The inseparable relationship of being-becoming shifts 'the subject' and its future potential state to a complex assemblage of inexorable movement: not *towards* something, but in struggles of power and subjection, experiment and resistance. Analysis of subjectivities and agency revealed becomings as experiments with being, and being in relationship. Existence in this relationship can be thought of as an undertaking of the present, the moment to moment understanding. As I have suggested, the unique qualities of the early childhood education and care space could enable such an existence by reflecting the collective assemblages of self as spread.

To bring this summary to a close, it is worth leaving some further questions suspended. Are freedoms from the tyranny of knowledge possible? What knowledges and lives are possible without shadows of control upon our being and our ever-becomings? The constraint of liberal humanist capitalism continues dominating, and obstructing, ways of being and the possibilities for becoming. It is worth conceptualising the 'beyond' of constraint, for "from the moment where humanity can separate from constraint-economy, political, cultural and moral- *then*, what kind of knowledge is possible?" (Foucault, 1983, spoken emphasis in original). The idea of imagining the 'beyond' of colonial-capitalist constraint is highly salient for decolonising efforts in the ECEC context. The greatest constraint over children is the flag of development. This thesis offers conceptualisations of being and becoming

that shift childhood as problem to being-becomings and becoming-relations as dynamic processes through which the ECEC space can realise 'collective selves'. The shadow of development hangs over children like a flag blocking the sun. Until other methodologies are seen as equal to this knowledge, children will remain colonised under the flag of domination. The argument drawn from the confluence is that existence, as being-becoming, is an undertaking of the 'present', where 'present' is wrapped in emergent and reflective response to interactions and happenings.

9.4 Wider significance

Early in the thesis I suggested the study sought to 'stretch the boundaries of ECE theory around concepts of being-becoming, agency and potential with a deepened reflection on these concepts as highly nuanced and contextual', in recognition of the need to expand what Nsamenang (2006, p.293) calls restrictive grids of early childhood. The aims of the study were to carry out a sustained critical analysis of childhood, being and becoming through a multiple perspective approach. Therefore, an immediate limitation was the space provided for each perspective. However, as the discussion has shown, there are threads and flows across the different streams that sustained analysis of the concepts and the emerging thread of potentiality. The relatedness paradigm has drawn out possibilities perhaps missed by single lens. As MacFarlane and Cartmel (2008) ask, how might a single lens confine a concept? This is the very question underlying firstly, a relatedness paradigm, and secondly, a decolonising project seeking difference and tensions in understanding. It places my research amongst those in early childhood wishing to shift paradigmatic dominance and explore alternative purposes for the conditions we provide for children. In order to do so, contentious concepts such as democracy –and new alternatives- also need to be given deeper deconstruction. The contribution of a framework for dialogue across difference does not suggest a packaged approach. The design of placing streams of knowledge worked across local, federal and international levels to create a nexus for generating a contextually relevant argument. This would have use in terms of future research for conceptual analyses.

It is remarkable that rarely, in early childhood or philosophical literature, are children noted for their contributions to society as present-beings. For my argument, adults could learn more about our lifeworlds by seeking understanding from children. Children, either directly or in reflection, challenge us to rethink our assumptions and logics. This is an area that I believe needs urgent attention, as contribution lies in more than productivity and human capital.

9.5 New coordinates: Coexistence and coproduction

Ideas developed through this conceptual exploration also hold practical implications. Holding back the tides of judgement and identifications, meandering towards a more inclusive and egalitarian existence. The trope of developmentalism's equations for an orderly, united, capitalist world –child, human, global- highlights contradictions in the way democracy is viewed. As Peter Moss (2011) has argued, this has significant relevance for those who would rethink assumptions of what early childhood education is for. Adding to this, I believe that rather than asking *what* democracy can be, through the co-produced and rough ground of discord, the question might be how to move to new constructions of plurality. Can the early childhood education and care space leave democracy's bounds to find newer ways of imagining coexistence? The point of plurality and the practice of coexistence is in accepting tension and difference, and for my argument, resistance to the reducing of the intricate and complex becoming of being and its multiple expressions and experiments in young children.

9.5.1 Coexistence

Coexistence, like freedoms, would be an ongoing work, and a continual walk. The idea of coexistence that I have suggested here sketches an ongoing process rather than end point. In terms of my argument, coexistence remains a conceptualisation

for decolonising early childhood educative spaces and the knowledge-preferencing that remains often unquestioningly dominant. Given this conceptual platform, there are possible entry points for practical and symbolic non-dominative meandering that I have termed *co-production*.

9.5.2 Coproduction

Methodologies for pedagogy, policy, and meaning-making require decisions that can be coproduced. Concepts, terms, philosophies, grafting in vernacular, injecting co-produced terms as reflective of community, suturing decolonial-thinking into becoming-relations. These are suggestions for entry points to dialogue, for mapping new landscapes and new social scapes. The narrative of early childhood education and care in its current trajectory is only one story. Workforce participation and intervention are not the only possible purposes. In co-producing new and emerging scapes, foundations of country can anchor purpose by indigenising the early childhood space. There are many questions to take us -children, adults- into decolonising pedagogies and relations. What can spaces for children be through localised versions? What is critical for this starting point? What might be the purpose and aims of conditions we provide? How can these be laid as foundations of connection?

Finally, a wider significance of the research is in rejecting theories of the subject to move towards emergent and irreducible versions of becoming-relations among collective selves. The relevance of these ideas to early childhood lies in the space for relationships and becoming. They are highly plausible for early childhood education and care contexts, a site providing a basis for multiple relationships at different levels across daily practice. The construction of child by the dominant and restricting discourses of early childhood are narratives that can begin to be decolonised by grafting vernacular narratives from multiple perspectives in its place. Children construct their own narratives, but whether they are listened to depends on the conditions provided for their telling. Van Oers (2003) suggests the restrictive nature of dominant discourses be recognised in order to break the cycle

of assumptions about child. Narratives of children should function as "fuelling the never-ending debate about the life-form of our future" (pp.20–21,). I argue it is our responsibility to also hear the narratives by children- stories they are, like those told around maps of the oceans, constructing themselves in a world of possibilities and relationships.

In early childhood education environments, children encourage adults to think more reflectively on relationships and differences as they negotiate their way through multiple cultural, social and linguistic worlds. Theorising practices of co-existence could be further decolonised through attention to young children's practices of acceptance and negotiations and dialogue across difference. To listen to stories previously left unheard, to learn from knowledges new and old, and to push back the incessant tides of dominance. Like Clay, to refuse supremacy and identifications. A digging of heels in soft dirt, and simply saying *No. This is not acceptable.*

What could it mean for the new stories generated by such conditions? What new knowledge? The possibilities for living beyond political, economic, developmental and medico-pedagogic directions for how one must become, to loosen the bounds of constraint on ways of being? All decisions are based on values, and all concepts bound in sequences of thought. Recognising this and working within tensions and contradictions, what new knowledge might meandering bring, and what new beings might we come to?

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