

Prof. dr. sc. Nada Babić & assoc. prof. dr. sc. Stanislava Irović
University J. J. Strossmayer Osijek, Croatia
Teacher Training College
E-mail. nbabic@ffos.hr

Play – meeting point for child and adult (pre-school teacher)

Introduction

Being both researchers and teachers, we were interested to look into the comprehension of the play by both children and adults. This comprehension is believed to be the starting point for considering the content of the aspect of continuity in the relationship child – parent - pre-school teacher. Our previous experience in the research of adult-child interaction in the context of play made us interpret the position of children and adults at play and mutual solving of social and cognitive problems on the example of their experience in interaction and behavioural styles. The awareness that adults gravitate toward social conformity in interaction with children at play served as a starting point in questioning the «childhood theories» - what meaning is ascribed to the educational reconstruction of play. The second important starting point was child's perception of adult at play: adult as a team-mate – partner or one in control.

The important question is whether pre-school professionals are aware of the peculiarities connected with the child's perspective of the world, his/her educational environment as well as his/her self-image and self-position in the afore-mentioned contexts. How do these professionals use those findings in their personal theories and practices of rearing children? Personal theories and practice of early education play an important role in understanding of the reality of play in any educational system. Our previous research focused on looking into the relation between personal theories of pre-school teachers and parents on play and pre-school education and their educational practice.

The research results confirmed our hypothesis that there is a connection between the value system and adult educational practice, and that there is a tendency of continuity in relation to social conformity (on the level of value system and educational practice of pre-school teachers and parents). Those very results, together with the familiarisation with guidance strategies of children at play led us to understand the crucial role of play, particularly symbolic play, in early education.

The focus of our current research project is a pre-school professionals at play (symbolic play, play of building, and games with rules): their value system and behaviour. Within the value system of the pre-school teacher we are interested into the following: What is their position to their childhood games and those of today's children? What do they think about the role of play, especially symbolic play, in the pre-school education? What do they think about their own educational practice in the context of play?

We assume that answers to the above questions might provide a significant contribution to the theory and practice of play as an important mediator between children and adults, particularly pre-school and school educators. At the same time, they represent bridges between research and practice, researchers and practitioners, experts and educational policy – all those professionally involved in childhood, play and education.

Play and education

For more than half of a century, more precisely, ever since 1950-ies, play, as well as the relationship between play and education, have been the object of numerous discussions, theories, research, pedagogical and political documents. What is common to all those previous interpretations of play, and its role in education? On the one hand, it is the understanding of play as a multi-dimensional social and cultural phenomenon, and on the other, it is seen as an important factor of learning and development. There are many conflicting interpretations, «theories» of play and its role in education.

Theories of play's role in education rely on research findings, which indicate that children's play skills and preferences are in correlation with developmental progress in the field of social, cognitive and psychomotor competency (Kelly-Byrne 1989; Hughes 1991; Sutton-Smith 1997). Hughes (1991) understands children's development for ability to play to be obvious in the increase of play complexity that follows the development of children's logical and structural thinking. A similar point of view can be found in Sutton-Smith (1997) who claims play to be an important form of learning in childhood, which also makes it easy to transfer knowledge and skills between diverse contexts. Empirical evidence indicates the circumstantial variability of play (elements of pre-school institutional environment). As a consequence, there may occur a regression in children's skills of playing (Bennett, Wood, Rogers, 1997 ; Wood, Bennett, 2000).

We find it necessary to point out beliefs founded on contrasting childhood and adulthood. The childhood pedagogy is a discipline where play is an important means of maintaining control between adulthood and childhood (Ailwood, 2002).

Traditional interpretation of children as «passive products» of socialisation, development, education (Corsaro, 1997) means supporting the model of education founded on stereotype of childhood in adult culture. The primary role of educational institutions, in accordance with the treatment of children and childhood in adult culture, is to regulate children's lives (Canella, 1999), they are a legitimate way to control expected children behaviour.

Scientific «truths» about childhood, especially pedagogical ones, depend on social and individual point of view, and are also very often influenced by ideology and mythology. This can be best seen in goals of educational programmes – children are expected to acquire diverse content (knowledge, skills, values), and are at the same time prevented from participation in its formation. Furthermore, programme evaluation i.e. formal measurement of the outcomes of programme interventions, with the tendency of affirmative judgement of educational and social values of «educational input» (Babić, Irović, 2003).

Contrast between those two worlds, the adults' and children's one, can also be seen in the interpretation of play, teaching and learning. «Pedagogical guidance» of children in educational institutions can be achieved by consensus of play as a means of learning and teaching in a pre-school context. Play is namely understood as a sort of children's «work», which inevitably has positive results. Pre-school professionals are familiar with catchwords such as: «play is children's work»; «children learn best through play». Values of adult work are being ascribed to children's play, which fits well previously mentioned expressions about child and childhood. Childhood is a time of immaturity that all children have to «run through» as quickly as possible and reach the desired position of importance and power – adulthood. Immaturity and powerlessness of children are complementary strategies of guidance and they help achieve educational and social ideal – to become a well adjusted member of a community, i. e. a «productive» community member...

If play is children's «work» and a legitimate means of learning whose aim is to achieve visible results (pre-reading and pre-writing skills needed for the literacy development; following the rules that lead to being disciplined etc.), then the possibility to realise that play i.e. play as a children's project, is questionable. Concentration only on play's products means negation of play as a unique value in its own right, characterised by inner motivation, children's suspension of reality and inner control (Lillemyr, 2001).

Concentration on a child, as well as on learning through play, referred to by many school programmes, is mostly declarative and as such remains on the margin of pre-school reality.

Bennett, Wood and Rogers (1997) offer better explanation why is learning through play considered to be problematic and also where the gap between rhetoric and reality lies.

This is the right time to critically review all the «truths» about play as children's «work» and play as a means of learning, i.e. to review all the dominant suppositions and educational practice. Our previous research warns about the inconsistency between educational programmes and pre-school practice when it comes to the holistic approach to learning and play, particularly in these dimensions: freedom-guidance, children's point of view and experience-educational values and teacher's intentions. Pre-school institutions (kindergartens) are structured spatially and materially in accordance with adult point of view: separated area, usually for age homogenous groups of children, division of interior into specialised areas that correspond to areas of intentional learning (play area, learning area, activity area...), every area equipped with didactic material in accordance with pedagogical standards etc. The afore-mentioned speaks about the segregation of the children's living area in pre-school institutions. The same can be found even in situations when the institutions are being redecorated and rebuilt in order to «suit the needs and interests of children», and the fact is that the starting point is always the one of adults – pre-school professionals and official educational policy.

Separated, didactically designed and equipped inner space of kindergartens together with daily time-tables are inseparable from educational concentration on play and learning. Teachers' and children's intentions in such a space are in conflict with each other. Teacher wants to carry out the programme, and child to freely explore the world he/she is in, i.e. to have a possibility of personal choice, activity and interpretation of reality. It is important now to find the way to move from asymmetrical to reciprocal relationship where play is a dominant interaction context of educational and developmental progress. How can elements of normative regulation be «brought together» so that they become socially acceptable for the personal discretion that includes personal preference of social on individual level?

More theoretically and methodologically rigorous research of play is needed, which would hopefully offer guidelines to practitioners and creators of policy and which would contribute to creating of new play pedagogy.

We think that the point of view that play and learning are vital parts of childhood is conditioned by the shift of focus of perception and research of play and learning from the adult to the child point of view. Such a point of view of learning and play enables value-neutral discussions and examination of childhood reality in various social and cultural

contexts. In relation to pre-school education this implies that there are «positive» and «negative» aspects of play and learning in pre-school institutions and that the elements of pre-school institutional environment significantly influence variable positions and outcomes of play.

Teacher's theories of play and their practice in symbolic play

A good insight into the relationship of play and learning offer implicit theories of play and its meaning in childhood. Implicit teacher's theories, as a sort of a personal way to interpret play, are crucial variables of pre-school practice. Implicit i.e. private theories, although coming from laymen, incoherent and theoretically unsupported, are very influential because they represent personal constructs based on personal socialisation biographies (Babić, Irović, Krstović, 1997). Professional community often uses terms such as belief, idea and point of view as synonyms for private theories.

Research results in the area of psychology from the 1980-ies (Crowel, Feldman, 1988; Miller, 1988; Goodnow, 1988) confirm that there is a both direct and indirect connection between adult beliefs (parents) and their behaviour. Consequently, more elaborate system of parental beliefs and their better understanding of child's capabilities (on actual and imminent future level) lead to better adaptive behaviour of parents. Indirect connection between parental beliefs about child development and capabilities can be seen in structuring material environment, choice of toys, picture books etc. (Miller, 1998). The same author warns about the cumulative influence of parental beliefs on child development – in cumulative history of interaction with parents a child realizes that a parent assesses, for instance, his/her curiosity and research spirit.

And what about pre-school teachers' beliefs when it comes to play? How do they see play from the point of view of their own experience and children's play today? How do they see play in an institutionalised pre-school context? How do their points of view correspond with their pre-school practice? What are similarities and differences between explicit – official and implicit-private theories of learning and play? What do they mean for pre-school practice?

In order to obtain answers to these questions we conducted a research in kindergartens of town of Osijek, Republic of Croatia¹. The research was carried out on the sample of 25

¹ Part of the research project Constructivism and developmentally suitable pre-school practice that was supported by the Ministry of science and technology of the Republic of Croatia. The head of the project: Nada Babić. Researchers: Stanislava Irović, Jasna Krstović and Zdenka Kuzma.

pairs (50) of pre-school teachers that work in turns with the same group of kindergarten children. 43 out of 50 teachers were surveyed, while 25 were observed during symbolic play with children i.e. one out of each teacher pair.

In order to get better idea of their pre-school practice in the context of kindergarten play, we observed pre-school teachers during symbolic play, play of building and playing games. Pre-school teachers received written instructions about the preparation of the space, expected roles and the sequence of play activities. Ten children took part in every play (randomly chosen 5 girls and 5 boys). Every play was supposed to last up to 20 min. It was made sure that instructions were understood and that there were no additional problems (from choice of children to additional instructions). Being non-participating observers, we recorded everything in two ways: by a video record and observation notes (written protocol). All pre-school teachers have had co-operated with us for a long time: as educators of future pre-school teachers, participants in workshops of permanent professional education and subjects in research projects.

Again, we find it necessary to point out that our earlier experience and knowledge about pre-school teachers' and parents' behaviour during play determined the described methodology. We found out that there are several important data about pre-school teachers' behaviour during play: those that refer to preparation and quality of play area, the level of teachers' participation in various play situations and the self-awareness of their own behaviour during play.

After the observation all the pairs of teachers were given video-records of themselves. Pairs and teams of pre-school teachers could do with those records what they wanted. Since they were familiar with that form of observation data, they had no problems with it. At the same time, we were able to get better insight into the recorded play situations and to analyse the collected data...

Once again we wish to stress out that this paper contains only the data connected with symbolic play («As if» play).

After pre-school teachers had seen the video-records, and the collected data had been analysed, we organized a set of educational workshops on pre-school play and learning for all the pairs of pre-school teachers who had participated in our study. At the end of those workshops we surveyed 43 pre-school teachers (7 teachers were unavailable at the given time). The purpose of that survey was to gather data on pre-school teachers' point of view about their own playing when they were young, and the playing of today's children, on

their opinions about play and pre-school education and their own pre-school practice and experience when it comes to play.

Points of view, beliefs of pre-school teachers about their childhood play and play of today's children

Judging from the data collected from the surveyed pre-school teachers, the majority of them think there is a difference between their childhood play and play of today's children. This applies to the playtime, sorts of games and the way of playing.

When it comes to play time, pre-school teachers (58,13 %) are prone to think that children before, and they themselves as children, used to have more time to play than today's children. Smaller percentage (34,88 %) thinks that children in the past and children today have the same amount of time to play, and only 3,69 % think that they themselves as children did not have enough time to play. The most commonly used explanation for the differences in time to play is the influence of modern media (TV, VCR, computer, video games etc.). It is followed by the obligations parents impose on their children (foreign languages, singing, ballet, rhythm, preparations for school, organised free time...). These findings coincide with the findings of Sandberg and Samuelsson (2003). The authors claim that the time for play and ways of children's play are connected with various external factors. The role of media is given a particular attention in the sense of its limiting or expanding children's play. Play time and role of media are singled out as two important topics in the play experience of pre-school teachers. However, teachers' perceptions of those two topics differ depending on their own experience of play before and today: idealized and/or pragmatic (Sandberg and Samuelsson, 2003).

When it comes to the sort of games, pre-school teachers remember games they used to play as children: ball games, school, skipping rope and 'hide-and-seek', and as games of today's children they name: playing with Pokemon cards, jumping over the rubber string, computer games, playing with Barbie-doll. It is interesting that there are games common to children before and today: ball games, skipping rope, hide-and-seek, jumping over the rubber string – these are traditional games that survived the test of time.

The research shows that pre-school teachers think that the media influence two dimensions of play: time (limiting factor) and sort of game (new vs. traditional).

When it comes to complexity of play and children's imagination, more than half of a sample (51,16 %) thinks that they as children and children today were equally imaginative

and games as versatile. However, 39,53 % of the sample thinks that they were more imaginative than children today and only 9,30 % think that they are equally imaginative.

All these data lead us to believe that the pre-school teachers from our sample are prone to «idealised» point of view: there are differences between games they used to play as children and games of children today (play time, sort of games, complexity and imaginativeness), and they tend to take their childhood as a norm, starting point to evaluate play and development.

Pre-school teachers' opinions about play and education and their own pre-school practice

Pre-school teachers think (81,39 %) that growing up does not exclude the ability to play i.e. they see the play as the generic feature of a human being.

Statement that play is the most effective way of children's learning is ranked first in the value system of developmental impact of play. In general, pre-school teachers believe that play is the most effective way of learning, but they allow the possibility of great individual differences when it comes to specific determination of developmental effects of play. This is most obvious in the perception of play as an element (or important context) of explorative children's behaviour.

Adults think play is the most effective way of children's learning and that includes the idea that they 'guide' children through play. Pre-school teachers have divided opinions: there is a group of those (58,13 %) who think children should not be taught how to play because it is in their nature, and then there is a group of those (39,53 %) who believe that guidance and encouragement of children is necessary for the development of children's play. If we try to interpret these data within the framework of the developmental theories, than it is possible to claim that there is a tendency toward a biological foundation of play. This is further supported by the data that explain whether pre-school teacher appreciate and value spontaneous children's play of their own choice or a guided one (where adults choose topics and guide children). The majority of the subjects (93,02 %) chose spontaneous children's play at the level of value and personal practice. If play is the natural gift that has its own development and steady developmental features (in developmental phases i.e. ages) than it is questionable whether play could be interpreted in the context of a certain culture and time. The same dilemma exists for guidance and «responsibility» for

educational and developmental impact. Supporting such a point of view does not mean perceiving play through children's eyes. It may and often is a concealed adult ideology.

Notion that guided play is necessary is supported by developmental theories about social and cultural foundation of development and play. Interpretation of play as a part and expression of culture means acceptance of the influence of a specific social and cultural reality on play (emergence, variety, way of playing, education...).

There are certain contradictions i.e. inconsistency in the viewpoints, and between viewpoints and practice of the pre-school teachers from our sample: although they perceive play differently (play as a natural gift or cultural construct), they similarly explain their viewpoints, similarly evaluate participation of adults and their own participation in children's play. Even though pre-school teachers value most and practice spontaneous and freely chosen children's play they still think that adults are important in children's play, especially as playmates (58,13 %) and observers (32,55 %). When they are playmates they usually help children resolve conflicts and difficulties, learning how to perceive play in children's way. When they are observers they get familiar with children's interests. Children usually approve of adult intervention when they come across difficulties and stop playing.

What influenced most teachers' perception of play and their professional behaviour in playing with children? On the one hand, 44,18 % of pre-school teachers think the strongest influence had their own childhood play experience, and on the other, 39,53 % of them believe that the strongest influence had their professional experience with kindergarten children. This information is of particular interest and importance for educators of future kindergarten professionals. If it is true that we teach others the way we ourselves were taught, then it is a critical moment for transformation of educational programmes i.e. methodology of teaching. The desired transformation should take place in the following: from «teaching» of knowledge to learning, i.e. e. constructing knowledge in social interaction of a dialogue type. If pre-school professionals are experienced in active participation during learning and teaching then it is more than certain that they will use that experience in their own pre-school practice – in learning and teaching children.

Pre-school teacher during symbolic play

This section brings data about the pre-school teacher and children behaviour during symbolic play. We wish to stress out that the data were acquired through observation at

symbolic play «Guests are coming over». Teachers were asked to prepare space and material for play and to start playing. Children take part in play and carry on playing, while teachers participate actively only if asked by children.

This symbolic play teachers usually structured in the family centre and some of them even «extended» it by desks. In several cases, the play area was separated from the rest of the room by improvised walls. Teachers offered standard equipment to children (toy dishes and cutlery) and additional material such as plastic glasses and plates, boxes and dry pasta. A part of teachers offered real food so that sandwiches for guests could be made. In most of the cases the designated areas were too small for children to play.

After having watched the video record for several times and having gone through the written protocol observation-behaviour categories of pre-school teachers have been established. The unit of analysis is the behaviour, adult and/or children actions with obvious intent, begin and end. All the interaction participants, teachers and children, were being observed in order to identify the mutuality of interaction. Since the behaviour categories of pre-school teachers and children were established on the basis of the recorded material, their artificiality was avoided.

All together there were established 18 behaviour categories of pre-school teachers and the same number of children categories.

Table 1 Behaviour of pre-school teachers during children's symbolic play

Rank	Behaviour of pre-school teachers	f
1.	not playing	312
2.	observing children	203
3.	saying what to do	116
4.	indirectly giving suggestions	99
5.	examining (showing, reminding, checking)	77
6.	talking «as if»	70
7/8.	moving, giving things, reshaping the space	60
7/8.	commenting, explaining, praising	60
9.	suggesting and determining play roles	58
10.	helping, offering help	54
11.	reminding of etiquette, making discipline	44
12.	approving of, accepting, allowing	38
13.	acting «as if»	37
14.	announcing the play topic	28
15.	talking about the real situation	24
16/17.	inviting to the prepared area (family centre)	12
16/17.	arbitrating and controlling	12
18.	physically relocating children	9
Total		1313

The pre-school teachers' behaviour was ordered according to its frequency in the observed time. The Table 1 shows that teachers are usually not playing. They are doing something else, out of camera's reach, in another corner of the room. The second most frequent behaviour is observation. These sorts of behaviour are in accordance with the written instructions. However, it is important to point out that these ways of behaviour are only formally in accordance with the instructions, which is supported by other ways of behaviour evidenced by our study.

For example, giving directions and saying what to do, as well as indirect suggestions are the evidence of a high level of adult guidance of children's symbolic play. Indirect suggestions, usually in the form of questions, make children behave in accordance with play topic and play roles (according to their ideas and expectations). This sort of teacher's behaviour conveys the intention of direct and indirect guidance of children's behaviour. The same intention can be seen in teachers' educational behaviour. Their demonstration, reminders and checking guide children to «correct» behaviour during symbolic play (teaching – «what should guests do, and what hosts», reminders about the behaviour suitable for children's play roles).

Teachers' taking part in children's «as if» talk and/or initiation of such a talk is on the 6th place. However, teachers' «as if» activities are far more rare. Although teachers' participation in children's «as if» talk is ranked relatively highly, video records show that those are mostly short «as if» incidents, and not longer conversations. These very data about the presence of teachers' «as if» behaviour (on verbal and performance level) speak about teachers' intrusion of children's play where reality is subjected to transformation and where communication is carried out by transformed meanings. Although teachers think that play is valuable for children's learning and development, they still have difficulty in participation as children's playmates. According to Feeney (1996) teachers' participation should be harmonised with children's play because if not, it ruins it. «Harmonisation» is understood as support of children's play where adult motives for participation in children's play are being constantly scrutinized. This motive scrutinisation, as a sort of reflection and self-reflection, is the way to children's «as if» behaviour, play, and control of personal domination and urge for teaching. Bodrova and Leong (2003) consider it important to maintain the balance between support of mature play and children's initiative, which can be achieved only if adults/teachers promise a specific support – from creating imaginary situations, integrating various play topics and roles to planning of the play.

During the observed period of time teachers relatively often move objects and reshape play area. Moving and adding of new objects are in function of reshaping of play area and that is mostly done from pre-school teachers' standpoint.

The same position share teachers' behaviour where they comment, explain and praise children and children's activities, behaviour and «results» (prepared sandwiches, set table, reached agreement etc.).

The next position is occupied by teachers' behaviour where they help or only offer help to children. Helping children is usually result of children's asking for help when they need to manipulate the objects and in social relations.

Teacher's participation in symbolic play of direct guidance (or tutor limiting guidance) can be seen in suggesting and determining children's roles as well as in determining play framework i.e. announcing the play topic. It was made directly, by teacher's saying the topic or by the description of the fictional situation where «guests» announced themselves by a letter or a telephone conversation. Arbitrating, correcting and demonstrating of activities, «physical relocation» of children appeared rarely in our study.

Table 2 Children's behaviour in symbolic play

Rank	Children's behaviour	f
1.	accept teacher's behaviour	391
2.	manipulate objects	288
3.	discuss real situation, objects, activities	112
4.	don't accept, don't react to teacher's behaviour	87
5.	perform «as if» activities	78
6.	take, carry, move objects	74
7/8.	ask for/accept teacher's help	61
7/8.	«as if» discussions	61
9.	assign roles, discuss them	47
10.	eat, drink «real» food and drink	30
11.	ask for teacher's approval, permission	20
12.	show their object, work to the teacher	15
13.	ask teacher to give them information	13
14/15.	observe other children during play	10
14/15.	discuss real activities	10
16.	sit (idle)	6
17/18.	push each other, make noise	5
17/18.	help teacher	5
Total		1313

Dominant children's behaviour in the monitored 20 minutes of symbolic play entitled "Guests are coming over" is acceptance of teacher's actions (this is mostly following the instructions, answering/reacting to questions teachers asked to check children's knowledge

and/or indirectly suggests children the way of behaviour/activities). It is followed by manipulation of objects. Children manipulate real objects – take them out of the cabinet, move them, set tables...

Very often children take part in “real” conversations with their playmates – they talk about a real situation and activities/actions, without using “as if” elements. Rejection, ignoring and failing to recognize teacher’s behaviour (order, instruction, suggestion) are also positioned relatively high on the scale.

“As if” activities are on the 5th place, and are followed by taking, moving and shifting prepared objects, asking for and accepting teacher’s help and “as if” talk. Other ways of children’s behaviour by which children ask for adult intervention (asking for acknowledgement or information, showing objects or schoolwork to the teacher) are less present in the sample. Inactivity i.e. idle sitting, physical conflicts and helping to the teacher are least present in the sample.

The highest reciprocity in the behaviour of children and pre-school teachers was noticed in children’s acceptance, following teacher’s instructions and teaching. There was no reciprocity in the behaviour of adults and children in relation to children’s manipulation of objects. When children manipulated objects teachers were almost always only observers or remained completely out of play context.

Video records and protocols show that majority of pre-school teachers, in spite of written instructions (prepare space and material, initialise play and intervene only if asked by children), intervened during play and occasionally assumed the role of a play-mate. There was a significant amount of teachers’ interventions during children’s symbolic play whose aim was to guide and regulate children’s behaviour as well as to teach directly. There was a prevalence of direct teachers’ guidance through instructions and suggestions (usually disguised as questions) that reflect the ideal of adults about the way children “should play”.

This research results confirm findings of our previous study as well as findings of other studies about the relationship between teachers’ beliefs, knowledge and practice. Teachers’ personal theories about play, where their childhood play experience has a significant place as well as their pre-school and school experience (elaborated as pragmatic or idealized interpretation of childhood), are in direct connection with their professional pre-school practice. Teachers’ personal theories are not always easily translatable into practice due to a number of limitations. Some of these limitations are: discontinuity and non-congruity on

the level of beliefs, between beliefs and professional knowledge, between beliefs, knowledge and pre-school reality.

References

- Ailwood, J. (2002). Homogenising play: Governing preschool childhoods. <http://www.aare.edu.au/02pap/ail02210.htm>
- Babić, N., Irović, S., Krstović, J. (1997). Vrijednosni sustav odraslih, odgojna praksa i razvojni učinci. *Društvena istraživanja*, 6 (4-5), 551-575.
- Babić, N., Irović, S. (2003). Dijete i djetinjstvo u pedagoškoj teoriji i edukacijskoj . U: N. Babić, S. Irović (Ur.), *Dijete i djetinjstvo: teorija i praksa predškolskog odgoja* (str.13-34). Osijek: Sveučilište J. J. Strossmayera, Visoka učiteljska škola.
- Bennett, N., Wood, E., Rogers, S. (1997). *Teaching Through Play: Teachers' Thinking and Classroom Practice*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Bodrova, E., D., Leong, D. J. (2003). The Importance of Being Playful. *Educational Leadership*. http://www.pdonline.ascd.org/pd_online/substitute/el1200304_bodrova.html
- Cannella, G.S.(2000). The Scientific Discourse of Education:predetermining the lives of others – Foucault, education, and children. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 1(1), 36-44.
- Corsaro, W. A. (1997). *The Sociology of Childhood* . Thousand Oaks. CA: Pine Forge Press.
- Crowell, J.A., Feldman, S. S. (1988). Mother's Internal Models of Relationships and Children's Behavioral and Developmental Status: A Study of Mother- Child Interaction. *Child Development*, 59 (5), 1273-1286.
- Feeney, S., Christensen, D., Moravcik, E. (1996). *Who am I in the Lives of Young Children*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Goodnow, J. J. (1988). Parent's Ideas, Actions and Feelings: Models and Methods for Development and Social Psychology. *Child Development*, 59 (2), 286-320.
- Hughes, F. P. (1991). *Children, Play and Development*. Massachusetts: Allyn and Bacon.
- Kelly-Byrne, D. (1989). *A Child's Play Life: An Ethnographic Study*. New York: Teachers' College Press.
- Lillemyr, O. F. (2001). Play – experince – learning, in early childhood education. In: E. Schmuck, F. Böttcher, A. Schubert (Eds.), *Play and Toys Today*, 22nd World Play Conference, 06.06.- 08. 06. 2001,Conference Proceedings (CD-ROM). Erfurt: University Erfurt.
- Miller, S. A. (1988). Parent's Beliefs about Children's Cognitive Development. *Child Development*, 59 (2), 259-286.
- Sandberg, A., Samuelsson, I. P. (2003). Preschool Teachers' Play Experiences Then and Now. *Early Childhood Research &Practice*, 5 (1). <http://www.ecrp.uiuc.edu/v5n1/sandberg.html>
- Sutton-Smith, R. (1997). *The Ambiguity of Play*. Cabridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Wood, E., Bennett, N. (2000). Changing Theories, Changing Practices: Exploring Early Childhood Teacher's professional Learning. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 16 (5/6), 635-647.

