

Cultural Models as Mediators of What is Possible in a Day

Presentation to the Roundtable session

“Getting Beyond the Zone of Proximal Development: Further Possibilities for Strengthening Early Childhood Education through Cultural-Historical Analyses”
at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association,
San Francisco, California, 28 April, 2013.

Holli A. Tonyan

Psychology, California State University, Northridge, USA

Corresponding author: Holli Tonyan, holli.tonyan@csun.edu, Department of Psychology, California State University, Northridge, 18111 Nordhoff Street, Northridge, CA 91330-8255, USA.

Holli Tonyan specializes in understanding the cultural organization of contexts adults organize for children’s early years with core training in Psychology and Education as well as interdisciplinary work in anthropology and sociology. She started her career working in the infant/toddler room of a child care center, but has also worked as an Assistant Professor of Psychology (current), a Lecturer in Early Childhood Education at Monash University, a Postdoctoral Fellow in Psychology at University of California, Santa Cruz, and a Spencer Fellow (Education) at University of California, Los Angeles.

Cultural Models as Mediators of What is Possible in a Day

Family child care (FCC; i.e., paid care in a home setting) is increasingly a target for intervention to enrich children's early experiences (e.g., improve quality, prevent obesity). However, change may be unsustainable without understanding how and why FCC providers (FCCPs) organize daily routines. Using CHAT and Eco(logical)-Cultural Theory (ECT), this paper examines cultural models as tools that mediate the action of organizing a daily routine. Thus, time is understood as limited and daily routines result from negotiating meaning with particular resources. In-depth qualitative interviews were conducted with 10 family child care providers. Through a mixed-method, or derived etic approach, *a priori* theoretical concepts are tested and evaluated against premises developed abductively through ethnographic-style investigations of local meaning. Thus, qualitative methods illuminate local meaning, context and process whereas quantitative methods provide a scale of magnitude comparable across particular contexts. The organization of daily activities provided a meaningful and useful window into the cultural models that mediate FCCPs' daily activity. CHAT suggests that such tensions, when identified, provide a rich basis for change. Scholarship and professional development efforts may need to articulate alternative models for care and professionalism more appropriate for informal, flexible home settings.

Keywords: sociocultural theory; Ecocultural theory; family child care; object-mediated action

Constructing a Daily Routine as a Site for Complex Negotiations

This is a paper about a theoretical topic, ways that Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) can inform work in early childhood education, but was motivated out of very practical concerns. Many of the most vulnerable children in the USA can be found in family child care homes (Morrissey, 2007). Further access to center-based care varies dramatically by region (e.g., in the service area in which I work 74% of licensed child care sites were family child care), age of children (e.g., more infants and toddlers in family child care), and other factors. Despite the practical importance of family child care in children's lives, notions of what constitutes "quality" in family child care and center-based care have

been highly contentious (Brownlee, Berthelsen, & Segaran, 2009; Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 1999; Doherty, Lero, Goelman, Tougas, & LaGrange, 2000; Howes, 2010; Owen, 2000; Woodhead, 1998). Of course, many in early childhood want to create effective environments for children. But early childhood educators often disagree, sometimes quite passionately, about what constitutes effective environments and what the purpose of those environments should be. I argue that CHAT provides a set of concepts that can help to examine providers' own ideas about their work, including the concepts salient to them (as opposed to "quality"). CHAT suggests that doing so is essential because ideas mediate actions – in this case caring for children – but ideas are also situated in a larger cultural-historical context. Specifically, I articulate several different cultural models of what constitutes good care that are grounded in the practitioners' own descriptions of their work and then show how these different models of care can help us better understand daily activities in family child care settings.

Despite its' practical significance in many young children's lives, little published research systematically examines family child care. The research that exists tends to assume that children's activities and providers' behavior mean the same thing to all participants, and that researchers' understandings of those activities are aligned with participants' understandings. By contrast, research examining center-based care suggests that many of the same activities have different meaning to different individuals (Howes, 2010; Tobin, Hsueh, & Karasawa, 2011; Tobin, Wu, & Davidson, 1989). Similarly, research examining child care providers' values and beliefs suggests that there is great variability in what child care providers believe that contrasts with researchers' assumptions about early care and education (see the review in Tonyan, Mamikonian, & Chien, in press). Thus, a primary goal of this research is to document what it is that family child care providers believe about their work. Specifically, this research documents variations in those beliefs rather than trying to assess the extent to which child care providers' endorse a researcher-defined set of values.

Cultural Historical Activity Theory, Ecocultural Theory, and Family Child Care

Some of Vygotsky's concepts have made it into widespread use. Most who have heard of Vygotsky are familiar with his ideas about assessing children's understanding in a dynamic

rather than static way, as captured in the concept of a zone of proximal development or the difference between what we can do on our own and what we can do with the prompts or structuring of a more skilled other (Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1984). Many have been introduced to the idea of tool-mediated-action: that humans' actions in the world are mediated by the material and symbolic tools that they use. Similarly, many are familiar with Rogoff's ideas about apprenticeship and guided participation as contrasted with more hierarchically organized learning: apprenticeship involves a novice and master involved in ongoing activity together in such a way that the more skilled master provides structure and prompts so that a less-skilled novice can learn whereas hierarchically structured interactions typical in many school settings involved adult-organized activity in which learners practice on tasks that adults have created particularly for practicing isolated skills and abilities (Rogoff, 1995; Rogoff, Mistry, Göncü, & Mosier, 1993). In the USA, these ideas were introduced by Jim Wertsch, Alex Kozulin, and Michael Cole and are collectively referred to by many as sociocultural theory. These concepts highlight the situated nature of cognitive activity – all that we think and do is dynamic and part of larger social structures. However, these concepts also focus on individual or dyadic and small group action and interaction rather than larger communities or larger systems.

Another line of Vygotsky's legacy examines the larger settings in which that activity takes place. Becoming more widely known here in the USA is Rogoff's work examining how development can be conceptualized as changing participation in activities, what she calls transformation of participation: humans shift from novices to experts and the movement can be documented (Rogoff, 2003; Rogoff et al., 2007). Thus, family child care providers start as novices and researchers could document how their participation in activities transforms as they develop. Importantly, that transformation must be measured in the context of a specific activity – an expert literacy promoter may be a novice physical activity promoter – and that activity is situated within communities. A family child care provider may not even think to be a physical activity promoter if physical activity is not valued in the communities in which she participates. Some activities are familiar across a wide range of communities whereas others are much more specialized.

Rogoff has primarily established this line of research by piloting and creating culturally-relevant standardized settings in which to study phenomena of interest (Rogoff,

2009), but we may not know enough about daily life in family child care to do so. Therefore, I turned to another related cultural framework to inform this research. Like Rogoff's sociocultural theory, Ecocultural theory draws from Shep White and the Whiting's anthropological work (C. P. Edwards & Bloch, 2010). Although it is not a direct descendent of Vygotsky's legacy, it fits quite nicely within a CHAT framework. Rather than seeing culture as an abstract concept, Ecocultural theory conceptualizes culture as enacted and visible through everyday activity in a particular ecological-cultural niche (Gallimore, Goldenberg, & Weisner, 1993; Gallimore & Lopez, 2002; Weisner, 2002). For example, activities can be conceptualized as taking place in a setting that has structural features, but is socially constructed. From this perspective, object-mediated activity is seen as taking place in a socially constructed activity setting or ecocultural niche. Activities involve personnel, task demands, and scripts for how the activity should be carried out as well as purposes or motives specific to the task at hand and larger, more generalized cultural models that include ideas about how the activity should be carried out.

As a researcher trained in naturalistic observation, I have witnessed remarkable advances in observations of the more easily observable aspects of activity settings: the personnel, the task demands, and – to a certain extent – commonly observed scripts like circle time, dramatic play, block play, and other commonly observed cultural forms of activity (Tonyan & Howes, 2003). These are currently measured in a number of assessments of both process and structural quality. However, what the field has done less well is document the purposes, motives, and cultural models that are relevant to understanding activities (Howes, 2010). People have ideas about the personnel who are and should be involved, how and why tasks should be carried out, and the purposes for different activities.

Ecocultural theory conceptualizes these ideas about how activities should be carried out as cultural models. Gallimore and Lopez (2002) defined cultural models as “the mental schema into which people code their interpretations of the environment and events, what is valued and ideal, which activities should be enacted and which avoided, who should participate, how people should interact, and so forth” (p. 725) and Weisner (2002) highlighted the shared nature of cultural models as “connected, schematized, shared knowledge” (p. 277). Furthermore, as Hidetada Shimizu pointed out, components of

cultural models must be understood as interrelated: “contradictory elements go together...things go in pairs...although they are separate and seeming mutually incompatible, they in fact support each other and generate insights and behaviors that are rooted in ‘wisdom’ specific to each and every human situation” (Bjork, 2009, p. 271). Even when, as in the USA, many activities are organized to foster independence over interdependence like sleeping in separate rooms and encouraging self-care (Rogoff, 2003), other activities, like organizing play dates and encouraging children to attend early childhood institutions where they can be with other children, also foster relationships and connections among people in ways that can be characterized as fostering interdependence.

Cultural models can only partially be understood through either behavior or statements because they are enacted in behavior but understood and evaluated through mental schemas. The choices people make in how to behave can be more completely understood in relation to explanations of why those choices were made, particularly when questions focus on specific examples of daily activity (The Ecocultural Scale Project, 1997). For example, a provider who makes a point to greet each of the children by name as they arrive might be prompted to discuss whether they ever did things differently or how children’s experiences might be different in a program that organizes arrivals differently thus avoiding eliciting a rational explanation for a taken-for-granted practice. Although cultural models are often unnoticed, researchers’ descriptions can make visible taken-for-granted behavior and schemas that should be recognizable to participants even if they had not previously been articulated (Rogoff et al., 1993; Tobin et al., 2011; Tobin et al., 1989; Weisner, 1997). For example, few people would spontaneously describe themselves as engaging in “mock excitement” to motivate young children to learn about new objects. However, a careful analysis of parents’ behavior with their young children that compared Mayan people in a community of Guatemala with European-heritage people in a community of the USA identified a behavior pattern that many would recognize as a common practice in the USA and that involved “invit[ing] or motivat[ing] the child to participate in an activity by means of exaggerated expressions of interest to try to engage or persuade the child...[that] was not real excitement or enthusiasm but pretend excitement” (Rogoff et al., 1993, p. 48).

Howes (2010) systematically examined the cultural models relevant to center-based practices, but I know of no studies that have attempted to examine the cultural models relevant to family child care. Thus, a primary purpose of the present paper is to articulate the cultural models reflected in family child care providers' descriptions of their daily activity.

Methods

The results presented here are part of a pilot project to demonstrate the utility of Ecocultural Theory for understanding the cultural organization of daily, routine activity in family child care settings undertaken with my collaborator Jennifer Romack. Specifically, our purpose is to adapt an interview originally developed for families so that it is appropriate for family child care settings. The cultural models presented here are just one of a variety of features of family child care settings examined as part of this larger collaborative project.

My collaborator, my research team and I are using a snowball sampling technique to interview 30 family child care providers in our local service area who have been family child care providers for at least 2 years. Our first participants were originally recruited through a survey mailed to all licensed child care providers in our region several years ago and indicated that they could be contacted for future research. Our first participants were recruited by contacting providers who had participated in previous research. Since that time, we have visited training and professional development sessions offered through the local resource and referral agency and we have even offered participating providers a "bonus" for helping us recruit additional providers into our study.

Participants first complete an in-depth, sixty to ninety minute ethnographic style interview. We begin by asking them to describe their day: "Tell me about your day." Interviewers have a set of show cards with an outline of the topics they are to cover and they listen attentively, probing for details or prompting for specific information depending on how the conversation unfolds. Many providers have completed the interviews during the children's nap time. We ask providers to complete a brief survey of child care practices and information about themselves and we leave a camera with them. We ask them to take about 10 photographs of activities that they would like to tell us about. We return about

two weeks later and ask them about the photographs they took plus any follow-up questions that arose from the initial interviews. When asking about the photos, interviewers ask, “Tell me about this photo,” and prompt for people present, task demands, and motives/purpose. Our study was reviewed by the CSUN Institutional Review Board and follows the ethical guidelines of the American Psychological Association and Society for Research in Child Development.

To date, we have completed preliminary analyses of ten providers. After reading through all the materials for our first several providers, we identified dimensions, or properties of the interviews that vary along a range from low to high. At the participant level, our “codes” involve a holistic process of first identifying dimensions of interest and then classifying providers as low, moderate, or high based on all the information we have about them. We use an abductive process of: (a) reading through all the material for all providers and identifying the providers we consider to be highest and lowest for the dimension, (b) formalizing these dimensions into a “code,” and (c) formulating hypotheses about the codes based on as much data as we have which we can then test. Thus, we move back and forth between inductive and deductive processes. Specifically, we formalize a “code” by articulating what we believe differentiates high, from moderate, from low, drawing from the providers’ own words and meaning as much as possible. As a final step in code development, we share our codes with people who were not involved in code development, ask them to read through the materials for a provider and apply our formalized codes. In addition to classifying the provider, coders must justify their coding with specific quotes from the text and write a rationale for their overall code. Thus, this kind of mixed method research involves a combination of both quantitative techniques and qualitative techniques throughout the process rather than using some qualitative techniques and some quantitative techniques that are then analyzed together at the end (Yoshikawa, Weisner, Kalil, & Way, 2008).

Preliminary Results – Cultural Models

Our preliminary analyses have identified two cultural models present in providers’ descriptions of their work and daily activity. We do not feel that this is a complete list of possible cultural models, but these represent two sometimes overlapping ideas about how

children can and should be reared. Providers differ in the extent to which they articulate each of at least two sets of beliefs as well as in the extent to which they enact activities that correspond with those beliefs. Providers who are low on both of these cultural models value other kinds of care that we eventually may be able to articulate. Thus, our notion of a cultural model contrasts with concepts of quality because we strive to ensure that “low” for our cultural models codes reflect decisions that all people who care for children must make about how to use scarce resources and energy rather than being lower in “quality.” We made particular efforts to ensure that we examined the cultural models of providers who struggled to articulate what they do as well as the providers who had more ready verbal descriptions of their work. We also strove to ensure that we were not just looking at statements, but also providers’ descriptions of their daily activity and the photographs they shared with us.

Although not evident at first, reflection on both cultural models together has led me to identify a common gradation in the two cultural models. Across both cultural models, preliminary analysis suggested that providers could be differentiated based on how much they valued, enacted, and or looked to see the effects of the cultural models on children. Although few of these providers have any formal training in education, I note parallels to the educational processes of values or dispositions, curriculum and assessment in these providers’ descriptions of their work. Thus, in addition to describing each cultural model, I also describe gradations in how much the providers’ descriptions reflect these three components of effective educational practices: valuing, enacting, and seeing what the providers themselves indicate to be important to them.

Love, Affection and Fun

A number of providers make it a priority to ensure that children feel loved, special, belonging, and enjoy their time with the provider and other children. We found that this could be displayed through efforts to interact with the children through play and conversation, to really see and know children, and/or through an emphasis on the rewards of strong relationships that result when children have been in their care.

Valuing, enacting, and seeing. Some providers show the importance of relationships, being together and having fun in multiple ways throughout the interviews.

For these providers, having fun and being together is a valued aspect of their work *in and of itself* and not just a means to help children learn other things or get things done. These providers engage in activities during the day when they make a choice (may or may not be aware of the choice) to help children feel loved, feel a sense of belonging and have fun (e.g., *“Okay the kid is so into this...just because there’s something else in my schedule I’m not going to ruin that moment. I’m going to let him be...I’m going to give him the time the space that he needs...to continue you know in his play...his activities”*). Furthermore, although many providers describe valuing relationships, only some of them organize their daily routines in ways that provide opportunities for children to experience belonging and fun as part of their daily routine. Similarly, family child care providers are not often understood as engaging in assessment, but sensitive examination of their transcripts shows that many of the providers look for and notice whether children show signs of belonging, feeling love, and having fun either in describing their daily activities or in the rewards of their work. Thus, what characterizes this type of cultural model is that providers value, enact, and look to see whether children experience love, affection, and fun as part of their daily activity.

We found this model to be indicated in a variety of ways. Some providers were aware of or could articulate this cultural model directly. For example one provider said, *“if they’re...they’re happy...they eat well they sleep well and they’re happy...everything else is going to come together, the math, the science all that not so much is putting them...”* *“I want you to write your name at the age of three,” I don’t believe so much in that, it’s...it’s having a loved environment, well nourished, everything”* showing awareness about her choice to prioritize children’s choices and well-being over her ideas about curriculum or her agenda. Another provider described what she sees as important:

I believe that a child should spend their Early Childhood years in a home environment. It has been my experience with children, that a child, by the time they reach school age, is tired of spending all day in a four wall classroom. I believe that a home environment, is an advantage to the child... As a provider, I see myself as a person, a child can trust, feel safe, loved, and comfortable with.

This provider explicitly contrasts the relationships children can construct in a home with what is possible in a more institutional setting, a common theme among providers. Both statements show awareness of their choices and rationale.

However, cultural research suggests that many of the most powerful drivers of our behavior are taken for granted beliefs and practices (Rogoff, 2003). As has been found in past work (Fleer, Tonyan, Mantilla, & Rivalland, 2008, 2009), only some providers clearly articulated their values. Thus, one aspect of our work was to read the transcripts sensitively to see different indicators of their cultural models. For example, we saw evidence of one provider, Ynez,¹ valuing love, togetherness, and fun in a wide variety of ways that can not be captured in just one quote or aspect of her work. Ynez is really struggling to make ends meet in the current policy climate, but one way she showed the importance of love, togetherness, and fun in work is reflected in her description of the rewards of her very demanding work (emphasis added):

Uhhmmm the rewards are when your child that was here three years ago and they call you that they want to come say hi to you its like “Oh My God.” Like the other day I had this child that stop coming uhhh 2 years ago she was here for 5 years and now she’s big and she... The mom, call me, “Oh I’m sorry that I’m calling you but my daughter is always bugging me that she wants to come and say hi to you.” I say, “Please bring her let her stay for one day I want to see your daughter too.” And **we talk about so many memories, the times and all those things** like, “oh my child tell me about this,” and **I feel really, really good**. Like I was talking to my husband about it and say I feel so good that you know **I know those children have these memories about me and it’s a good memory you know. I put something good on them** because if they wanna come to see me is **because they have something good about me**. That’s the reward.

Thus, this provider, like many others whose interviews included similar quotes, shows the presence of a cultural model of love, togetherness, and fun by seeing relationships with children among the rewards of her work. The enduring relationships she has constructed as

¹ All names used in this paper are pseudonyms.

well as her awareness of the effects of those relationships on children suggest that she sees the effect of her values in children's development. Further, when describing photographs of her daily life, many times she chose activities that involved seeing the children's interests and taking pride and joy in their choices. Many of her statements can be seen as demonstrating a value for togetherness through pride she takes when children's choices reflect things they do together (emphasis added):

I took this picture because ah she was telling me that she was making some tortilla [laugh] and at home at home they don't eat tortillas. ...I give them some ah dough to make tortillas and she..she always wants to make tortilla...and because at right here I always give them tortillas so the mom would tell me like oh when we go to the store she always want tortillas. So she has to buy tortillas for home...so when she was telling me she was making tortillas when she's little [laugh] and I took the picture because ah I think it was good to ah let you know that ah you know other ethnics are able to get something from other ah cultures..you know like her **she's learning to eat tortillas even though at home they don't eat tortillas. Ah she was making exactly tortillas.** [laugh] some..some kids don't make tortillas they just play around or stick it around but she really like to make tortillas because we come over here to the stove and we actually make the tortillas...in a little thing, you know, and they make the tortillas **and sometimes they take it home.**

Interviewer: ...alright so um is this something that you integrate fairly often into...

Provider: Yeah..really often.....they actually like to make the tortillas and eat it like if we're going to I'm going to cook some chicken soup and they like to eat it with tortillas they ask me earlier they want to make tortillas...**and they make their own size tortillas you know and they..they love to eat the tortillas...**

Notice that in this quote, the provider is looking to see that the child has learned to make tortillas (i.e., "she was making exactly tortillas... some kids don't make tortillas), and this provider seems to take pride that, despite ethnic differences, this girl brings home things she learned from a typical activity in the child care.

Other activities Ynez chose to photograph and describe for us more explicitly focused on togetherness and relationships. The following example could be described as a learning activity, but she noticed and described more about togetherness than about what

children learned (emphasis added):

Ah this picture is like um at this time they were playing outside and um my helper didn't come this time ah so I asked my mom to come and help me and so she was teaching them um a lot of you know things in Spanish and they were so excited and she was calling them **they were calling her grandma** [laugh]. So she was like **she was really excited playing with them** and they were like at the first time you know they got **so much in touch with her** and that's why I took the picture [laugh] and they were really, really **happy playing** with her [laugh]

Thus, Ynez' transcripts showed an emphasis on valuing, enacting and seeing the effects of love, togetherness and/or belonging, and fun.

Interestingly, although many providers showed signs of this cultural model, I was surprised that few of these providers explicitly emphasized the continuity of relationships that are possible in family child care settings where children spend long periods of time with a small group of peers and a small number of adults. There is less turnover among staff in family child care, children are not "aged out" from one classroom to the next. Many programs have siblings together. Indeed some research suggests that children learn valuable skills from the mixed-age interactions of family child care. All of these factors create possibilities in family child care settings to encourage relationships that require extra effort in centers and yet providers do not often seem to see or articulate that strength of their own setting.

Valuing, enacting or seeing. Other providers show signs of valuing having fun and being together, but there are indications that other aspects of work may take priority over or interfere with the ability to enact this belief. There were two common ways we saw this in our sample. One group of providers prioritized other goals (e.g., safety or school readiness) *over* love, affection, and fun. For example, a provider may mention fun frequently throughout the interview, but fun is described as more of a way to help children *learn or get tasks done* (e.g., "*They do it, we picking up, helping us out, but we pretending we're vacuum cleaners, picking up all the toys. So we doing that with music, and movement and we're cleaning (laughs)... So that's how we do it, we integrate the work with the fun and if I'm cooking because I'm doing, I'm making something else, so the kids want to help*"). A

second group of providers seemed too overwhelmed by other responsibilities to ensure that this belief was enacted. Given the complexity of running a small business in one's home, it is not too surprising that some providers may *want* children to feel loved and have fun but take a more supervisory/director-like role and cannot describe specific examples of how this is enacted on a daily basis even when prompted. For example, one provider described the administrative tasks that take her away from activities with the children:

I know that we try to do primary care with certain children and works- works sometimes but it's really hard because we want to be there like for everybody. Not just be [um] focused just on, you know, Billy, Joey and Sammy. Because there will be times when I'm not going to be available for my primary kids and I want [girl] to be available so we try to make ourselves available for it. Especially now, I've recently changed my position. I was actually working everyday all the time and I had to step back and do more administrative work. It's different 'cuz I have my own family and then I have to make sure all the safety things and [um] all the bill are paid and it was getting to the point where on the weekends I was working. And I wasn't being with my family so I had to really decide either I'm going to hire someone to do all my billing or I'm gonna do it and still work a few hours throughout the day. Because it gets really challenging [short pause] and stressful.

Similarly, a provider who states many times that love and fun are important, but then describes daily activities purely in terms of tasks and other features may value this aspect of work, may not be *seeing* this aspect in daily life:

Well they were told they were to take turns because they were trying to climb one another [UI] so they were told they would have to take turns so one could slide at a time so they could slide down into the pool and they would not get hurt. And then they got the water hose since there all children and there were a lot playing with the water hose so you sit there too and spray it around making sure, because every time they slide down the water splats splashes out of the pool, so we make sure they have plenty of water in there. So they would just climb up and down and up on the top there's a sprayer that they like to stay there and get all sprayed out with the water.

This provider describes practical (e.g., “the water ...splashes out of the pool”) and safety

(e.g., “they would not get hurt”) aspects of the activity.

Not valuing, enacting, or prioritizing love, affection and togetherness as a valued goal in and of itself. For some providers, we have little indication that the provider believes in or enacts love, affection, being together, and fun *as valued aspects of their work in their own right*. If love, affection, being together, and fun are mentioned, they are mentioned sporadically or only as a means to another end. For example, a provider may mention these a few times, but usually in the context of describing how she achieves other goals, as exemplified in the following quote (emphasis added):

Um so they sign in, put their homework in the box put their things in the cubby, and we have free time. Um, because **we want to the kids excited to be here and if I kinda just put them in to, to do what I want then they’re not gong to be happy about being here.** So I, and I want them to be **an easy transition from home to child care** so, its free time, I usually put things out on the table that we’re going to, ya know, do that day and um I rotate that you know probably da-on a daily basis of what the teacher initiated um, project is. And usually these two tables here, you know one will be set up here one will be set up here and-and **they’re welcome to join.** Usually have my AM assistant on one table and then I’m at the other table. ... Okay so, so we’re here at these two tables usually we’re-re-we-in this activity in this room specifically. Each one has a name, this one’s the writing room. And so um, we’re in this room and **if they want to join us in the act-activity they can, if not they’re welcome to do-to do what they like.** In this room, its free play. And we do that for probably about thirty to forty minutes depending on how um, interested they are in this room and then after that we ring the bell cause I like to use bells as **getting they’re attention,** I actually gave them a five minute verbal you know, warning that I’m going to ring the bell just to try and **get them prepped,** that I’m going to be ringing the bell. So I will, I will do that. And ill say “oh there’s five more minutes” and I will ring the bell and then um, its time for clean up so we help each other clean up, I help out for cleaning up also just so they can see, role playing, they can see that I’m helping out too instead of working, you know, cleaning the room up. (Nadia)

This provider may value love, affection, and fun, but this excerpt suggests that she prioritizes other aspects of her work above fun and, instead, uses fun in a number of ways to help children want to do things *she* sees as important for them. The provider herself

describes a disjuncture between home and child care that she (and her staff, presumably) are instrumental in creating (e.g., “an easy transition from home to child care,” “getting their attention, “get them prepped”) and between free time and the instructional activities that will come next. She also uses a fair bit of language to suggest that children are welcome to “join” the activities that *she* has prepared. This teacher is not using the language of togetherness in the same way as the other teachers and we have little evidence throughout her interviews that she is opening and creating spaces for children to feel any deep sense of belonging or construct relationships as a goal in and of itself. Instead, fun, togetherness, belonging and love, if valued, enacted, or seen, seem to be desired by-products or ingredients for another goal or purpose.

School Readiness

A second cultural model we identified involves preparing children for school and seeing changes in what children know and can do as related to school readiness. This can include literacy and numeracy as well as social and emotional development (e.g., taking turns, waiting in line), but the focus is on being ready for school. This can include either organizing traditional activities where a teacher instructs (e.g., circle time or “learning time”) or embedding learning throughout the day and into other activities (e.g., believing that children learn through play and so providing lots of opportunities for exploration and child-led play).

Valuing, enacting, and seeing. Some providers articulate a value for school readiness, enact that value through numerous activities that are embedded into the daily routine, and shows signs of actually seeing changes in children’s learning. These can be traditional school-like, teacher-directed activities or this can reflect a focus on seeing learning in children’s self-directed activity. They have multiple ways and times of the day that are organized for the purpose of preparing children for success in school. Some providers may even hire additional staff in order to provide further education outside the provider’s realm of experience. These providers are often rewarded by changes in what children know or can do that result from their participation in activities (e.g., “*their fine motor skills are so much better when they start school if they’ve had preschool. Uh, it just-it just helps them you know. They don’t have to spend uh the first couple months learning*”).

the letters and numbers, they don't have to struggle over how to write their name, they already know. So. Um, it's one of the things that I feel is the biggest benefit of-of day care").

Some providers operate a home-based preschool through the Los Angeles Universal Preschool program (LAUP). A common configuration is to serve two groups of children who attend only part-day programs. As Nadia describes below, she sees her credentials and her structure as aiding her goal of providing an educational experience (emphasis added):

I do run it primarily as a preschool. I currently don't have any infants at this time but um, in the past I have had infants. But I find it easier when I have just a group of the same aged children. So if were to have all toddlers it would be easier, **If I have all um preschool aged children its easier**, and at this time I have- I do have all preschool aged children and currently I have a group of ten in the morning and I do shifts. I currently have a group in the morning and I have a group in the afternoon... I am a credentialed um site supervisor and the teacher. So and the parents do know that so they do know **I run the-the the facility as it were uh preparation for kindergarten.**

In other parts of her interview, she describes her focus on educational curriculum:

I—I do use a couple of curriculums, there isn't one specific one that I love so I use a variety of curriculums, I use a creative curriculum, I use scholastic, and through out the years, ive been doing this for eight years now and what I've done I've created like my own curriculum with all these other curriculums. So I have had binders where, like for example if we're going to be talking about the body that week. So I have you know, clear sheets where I put from different areas of where I found I've made copies and I put everything that has to do with the body in that binder. Um, and whether its like a hand out for the parents or, a cutting assignment for them its all in that one space so when I put it on the calendar as a topic I go and get photo copies of it and um, look at it at binder. Well I have, I have I probably have a total of, like maybe, twenty-five binders or so, of different themes and topics.

Thus, she is reflecting on an evaluating the activities she plans for educational purposes. She describes a variety of learning materials and activities inside:

the receiving room has the cubbies, it has the sign in and out sheet, it has the bulletin board with parent information, it has pictures, um activities that we do, it has their names. Um, lined up with where they need to be sitting on the rug, it has several um, um, shelves with books and toys and puzzles and it has a small table, and a large rug and so we go into the-the receiving room and we-and the kids look at their name it see what's where they need to be seated because again it's a different logo now, or a different sticker, so they go into the um, and it matches the sticker with the rug and the sticker next to their name matches. And so they go in and sit at that location on the rug and then um, we go over if they return their assignment that they do with their parent and they get a star for that and then we have music together. We usually sing a song and and sometimes we'll ask them if they have a request, once they become familiar with the program or with the songs and um, if not if its in the beginning of the of the of the year cause usually the September is when we have a lot of new kids. Um, I'll-I'll-I'll pick the song and then we'll sing it together and then I'll have them come-come up to the board and write certain things or you know, its just-its just a variety of things sometimes we'll read a book, or whatever what we're doing that day. And after that um, I'll give them short assignment to do sometime of a cutting assignment ya know, cutting and pasting, um, or maybe its um, coloring something like that. And they come over to this room, well we do the flag salute and they come over to this room which is the writing room and they do that assignment.

Thus, she describes herself as organizing the space for, planning for, and assessing children's learning and school readiness in terms of content as well as routines and dispositions. Furthermore, she also describes a variety of learning materials and activities outside:

[the children] help us prepare the, the outdoor area so they we have a sand box so we- they help open up the sand box and they help put water in the water table and we also rotate what we put in the water table. We have two water tables so maybe today they put out foam on one table and the other one had um, squirting animals and the other table. And we try to not combine them because some kids prefer just to do one thing and then do the other thing.

She describes an orientation for parents and children, homework, cubbies, and explicitly

describes learning goals for children during almost every activity of the day, from snacks, waiting and transitions, to arrivals and departures. Thus, this provider values, enacts, and sees children's learning as related to school readiness throughout her day.

Interestingly, this provider is one of the providers who prioritizes school readiness *over* love, affection, and togetherness (i.e., coded as “values, enacts and sees school readiness,” but coded as “does not value, enact, or see love, affection and togetherness”). Although she describes wanting children to be “excited to be here,” she has many systems in place to ensure that children learn with few means of ensuring that each child feels loved or a sense of belonging as a valued goal in and of itself. Of course, this was not the only way that providers articulated a cultural model of school readiness. Below, I will discuss another example of a provider who values, enacts, and sees both of these cultural models.

Valuing, enacting or seeing. Some providers indicate that they value school readiness, but it is not clear that this value is enacted or that the provider sees what children learn. A provider moderate on this dimension either talks about school readiness throughout the interview or has at least some time each day where they prepare children for success in school. There may be factors that impede the providers' ability to enact this value (e.g., many part-time children or variable hours care mean that the provider has a hard time organizing a predictable daily routine that includes some focus on learning, but the provider talks about learning as being very important). Moira, a provider who has a relatively comfortable economic situation among our child care providers by enlisting the help of her mother and a network of helpers as well as paid specialty teachers, describes a variety of ways that she values school readiness:

[A]fter we have breakfast [um] those 15, 20 minutes we do have circle time where we, we all sit down in a circle and we say good morning to everybody and, you know, anybody want to share something, something that happened. Usually a kid will share about something about my sister did this or whatever happens. [Um] then we do the calendar, the days of the week. [Um] we do the days of the week in both in English and in Spanish and we do the alphabet as well. We review the alphabet with [um] [um] depending on what the theme is that month of activities [um] we'll talk about whatever that issue is like a last month we talked about [um] animals and showed them pictures about certain animals, to talk to us what they know about these animals and how they

behave or how do they walk and that itself becomes or we'll do a, a there's this one song that's like a Simon says style like you dance and you kind of have to freeze and anything that has to do with them just 'cuz they have to release that energy, then we go brush teeth.

Similarly, this provider includes a music teacher who comes twice per week, and describes the value the music teacher brings:

Well she comes umm all the kids you know she does the good morning song for everybody. She includes everybody's names and everybody to include everybody. Umm there's a lot of dancing going on, and she brings instruments, and she I mean all kinds of instruments and encourages them to play with them a lot, but I like the component of just inviting music. I mean we have music here all the time, but in this case she's teaching them a lot of songs like umm like nursery rhymes that are in Spanish. That they would have never been exposed to because you know maybe because of cultural um components, but I think that's the biggest thing. I want to expose them to a different culture um than their own and it's a little bit of who we are and I encourage that with the parents to let them because of the language we also let parents know that we talk another language here so that they, and they're so happy about that because they want their children to understand another language so I think the cultural aspect and just the music part of it is important.

This provider is doing many things to show a value for and even enacting a cultural model of school readiness. However, it is not clear that she looks for and sees changes in school readiness that may result from the organization of care. Further, it may very well be the network of people involved who make it harder to ensure that each child is experiencing what this provider values because different people are involved in different tasks:

Interviewer: So, during circle time do you and your assistants sit down with them?

Provider: [Uh] it's usually it's [um] we rotate. One of my assistants and or myself will rotate. Depending on how- what what's going on as far as my administrative stuff that I have to do. [Um] we will rotate. [Um] and if I'm there then the other ones in the kitchen cleaning up and the other one's doing again the diaper- diaper change or she's interacting with the, the smallest the babies to infants. [Um] so there's certain days

when the babies are here and for sure I'm there because we'll need that person to be focused just on the babies while the other persons with the other kids and the other one's finishing up cleaning.

Like a center director, this provider must rely on others to ensure that her values are enacted and affect children in the ways she values.

By contrast, many of the teachers who value, enact, *and* see school readiness took photographs of activities that included learning and school readiness and when describing the photos they described features of the photos that showed an awareness of what children were learning from the activities. Indeed, Ynez, above, can be contrasted with Moira because Ynez described homework that children completed three times each week to be able to see changes in their learning. Wendy, below, also provides a contrast with Moira because she describes the domains of children's development that she is looking to see changing. Thus, Moira represents an important aspect of school readiness highlighted by Anne Edwards(2010): some early childhood professionals may benefit from additional support to be able to ensure that *learning* or changes in capacities and understandings are taking place. Moira herself commented on this, when asked what she would change in her daily routine:

I would like to integrate more activities. [um] I thought of the idea of hiring a part-time preschool teacher. I've been playing with that idea for a while [um] but then again it comes into the factor of [um] first would be that I would have to raise the rates to make that [um] to be able to com- make that accommodation and I don't like to do that because already parents are already struggling in general with paying everything and the lea- the least I can- I mean I try to be as fair as possible and reasonable [um], you know, I don't want to have to raise the rate. And the second challenge is that finding a preschool teacher who's willing to come for 3 hours 2 days a week or 3 days a week [um] and I'm happy to provide all the, you know, the supplies and all that. But again, you know, preschool teachers don't come very cheap and I don't want to get a, you know, I don't want to choose a teacher because, 'oh she's cheap,' rather I want to get a quality teacher. [Um] so, it's kind of like a challenge but I see that happening in the future. [Um] but I just have to figure out how I'm gonna do it as far as balancing it with the rates and how many children I have. I mean in order for me to do that I probably

have to have 14 children and I'm not willing to do that because it really is a lot of work. [Um] and that's an additional person and that means additional work for me too because then I have additional files and additional food and again it's - it all is kind of inter-connected.

Importantly, I do not want to be seen as criticizing Moira's work. Indeed, her leadership, passion, and skill in bringing together a wonderful team of help are evident throughout her interview. Nonetheless, her interview suggests that the field of early childhood could better support her to reach the goals that *she herself* articulates.

Not valuing, enacting, or seeing school readiness as a valued goal in and of itself.

For some providers, we have little or no evidence that they emphasize school readiness for children. They may not have a daily routine that incorporates other activities over those that might prepare children for school. They may be overwhelmed by the economic instability or other aspects of their work. They may focus on other goals like safety or the complexity of managing a small business in their home with their own small children and multiple employees.

Overlapping Cultural Models

Although some providers' statements reflected only one of the two cultural models described above in ways that reflected prioritizing just one of these two cultural models, other providers seemed to integrate or move between both cultural models. One provider, Ynez, was described above as an example of a provider who values, enacts *and* sees love, fun, and togetherness as a cultural model. However, the photographs she shared with us included rich examples of both cultural models. As described above she seemed to be proud of and take joy in seeing a child incorporate making tortillas – something shared with her, not learned at home – into her play. Similarly, she emphasized the togetherness rather than what children were learning when describing the children interacting with her mother and calling her mother grandma. Nonetheless, she also described a number of enriching and learning activities. The following excerpt shows a group activity organized in a school-like way:

This is the area where we do the circle time over here on top there's the letters and we review the letters everyday or we talk about colors every week we choose like a color, a letter and we talk about it or we do the calendar and...also right here is the behavior if a kid is behaving really good they going to get a prize at the end of the month if they're behaving bad so they..they get warning like oh I'm behaving bad so I have to go to the clown so I can get a prize at the end of the month...so ah we do a lot of stuff in this area.

Similarly, the following excerpt describes a photo she took of children playing with a variety of materials that she linked to the development of imagination.

Those are ah legos um those are ah um.....like foam and so if they built things with the foam comes in the different shapes and this is to make a like a train, cars, ah wooden cars and those are things to build also..it's plastic and they come in different shapes also....and let me see those are little stubs to build also um like those are ah...let me see [laugh] there's different things to build you know...that's what it is.[when asked why she chose that picture to share with us]...**I think it's important to have this area in a daycare because they ah....they can build things...using their imagination.** (emphasis added)

Thus, Ynez' interviews showed that she valued, enacted, and looked to ensure children were experiencing love, affection, and fun *as well as* school readiness. Elsewhere in her interview, she discussed how she attributes the success of her activities to her ongoing participation in professional development activities. Something she finds increasingly hard to do in the context of severe budget cuts in the California.

One particularly articulate provider, Wendy, has many years of experience as a provider, an advocate, and community organizer, also has experience assessing others using the Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale (FCCERS), and articulated how she was using the FCCERS as a tool to mediate her action – in this case organizing the space of her living room to function like a developmentally appropriate child care:

Oh, I.. I really struggle to try to make sure that I had everything that I needed to have to, to meet the family child care environmental rating standards. So I wanted to make sure that I had a block here, by either a table or.. that was is a protected space. ...And-

an the block area has its-its accessories right, right with it. You know, and they have their-their have their people, they have cars and vehicles, and they have some street signs, so its... clear to th- and blocks, block people. So it's clear to them that they can use the.. the blocks and and the accessories together. [um].. recently I moved some more of the infant toddler things over to this area and.. put some of my pre-my preschool things more in-in, ya know, in the area that would be accessible to everybody and then I start moving some-some of my preschool [um], appropriate things that would not necessarily, that wouldn't be appropriate for the infants and toddlers over to the corner where I'm gonna need to make it so that my preschoolers can get into it, and my infants and toddlers can't. This is a challenge. I struggle everyday, how am I going to do it this time...I use play yard pieces, ugh but that's not totally what I want cause I want them to be-I don't want to have to lift them in and I don't want to have to help them in. I want them to be able to get in whenever they want. So I'm thinking "hmm I wonder if I had a combination lock or had one two three, it might be able to do that. How would I do that?" So I'm still just struggling with how can I make it, so that they can get in there anytime they want and then ill move a table over here and they'll be able to do their preschool things whenever they want and have my infants and toddlers safe from-from objects that would be choke-able.

Her statements are probably the most articulate and clear reflections of a provider using "quality" as defined by the Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale as a tool to mediate activity. However, because this was not a commonly articulated view, we grouped her together under "school readiness." Her statements also show the challenges facing family child care providers serving children of many ages who try to meet those standards.

Another excerpt from Wendy's interview shows how she is also looking for and valuing love, affection, and fun for their own sake:

Well, sometimes they're looking, they're more interested in finding worms and, and sow bugs but they also do look for yes-yes especially strawberries. When Isaac comes in the morning he wants to go for a strawberry hunt. His treat is that you know, that I'll wash up a couple of ones that he manages to find and he can eat 'em right, you know, then in the morning. I mean it couldn't be any fresher. And he-and red happens to be his favorite color, so he's so cute. "Nanny it's a red one, it's a red one! This ones

ready, it's ready! This one is ready!" And he is running over, you know, and I've got 'em trained to let me pick 'em or else they might pull the plant up. And their enthusiasm, so, he's excited! And when they see a big zucchini, the kids get such a big kick out of size. When those zucchinis are big they go, "Oh nanny it's a big one! Look at this one and how big it is!" And they fall in love with it. They want to carry it like a baby, you know, and, heaven help me if I don't have enough for each one of them to carry. Cause they want to carry this around! You know, and they fed them on the table and there are practically fighting over who can touch it. They want to feel it, they want to look at it, so, it's, you know, I put it right on the table, something they-they're enjoying looking at this zucchini and feeling it. More then they're going to enjoy eating this particular vegetable. But, they get such a kick out of how big they get that I grow it any way. And, I figured out a few ways of how I can get them to eat zucchini.

Thus, Wendy is able to strive for, enact, and see enthusiasm and joy even while always keeping in mind how to help facilitate her ideas of healthy development, in this case – how to “get them to eat zucchini.”

Conclusions

We have been able to articulate two cultural models that reflect shared, often widely held ideas about how to organize family child care. However, providers varied in the ability to articulate their cultural models as well as in the congruence between stated beliefs, their enacted and described daily routines, and looking to see whether children demonstrated the effects of these activities. Thus, our results suggest that cultural models can contain identifiable shared elements, but that individuals appropriate and enact these shared cultural models in different ways. Taken together, our results show at least some of the ways that cultural models may mediate family child care providers' daily interactions with children through what they see as desired and possible in a day.

Efforts to document the cultural models that underlie providers' descriptions of their work can serve a number of functions in the field. CHAT suggests that efforts to help providers better articulate and enact what they believe or efforts to help providers recognize tensions among their beliefs and actions could be a powerful site for change and professional development (A. Edwards, 2010). Such work could also help providers in

their daily life: many providers struggle to explain to prospective parents why a family child care home might be right for a child or how the care provided in a family child care home might differ from that provided in a center. In the context of much public discourse stressing the importance of high quality center-based care despite many parents' desire for home-like care, particularly for young children, providers who are able to articulate the strengths of home-based care may be better able to help parents find the right fit for their child. Further, drawing from research that examines how families respond to early intervention efforts as a model suggest professional developments may need to help providers establish or maintain a daily routine that fits with personal meaning before it will result in long-term changes in practice or dispositions. Thus, efforts to provide professional development for family child care providers may be most successful when they help providers reflect on, articulate, enact, and assess the results desired in their own cultural models.

As expected, the larger tensions in the field between discourses of early childhood care and education are visible in these providers' ideas about daily life. However, even providers who prioritize being together, feeling love and affection, and having fun sometimes also strive toward school readiness. Indeed, in some ways, providers who were more connected to the field of early childhood education seemed to separate these two more than providers who were less involved in the fields. We need more research to understand diverse cultural models in early childhood as well as the processes, including education and professional development, through which providers adopt, adapt, appropriate, or reject cultural models. In particular, research that links observations of daily routine activities with interviews will allow us to better understand object-mediated action, but photo-stimulated interviews may also provide a less-expensive means to begin to explore the connections between what people do and think.

The cultural-historical setting in Los Angeles, of course, provides a backdrop for the tension that exists between these two cultural models. The state of California has dramatically cut subsidies to providers and professional development options while specific programs for some groups of providers have continued to exist when funded through particular grants. This may be creating real disparities in the opportunities providers have for professional development and support. Indeed, our results suggest that it is even

creating disparities in enrollment. For example, some providers have chosen to participate in a universal pre-school program funded by a local initiative, Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP). This program provides some economic support, but constrains autonomy and is interpreted as rewarding a school readiness model. At a recent reception we held for these providers, a heated exchange involved whether one was operating a “day care” or a “preschool” and whether participation in the LAUP program provided a signifier of status. Some providers believed strongly that it did whereas others believed that they could run a program of integrity without such a signifier. A quote from our interviews also speaks to this tension and context:

Or let's say this provider is open a day care and uhmm and you go to the day care and you don't see anything, you know. You just see a sofa and a TV there, and that's the day care. And [government agency] paying the same amount to this provider and the same amount to me that I spend not only money, but a lot of work thinking what activities I'm gonna give to the children. Because I always thinking, “Okay what kinda activities I'm gonna do this month, how am I gonna develop the activities, and what things I need for those activities.” So I'm gonna spend money on that and I'm gonna spend my time in there. So comparing myself I'm not saying that I'm better than anybody but as you can see I do spend money on, on things and each thing is thinking that how's gonna help this child. And I have been in some day care's providers home and they only have the TV and sofa and three books and a doll and a little kitchen for them. That's it. You know they don't spend money they don't spend time I don't see any papers for them to write I don't see any pencils there and they are paying the same amount of money to them and to us, you know. And that's like I'm like ahmm should I still working in this or should I spend money doing this? If they are gonna pay me the same I don't need to buy anymore books I don't need to spend my time planning activities, you know. Probably they're not aware of that, probably they haven't been in different day cares to see, “Oooh, okay. This provider is spending not only time but money you know, effort going to school.” Because as soon as you walk to one place you can see like ohh this person is putting a lot of working in this comparing to this person you know. So hopefully one day they can see that. (Ynez)

Ynez' frustration provides an articulate reminder that the struggles the providers face have real political implications and do not operate in a vacuum. Although the cultural models

we identified are not mutually exclusive, providers' time and resources are limited. Thus, when policy and political structures incentivize some cultural models over others, they can either drive some providers to dislike their work or change their daily activities or space in ways that do not fit their ideals of how care should be organized. Indeed, our experiences with these providers suggest that current efforts to improve "quality" by using the standardized measure of the Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale for assessment and even for providing stepped levels of funding that vary according to scores on "quality" is already leading some providers to prioritize materials and environmental features over togetherness. For example, Wendy, has resolves this tension in a creative way: she explicitly strives for "quality" as defined by the FCCERS and she has managed to reduce the complexity of her program by taking children on subsidies (thus eliminating negotiations with parents over fees, but also providing minimal economic income), by refusing to participate in any program that takes her time away from the children, and by engaging in a daily struggle to balance the complex tensions at play in her work. Efforts to articulate alternative and diverse cultural models as well as levels of achieving those diverse goals for human development can contribute to creating a better understanding of the diversity of contexts adults create and maintain for children.

References

- Bjork, Christopher. (2009). Preschool in three cultures revisited: Moderated discussion. *Comparative Education Review*, 53, 259-283.
- Brownlee, J., Berthelsen, D., & Segaran, N. (2009). Childcare workers' and centre directors' beliefs about infant childcare quality and professional training. *Early Child Development and Care*, 179(4), 453-475. doi: 10.1080/03004430701217688
- Dahlberg, Gunilla, Moss, Peter, & Pence, Alan R. (1999). *Beyond quality in early childhood education and care: Postmodern perspectives*. London, UK: Falmer Press.
- Doherty, Gillian, Lero, Donna S., Goelman, Hillel, Tougas, Jocelyne, & LaGrange, Annette. (2000). Caring and learning environments: quality in regulated family

child care across Canada. Guelph, Ontario, Canada: Centre for Families, Work and Well-Being, University of Guelph, Ontario.

Edwards, Anne. (2010). *Being an expert professional practitioner: The relational turn in expertise*. Dordrecht: Springer.

Edwards, Carolyn P., & Bloch, Marianne. (2010). The Whitings' concepts of culture and how they have fared in contemporary psychology and anthropology. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 41*, 485-498. doi: 10.1177/0022022110362566

Fleer, Marilyn, Tonyan, Holli A. , Mantilla, Ana C., & Rivalland, Corine M. P. (2008). Play and learning in Australia. In I. Pramling-Samuelsson & M. Fleer (Eds.), *Play and learning in early childhood settings: International perspectives*. New York: Springer.

Fleer, Marilyn, Tonyan, Holli A. , Mantilla, Ana C., & Rivalland, Corine M. P. (2009). A cultural-historical analysis of play as an activity setting in early childhood education: Views from research and from teachers. In M. Fleer, M. Hedegaard & J. Tudge (Eds.), *Childhood studies and the impact of globalization: Policies and practices at global and local levels*. New York and London: Routledge.

Gallimore, Ronald, Goldenberg, Claude N., & Weisner, Thomas S. (1993). The social construction and subjective reality of activity settings: Implications for community psychology. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 21*, 537-559.

Gallimore, Ronald, & Lopez, Edward M. (2002). Everyday routines, human agency, and ecocultural context: Construction and maintenance of individual habits. *The Occupational Therapy Journal of Research, 22*, 705-775.

Howes, Carollee. (2010). *Culture and child development in early childhood programs: Practices for quality education and care*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Morrissey, Taryn. (2007). Family child care in the United States *Reviews of Research* (pp. 1-28): Child Care & Early Education Research Connections.

Owen, Sue. (2000). Assessing quality in childminding. *Children and Society, 14*, 147-153.

- Rogoff, Barbara. (1995). Observing sociocultural activity on three planes: Participatory appropriation, guided participation, and apprenticeship. In J. V. Wertsch, A. Alvarez & P. del Rio (Eds.), *Sociocultural studies of mind* (pp. 139-164). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Rogoff, Barbara. (2003). *The cultural nature of human development*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Rogoff, Barbara. (2009, April). *Designing research scenarios for cultural comparison*. In C. S. Tamis-LeMonda (Chair), *Methodological approaches to the study of culture*. . Paper presented at the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Denver, CO.
- Rogoff, Barbara, Mistry, J., Göncü, A., & Mosier, C. E. (1993). Guided participation in cultural activity by toddlers and caregivers. *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development*, 58(serial No. 236), i+iii+v-vi+1-179.
- Rogoff, Barbara, Moore, L., Najafi, B., Dexter, A., Correa-Chávez, M., & Solís, J. (2007). Children's development of cultural repertoires through participation in everyday routines and practices. In J. Grusec & P. Hastings (Eds.), *Handbook of Socialization* (pp. 490-515). New York, NY: Guilford.
- The Ecocultural Scale Project. (1997). *The Ecocultural Family Interview Manual*. UCLA Sociobehavioral Group. Los Angeles, CA.
- Tobin, Joseph J., Hsueh, Y., & Karasawa, Mayumi. (2011). *Preschool in Three Cultures Revisited: China, Japan, and the United States*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Tobin, Joseph J., Wu, D., & Davidson, D. (1989). *Preschool in Three Cultures*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Tonyan, Holli A., & Howes, Carollee. (2003). Exploring patterns in time children spend in a variety of child care activities: Associations with environmental quality, ethnicity, and gender. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 18, 121-142.
- Tonyan, Holli A., Mamikonian, Ani, & Chien, Dorothy. (in press). Do they practice what they preach? An Ecocultural, multidimensional, group-based examination of the

relationship between beliefs and behaviours among child care providers. *Early Child Development and Care*.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Weisner, Thomas S. (1997). The ecocultural project of human development: Why ethnography and its findings matter. *Ethos*, 25, 177-190.

Weisner, Thomas S. (2002). Ecocultural understanding of children's developmental pathways. *Human Development*, 45, 275-281.

Wertsch, James V. (1984) The zone of proximal development: Some conceptual issues. *Vol. 23. Children's learning in the "zone of proximal development"* (pp. 7-18). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Woodhead, Martin. (1998). 'Quality' in early childhood programmes – a contextually appropriate approach. *International Journal of Early Years Education*, 6, 5-17.

Yoshikawa, Hirokazu, Weisner, Thomas S., Kalil, Ariel, & Way, Niobe. (2008). Mixing qualitative and quantitative research in developmental sciences: Uses and methodological choices. *Developmental Psychology*, 44, 344-354.

Acknowledgements

This research would not have been possible without the collaboration of Jennifer Romack; the participation of the family child care providers; the dedication of Ivanna Ayala, Lidia Corral, and other members of the CSUN Infancy and Early Childhood Lab; the ideas and contributions of Lidia Corral in developing this coding scheme; the mentorship of Thomas S. Weisner and Carrie Saetermoe; the inspiration and guidance of Barbara Rogoff; and funding from Provost Harold Hellenbrand and the CSUN-San Fernando Valley Collective to Reduce Health Disparities (National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities of the National Institutes of Health Research Infrastructure at Minority Institutions Grant # 1P20MD003938)