Refugee children's agency in a host country's Early Childhood Education Program: Ethnographic case study in Berlin, Germany

Ahee Kim

Master's Thesis in Development, Education and International Cooperation
Specialization in Education
Monograph-style
Spring Term 2022
Faculty of Education and Psychology
University of Jyväskylä

ABSTRACT

Kim, Ahee. 2022.Refugee Children's Agency in a Host Country's Early Childhood Education Program: Ethnographic Case Study in Berlin, Germany. Master's Thesis in Development, Education and International Cooperation. University of Jyväskylä. Department of Education. 58 pages.

Despite host countries' efforts to follow international conventions in protecting the childhood of refugee children through quality education, there has hardly been any research conducted on the complex childhoods of refugee children and academic representations of it is scarce. As the rate of forced displacement increases, qualitative studies play an important role in inviting readers to listen to the real stories of refugee children behind the statistics.

In this ethnographic case study, a group of young refugee children (n=9) and teachers (n=4) in an early childhood education program in Berlin, Germany: Frühe Bildung vor Ort (FBO), were observed and interviewed. The researcher, who had previously worked in the FBO, re-visited the group as a participant-observer, collected data, and analyzed it by using qualitative thematic analysis.

The results show that refugee children exercise their agency as they communicate using different tools, personalize their play activities, participate in activities with peers, and adapt to the existing educational systems they are placed into. Moreover, the teachers demonstrated their support for children's agency by leading activities based on children's interests and ideas, engaging in interactive dialogues, caring, and recognizing the importance of parental engagement.

This study challenges a deficit-conception of refugee children as 'not-yet-integrated' and suggests an agency-based perspective for policy makers, educators, frontline workers, or volunteers working with refugee children when organizing educational programs with them.

Keywords: refugee children, agency, ECEC, ethnographic case study, Germany

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

While actively observing and analyzing the "being" of refugee children for this thesis, I examined my own "being" here in Jyväskylä. Especially when writing a thesis for the first time as a novice researcher/master student, I often felt stuck and did not know what kind of questions I could even ask to proceed with the research. Beforehand I thought that agency as an adult meant complete independence, but now I have come to understand that agency in adulthood also grows through relations and interdependence.

Therefore, I sincerely thank my supervisors Eija Aalto and Merja Koivula for being present in every step I took in preparing for and writing my master's thesis. Without their encouragements and thorough feedback, I would not have been able to complete this work. Thank you Eija and Merja for trusting what I had to offer and guiding me gently and patiently through the unknowns. You have exemplified true support for me in exercising my agency.

Secondly, I thank the supportive communities from Berlin: the children of the FBO, the FBO team, Frau Merkel, the staff at the shared accommodation, and WillkommensGemeinde. Vielen Dank für euer offene Willkommen und herzliche Unterstützung während meiner Zeit in Berlin. Ich bedanke mich sehr, dass ich mit euch und von euch lernen durfte.

Next, my deepest gratitude goes to my life-long supporters: my grandparents, Mama Hong, and Papa Kim. Your faith in me and prayers for me have taken me this far. Thank you for supporting me in every chapter of my life. I will always remember to share the love I have received from above. And thank you, Johan, for joining the special crew.

Lastly, I want to remember Maram and her family, who aspired me to fight for quality refugee education. Thank you, friends and families who have been part of my journey, in Finland, Germany, the US, and Korea.

May our recollections of "being" and "becoming" remind us of who we are created to be.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLES

FIGURES

ABBREVIATIONS

CSP:	Culturally sustaining pedagogy
ECEC:	Early Childhood Education and Care
FBO:	Frühe Bildung vor Ort
	(ECE program for refugee children in Berlin, Germany)
IOM:	International Organization for Migration
TA:	Thematic Analysis
UNCRC:	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNHCR:	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF:	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

1 INTRODUCTION

War, persecution, oppression, natural disasters, conflicts, and other complex threats have been displacing the global population without their free will. Framed as a crisis, forced migration has robbed people's homes, jobs, families, and communities, and threatened people's rights to thrive or even survive. In response, both efforts to prevent causes of displacement and to provide accessible support for the displaced population (UNHCR, 2021) have been considered equally important. This study then focuses on the latter; more specifically on how refugee children's childhood may be protected through Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) in a host country despite the marginalization of "adequate health care, nutrition, education and protection from violence (UNICEF, 1989)" in refugeehood (Shacknove, 1985).

Among the 82.4 million displaced population in the world, statistics show between 33-35 million are children under the age of 18, which indicates every third child living outside of their birth country is a refugee (UNHCR, 2021; UNICEF, 2021). Moreover, it is estimated that one million children were born in displacement between 2018-2020 (UNHCR, 2021), without any promise of when the exile ends. Behind this statistics are three group of refugee children: those settling in a host country, those seeking asylum, and those who are internally displaced in their home countries. Regardless of which label they may have, it is commonly acknowledged that their rights according to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (UN General Assembly, 1989) are at risk. Although multilateral governments continue to agree on and implement actions to protect the rights of refugee children by committing to international conventions like the article 22 of UNCRC: "protection of refugee children's rights according to the rights of host countries' children (UN General Assembly, 1989)", and "Sustainable Development Goal 4: to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all (United Nations, 2022);" the efforts of states and non-state actors have not reached all the children to meet their needs (UNESCO, 2021).

To avoid overgeneralization of refugee children's childhood, the term 'refugee children' here will be used to describe educational experience of children resettling in Europe. In general, refugee and migrant children's access to education in Europe has been restricted for children of pre-primary ages (3-5) because some of the national legislation do not have pre-primary education as compulsory education (UNHCR et al., 2019). Nevertheless, even when they have access to compulsory education in a host country, it is reported that refugee children face initial underperformance, stereotypes, prejudice, or discrimination (UNESCO, 2019).

In such reality, support for refugee children has been playing an important role. For example, studies like Harju & Åkerblom (2020) and Morland & Levine (2016) corroborate that spaces and services to support young refugee children's learning and settlement have posed positive results to their learning and development. Also, it is reported that the performances of refugee children improve over time with adequate support (UNHCR et al., 2019).

This highlights the importance of support to refugee children. Nevertheless, the lack of quantitative data availability and the absence of coherent data collection methods remain as challenges in response to the educational needs of refugee children (UNHCR, et al., 2019). Moreover, the efforts to unpack the complex childhood of refugee children from qualitative studies have been limited. Therefore, whilst many qualitative studies explore teachers' perspectives in education for refugee children (Gerokosta, 2017; Harju & Åkerblom, 2020; Maher & Smith, 2014; McDevitt, 2021), this qualitative study explores refugee children in a host country's early childhood educational setting and their interactions with peers and teachers through the lens of agency.

This ethnographic case study attempts to add empirical knowledge to the current Childhood Studies, by observing the 'being' of refugee children (n=9, aged 3-6 years) in an early childhood education setting (FBO) in Berlin, Germany. In addition, semi-structured interviews with teachers (n=4) after the observation suggest how teachers and adults may be aware of their agency and support their "becoming." This study challenges a deficit-conception of refugee children as "not-yet-integrated" and suggests an agency-based perspective for educators,

frontline workers, or volunteers working with refugee children when organizing educational programs with them.

The next section explores the term refugee children and their childhood, which is followed by the how the concept of children's agency influences approaches to both childhood studies and ECEC.

1.1 Refugee children and their childhood

Before going further, let's take a closer look at the term *refugee children*. The term used in this paper is narrowed down to describe children settling in host countries, specifically in Europe. Moreovoer, among accompanied, unaccompanied, and separated refugee children (UNHCR et al., 2020), the study observes a group of accompanied refugee children living in shared accommodation. Notably, "refugee" may display people's current legal status in the residing country, but the generalization of refugees dismisses the complexity and multidimensional experiences they must go through to flee and resettle (Ward & Warren, 2020). In addition, Berlin Senate (2018, p.12) states:

> "Refugees are not a homogenous group. On the contrary, their asylum and residence situations vary just as greatly as their individual lives and the social factors that define their needs, skills, and potential: nationality, ethnicity, sex, physical or mental disability, age, marital status, academic background, social status/milieu, and sexual identity."

Shacknove (1985) describes *refugeehood* as an absence of state protection to decrease citizens' vulnerabilities and needs, where people also experience insecurity or even fear that the government will not meet the recourse. This implies people experience no security and certainty from their home government, therefore seeking international assistance to meet their needs (Shacknove, 1985). This for refugee children means childhood in refugeehood.

Childhood in refugeehood exposes children to many vulnerabilities, leaving their healthy childhood and well-being at risk (MacGregor, 2019). For instance, even after receiving refugee status in their host countries, children may find difficulties learning new languages and cultures in new communities (UNICEF, 2021). Moreover, witnessing conflicts and being forced to flee borders can indeed have detrimental impacts on mental health, and refugee children are

not excluded from those traumatic experiences (Murthy & Lakshminarayana, 2006). Thus, studies (Almqvist & Broberg, 1999; Buchmüller, et al., 2020, Derluyn & Broekaert, 2007; Ziaian, et al., 2013) on refugee children were often conducted to investigate the emotional and behavioral problems of refugee children and to emphasize the physical, mental, and emotional support available for refugees and refugee children. For example, Eruyar *et al.* (2017) examined the relationship between trauma exposure and refugee children's mental health. They concluded that both trauma-focused and family-based interventions are necessary when providing mental health support to refugee children, as there are micro-and macro factors like parents influencing refugee children's mental health (Eruyar et al., 2017). Thus, it is refugee children face many hindrances to reaching their full potential (UNICEF, 2021).

However, focusing on the challenges and deficits of childhood in refugeehood reflects the limited discourse around refugee children (Pupavac, 2008). By no means, children's exposure to traumatic experiences cannot be downplayed. Nevertheless, the focus on host countries' integration policies (Park, et al., 2018) as the mainstream discourse on refugee children may manipulate children's childhood (Maher & Smith, 2014) when they are not integrated into host countries' societies to their standards. Thus, this study invites the readers to read about refugee children in a host country's early childhood education program through the lens of the children's agency. It analyzes how children are being present in their childhood in a host country along with the system and adults who support them.

1.1.1 Children's Agency in Childhood Studies

Agency is a central idea of Childhood Studies, which sees children as active subjects, rather than passive recipients of social structures or adult norms (Esser *et al*., 2016; Leonard, 2016). In the past, the concept of socialization, so-called the older paradigm of childhood, was a conventional way of studying childhood (Leonard, 2016). Studies in psychology, sociology, educational science, and social work commonly approached children and childhood from a developmental paradigm (Esser *et al*., 2016), which defined childhood as a 'becoming stage.'

Instead of recognizing "being" of children and childhood, this paradigm viewed children first had to become adults, to be accepted members in a society (Matthews, 2007). In other words, in order to become full members of a society, children had to successfully socialize into adulthood (Leonard, 2016). Such understanding in academic research also placed children only as study objects of transition into adulthood or the process of familiarization (Esser, et al., 2016).

With a conventional paradigm in childhood studies, refugee children are positioned in an even more vulnerable state, as they are expected to be socialized (Leonard, 2016) or integrated into the host country to become accepted members. Therefore, this study will utilize a new childhood paradigm called 'agency' (Qvortrup et al., 2009) to reconceptualize the paradigm of childhood (Varpanen, 2019) in the context of refugee children in host countries.

Children's agency is a complex concept (Hammersley, 2017), which scholars have been trying to unwrap from different disciplines. Constituted in the Convention on the Rights of Children (UNCRC; UN General Assembly, 1989), children are "subjective right bearers and social actors (Whistutz, 2020, p. 116)." This legitimizes that children are worthy of an independent focus of research (Esser *et al*., 2016). Nevertheless, the interpretation of agency varies by the ontologies (Charteris & Smardon, 2018; Varpanen, 2019), and the complexity of children's agency (Hammersley, 2017), has been unwrapped from different academic disciplines.

For instance, in psychology, the agency is explained as a process from "heteronomous will to autonomous agency through perspective-taking" (Sokol & Huerta, 2010, p.49). From educational science, the agency is interpreted as exercising choice of what an individual wants to do and can do in response to the possibilities that surround them (Fisher, 2010). This is then studied to play a role in individual learning (Fisher, 2010). Moreover, in the sociology of childhood, the sense of agency recognizes that an individual can "accept, resist, challenge, and transform" the social structures (Leonard, 2016, p. 64). Similarly, Tay-Lim and Lim (2013, p.66) understand children's agency "on the premise of the philosophical belief that children are capable of making sense of their views and sharing their views on issues concerning them."

Although the concept of children's agency may be interpreted as that children are competent only when they are aware of their rights and express them in the decision-making process (Alasuutari, 2014), above mentioned descriptions suggest agency is not an individual psychological development or capability, but rather socially influenced competence (Valentine, 2011). The understanding of agency only as "the exercise of authentic choice or self-directed action (Valentine,2011, p.348)" has been criticized for overemphasizing the autonomy of children. Also, Valentine (2011) highlights such a limited view can impose danger on reproducing the idea that agency is observed by privileged children. Therefore, it is emphasized that agency evolves in relations and interdependence (Abebe, 2019; Fisher, 2010; Sevon and Rutanen, 2021; Vuorisalo, 2016), and agency allows children to negotiate their actions in relation to the social context (Fisher, 2010).

Abebe (2019) introduces agency as a continuum, which suggests how children come to exercise agency is related to their surroundings and communities. Furthermore, according to Qvortrup (2014) and James and James (2012), childhood is legally, socially, and scientifically recognized as an early stage of life, which is influenced by the change in economy, politics, and technology. From this understanding, childhood is socially constructed and not universally fixed, nor limited to the psychological development of an individual child (Leonard, 2016). Hence, recognizing childhood as a socially constructed framework suggests taking interdisciplinary approaches (Hart, 1997; Qvortrup, Corsaro & Honig, 2009) to understand how multifaceted childhood is experienced across different times and societies (Leonard, 2016).

For that reason, this study follows a new paradigm of sociology of childhood by Prout and James (1997, p.8 cited in Leonard, 2016, p.23) to explore refugee children's agency manifested in ECEC in a host country. The new paradigm is laid out that:

1. Childhood is a social construction.

2. Childhood is a variable of social analysis.

3. Children's everyday lives are worthy of study in their own right.

4. Children are not passive subjects of social structures but active actors.

5. Ethnography may be the most useful methodological approach to understanding children and childhood.

6. Childhood theorists and researchers also play a role in reconstructing childhood.

According to these principles, children are the main actors to construct their childhood (Esser, et al., 2016). Moreover, by placing children as the main actors in their social lives, it claims that children's voices shall be emancipated to be heard in a society (Leonard, 2016).

Moreover, this urges the role of adults, including theorists and researchers' to be reflected when reconstructing childhood (Leonard, 2016). Berthelsen and Brownlee(2005) advocate that children's agency starts with adults' perception of them. It is noted that children's agency is encouraged through the relations between adults and children, in which children may acknowledge their vulnerability and dependence on adults, and adults may appreciate children's competencies and capabilities (Berthelsen, 2006).

On the other hand, childhood as a socially constructed framework suggests the interpretation of agency is highly influenced by the cultures around children (Mashford-scott & Church, 2011; Sevon & Kuukka, 2021). For example, when children have access to resources and the societies around them value autonomy and independence, their agency will be more easily accepted and appreciated by the adults. Nevertheless, described as "thin agency," social contexts like in collectivist cultures that do not emphasize much about an individual child's autonomy(Esser et al., 2016) may interpret agency differently. However, knowledge of agency in different contexts is limited, as discourses around childhood have been explored mainly through western lenses or in a western context (Valentine, 2011). Therefore, understanding the childhood of refugee children in a western setting (host country) would add valuable insights to childhood studies.

1.1.2 Children's Agency in Early Childhood Education and Care

Children's agency in contemporary ECEC has become an important topic (Varpanen, 2019) and has influenced the reconceptualized of ECEC (Tay-Lim & Lim, 2013). On that account, young children's agency promoted in ECEC has been noted to play an important role in their learning, development, and wellbeing (Mashford-Scott & Church, 2011).

Understanding of children's agency has appeared in different forms of ECEC educators' pedagogical approach. For example, educators may allow children to decide whether they participate in teacher-led activities or not (Vuorisalo *et al*., 2018). In addition, teachers' respect for children's agency is interpreted as having children's voices heard when planning individual educational plans with their parents (Alasuutari, 2014). Moreover, teachers focus on enabling opportunities for children to grow their sense of agency by re-directing children's responsibilities to themselves when there are conflicts between peers (Mashford-Scott & Church, 2011).

Adapting children's agency in the multicultural classroom has been also important. For instance, asset-based pedagogies like culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP) approach ever-changing cultural differences not just as something to respond to, but rather to support and to sustain a pluralistic society (Paris, 2012). By fostering multilingualism and multiculturalism both in the classroom and curriculum (Paris, 2012), such pedagogy recognizes the asset of heritage that children bring to the classroom.

Furthermore, Smith(2013) revisits Bhabha's (1994) "third space" as another pedagogical framework to recognize children's agency influenced by their home culture. This third space invites educators, children, and parents to share about the cultures between children's homes, schools, and national curriculum, rather than discussing what is right or wrong (Smith, 2013). Thus, the "third space" abridges the distance between children's homes and school and allows students to find a place to belong (Quigley & Hall, 2014). Similarly, it encourages parental involvement, as educators are listening to what the parents have to offer rather than acting as "experts" on children's education (Smith, 2013).

1.2 Refugee Education

While supporting children's agency in ECEC is displayed in different ways, this section explores how education for refugee children is institutionalized in general, and later in more detail about ECEC in Germany, for more depth of the study context.

Access to education is refugee children's basic human right (UNICEF, 2021), and the quality of education for all children is promised to be ensured (UN,2022). Thus, quality education for refugee children is emphasized to support them to face the unknowable futures. This means, the possibility of children's re-location, re-settling or return has to be considered when approaching refugee education (Dryden-Peterson, 2017).

For example, the refugee population's re-location in a host country is reported to be still high until they find private homes (Berlin,2018). Even though the living condition has been improved from emergency accommodations to community accommodation for many refugees, long term grant opens the possibility for their children to become citizens of the host country (Maher & Smith, 2014), and many choose to re-locate or re-settle to find a private housing (Berlin,2018).

On the other hand, the future of refugees may be returning to their home countries. Although the statistics of voluntary returns are decreasing (UNHCR, 2021), efforts to promote voluntary returns of refugees to their country of origin have been always prioritized (Berlin, 2018). Besides, personal stories continue to narrate people's desire to return to their safe homes and families (Gopalakrishnan, 2017; UN News, 2017). At the same time, involuntary return is often enforced when those in the pending asylum process are denied asylum (Wihstutz, 2020).

Amidst such an unknowable future, host countries have been making efforts to provide refugee education. For instance, the provision of refugee education highly depends on the laws, policies, and practices in host countries (Dryden-Peterson, 2016). From the 1980s through the 2000s, when the UNHCR

protected the refugees mainly with the means of refugee camps, education was offered separately from the national children, in the form of refugee-only schools. This was justified as a response to support their return. However, from 2000, integration became the framework to use the national curriculum and language along with national children in the same space (Dryden-Peterson, 2016). Teachers and families began to promote early learning in public kindergartens for refugee children (Gerokosta, 2017), to foster language integration and alleviate challenges caused by language.

Based on such a global framework of institutionalized education for refugee children, teachers play the next key role in education for refugee students (UNESCO, 2019). Indeed, when teachers are trained to support pluralistic society and recognize refugee children's agency, they can successfully include the refugee children in education with an understanding that their agency is constructed both by their home culture and the dominant culture of a host country (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

On the other hand, acute and emergent support without trained teachers has faced criticism that they hinder the sustainable integration of refugee families (Park, et al., 2018). For example, some refugee children in first asylum countries reported that they face aggressive discrimination, receive education separated from the nationals, and have limited access to higher education (Dryden-Peterson, 2016), which would be more challenging without support from the teachers. Moreover, when teachers lack the understanding of refugee children's agency, they may seek special services right away when they notice a delay in development or behavior problems, without giving children the chance to adapt (Hurley, et.al., 2013).

Although approaching refugee education only with a focus on integration is another limited, way to deal with the uncertainty of refugee children's future (Dryden-Peterson, 2017), education is still believed to be the tool to re-build the future of war-torn countries, like Afghanistan (The Sunhak peace prize foundation, 2018). Prized as a mother of refugee education, Dr. Yacoobi has been offering a wide pool of classes and training teachers for refugee children to build

critical thinking, as education empowers children to dream and to hope (The Sunhak peace prize foundation, 2018).

The next section then will explore how Germany has designed its ECEC for children residing in the country, whether as citizens, migrants, or refugees.

1.2.1 Early Childhood Education and Care in Germany

Germany has institutionalized ECEC nationally after the reunification in 1990, as East Germany had a more developed ECEC program and higher enrollment than the West (West et al., 2020). From the 1990s, every child between three and- to six-year-old could have a placement in kindergarten. Since then, the policy expanded to any children below 6 to have access to daycare or a childminder (*Tagesmütter*) (West et al., 2020). In addition, the policy supported universal childcare to subsidize half-day care for three to six years old (Cornellisen et al., 2018).

The implementation of ECEC is decentralized in Germany. In other words, the German federal government funds the programs, and the states (Länder) and municipalities are responsible for organizing ECEC services (West et al., 2020). For example, when there is demand for daycare, the state calls for service providers. Then with state approval, the providers could operate the service with federal subsidies. This paper focuses on the ECEC system in Berlin, as each state has different regulations.

In the case of Berlin, the subsidy is often given in the form of vouchers (Kita Gutschein) to the parents who use the ECEC service (West et al., 2020). In 2018, Berlin has expanded the half-day subsidy availability to all children, regardless of the age to use the ECEC service (Berlin, 2018). Moreover, to ensure the quality of the program, the providers in Berlin must hire qualified staff (*sozialpädagogische Fachkräfte*) and maintain a reasonable children-to-teacher ratio (West et al., 2020) to be approved as valid providers. Such strong government policy and investment are expected to have positive outcomes. However, Busse & Gathmann (2018) evaluate that the outcome is rather different by children's age, gender, and family socioeconomic status. Moreover, even though free access to universal childcare implied significant benefits for children with migration or

disadvantaged family backgrounds' school readiness, the data stated their enrolment is rather low and is not reaching the most needed group (Cornellisen et al., 2018).

One of the reasons behind Germany's investment in ECEC is also to encourage parental economic integration, especially maternal economic involvement (West et al., 2020). Nonetheless, the general correlation between public childcare and parental employment has not been so straightforward. Whereas Bousselin's study (2021) indicates rather a modest relevance between children's enrollment and maternal employment, other studies prove there is a significant positive correlation (Andresen & Havnes, 2018; Bauernschuster & Schlotter, 2015). At least, a common result of the studies shows that the provision of childcare does not influence paternal employment (Andresen & Havnes, 2018; Bauernschuster & Schlotter, 2015; Bousselin,2021). This example points out that children's access to childcare not only influences children but also their families. Thus, let us move on to explore how Germany is approaching ECEC for refugee children and their families.

1.2.2 German ECEC policy for refugee children

Germany's commitment to providing ECEC to all children does not discriminate against children based on their legal status. The support for refugee children have been reflecting a commitment to international conventions like the 1951 Refugee convention (UNHCR, 2011), Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC; UN General Assembly, 1989), SDG4 (UN, 2022), and giving guidance to policymaking and implementation (Park et al., 2018).

German states have been prepared for refugees even before the big increase in refugee population during 2015-16. For example, the German government has been funding national and local initiatives like *Sprach-Kitas* (language kindergarten), *Kita Einstieg* (Headstart), and *Willkommen-Kitas* (welcome kindergartens) to support children and families with migrant backgrounds to integrate into the German education system (Park, et al., 2018). There has also been much support for refugee families to receive low-threshold assistance at family centers and by the district mothers (*Stadtteilmütter*) (Berlin,

2018). In addition, some visiting consultation on the community accommodation has been also available based on the demand (Berlin, 2018).

Such local and state initiatives promoting inclusiveness, equity, and diversity not only strengthened the educational sector but overall approaches to integration (Dekker et al. 2015). For example, parental integration is another agenda of early childhood services by the host countries. Although the specific impact of childcare on refugee parents' economic integration is understudied, Gambaro et al. (2021)'s study evaluates that refugee children's attendance in ECEC has a positive relation to the social integration of refugee parents, especially mothers` language and social integration.

Moreover, along with preparation and prioritization of ECEC and support for refugees, many professionals, in Berlin, in particular, reported that they had some sort of necessary training, for example, anti-bias training and strategies, to effectively serve immigrant children and other students from diverse backgrounds (Park et al., 2018).

Nevertheless, some municipalities have been facing challenges to expand the service for refugee children due to the rapid increase of the incoming refugee population (Park et al., 2018). On top of that, refugee women's fertility is studied to be reaching a peak a few years after resettlement (Liebig & Tronstad, 2018), which indicates the number of children born in displacement may continue to grow (UNHCR, 2021).

The growing population of young children suggests more demand for access to ECEC in the coming years. However, the shortage of qualified professionals has hindered not only the quality, but also the access to ECEC, and forced the states to find alternative ways to provide education (Park et al., 2018). When occasional activities for young refugee children are not the best alternative solution to structural education (Vandekerckhove & Aarssen, 2020), it is German states' great concern to provide quality ECEC opportunities for refugee children.

1.3 Research Task and questions

This study attempts to explore refugee children's agency to expand the understanding of refugee children's early childhood in a host country. The first section of the study scrutinized how refugee children's childhood is multifaceted and socially constructed from the framework of childhood studies (Leonard, 2016). Then it briefly explored how the concept of children's agency is applied in research and ECEC. Next, it investigated how education for refugee children is institutionalized, especially in German ECEC, as it provides a more in-depth context to this research.

Because the aim of the childhood study is not to come up with a universal understanding of childhood or agency (Esser, et al., 2016) but to explore how childhood is socially constructed, this qualitative study of refugee children's agency displayed in German ECEC will add valuable empirical knowledge to the current Childhood Studies (Wihstutz, 2020) and readers' understanding of refugee children behind the statistics.

When re-visiting the previous workplace this time as a participant-observer, I entered the early childhood education program called Frühe Bildung vor Ort (FBO) without any hypothesis or set of research questions, nor a fixed perception of agency. This was an intentional choice to stay unbiased and open-minded about what refugee children were going to show me about their agency in FBO. Therefore, it was only after the participant observation at FBO and semi-structured interviews with the teachers, that the research questions were underpinned as follows:

1. How is children's agency manifested in children's activities in FBO?
2. How do teachers support children in FBO to practice their agency?

The following chapter will explain how these questions were inductively investigated in this qualitative research.

2 RESEARCH IMPLEMENTATION

Creswell and Poth (2018) corroborate that qualitative researchers need to write actively about their beliefs and theories in the research. Moreover, Ennser-Kananen (2020) writes that researchers' positionality, which is shaped by their identity and worldview, will influence the research implementation. Therefore, I (researcher) will be actively using the first-person narrative from this section to describe how this study is designed and implemented.

As a novice researcher, I am still engaging in the practice to develop a more solid foundation for ontology and epistemology (Holms,2020). Nevertheless, I follow the constructionist and interpretative paradigm in this research design. This paradigm assumes there are multiple realities, in contrast to realists or positivists who believe there exists a single reality (Creswell and Poth, 2018). In addition, I understand my role as a researcher is *verstehen* (to understand) (Tracy, 2012) and to make sense of research questions through the perspectives of the participants of the study. Therefore, I strive to investigate children's agency by interpreting the direct observation of children's behavior and by examining the context around the group of children and the education program.

In this chapter, I elaborate more on the research context and participants, and how my positionality guided the design of the ethnographic case study, data collection, analysis, and ethical solution.

2.1 Research Context

2.1.1 Frühe Bildung vor Ort (FBO)

Aligning with a federal goal to prioritize all children's integration into formal or non-formal education offers (Berlin, 2018 p.34), Berlin's senate has been designing needs-based programs (Park & et al., 2018) like "Frühe Bildung vor Ort (FBO), i.e., Early Education On-Site" (Berlin, 2018).

Commenced in June 2018, the main mission of FBO is to support children's language learning, their adaptation in primary school, and parent's integration

(Berlin Senatsverwaltung für Bildung, Jugend und Familie, 2018). FBO provides half-day child-care, so children without access to daycare centers may join the program until the transition to formal ECEC happens. Although the program is designed for the transition shall happen within one year, some children join FBO for more than a year, until they attend primary school.

As an initiative targeting young refugee children and families living in shared accommodation, different organizations in Berlin may apply for the funding of the Berlin Senate to carry out FBO. When organizations are selected, they have much freedom to run the program. As FBO does not propose a specific curriculum, the team of qualified ECEC educators and intercultural staff, employed by the carrying organization, can initiate activities in FBO. Table 1 shows the general daily structure observed in FBO.

Table 1

General Daily Structure in FBO

Estimated schedule	Activities
8:00-8:30	Teachers set up
8:30-9:15	Children come in and free play
9:15-9:45	Morning Circle & Breakfast
9:45- 11:00	Indoor play
11:00-12:00	Outdoor play
12:00-12:30	Indoor play and children pick up

The specific FBO that this study visits was located in the northern part of Berlin and was run by the *Berliner Stadtmission*, which was also a carrier for the shared accommodation. After two years of running, FBO carried by the *Berliner Stadtmission* was discontinued as of Fall 2021. Nevertheless, the empirical data that was collected in this study is still valid and will add to the understanding of the children living in shared accommodation as refugees (Andresen et al, 2021).

For the placement of FBO, the Berliner Stadtmission team decided which children meet the priority (age and parents' availability) to join FBO. As there were many children in the accommodation without daycare placement, some parents often stopped by the FBO room to ask the teachers whether they could

send their children to FBO. Once the child's attendance at FBO was confirmed, the parents picked up the day-care voucher (*Kita Gutschein*) from the senate and finalized the paperwork with the teachers (West et al., 2020)

Mentioning the FBO room, the FBO of this study took place on the first floor of the shared accommodation where the offices were located. It was a joint room dedicated to the residing children, where two spaces were connected without a door. On weekday mornings from 8 to 13, the space was used by FBO, and in the afternoon, it was used for homework help or other activities for older children. Vuorisalo *et al*., (2016)'s understanding of space as relationally produced suggests the space in ECEC is reproduced by the interactions of the members in the space. Similarly, this room in the accommodation could be just a room for children's activities, but with FBO teachers and children, this place became a *Kita* (daycare in German) for children who would otherwise not go to Kita.

For example, FBO teachers constructed the space by the door with furniture like children's bag hangers, cabinets, and big tables for crafts and eating. Children could also do some physical activities in the same space. The other room was designed for more calming activities, with a reading corner on mattresses and desks for painting. The big windows in the room could be opened so one could go outside to the playground through the windows, but children were not allowed to use the door for security reasons. The door to the room from the hallway was always locked and could be only opened with a key from outside. Therefore, to go to the toilet, which was on the other side of the hallway, a teacher always had to accompany the child.

The location within the accommodation allowed children to come on their own or be dropped off by their parents or their older siblings. Nevertheless, during the school vacation, older children who were bored would come down to the space and asked if they could play at the *Kita*. In addition, shared space meant it was occupied with other materials that were not FBO's. The space was cleaned every day by a cleaning lady, who also knew the names of the children and families living there.

2.1.2 Shared accommodation in FBO

In the summer of 2021, when the research was conducted, the accommodation had about 400 residents in two buildings, where more than half of the residents were children under the age of 18. The list of nationalities living in the accommodation was not shared, but there were several different nationalities represented in the residence, the majority being Arabic speakers. Some families helped each other out for example, by taking care of the children when needed, but not all families were getting along just because they had the same nationalities or lived on the same premises.

Children and youths also seemed to be influenced by how their parents talked about the other families, but it was regularly observed that young residents were interacting with each other in German and participating in accommodation's organized activities together. Furthermore, with limited space for children and youth in the accommodation, the staff collaborated with other initiatives to offer activities after school or during school vacations, which is encouraged to promote the integration of refugee children (Morland, & Levine 2016). Integration and democracy were the core values when organizing programs for the residents and the children. For example, there was also a children's parliament, where elected children living in the accommodation acted as representatives and practice democratic values and agency.

In the accommodation premises, there was also a small playground where children could play under the parents' supervision. However, children mostly came with their friends from the accommodation to play, as the parenting style of each household was culturally constructed and parents were fine with children going to the playground alone.

Nevertheless, rules of the accommodation were strictly enforced, for instance wearing masks and having visitors during the pandemic. Securities of the accommodation stayed in service 24/7 and guests only with approved IDs could enter the site. On the other hand, staff at the accommodation provided translation services and other assistance with the residents' settlement in Berlin. They were also encouraging the participation of the adults in integration projects like men's groups or language learning.

2.1.3 Ethnographic case study

Approaching this qualitative study as an ethnographic case study best describes my constructivist and interpretive paradigm to identify refugee children's agency and teachers' support in an early childhood educational program Creswell & Poth, 2018). Although I first approached the research design as ethnography, I recognized this research as an ethnographic case study may be more fitting for several reasons.

Generally, ethnography aims to understand the social world from the perspectives of the insiders (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Besides, ethnography is recommended as the most effective methodological approach to learning about children and childhood (Jenks, 2000; Leonard, 2016). In addition, Albon and Huf (2021) describe ethnography in ECEC utilizing the full sensory input of ethnographers could reveal the complexity of crucial themes such as children's social interactions and agency. However, I found some limitations to conducting purely an ethnographic study.

First, I found FBO is a too specific form of ECEC for refugee children, and not all refugee children share the experience at FBO. For example, similar to how ethnography investigates a shared culture (Armstrong et al., 2019; Creswell & Poth, 2018), this study aimed to find a shared pattern of refugee children in a host country. However, by specifying the context of FBO and the shared living situation of refugee children in Berlin, I noticed refugee children's agency and teachers' support in ECEC is rather case-specific.

Second, ethnography often relies on long-term data collection (Creswell, 2018), yet the data collection period that would fit my study schedule was ten hours a week for a duration of four weeks (Fusch et al., 2017). And this felt quite short, especially with the low attendance of children at FBO. Granted, as a previous intercultural staff at FBO, I was re-visiting the same FBO I worked at and was already familiar with two of the colleague (out of four) and five of the children (out of nine). Therefore, a long-term period of observation, like months, may not have been necessary to immerse in the field and to gain an insider's perspective (Hammersley, 2018). Nevertheless, with the low attendance of

children, the chance of understanding the shared pattern in FBO became more challenging.

But most importantly, I was convinced that study design as an ethnographic case study would enable me to answer the research questions (Fusch et al., 2017). Lund explains a case as "an edited chunk of empirical reality where certain features are marked out, emphasized, and privileged while others recede into the background (2014, p.224)." This definition highlights the refugee children's agency and support for the agency analyzed in FBO can be highlighted as a case study. At the same time, my previous experience in FBO and knowing some of the participants and context already highlighted a good foundation to conduct an ethnography. Therefore, by utilizing data collection methods including direct observation and interviews, I conducted an ethnographic case study with the time and resources I had (Fusch et al., 2017).

2.2 Research Participants and Research Data

In this section, research participants: children and teachers are described in more detail to allow the readers to decide the transferability of the research (Fusch et al., 2017). The reason these participants were chosen for the study is because of my familiarity with the participants and the context, as a previous intercultural staff of FBO.

2.2.1 Children in FBO

As mentioned in section 1.1.1, experience in refugeehood is not homogeneous, and seeking refuge is one area of people's life experience (Anderson, 2022). Nowadays, many young refugee children in ECEC have not experienced the conflict zones themselves but were born with refugee status, as the family is in displacement (UNHCR, 2020). In fact, UNHCR reported almost one million children were born in host countries between 2018-2020, with the risk of remaining in exile for the rest of their lives (UNHCR, 2020). Although I do not know individual child's stories of displacement, I heard once that children in FBO have resided in Germany for the past four to five years. In addition, I do not have access to the information on when the families moved into the particular

shared accommodation, but the accommodation opened in 2018 for the refugee population, so it is after that period that families started living in the shared accommodation together.

The guidelines of FBO suggest twelve children as the ideal number for program participants (Berlin Senate, 2018). However, taking the space of the room and children's acclimatization into account, the teachers of FBO insisted to keep the children's size to ten. Therefore, ten children (n= 5 girls and 5 boys) from four different home countries were asked to participate in the research. During the four weeks of observation, however, a total number of nine children attended FBO, and three of them (one sibling and one child) showed up only on the last day. The last day of observation was the last day before the summer break, and we had a party for three children who were going to primary school. The rest were going to stay in FBO for the next school year, except for one child who found a placement in a local kindergarten. It indicated the selection of four new spots for FBO was already in process. Yet, it turned out that FBO had to close in the fall of 2021.

These FBO children were living in the same shared accommodation with their families (at least one parent) and mostly with siblings. There was only one girl who was coming to FBO outside of the shared accommodation, and only one boy was living as an only child. Because the enrollment process in FBO first prioritizes the age of children and then the need for childcare, there were two sets of siblings (brother and sister) attending FBO at the same time.

To protect the participants, more detailed information on children, like their home countries, mother tongues, age, and real names cannot be provided. Nevertheless, to highlight the individuality of children, the ones mentioned in the result chapter (3) will be called pseudonyms. These names were carefully chosen considering the meanings of the names (Teodor= gift of God, Anwar= brighter, Farhan= joyous, Akilah=bright, Ivana= gift of heaven, Arina= goddess of peace).

2.2.2 Teachers in FBO

The staff team of FBO consisted of two certified early childhood educators (*Pädagogische Fachkräfte*) and two intercultural staffs (*Interkulturelle Unterstützungskrafte*) (n=4, all-female). But since their interactions were not influenced by their titles, I will call all of them "teachers" in this study. Two teachers had been working with children since the beginning of FBO in November 2019, and the other teachers joined in the fall of 2020 when I left to pursue a Master's degree. Since FBO is a half-day program, all teachers worked part-time in FBO. Therefore, each teacher had another job, for instance, one was completing an art therapy program, one was studying to be an early childhood practitioner, one was working on another project at the Berliner Stadtmission, and one teacher worked at a shared accommodation, which meant she was aware of the administrative parts of the accommodation.

A team of diverse professionals meant they could bring in different talents to FBO. At the same time, it meant making efforts to be on the same page and collaborating. Therefore, every other Wednesday, teachers had a team meeting for about an hour to discuss what was going on in FBO. In addition, teachers, an FBO supervisor from the Berliner Stadtmission, and a leading team of the accommodation gathered for a meeting once a month to exchange any updates. During the meeting, for example, the list of children waiting for the placement in FBO was shared.

When the FBO project first began, there were no specific instructions or curriculum for the teachers. Therefore, the teachers had a lot of freedom to implement activities such as art, play, or sports to help the children feel welcomed and get used to the education in Germany. As a diverse team, two teachers of the team spoke Arabic, which allowed Arabic-speaking parents to communicate without language and cultural barriers. There had been some challenges communicating with the parents, but building trust with parents and supporting their integration into the education system in Germany has been an important goal of the project.

As briefly mentioned, no strict organization in the program allowed the teachers from exploring different activities like drawing, making clay, painting,

playing outside, and legos. Without specific structure, the program already allowed children to exercise their agency to decide what they wanted to do that day and how and with whom they wanted to play.

Once again, to protect the participants, more detailed information on teachers, like their home countries, mother tongues, age, and real names are not provided in this section. Nevertheless, to highlight the individuality of teachers, they will be called pseudonyms, which were carefully chosen as Jojo (=full of inspirations), Elham (=inspiring), Aisha (=alive) and Erica (=always mighty).

2.3 Data Collection

Using the method of ethnographic case study, the data was mainly collected through participant observation of refugee children (n=9, aged 3-6 years) and teachers (n=4) at Frühe Bildung vor Ort (FBO) in Berlin, Germany. In addition, semi-structured interviews with teachers added more reflecting points to the observation and ideas for analysis. In this section, I explain more about the data collection methods and the process.

2.3.1 Participant observation

Participant observation plays an integral part in ethnographic research (Montgomery, 2014), as well as in childhood studies (Esser et al., 2016 & Leonard, 2016). This method positions the research participants as informants and invites researchers to learn through interactions and activities with research participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Therefore, to learn what children have to share about their agency, I joined the field as a participant-observer. Since I had worked with FBO children and teachers from January, 2020 until I began my studies in August of the same year, the connection I had with children and teachers who remained in FBO was easy to recollect. Besides, staying in contact with the teachers and hearing about FBO updates every now and then fostered a smoother transition from a visiting researcher to a participant-observer (Montgomery, 2014).

Another reason for choosing participant observation was because of the ethical considerations, especially for those with forced migration backgrounds (Ali & Gibran, 2020; Clark-Kazak, 2017). Following Clark-Kazak's (2017) guided

principles of equity, right to self-determination, competence, and partnership with research participants, I understood my role as a participant-observer would not change the FBO dynamic too much with planned activities and allow children to participate naturally. And I believed observing and joining their authentic and usual activities are the best way to learn from and with children.

However, being a participant-observer indicated that I was the primary data collection instrument (Fusch et al., 2017). Hence, I needed to be active in unlearning my bias as an adult without a refugee background, in order to interpret how refugee children may exercise their agency (Hammersley, 2013; Reyes, 2020). Moreover, I needed to be aware of my ethical responsibility to protect the children and teachers from any problems that may be caused by this research.

Cited in Montgomery (2014, p.377), Fine lists four ways of participating in research with children as a "leader, supervisor, observer and friend (1987: 223–4)"; In my case, being a "friend" and having less authority(Fine, cited in Montgomery, 2014) over a small group of open-minded children came naturally. However, my understanding of the researcher's responsibility to prioritize the participants' interests, reminded me to keep some distance, switching sometimes between observant participant and participant observation (Moerman, 2016). In fact, being aware of when to observe, participate and intervene also had ethical and validity implications (Montgomery, 2014).

For example, during my observation from 22.06.2021 to 13.07.2021, I actively joined all the teacher-led activities and played with the children. In addition, when a child approached for help, I interfered in ways that align with FBO's values (Montgomery, 2014). However, when I observed teachers' interactions with the children, I switched to observant participation to respect the teachers. Only when I noticed that teachers were okay with me joining, did I join their conversations.

Besides, I learned not to intervene so much when children were free playing. For instance, during one free indoor playtime, Arina asked if she could paint. While I was preparing the materials, I asked her if she could paint something about FBO, as I thought it could be a great data resource. She willingly

agreed then, but later when I questioned what she was drawing, she said "Can you just leave me alone (*Kannst du bitte mich alleine lassen)*?" This could also be an example of children's agency, yet it reminded me that my role as a participant-observer was to keep FBO as a safe space for children to come and play, rather than a place where they were studied.

I mostly used fieldnotes with pen and paper during the observation. Always having them by me, I wrote in which activities children join during the free play, how they interact with peers and teachers, and how they communicate their needs and desires. I noted down almost everything that happened that day in FBO with a timestamp. In addition, to avoid the possibility of missing some important interactions, my supervisors advised me to videotape when writing notes was difficult. Although I was able to observe "slow-attentiveness" (Albon & Huf, 2021, p. 241) thanks to an average of 3 children coming each day, I also used videos to document group activity or breakfast time, where I was needed for full participation. Video recordings and photos were mainly the secondary data for observation, that helped recall the situations.

My final day at FBO was the last day before the summer holidays for 3 weeks, which meant new children coming and another teacher would be joining when it reopened. Therefore, leaving the field was not too abrupt making the children feel bewildered (Montgomery, 2014).

2.3.2 Semi-structured interviews

After the final day at FBO before the summer holidays, I conducted semi-structured interviews in German (Appendix 5) with teachers in two different groups according to their schedule preferences. I prepared some questions based on my observation and kept them rather concise, as I already had many interactions with the teachers already during the FBO observation and knew some of the repeated topics and concerns about FBO from the meetings every other week. Moreover, as they were always working overtime, I wanted to respect their time. Therefore, the interviews were done rather in informal conversations one time in FBO room and other in one of the teacher's home thanks to her invitation. All interviews were recorded with their consent, and I

was making notes during the interviews. These interviews were done to support the analysis of the observation of refugee children. In addition, through the sharing of the teachers, I could gain more insight into how they have supported the participation of children.

2.3.3 Data Collection Process

When I first had the research idea, I contacted a former colleague in FBO about the possibility of visiting FBO over the summer for research purposes. She forwarded me the new supervisor of FBO's contact, and after connecting with her via emails and phone calls, I got the approval of visiting FBO in the summer of 2021 from the supervisor on behalf of the teachers. Nevertheless, the consent of every parent for their child to participate in the study was the most important matter to carry out the research. Therefore, the research notification, privacy notice, and consent forms for the parents and teachers were carefully revised first into simple English and then into simple German (Appendix.1,2,3) for participants to read it easier. I visited FBO twice before starting the observation to reconnect with the teachers and children and parents. In addition, the teachers of the program supported me to explain my purpose of visitation/observation to the parents. Receiving consent is explained further in detail under the ethical solutions.

On my first visit back to FBO before I began observation, I sensed a big advantage of conducting this research in my previous workplace. Not only the colleagues were happy to have me back, but also some children from last year, who were informed that I was coming, were running and shouting my name to give me big hugs when I entered. Interestingly, their warm welcome must have influenced the new children's openness to a different looking (as Asian) adult in FBO, because although shy at first, they were holding my hands to take me to slides and to play with them. Such openness and familiarity allowed me to gain the insider's perspectives only within a month of observation.

In addition, having the children at the center of the research, I simply explained to each child why I came and asked if I could come to learn from and with them over the summer. In informal conversations, some said 'yes' and some

gave unspoken consent by bringing toys to play with me. The children were very cooperative in terms of not playing with the camera or my fieldnotes. To capture natural interactions, I placed put small Go-pro camera on a shelf or in the corner, and I noticed that children do not look into the camera.

Following the University's value of research which is "FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Re-usable) (GO FAIR, 2022)," I focused on being present in the field, but also collecting rich and quality data for the analysis. Table 2 describes the data that is collected.

Table 2

Data Collection Procedure

Contents	**Methods**	**Length**	**Period**
Children's interaction observation	Video/audiotape & transcribing	32 clips 62mins	Random occurrence during the whole research period with GoPro rented from the university
	Photographs of children's work/interaction	63 images	
	Fieldnotes	7 days 18pgs	Random occurrence with pen and paper
Informal interview with teachers	Audiotaping & transcribing	50min with 2 teachers 40 min with 1 teacher	Around one hour at the end of the observation

The investigation of childhood and agency are rooted in multiple data sources (Leonard, 2016). For this study, field notes and interviews are used as the primary data, while the pictures and videos are used as secondary sources to recall the memories. The readers can find some pictures in the result section that will further supplement the themes that are explored.

2.3.4 Data Management

Before collecting the data, I worked on a data management plan until it was accepted by the university, and until I understood the responsibility of the researcher managing their data. To ensure the protection of personal data, the research notification, privacy notice, and the consent form (Appendix 1,2,3,) with the template authorized by the University of Jyväskylä were used. As the videos and photos during the observation and interviews with teachers involved personal data, research notification and privacy notification clearly stated the purpose of the research, how the data would be collected, as well as how it will be processed. Following the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), all the raw data written on the fieldnotes were safely stored. In addition, the recordings and the transcriptions of the interviews were saved in a safely stored hard drive, to which no other had access than the researcher. The analysis files were also encrypted so that the files could be accessed only with passwords.

Also, the sensitive data that is not needed for the research was not included in the analysis, and those data that are included were all pseudonymized (Responsible conduct of research, 2018). All data is planned to be terminated after the thesis is accepted.

2.4 Data Analysis

2.4.1 Thematic Analysis

In this study, Thematic Analysis (TA) is used as an independent qualitative descriptive method (Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2013). Following its definition by the most renowned Thematic Analysis researchers, TA approaches research questions by identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). While 'systematic coding and categorizing of data' sounds similar to other qualitative descriptive approaches like Content Analysis (CA), TA has been recognized as an independent method that can provide reliable analysis in qualitative studies (Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2013). In addition, whereas the quantification of data is possible in CA, TA purely focuses on qualitative and detailed themes throughout the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Researchers can use TA as both deductive and inductive or mixed approaches. Having the choice of flexible approaches within the TA is one of the reasons why it has a low threshold for novice qualitative researchers (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Since the special context of the FBO as an early childhood education program for refugee children is a rather under-researched phenomenon, I chose the inductive approach (Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2013). Therefore, the answers to research questions were driven by the data through Braun and Clarke's reflexive approach (Braun and Clarke, 2006). In this approach, the researcher's subjectivity plays a big role, as it emphasizes the researchers' engagement in the data. On the other side, reflecting on my positionality multiple times was essential especially in the analysis process to avoid bias or assumption (Reyes, 2020). Thus, for reliable and rigorous analysis, the my position as a researcher has been clearly and repeatedly stated through the research implementation section.

Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest 6 steps to the reflexive thematic analysis, and here I lay out how I followed the framework to construct the relevant themes to the research questions (Clarke, 2018).

1. Familiarizing with Data

In addition to collecting the data on my own, the hours of collecting and transcribing invited me to immerse in the data continuously. First, I wondered whether there is enough data, especially with lower attendance than I expected, but the more I dwelled on the data, I could see how practices captured in the data are signaling children's agency and teachers' support.

2. Generating Codes

After about a total of 25 hours of transcription of data into Microsoft word files, I could visualize some broad descriptive themes based on the field notes and interviews. For example, I found repetitive actions of children communicating some in language forms and some in other forms. In addition, I recognized the initiatives of teachers throughout the FBO hours. With those ideas in mind, I used a qualitative data analysis software "Quirkos" for a line-by-line coding, which

highlighted the actions of children and teachers from the transcription and placed them into initial themes. Understanding themes as patterns, which capture interesting points from the data that are relevant to the research questions (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017), I revisited each initial theme to specify the highlighted actions into codes.

3. Generating Themes

During the second time coding through the data, I noticed how some codes belong to other themes or some themes are rather overlapping. For example, I first differentiated the theme of children's communication into two parts: when children were using spoken language and when children were using different tools. However, by replacing them around, I realized they could unite by one central idea: communication. If the analysis would have ended here, it would have been so-called "*semantic focus*, which means to code and report on explicitly stated ideas, concepts, meanings, and experiences, etc. (Braun *et al*., 2016)."

4. Reviewing Themes

Therefore, the analysis continued by focusing on the research questions: 1) how children's agency is manifested in their activities in FBO, and 2) How teachers support children to exercise their agency; to interpret their significance and meaning with latent focus (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). To unlearn the biases I had when coming up with initial themes, I moved around the different codes and placed them in other themes. This meant to let things go because themes are not buckets of every code that was identified. Braun and Clarke (2006) encourage that the themes shall not be too fragmented into many levels.

5. Defining and Naming the Themes

By comparing the themes coded on Quirkos and video clips and pictures, the themes were refined and defined. The ongoing reflection on themes was possible thanks to the variety of data sets, especially as visual data could recall back the settings and moments from the fieldnotes. Table 3 briefly introduces the themes that are defined and will be more elaborated on in the findings section.

Table 3

Themes Under Research Questions

Research questions	Themes
1. How is children's agency manifested in children's activities in FBO?	• Expression and communication using different tools • Personalization of repeated activities • Peer Effects • Adaptation to FBO
2. How do teachers support children in FBO to practice their agency?	• Leading activities based on children's interests and ideas • Engaging in interactive dialogues • Caring • Cooperating with parents

6. Producing Report

In the findings section, the themes will be illustrated with pictures and video captures, and examples from fieldnotes and interviews (Braun et al., 2016). This is something unique to TA compared to other qualitative analyses like content analysis, where the results are presented as conceptual maps or models (Vaismoradi *et al*., 2013).

2.5 Ethical Solutions

Respecting children's participation in FBO was the top priority throughout the research process, and I made decisions in every step of the research by always asking 'how will this benefit child and teachers of FBO?' As the research is developed around the core idea of the children's agency, I communicated with all children (verbally), teachers (verbally & written), and parents (verbally & written), that participation in this research is voluntary.

Also, for the consent forms for children and their families, parents had the option to give permission just for my observation or also for data production and analysis. Agreed with the supervisor of FBO, observation and visitation could

not take place without unanimous consent. So it was significant that all parents, as guardians of their children, gave consent to my partcipation in FBO again.

Besides, as the data involved personal information, data was collected and handled in an ethical manner, which is described more in detail under heading 2.3.3. and 2.3.4.

In addition, I carefully followed the guidelines of data security (GDPR) and the University's research requirements like the research notification, consent forms, and the data management plan (Appendices). Especially as the children have their vulnerabilities including their age, ethnicity, and refugee status (Clark-Kazak, 2017), I ensured their privacy as the priority. Therefore, after multiple revisions of the research notification form and consent forms in simple English, I translated them into easy German with the help of a native speaker. Then I got them revised again and approved by the FBO supervisor. For the families of children to better understand the research procedure and objective, I discussed the research plan with the teachers thoroughly so that they may interpret the information in Arabic for the Arabic-speaking parents.

In fact, when the notification and consent forms were handed out to parents in person, I was able to explain what it was about to the parents directly in simple German and with hand motions. Whereas some parents signed the form at the direct spot, some moms said they would bring them tomorrow, with their dad's agreement. One parent asked me wittingly if videos would make their child famous. Every parent gave their permission except for one parent, who kept on assuring me that they would return the paper after reading the documents word by word. It was important for me as a researcher to respect parent's concern and their strong sense of responsibility for their children, so I waited for their consent. In the end, teacher Aisha, who had a trust-based relationship with the parents, explained everything again in simple German and I could collect all the consent.

Also to protect all research participants from direct identification, I did not use any pictures revealing their faces and used pseudonyms when reporting results. The names were carefully chosen by taking the participant's cultural heritage and meanings into consideration. I chose pseudonymity instead of

anonymity to protect participants' identities yet still represent their authorship (Clark, 2014).

Moreover, following the health regulation of the field (FBO) required equal consideration as other ethical reasons, especially during the pandemic. According to Berlin's regulations, I did an antigen test every time I visited FBO and received the COVID vaccination as soon as they were available. As there was a mask mandate in the accommodation, I kept the rules of the shared accommodation, but we did not have to wear any masks in FBO room or outside.

3 RESULTS

3.1 How is children's agency manifested in children's activities in FBO?

Although children's agency has been the central idea for Childhood Studies and ECEC, empirical research on how children's agency is practiced in different contexts is limited. To truly make 'children's agency' as children's, the adults need to make efforts to recognize how children may practice their agency in real life. As agency is highly relational and socially constructed (Fisher, 2010; Varpanen, 2019; Wihstutz, 2020) the analysis focused on how children's agency is displayed in different forms of activities in FBO, by utilizing the resources around them in FBO- teachers, peers, activities, materials. Table 3 illustrates the actions children take in FBO.

Table 4

Children's Agency Reflected in Activities in FBO

Themes	Descriptions
Use of different tools to communicate	• Use simple phrases and words in German • Utilize objects and sounds • Do not use their mother tongues with the ones who do not share the language
Personalization of play activities	• Adjust activities according to their ability • Discover new playground equipment • Always show teachers what they have done
Peer effects	• Join the activities longer, until completion when they see other children doing the same activities (ex. crafts, snail hunting, collective game) • No comparison or competition • Participate in events with peers from the shared accommodation (ex. German flag sticker tattoos)
Adaptation to FBO	• Adapt not in ways how adults expect (ex. going home in the middle of the day, irregular morning circle) • Challenges

3.1.1 Use of different tools to communicate

Usually language barrier has been recognized as the biggest challenges for ECE teachers with refugee children (Busch, et al., 2018). Although some children in the FBO appeared comfortable communicating with each other and with teachers in German, they were mostly those with older siblings. As primary or middle schools run all in German, it is more likely that older siblings would use both German and their mother tongues at home, which increases the chance for children in FBO to be exposed to German. Indeed, these children could tell stories about how their mom purchased a toy that they wanted to have and explain how something broke accidentally as they were playing. On the other hand, children either with younger siblings or no siblings hardly used German when they communicated. This could be because they do not live with those who use more German than their mother tongue. Nevertheless, their knowledge of the German language did not refrain them from communicating with each other or with the teachers.

For example, except for some command words like, "guck=look" or "mehr=more" that were used repeatedly, Anwar hardly used German words or sentences to express his thoughts. Rather, when interacting with others, he was using different tones and sounds to show his excitement to play with other children. He was also smiling a lot when he was being playful, so one could tell that he was expressing his desire to play with them even when he was poking. Despite his attendance in FBO for two years, Anwar's slow language development indicated that he may need to visit a speech pathologist for professional help. However, teachers' attention to Anwar's communication tools allowed teachers to be mindful of his family situation and support his social skills in FBO.

In the case of Akilah, she made animal noises when playing with animal cards, to communicate that she knew what they were, even if she did not know their names in German. Moreover, she rather used sound and motions to communicate what she was imagining or doing. For instance,

> Akilah made a human, he was in like a basket (also made by playdough), and teacher Jojo asked "is that a bed? (*ist das ein Bett?*)" and she pretended to hold a shower hose with her hand. I asked "shower? (Dusche?)" and she nodded, and teacher Jojo said "Ah, bathtub (*Ach, ein Bad*)." And Akilah made "shhh…." sound, as if water was coming out. (June.22. 2021, Fieldnote)

In the example, Akilah had clear idea of what she was creating. When the teacher asked whether her interpretation of the creation was right, Akilah did not say no, nor just agreed to what the teachers or adults thought of what it was. Instead, she explained what her creation was doing in ways that made sense to her and others.

Sometimes, children personified their toys or creations to communicate their needs. For example,

> One day, we were crafting with playdough, and the teacher and I were having a conversation about a challenging moment in FBO that just happened with a child. Arina put her finger on her lips and shushed "shh….!" She then held her playdough, which was laying on the bed. The teacher and I noticed right away that she wanted us to be quiet because her creation is sleeping. A few seconds later, she started to whisper, and then later with a loud tone sang "Ku-koo-di-ku." Although the teacher first responded by putting her finger on her lips to be quiet, right away, we realized, that was the rooster, waking up the creation (June.22.2021, Video).

As the previous example illustrates, Arina used sound and her creation to send the adults a message to be quiet. She was assertive in a way that her shush paused teacher Jojo and my conversation immediately. Nevertheless, she was showing her creation to explain that we needed to be quiet because her creation was sleeping. Besides, she was also staying silent by whispering what she had to say. She then broke the silence by changing the setting of the personified creation waking up in the morning.

Both examples have children saying "shh…," yet the expressions illustrate different meanings related to the context. For example, Akilah's "shh" meant water falling from the shower to explain what the creation was doing, while Arina's "shh" was a command to express that her creation needed silence. Although these specific differences in tones could be identified more easily in a real-life context, these examples highlight the importance of adults and educators

being present and attentive to children who use different tools of communication, as their communication tools are contextualized.

Another interesting observation was that children did not use their mother tongues in FBO, which they would typically use at home. Instead, children seemed to understand that those who did not share their mother tongue would understand them only if they use gestures or non-verbal means of communication. Nevertheless, some Arabic-speaking children had conversations with Arabic-speaking teachers only when serious explanations were needed.

3.1.2 Personalization of play activities

As there are many repeated activities in FBO, children knew they had the freedom to take the materials they want, for example, legos, play doughs, and games to play with. Despite the same materials, it was noticed that children used them in various ways to personalize the activities, to keep themselves engaged and challenged.

Figure 1 *Personalized Obstacle*

On one occasion, we had one teacher's daughter visiting FBO during her school break. She was a bit older and enjoyed gymnastics, so she gathered mattresses and big blocks to jump over. When Anwar and Farhan saw that, they

collected some cushions and stuffed animals to make easier obstacles to jump over. As seen in Figure 1, Anwar and Farhan built a lower version of an obstacle on the right, accommodating it into what they could jump over. Anwar and Fahran were excited to jump over their obstacle next to the higher obstacle built by an older child, and they were slowly adding more things until it became too high for them. This exemplified that children were aware of their ability to modify what they found interesting into what they could enjoy doing.

Sometimes, however, children's adventurous attitude to try new things or to add challenges in regular activities made me wonder whether they could actually do them. For instance, on a very hot summer day, FBO visited a new playground in the neighborhood during the outdoor play time. When Arina, Teodor, and Ivana found a big skateboard ramp, they ran toward it, even though swings, slides and other playing equipments were on the other side of the ramp. For them, skateboard ramp was an exciting "slide,"which they had to climb up without any bars to hold onto. Though it appeared difficult to go up even as an adult, Teodor, who had been always athletic, ran up to the top first and gave Arina a hand for her to come up as well. Ivana, the youngest among them had more difficulties to go up, and I could also not help her much when she asked for a help. After a few attempts of running up the ramp like other children, nevertheless, she found her own way to go up; she first ran up as high as she could and quickly held onto a small space on the side of the ramp to push her upwards. Then, Arina and Teodor helped her come up all the way.

Children were sliding down the ramp like they would on a normal slide, getting better at going up, making a new hang-out spot on the top of the ramp. They were personalizing the skating ramp as their new play equipment and discovering new activities with that.

Also during indoor play time, children were finding ways to do new things and to challenge themselves. Furthermore, every time children did something new or which they were proud of, they wanted to be recognized by the teachers. For instance, Anwar, who did not use much German would repeat "guck=look," every time he finished his craft or did something new with his body (Figure. 2). In response, teachers were giving compliments or showing surprised

reactions, and I gave them high-fives. I believe adults' exciting responses also contributed to children's attempts to continue peronalizing regular things around them as their new play materials. The interactions between teachers and children will be more described under the section 3.2.2.

Figure 2 *Child's "Guck! (look!)"*

3.1.3 Peer effects

Personalization of activities was often done in peers, which indicated that children's agency is appeared not only in the form of individual development but also in interdependence (Abebe,2019). Moreover, children's participation in activities were often influenced by their peers.

For example, during the craft activity, children completed their work side by side, seeing each other using the scissors to cut around the figure and coloring it (Figure 3). During the crat time, I heard Ivana saying "Ich kann nicht (I can't)," because she found cutting her person along the line difficult. Anwar, on the other side, was also working hard, pausing every once in a while to cut his person. Arina also seemed to enjoy coloring her person and cutting other colored paper for the hair. And possibly because they saw each other working on the same

project, Ivana grabbed her person again and began cutting, even though she did not cut along the line. It was my first time, including the time I had worked in FBO, to observe children working on a project together until the completion.

Figure 3 *Chilren's Craft*

Figure 4 *Snail Hunting*

Children probably had developed their skills to sit down and concentrate on their task over time, but the peer effect appeared vividly in this case; when children saw other children doing the same activities, it was more likely that children would join the activities longer, until the completion.

At the same time, it needs to be highlighted that peer effect did not appear in a form of competition or comparison. Ivana, who may have sensed that Arina is making a more colorful person, did not copy(*nachmachen*) Arina, nor asked the teacher 'who did better.' Instead, they were making their own creations, following their own pace.

Another example of a children's agency shown in the form of peer effect was by "snail hunting (Figure 4)." A day after the rain, Ivana found a snail outside, and other children started to search for the snails as well. No matter how much time was passing, children were looking everywhere and also helping each other to find the snails. Once everybody found a snail, I noticed Ivana was kissing the snail and started singing to the snail "Don't worry. (*Hab keine Angst*),

everything is good (*Alles ist gut*) (06.07. 2021, Fieldnote)." Children who were sitting side to side and holding the snail in a careful manner, followed the song Ivana was singing, and we all sang later the snail song(*Kleine Schnecke*), which I taught them last year.

On the last day of FBO before the summer vacation, where all nine children from FBO attended the farewell party, another positive peer effect was observed:

> In the morning, the teachers prepared a farewell party to celebrate three children, who were going to primary school. When children came nicely dressed up, children gathered at the table with food and all waited silently for it to begin. After the feast, the children went on to play a game together. For about 30 minutes, all children were so engaged to play a collective game "*Ente, Ente, Fuchs* (Duck, Duck, Fox)" They all sat in a circle, patiently waited until a fox is dropped behind them before they started chasing after the friend. Teacher Aisha was their favorite target to drop the fox, and teacher Aisha ran many rounds despite her injured knee. Children were taking turns quite equally. (July.13. 2021, Fieldnote)

Usually, children had difficulties staying in one spot for a long time. Especially when remembering the summer party from the past year (2020), I had not imagined that group playtime could run so well in FBO. However, on this day, children appeared to enjoy each other's company and were actively joining the game.

Nevertheless, the peer effect also meant children easily lost their interest and concentration when they saw others losing concentration. For example, during breakfast time one day, Teodor and Anwar were sitting across each other, constantly playing, making the gestures that they see each other ('I see you'). Besides, peer effect was a challenging to be spotted on the days with low attendance, because children did not have wide pool of peers to influence and/or be influenced by.

Living in a shared accommodation also played a role for children being influenced by the other children. Since they constantly ran into each other in the hallways or outside on the playgrounds, children were playing with similar toys or had similar backpacks. Also during the European football championship (UEFA Euro 2020), I noticed children in FBO and in the shared accommodation were going around with German flag sticker tattoos on their bodies (Figure 5). Although all the children were coming from different background and speaking mothertongues other than German, they were all cheering for Germany during the big international event.

Figure 3 *German Sticker Tattoos*

These examples, which were observed in the relations to peers, were something that children could experience because FBO program and shared accommodation existed. This highlights the importance of space and opportunities for children to be in a group to interact with others.

3.1.4 Adaptation to FBO

Nevertheless, children's agency was not always expressed in the forms that teachers or adults expected. For example, structures and rules set in FBO were not easily followed by the children.

Children in FBO did not have any formal education opportunities prior to FBO. This meant everything they experienced and participated in FBO were their "first-time," yet they were expected to adapt into a structure they were placed into as soon as they could. For some repeated behaviors like: hanging their bags and leaving the shoes on the designated spots, cleaning up the toys they played with, and packing their lunch box and water bottles when going home; were mastered with time and practice.

On the other hand, with some regular activities like: sitting around the moring circles, staying inside FBO room until the outdoor playtime, following teachers' instructions or even coming to FBO by 8:30; children appeared to have challenges when participating. Furthermore, as FBO was located right under their living apartments, some children left FBO in the middle of the day if something bothered them and teachers seemed to not be on their side. Besides, I noticed that children always wanted to go outside all the time, refusing to join the activities offered inside. Granted, with low attendance during the summer, children's play partners were limited to choose from and they may have preferred to play outside in a good weather. Nevertheless, one morning Teodor was expressing:

> "I can't do it anymore, I am bored, I am leaving (Ich kann nicht mehr, mir ist langweilig, Ich gehe jetzt)" and used the window in the other room (where they were not watched) to go outside. Teacher Jojo affirmed we were going out soon, and we needed to have our shoes first, but Teodor left. Even though it was not allowed, Ivana, his sister followed him outside." (June.24.2021, 11:17, Fieldnote)

Frankly, this example combined with not the most positive example of peer effect (with Ivana joining), was a distressing observation. Plus this along with other situations, which I am not choosing to indicate due to the privacy issue, were perceived as challenges for teachers. However, this interpretation paused me for a second to ask myself if it was also distressing for children. 'What if they were finding instructions and structures as restrictions to exercise their agency to do what they wanted to do?' Although FBO was mostly running with children-centered activities and much free time for play, children expressing difficulties in adaptation invites us to a discussion in the next chapter. However, beforehand, let's have a look at teachers' practices that acknowledged and supported children to exercise their agency.

3.2 How do teachers support children in FBO to display their agency?

The relational aspect of the agency was evident in teachers' interactions with children. These four themes (Table 4) capture the idea of how teachers' support was interdependent for children to learn about and exercise their agency.

Table 5

Teacher's Support for Children's Agency

Themes	Description
Teacher-led activities based on children's interest and ideas	• Instructing activities flexibly (ninjas and craft) • Introducing different materials (playdough, clay, paint)
Interactive dialogues	• Exposing the German language through having conversations and asking questions • Big reactions
Care	• Being aware of each child's needs • Attention and explanation • Introducing different tools for children to express their emotions (emotion monster cards) • Individual compliment
Cooperation with parents	• Support for children to find regular kindergarten • Collaborate with parents to go about challenges • Challenge caused by the limited working hours

3.2.1 Teacher-led activities based on children's interest and ideas

FBO was structured so that teachers had much freedom to design the day. While following the general daily plan (see Table 1 under section 2.1.1.), teachers took many initiatives to lead and instruct activities. Nevertheless, instead of sticking with the plans they had *for* the children, teachers stayed openminded to the ideas chidlren were coming up with and did exercises *with* them.

Figure 4 "*Ninja*" *Activity*

For example, teacher Elham came up with an exercise using a swimming poll one morning, because she recalled children talking about "Ninjas," when she saw that one child was wearing a ninja T-shirt. She then started doing different moves using the polls to move the body and start the day active (Figure 6). However, as she noticed that children were getting distracted easily, she changed the exercises frequently so that children could stay interested to follow the activities.

This exemplifies that teacher Elham was attentive to what children were interested in and could transform their interest into a playful learning activity. Besides, she was aware of children's attention span, therefore accommodated the activity by adding diverse movements to keep children engaged. In fact, when

she added a peer activity, where children had to throw their polls to each other at the same time, children were endlessly saying "guck=look," to show how they were successfully doing it.

Moreover, teachers used diverse materials to lead activities and to engage children with different interests and needs. For instance, teacher Jojo, who had experience with art therapy, introduced different art materials like clay, playdough, paint, pearls, felts, and more throughout her time in FBO. Every time a new material was introduced and after teacher Jojo showed what children could do with those materials, children were invited to ask for them whenever they wanted to play with them. When I asked teacher Jojo why she introduced clay to the children, she said:

> "clay can show what people feel. It is a very good material to express what is inside only with little force […]" (translated, July 18, Interview 2: 18:07)

This indicates that children's pool of choices and activities to practice their agency could expand with some guidance and suggestions by the teachers. Especially when teachers are not forcing children to do something but inviting children to explore something new, children will have freedom to choose whether they participate in it or not.

3.2.2 Interactive dialogues

With an adequate teacher-children ratio plus low attendance during the observation, teachers had more opportunities to carry out interactive dialogues with the children in FBO. From the first research question, it was identified that children use different communication tools in FBO, but teachers mostly used German and big motions when they were communicating. Following one of the main goals of FBO, to promote the German language (*Sprachförderung*), children were exposed to German by teachers constantly speaking with them in German.

Throughout the day, I could observe teachers asking questions, activating children to express what they were playing and also making them think, and teachers could learn about children's creativity. For instance, teacher Aisha saw

Ivana making something, and she asked if Ivana could make some "fruitsalad" for her. Soon after, teacher Aisha asked,

1 Aisha: What is in here? (Was ist hier drin?)
2 Ivana: Chocolate (Shokolade)

It may have been that Ivana was confused with what belongs to fruit. So Aisha invited her to repeat after her :

1 Aisha: Apple, Banana, Cherry, Watermelon…
2 Ivana: Apple, Banana, Cherry, Watermelon… (July.06.2021, 11:17, Fieldnote)

Similarly, a few days later, Ivana was making a cake with play dough. She was focused, and this time I asked:

1 Me: What is in here? (Was ist hier drin?)
2 Ivana: Lollie (candy), Chocolate, Lollie… (July.08.2021, 10:20, Fieldnote)

Just like how Ivana answered about the fruitsalad, it seemed like Ivana mastered the words that she enjoyed eating: chocolates. Then it was with teachers where she could practice some words which she already knew but did not necessarily associate with fruit salad or cake to describe what she was doing. Teachers were there to have conversations that would activate children's vocabularies. It is certainly important to leave children alone to be creative on their own, but these example proposes asking questions about what children are doing or playing with them may activate children to practice their communication with words and expand their creativity.

Moreover, learning colors, counting, vocabularies, and simple phrases like "*Danke* (thank you), *Bitte* (please), *Entschuldigung* (Sorry/ Excuse me), or *Darf ich*? (may I?)" were mostly happening in the forms of repeated dialogues. Only FBO could offer children the chance to learn these host country's verbal manners, as children had limited opportunities to be exposed to German culture before they go to primary school. Therefore, teaching manners through could serve children to exercise their agency in a more responsible manner.

Teachers' big reactions also played a positive role in engaging children to express their emotions and thoughts, like described under this occasion:

> Akilah and Arina played "Abracadabra" with teacher Erica. With a small marble, she showed it to us and dropped it to the floor (made it disappear) and showed her empty hand. She did not make it obvious, and children went around looking for the marble that rolled on the floor. Teacher Erica discretely picked the marble up and showed that it was back in her hand.
> Lots of laughing, fun, copying it (*nachmachen*). First with the marble and then with drinks. Arina said "Abracadabra" with teacher Erica's water bottle and made it that into coffee, then to Coca Cola, or whatever she wishes. Teacher Erica played with them so well and acted out with tones and motions as if she was really surprised that her water turned into coffee (June. 22.2021, 9:40, Fieldnote)

Teacher Erica's engaging play with a marble not only entertained children and me, but also demonstrated how teachers use different tools to keep the dialogues more interactive. Moreover, such positive example invited Arina to share her creativity, which she did by changing the marble with a water bottle.

3.2.3 Care

As part of Early Childhood Education and Care, teachers' approach in FBO exemplified care. In fact, teachers were convinced that offering care services in FBO to children was crucial for their socio-emotional development. During the interview, teachers indicated how children need contact person (*Bezugsperson*) by stating how each child expressed differently in addition to having different needs. Indeed, teachers understood that the context of the family often imposed some challenges:

> "They have enough problems, and those problems take up the whole time. They shall enjoy the time with their children, but they do not have time. Do you understand what I mean?" (translated, July 15, 2022, Interview 1, 18:07).

Acknowledging such special background of children, teachers were determined that they were coming to FBO, only for the children and only to care for them. Nevertheless, in situations of conflicts or misbehaving, teachers needed

much patience. With Arabic-speaking children, Arabic-speaking teachers could talk in their mother tongue when the topic was heavy or when the situation involved detailed explanation. Otherwise, teachers did their best to have caring conversations in German when children were misbehaving or not following the structures.

> "…although he knows that it is wrong, he will do it when nobody pays attention to him. Yes, they understand that, so we talk with them and tell them why it is a No. Not just because it is wrong, but because it is important for children to understand why it is not right." (translated, July 15, 2022, Interview 1, 23:00)

This response in the interview brought me back to the moments that were interpreted as challenges for the teachers (section 3.1.4). While some actions could be interpreted as children's agency from another perspective, we cannot dismiss some behaviors children need to learn to live well with each other in a society. Therefore, teachers' caring mindset and attitude emphasized in ECEC were found to be essential for supporting children with learning their agency appropriately.

Figure 5 *Monster Emotion Cards Illustrated By Teacher Jojo*

Communicating with care also included using "Monster-Emotion cards," made by teacher Jojo. For example, in the interview with teacher Aisha and Elham, they recalled of a time when Teodor had difficulties expressing his emotions after an argument with a friend. Since 'learning how to express their emotions in words not in actions' had been an emphasis of FBO, teacher Jojo showed the cards with different facial expressions so that Teodor could point out which card he could relate to. Teacher Aisha remembered that he was first reluctant to choose a card, but some time later, he chose a card that had upsetting expression. This then served as a starting point for a conversation about his emotions after the conflict, and teacher Jojo encouraged him to choose other cards to visualize how his emotions were changing. Teachers were saying that:

> "he could not express his emotions, but then [he chose card that described] really angry, then sad and then okay. He showed the whole process of handling emotion."(translated, July 15, 2022, Interview 1, 30:00)

Sometimes, conversations carried out in as language that is not your native language could be intimidating and pressuring, especially when having to express personal thoughts or emotions. It implies that good intention is not enough when carrying out personal conversations. Therefore, alternative expression tools could lower the threshold for speakers, especially if that is a communication tool that both parties could understand. In this case, both Teodor and teacher Jojo could understand what were described on Monster-Emotion cards, and they could utilize them to keep the conversation engaging and understandable. By providing such tools, children could learn to use another tool to express their agency.

Lastly, I interpreted that teachers' caring attitude toward each and individual child had allowed children to practice agency in their authentic way. Earlier, I mentioned that children did not compare themselves, even though children's participation and action were influenced by the peer effect. It was observed that teachers compliment each child on what they could do, especially when they were showing something they were proud of. Also, teachers never praised only some children's behavior or work. As small as it sounds, such

observation indicates teachers care' for each child may had influence on children's understanding of their agency, that it is not about 'who is better.'

3.2.4 Cooperation with parents

From the interviews and talks during the observation, teachers highlighted that collaboration with parents was one of the priorities they set for next year. They shared cooperation with parents will support with children exercising agency in a host country, as families provide children a stable community, while FBO is a transitionary place. Therefore, teachers were making many efforts to talk with the FBO parents and support with some document translation especially for Arabic-speaking parents, as two teachers could speak Arabic.

In fact, they recalled that some parents were very appreciative about the attention that FBO teachers share with them. For instance one time, all four teachers joined a talk with a single parent, and the parent shared it was her first time to talk about her child with other adults that care about him.
Nevertheless, teachers were aware of two big challeges to realize engaging parents. First, parents were not responsive. It was hypothesized that some parents either with language challenges, other responsibilities or other children were rather overwhelmed to invest more time in their children in FBO. In fact, Aisha, who was actively finding ways to communicate with parents said:

> "...they (parents) don't even have ten minutes. They do not come down and they are not reachable via phone. If I could reach them at least via phone, we could make a little step forward" (translated, July 15, 2022, Interview 1, 38:39)

Although this shows that teachers stayed flexible to make work with parents possible, it appeared that parents were not excited or may be that they do not understand why cooperation with teachers are necessary.

Secondly, part time working hours was a big hindrance. During the two years of carrying out FBO (although it is now closed), teachers shared that part time working hours were just not enough for them to reach out to the parents. Even though they had multiple ideas about how they could build relationships with parents through individual parent-teacher conversations, the teachers

confessed limited hours with their job as the biggest challenge to foster parents' involvement. In teachers' perspectives, FBO teachers needed more hours to support parents' integration as well:

> "... parents have to be integrated first for the whole integration of the children. Berlin Senate should make it compulsory for parents to complete German course. When parents are somewhat integrated and know the language, they will be able to communicate more with the teachers and care about their children…"(translated, July 15, 2022, Interview 1, 43:39)

As an early childhood education program, this point and awareness of the teachers highlighted integral part that parents' involvement in ECEC and children's agency play. Moreover, teachers' desire and effort to cooperate with parents indicated how teachers support children's agency in a more wholistic manner, even outside of FBO.

4 DISCUSSION

In this study, refugee children's agency was explored in the context of the host country's early childhood education program. In addition, the study analyzed how teachers supported children to exercise their agency. Although themes identified here are only selective representations of how I, as a researcher, interpreted refugee children's agency, the results show empirical data of how refugee children exercised their agency while living their childhood in a host country.

In contrast to other studies that observed agency as how children choose to participate in ECEC activities (Vuorisalo, et al., 2018), agency displayed in the FBO came more in the form of how children utilized the resources around them (Fisher, 2010). For example, children actively used the tools and resources that were around them to communicate. In other words, children were aware that their peers or teachers may not speak their mother tongue like they would at home, so they used German or other non-verbal tools that were shared among the participants in the FBO. In addition, children exercised their agency by personalizing play activities. They were aware of what they were able to do and what they would enjoy. Berthelsen & Brownlee (2005) note that children's engagement with others will more likely occur when children are familiar with the setting and their peers. And clearly seeing how children were influenced by each other when participating in activities complemented the understanding that children's agency continues to grow in interdependence and not just in individual development (Abebe, 2019). Lastly, the agency shown in their adaptation in the FBO setting challenges educators and adults to approach some of the ECEC practices from a different perspective.

Busch, *et al.*, (2018) note that tardiness, behavioral problems like withdrawal, or infrequent attendance, are some of the trouble points that educators noticed in refugee children in ECEC. The same observations were made in the FBO setting. To be clear, I do not want to discount these behaviors just by highlighting that children are agents and they are fine without structures. Nevertheless, the readers are invited to think from the children's perspectives: as

children who are joining a host country's education system, or even a formal education system for the first time. What may be natural for those who are already socialized into a society, may be different and challenging for others. Moreover, children may behave in certain ways not because they want to be rebellious, but because they do not realize what is expected of them. Therefore, before stigmatizing certain behaviors, it is important that educators reflect on whether parents and children are well infomed about the structures and rules of ECEC. Such reflection can foster reliable relationships with refugee children and parents (Busch et al., 2018).

The second research question focused on the practices of teachers that recognized and supported refugee children's agency. First, teachers organized activities based on children's interest. For them the children were the center of the organization, and they used different materials to keep the children engaged. The teachers also engaged in interactive conversations with the children, acknowledging and validating their ways of communication. Although one of the FBO's main goals was to enhance children's language development in German, the teachers appeared to respect what the children had to share with the communication tools they were using. In fact, Arabic-speaking teachers sometimes even used Arabic with a few children to talk about more serious matters. Harju & Åkerblom's study (2020) stresses that accepting multilingualism in an educational space can shift educators' perspectives on children's skills and agency away from the more common deficit assumptions of language practice by children with migrant backgrounds. It also notes that language is a "process for expression and meaning-making, rather than a tool for mastering the majority language"(Harju & Åkerblom study ,2020, p. 523).

Dryden-Peterson (2017) claims that teachers of refugees help refugee children to conceptualize what the future will be like and teach them how to prepare for it. Although the length of the children's stay in the FBO, shared accommodation, or even Germany is unknown, the teachers were actively providing care and resources for children to play, express, learn new things and to live their childhood. The teachers supported children's agency so that the children could practice their agency in constructing their childhood.

Lastly, McDevitt (2021) emphasizes that listening to the stories of immigrant teachers is the most valuable source of insight for creating responsive and caring teaching methods. In the interviews, the teachers highlighted the importance of setting more cooperation with the parents as the priority goal for supporting FBO children's agency. Tobin (2019) asserts that some refugee parents have difficulties in having their voices heard in their children's education in host countries. Moreover, Smith encourages practitioners to approach parental involvement by listening to what the parents have to offer, rather than acting as the sole experts on children's education (Smith, 2013). Although the teachers voiced some challenges in cooperating with parents, the demonstration of teachers's practices supporting children's agency was indicative of their desire for increased parental engagement for the children's and their families' best interests.

4.1 Limitations and Trustworthiness

When collecting data, the low attendance at FBO posed many questions regarding the transferability of data. Transferability is a term that describes the subject's capacity to be generalized and applied to other situations for qualitative studies (Fusch et al., 2017). I realized that the population of those enrolled at the FBO was but a small fraction (n=9) compared to the 6200 refugee children who arrived in Europe in 2020 (UNICEF, 2021). Furthermore, many FBO children stayed home during my observation period, as their older siblings were on summer vacation. Therefore, most of the time, I observed three children at a time in the FBO, which meant observation of peer interactions was limited because children did not have a wide pool of play partners. On the other hand, the smaller group of children allowed me to conduct a more in-depth observation of the individual children and to write more detailed field notes. Therefore, I provided as much detail as I could concerning the context of FBO, shared accommodation, and also participants while protecting their privacy, so that the readers can decide the transferability (Fusch et al., 2017).

Moreover, since the FBO is a bridge program for refugee children until they find placement in public education, their exercise of agency in the host country was limited more to their living environment than general ECEC. Gerokosta (2017) underpins that integration of refugee children best begins in public kindergarten. Also, one of the teachers in the FBO highlighted that the FBO is limited in supporting children's integration into German society, because there are no German children in the FBO. This suggests a future research idea to investigate how refugee children exercise their agency in a formal kindergarten setting amongst peers from different contexts (Hammersley, 2017).

The study observed children's childhood in refugeehood, which focused on the context of a host country and the shared accommodation they lived in. However, further research on childhood studies on refugee children could take into consideration other social factors such as their home heritage and gender, to discover the intersectionality and interdependence that shape their agency (Abebe, 2019; Esser et al., 2016.)

Lastly, when reflecting on my positionality as a researcher, conducting a study as a novice researcher meant learning by doing during the whole research process. Although the study was approached inductively, the lack of a solid theoretical framework of children's agency from the beginning of the research phase, limited my data collection methods and the analysis. For example, after I began my observation, I wondered if action research or participatory methods could have investigated refugee children's agencies more effectively. Moreover, despite my desire to represent diverse academic voices understanding childhood in refugeehood and refugee education, this study covered mostly academic voices in western society. Despite these limitations, I found myself also reflecting on my own agency as a researcher throughout the duration of this project, and I experienced first-hand that agency grows in continuum (Abebe, 2019).

4.2 Conclusion

The observation and analysis of refugee children in the FBO describe that children exercise agency through their childhood. They find ways to communicate with each other, influence each other to participate in activities, and accommodate the activities based on their personal needs and skills. Nevertheless, children's agency does not always appear in ways that adults expect them to. For instance, as children first experience the new context of the education system in a host country, they may express their desires or needs in ways that disagree with common structures or rules in ECEC.

By no means does this study advocate the idea that children's agency justifies every action or behavior of children. In fact, this could lead to another crucial research topic about children's responsibility when exercising their agency (Hammersley, 2016). Moreover, the concept of agency is so complex that research around it is still evolving (Esser et al.,2016). Nonetheless, the concept of children's agency encourages educators to approach refugee children's ECEC with culturally sensitive and asset-based pedagogy (Paris,2012) and unlearn the preconceived notions that 'they behave in certain ways because they are traumatized or not yet integrated into the host country's societies'. Perhaps, in conflicting situations, teachers may reflect whether or not the rules are clearly communicated and understood by the children.

In addition, "children's agency" does not propose that children can do everything on their own. Rather, the study identified that the teachers of the FBO encouraged the children to display their agency by leading children-centered activities, initiating interactive dialogues, caring, and making efforts to engage the parents in children's adaptation to FBO. On top of understanding children as social actors, the concept of agency highlights the synergy of interdependence and the relational aspect of constructing childhood (Abebe, 2019; Leonard, 2016).

It is uncertain for how long children would carry the label "refugee children" for their life journeys (Dryden-Peterson,2017). However, this study shares the stories of refugee children who were, and still are actively living and constructing their childhood. When they were given the opportunities for structured education and surrounded by trained educators who acknowledged

their being, the children were able to learn about and exercise their agency. Indeed, the current efforts for refugee children in host countries are not only preparing them for integration into the host society (Park et al., 2018), but also protecting their "being" in childhood, which can never be repeated. Therefore, steady research on childhood studies through interdisciplinary approaches in different contexts will empower the discourse on refugee children and enrich their education. Furthermore, it is hoped that those efforts will soon reach the millions of children in the world, who because of displacement, lack access to education and a means to learn about and exercise their rights (UNHCR, 2021).

REFERENCES

Abebe, T. (2019). Reconceptualising Children's Agency as Continuum and Interdependence. *Social Sciences*, *8*(3), 81. https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci8030081

Alasuutari, M. (2014). Voicing the child? A case study in Finnish early childhood education. Childhood, 21(2), 242–259. https://doi.org/10.1177/0907568213490205

Albon, D., & Huf, C.. (2021). What matters in early childhood education and care? The contribution of ethnographic research. *Ethnography and Education*, *16*(3), 243–247. https://doi.org/10.1080/17457823.2021.1916978

Almqvist, K., & Broberg, A. G. (1999). Mental health and social adjustment in young refugee children y 3½ years after their arrival in Sweden. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, *38*(6), 723-730.

Andresen, M., & Havnes, T. (2018). Child care, parental labor supply and tax revenue. IZA Discussion Papers 11576, Institute of Labor Economics (IZA).

Anderson, J., (Host),(2022, April). *How We Can Better Support Refugees in Education [Audio podcast episode]In Harvard EdCast:* Harvard Graduate School of Education. https://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/22/04/harvard-edcast-how-we-can-better-support-refugees-education

Bauernschuster, S., & Schlotter, M.. (2015). Public child care and mothers' labor supply—Evidence from two quasi-experiments. *Journal of Public Economics*, *123*, 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpubeco.2014.12.013

Berthelsen, D., & Brownlee, J.. (2005). Respecting children's agency for learning and rights to participation in child care programs. *International Journal of Early Childhood*, *37*(3), 49–60. https://doi.org/10.1007/bf03168345

Berlin Senate (2018)- Here in Berlin: Comprehensive Programme for the Integration and Participation of Refugees „*Angekommen in Berlin: Gesamtkonzept zur Integration und Partizipation Geflüchteter*"

Berlin Senatsverwaltung für Bildung, Jugend und Familie (2018) Leitlinien „Frühe Bildung vor Ort“ für Kinder aus geflüchteten Familien (FBO) Retreieved October 1, 2020 from https://www.kindererde.net/fbo/

Bousselin, A.. (2021). Access to universal childcare and its effect on maternal employment. *Review of Economics of the Household*. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11150-021-09572-9

Braun, V., Clarke, V., 2006. Using thematic analysis in psychology. Qualitative Research in Psychology 3, 77–101.. doi:10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Braun, V., Clarke, V. & Weate, P. (2016). Using thematic analysis in sport and exercise research. In B. Smith & A. C. Sparkes (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of qualitative research in sport and exercise* (pp. 191-205). London: Routledge.

Buchmüller, Thimo & Lembcke, Hanna & Ialuna, Francesca & Busch, Julian & Leyendecker, Birgit. (2020). Mental Health Needs of Refugee Children in Specialized Early Education and Care Programs in Germany. Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health. 22. 10.1007/s10903-019-00896-4.

Busch J, Bihler LM, Lembcke H, Buchmüller T, Diers K and Leyendecker B (2018) *Challenges and Solutions Perceived by Educators in an Early Childcare Program for Refugee Children*. Front. Psychol. 9:1621. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01621

Busse, A., & Gathmann, C.. (2018). Free Daycare and Its Effects on Children and Their Families. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3169867

Charteris, J., & Smardon, D., (2018) A typology of agency in new generation learning environments: emerging relational, ecological and new material considerations, Pedagogy, Culture & Society, 26:1, 51-68, DOI: 10.1080/14681366.2017.1345975

Clark, A. (2014) In Clark, A., Flewitt, R., Hammersley, M., and Robb M., (2014). 12 Developing and Adapting the Mosaic Approach. In *Understanding research with children and young people*. Sage

Clarke, V. (2018). Thematic analysis - an introduction [YouTube Video]. In *YouTube*.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5zFcC10vOVY&ab_channel=VictoriaClarke

Cornelissen, T., Dustmann, C., Raute, A., & Schönberg, U.. (2018). Who Benefits from Universal Child Care? Estimating Marginal Returns to Early Child Care Attendance. *Journal of Political Economy*, *126*(6), 2356–2409. https://doi.org/10.1086/699979

Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.

Davies, S., & Batchelor, C. (2017). *Resettlement as a protection tool for refugee children*.https://www.fmreview.org/sites/fmr/files/FMRdownloads/en/resettlement/davies-batchelor.pdf

Dekker, R., Emilsson, H., Krieger, B., & Scholten, P.. (2015). A Local Dimension of Integration Policies? A Comparative Study of Berlin, Malmö, and Rotterdam. *International Migration Review*, *49*(3), 633–658. https://doi.org/10.1111/imre.12133

Derluyn, I., & Broekaert, E. (2007). Different perspectives on emotional and behavioural problems in unaccompanied refugee children and adolescents. *Ethnicity and health*, *12*(2), 141-162.

Dryden-Peterson, S.. (2016). Refugee education in countries of first asylum: Breaking open the black box of pre-resettlement experiences. *Theory and Research in Education*, *14*(2), 131–148. https://doi.org/10.1177/1477878515622703

Dryden-Peterson, S.. (2017). Refugee education: Education for an unknowable future. *Curriculum Inquiry*, *47*(1), 14–24. https://doi.org/10.1080/03626784.2016.1255935

Esser, F., Baader, M.S., Betz, T. & Hungerland, B. (eds.) 2016. Reconceptualising agency and childhood. New perspectives in Childhood Studies 2016. New York: Routledge. E-book.

Ennser-Kananen, Johanna (2020). Coming to terms with ourselves in our research. Language on the Move, 8 July. https://www.languageonthemove.com/coming-to-terms-with-ourselves-in-our-research/

Eruyar, S., Maltby, J. & Vostanis, P. (2018). Mental health problems of Syrian refugee children: The role of parental factors. *European Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 27*(4), 401-409. https://doi.org/10.1007/s00787-017-1101-0

Fisher, R.. (2010). Young writers' construction of agency. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, *10*(4), 410–429. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468798410382407

Fusch, P. I., Fusch, G. E., & Ness, L. R. (2017). How to conduct a mini-ethnographic case study: A guide for novice researchers. *The Qualitative Report*, *22*(3), 923-942.

Gambaro, L., Neidhöfer, G., & Spiess, C. K. (2021). The effect of early childhood education and care services on the integration of refugee families. *Labour Economics*, *72*, 102053. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.labeco.2021.102053

Gerokosta,V.S., 2017, "Integration of refugee children in kindergarten:Views of nursery teachers in the Prefecture of Chios", *Journal of Contemporary Education, Theory & Research*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 33-40, 2017

GO FAIR, 2022, January 2., *Fair Principles*, GO FAIR. https://www.go-fair.org/fair-principles/

Gopalakrishnan, M., (2017) *Voluntary returns: when asylum seekers want to go home | Deutsche Welle | 10.05.2017*. DW.COM. https://www.dw.com/en/voluntary-returns-when-asylum-seekers-want-to-go-home/a-38782509

Hammersley, M. (2013). Methodological Ideas. In A. Clark, R. Flewitt, M. Hammersley, & M. Robb (Eds.) *Understanding Research with Children and Young People* SAGE Publications (pp. 169-186).

Hammersley, Martyn. 2016. Childhood studies: A sustainable paradigm? *Childhood* 24: 113–27. https://doi.org/10.1177/0907568216631399

Hammersley, M. (2018). What is ethnography? Can it survive? Should it?. *Ethnography and Education*, *13*(1), 1-17.

Harju, A., & Åkerblom, A.. (2020). Opening up new spaces for languaging practice in early childhood education for migrant children. *International Journal of Early Years Education*, *28*(2), 151–161. https://doi.org/10.1080/09669760.2020.1765087

Hart, A., R., 1997, *Children's Participation*
The Theory and Practice of Involving Young Citizens in Community Development and Environmental Care, Routledge, ISBN 9781853833229

Holmes, A. G. D. (2020). Researcher Positionality--A Consideration of Its Influence and Place in Qualitative Research--A New Researcher Guide. *Shanlax International Journal of Education*, *8*(4), 1-10.

Jenks, C. (2000). Zeitgeist research on childhood. In Christensen, P., & James, A. (Ed.) *Research with children: Perspectives and practices*, p.62-76. Routledge

Koyama, J., & Bakuza, F. R. (2017). A timely opportunity for change: Increasing refugee parental involvement in U.S. schools. *Journal of Educational Change*, *18*(3), 311-335. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10833-017-9299-7

Ladson-Billings, G., 1995 "Toward a Theory of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy" American Educational Research Journal, Vol. 32, No. 3. (Autumn, 1995), pp. 465-491. Stable URL: http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0002-8312%28199523%2932%3A3%3C465%3ATATOCR%3E2.0.CO%3B2-4

LAF (Landesamt für Flüchtlingsangelegenheit) (2022), *Überblick über die Flüchtlingsunterkünfte in Berlin - Berlin.de* (Retrieved on 29.03.2022) https://www.berlin.de/laf/wohnen/allgemeine-informationen/ueberblick-fluechtlingsunterkuenfte/artikel.629241.php

Leonard, M. (2016). The sosiology of children, childhood and generation. London: Sage https://us.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-assets/73141_book_item_73141.pdf

Liebig, T., & Tronstad, K.R. (2018) 'Triple disadvantage? A first Overview of the Integration of Refugee women', OECD Social, Employment, and Migration Working Papers No. 216 OECD Publishing, Paris

Lund, C. (2014). Of what is this a case?: Analytical movements in qualitative social science research. *Human organization*, *73*(3), 224-234.

Maguire, M., & Delahunt, B. (2017). Doing a thematic analysis: A practical, step-by-step guide for learning and teaching scholars. *All Ireland Journal of Higher Education*, *9*(3). http://ojs.aishe.org/index.php/aishe-j/article/view/335

Maher, M., & Smith, S.. (2014). Asylum Seeker and Refugee Children Belonging, Being and Becoming: The early Childhood Educator's Role. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*, *39*(1), 22–29. https://doi.org/10.1177/183693911403900104

McDevitt (2021) Teaching immigrant children: learning from the experiences of immigrant early childhood teachers, Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education, 42:2, 123-142, DOI: 10.1080/10901027.2020.1818650

Moerman. (2016). 2.2 Participant Observation | Qualitative Methods | Observation | UvA [YouTube Video]. In *YouTube*. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fDNYzPDlfRA&ab_channel=ResearchMethodsandStatistics

Montgomery, Heather (2014). Participant observation. In: Clark, Alison; Flewitt, Rosie; Hammersley, Martyn and Robb, Martin eds. *Understanding Research with Children and Young People.* Published in association with The Open University. Sage, pp. 122–135.

Morland, L., & Levine, T. (2016). Preschool: Collaborating With Refugee Resettlement Organizations: Providing a Head Start to Young Refugees. *YC Young Children, 71*(4), 69-75. Retrieved October 1, 2020, from http://www.jstor.org/stable/ycyoungchildren.71.4.69

Murthy, R. S., & Lakshminarayana, R. (2006). Mental health consequences of war: a brief review of research findings. *World psychiatry: official journal of the World Psychiatric Association (WPA)*, *5*(1), 25–30.

Paris, D.. (2012). Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy. *Educational Researcher*, *41*(3), 93–97. https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189x12441244

Park, Maki, Caitlin Katsiaficas, and Margie McHugh. 2018. *Responding to the ECEC Needs of Children of Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Europe and North America*. Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute

Pupavac, V. (2008). Refugee Advocacy, Traumatic Representations and Political Disenchantment. *Government and Opposition, 43*(2), 270-292. doi:10.1111/j.1477-7053.2008.00255.x

Quigley, C. F. & Hall, A. H. (2014). Creating space: Pedagogical choices to encourage a third space in an urban, kindergarten science classroom.

Presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Philadelphia, PA.

Qvortrup, J., Corsaro, W.A., & Honig, M.-S. (2009). Why social studies of childhood? Introduction to the Handbook. In J. Qvortrup, W.A. Corsaro & M.-S. Honig (Eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Childhood Studies* (pp. 1-18). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Qvortrup, J. (2014). Sociology: Societal Structure, Development of Childhood, and the Well-Being of Children. *Handbook of Child Well-Being*, 663–707. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-90-481-9063-8_138

Reyes, V.. (2020). Ethnographic toolkit: Strategic positionality and researchers' visible and invisible tools in field research. *Ethnography*, *21*(2), 220–240. https://doi.org/10.1177/1466138118805121

Responsible conduct of research. (2018). Responsible Research. https://vastuullinentiede.fi/en/doing-research/responsible-conduct-research

Sevon, E. & Kuukka, A., (2021) Lecture 2: Childhood in society [PowerPoint slides] . Retrieved from: https://moodle.jyu.fi/pluginfile.php/699144/mod_resource/content/1/Slides%20Tue%2012012021.pdf

Smith, N. (2013). Perspectives on parental involvement: a discussion of practitioner research. In A. Clark, R. Flewitt, M. Hammersley, & M. Robb (Eds.), *Understanding Research with Children and Young People* SAGE Publications

Sokol, B. W., & Huerta, S. (2010). Through Thick and Thin: Agency as 'Taking' Perspectives [Review of *Psychological Agency: Theory, Practice, and Culture*, by R. Frie]. *Human Development*, *53*(1), 46–52. https://www.jstor.org/stable/26764943

Tracy, S. J., (2012), Qualitative research methods: collecting evidence, crafting analysis, communicating impact. Oxford: Wiley (eBook).

UN General Assembly, (1989), *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, 20 November 1989, United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 1577, p. 3, available at: https://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b38f0.html [accessed 2 May 2022]

United Nations, (2022) Goal 4 | *Department of Economic and Social Affairs*. (Retrieved 23.3.2022). Un.org. https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal4

UN News (2017, May 26)., *"All refugees want to go home someday" – UNHCR spokesperson and author Melissa Fleming*. (Retrieved 29.03.2022) https://news.un.org/en/story/2017/05/558212-all-refugees-want-go-home-someday-unhcr-spokesperson-and-author-melissa-fleming

UNESCO, (2021). Non-state actors in education | Global Education Monitoring Report. (Retrieved 23.03.2022). Unesco.org. https://en.unesco.org/gem-report/non-state_actors

UNESCO (2019). Global Education Monitoring Report 2019. Migration, displacement and education: Building bridges, not walls. UNESCO: Paris. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000265866/PDF/265866eng.pdf.multi

UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (2011), The 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, September 2011, available at: https://www.refworld.org/docid/4ec4a7f02.html [accessed 2 May 2022]

UNHCR (2021). *UNHCR - Refugee Statistics*. (Retrieved 23.03.2021) UNHCR. https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/#:~:text=Forcibly%20displaced%20people%20worldwide,84%20million%20at%20mid%2D2021.

UNHCR Global Trends - Forced displacement in 2020. (2021, June 18). UNHCR Flagship Reports. https://www.unhcr.org/flagship-reports/globaltrends/

UNHCR, UNICEF & IOM (2019). Access to education for refugee and migrant children in Europe. Factsheet, September 2019. DOI: https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/press_release/file/access-to-education-for-refugee-children.pdf

UNICEF DATA. (2021, September) *Child Displacement and Refugees* - UNICEF DATA. (Retrieved 23.03.2021) https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-migration-and-displacement/displacement/

Vandekerckhove,A., & Aarssen, J. (2020) High time to put the invisible children on the agenda: supporting refugee families and children through quality ECEC, European Early Childhood Education Research Journal, 28:1, 104-114, DOI: 10.1080/1350293X.2020.1707366

Vaismoradi M, Turunen H, Bondas T (2013). Content analysis and thematic analysis: Implications for conducting a qualitative descriptive study. Nurs Health Sci. (3):398-405. doi: 10.1111/nhs.12048. Epub 2013 Mar 11. PMID: 23480423.

Valentine, K.. (2011). Accounting for Agency. *Children & Society*, *25*(5), 347–358. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1099-0860.2009.00279.x

Varpanen, J.. (2019). What is children's agency? A review of conceptualizations used in early childhood education research. *Educational Research Review*, *28*, 100288. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2019.100288

Vuorisalo, M., Raittila, R., & Rutanen, N. (2018). Kindergarten space and autonomy in construction : Explorations during team ethnography in a Finnish kindergarten. Journal of Pedagogy, 9(1), 45-64. https://doi.org/10.2478/jped-2018-0003

Vuorisalo, M., Rutanen, N., & Raittila, R. (2014). Constructing relational space in early childhood education. *Early Years*, *35*(1), 67–79. https://doi.org/10.1080/09575146.2014.985289

Vuorisalo, M., Raittila, R., & Rutanen, N.. (2018). Kindergarten space and autonomy in construction – Explorations during team ethnography in a Finnish kindergarten. *Journal of Pedagogy*, *9*(1), 45–64. https://doi.org/10.2478/jped-2018-0003

Ward, A. N., & Warren, N. A., (2020). "In Search of Peace": Refugee Experiences in Children's Literature. *The Reading Teacher*, *73*(4), 405–413. https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.1849

West, A., Blome, A., & Lewis, J.. (2020). What characteristics of funding, provision and regulation are associated with effective social investment in ECEC in England, France and Germany?. *Journal of Social Policy*, *49*(4), 681–704. https://doi.org/10.1017/s0047279419000631

Wihstutz,A., (2020) 'I can't sit here and cry with you, I have to play'. Strategies by very young children in refugee collective accommodation, European Early Childhood Education Research Journal, 28:1, 115-128, DOI: 10.1080/1350293X.2020.1707367

Wood, D., Bruner, J. S., & Ross, G.. (1976). THE ROLE OF TUTORING IN PROBLEM SOLVING *. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, *17*(2), 89–100. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-7610.1976.tb00381.x

Ziaian, T., de Anstiss, H., Antoniou, G., Baghurst, P., & Sawyer, M. (2013). Emotional and behavioural problems among refugee children and adolescents living in South Australia. Australian Psychologist, 48(2), 139-148.

APPENDICES

All the documents were translated from English to German by the researcher with help of native German speakers, so that the languages learners (ex. Parents) may also understand the document.

Appendix 1 Research Notification (GER/ENG below)

<u>Mitteilung der Forschung</u>

Sehr geehrte Damen und Herrn,

mein Name ist Ahee Kim, ehemalige Mitarbeiterin in der Frühen Bildung vor Ort (FBO) vom 8.1.2020 bis 31.07.2020. Nun als Master Studentin, die Bildung und Entwicklung an der Universität Jyväskylä, Finnland studiert, bitte ich Sie, an der Forschung meiner Masterarbeit „Fähigkeiten von Kindern mit Migrationshintergrund in der frühen Bildung (children's agency in early childhood education)" teilzunehmen. Mit Beobachtungen von Kindern in der FBO, will ich ihre Interaktionen untereinander und mit den Erzieherinnen untersuchen und die die Fähigkeiten der Kinder (agency) in der frühen Bildung zeigen.

Nur mit Ihrer Zustimmung werde ich ab dem 21.06.2021 bis zum 19.07.2021 die FBO zweimal pro Woche besuchen. Jetzt stelle ich Ihnen die Methoden vor, die ich in meiner Forschung anwenden werde:

Inhalt	**Methoden**	**Zeitraum**
Die Beobachtung der Interaktionen von Kindern	Video & Aufnahmen & Transkriptionen	Gelegentliche Aufnahmen von Kindern während der Beobachtung mit Hilfe der GoPro Kamera
	Bilder von den Kinderarbeiten	
	Feldnotizen	Gelegentliche Notizen mit einem Kugelschreiber und Papier
Gespräche mit Erzieherinnen	Aufnahmen & Transktiptionen	Ca. Eine Stunde nach der Beobachtung

Die Zusammenartbeit mit Kindern und dem Erzieherinnenteam der FBO hat mir viel beigebracht, deswegen würde ich die FBO wieder besuchen. Ich möchte die Interaktionen von Kindern in Hinblick auf Ihre Fähigkeiten (agency) beobachten. Diese Untersuchung ist ein Teil meines Studiums. Die Ergebnisse werde ich mit den Mitarbeiterinnender FBO teilen, aber sie werden nicht zu privaten Zwecken genutzt. Alle Dateien werden auf der Driveplatform von der Universität gespeichert (U Drive). Für den Datenschutz werden die persönlichen Daten (Namen, Nationalitäten) pseudonymisiert.

Bitte beachten Sie, dass die Teilnahme an dieser Untersuchung freiwillig ist. Mit Ihrer Unterschrift erklären Sie Ihr Einverständnis für die Teilnahme Ihres Kindes/Ihrer Kinder.

Sie können auch wählen, ob Sie **nur die Beobachtung** oder **auch die Aufnahmen** von Ihren Kindern erlauben. Ihre Wahl können Sie am Ende dieses Dokuments ankreuzen.

Das Recht und die Würde der Kinder ist in jedem Fall gewahrt. Teilnahme an dieser Forschung ist ohne Entgelt.

Bitte geben Sie mir Bescheid, falls Sie irgendwelche Fragen oder Zweifeln haben.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen,

Ahee Kim, Masterstudentin in Entwicklung, Bildung und internationale Zusammenarbeit, ahee.21.kim@student.jyu.fi, +491773314383, Universität Jyväskylä, Finnland

Research Notification (ENG)

Dear _____

My name is Ahee Kim, a former Frühen Bildung vor Ort (FBO) intercultural staff from 8.1.2020 to 31.7.2020. Now as a Master student studying Education and Development at the University of Jyväskylä, I am humbly asking you to participate in my study of refugee *children's agency in early childhood education*. By observing authentic interactions of children with each other and with teachers, I will study how refugee children display their agency (what they can do) in early childhood education setting.

Only with your consent, I will observe the FBO twice a week, from 21.06.2021 until the summer break begins on 19.07.2021. Here are methods that I will be using to witness children's agency:

Contents	Methods	Period
Children's interaction observation	Video/audiotape & transcribing	Random occurrence during the whole research period with GoPro rented from the university
	Photographs of children's work	
	Fieldnotes	Random occurrence with pen and paper
Informal interview with teachers	Audiotaping & transcribing	Around one hour at the end of the observation

Learning and working with children from FBO has taught me many things, and I would like to re-visit the FBO to observe and understand children's interactions through the lens of agency. This study is a part of my completion of studies, and the findings and analysis can be shared with the FBO staffs, but not for any other private reasons. All data will be saved on the university's U drive and personal data (names, ethnicity) will be pseudonymized to ensure data security.

Please note that participating in this study is voluntary. You can refuse to participate in this study or cancel your participation at any time. Please mark your consent to observation only or also to documentation.

Participation in the study will not cause any harm or discomfort.
No fee will be paid for participating in the study.
Please let me know if you have further questions or concerns:

Sincerely,16.06.2021

Ahee Kim, Master Student in Development, Education and International Cooperation, ahee.21.kim@student.jyu.fi, +491773314383, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Appendix 2 Privacy Notice (GER/ENG below)

Datenschutz

1. **Persönlichen Daten in der Forschung „Fähigkeiten von Kindern mit Migrationshintergrund in der frühen Bildung“**

Diese Forschung wird sich auf die Fähigkeiten von Kindern mit Migrationshintergrund in der frühen Bildung konzentrieren. Das Hauptziel dieser Forschung ist die Dokumentation, was die Kinder mit Migrationshintergrund in der frühen Bildung machen können. Aus diesem Grund ist es wichtig, die persönlichen Daten richtig aufzunehmen und sie später korrekt und sicher zu nutzen.

Die folgenden persönlichen Daten werden von den Teilnehmern gesammelt: Namen, Videoaufnahme, Feldnotizen, Bilder von den Kinderarbeiten, Gespräche mit Transkriptionen.

Datenschutz wurde auf Englisch geschrieben und dann auf Deutsch übersetzt, sodass die Teilnehmenden eine bessere Möglichkeit haben, den Text zu verstehen. Er wird auch von den Erzieherinnen und von der Forscherin den Teilnehmenden erklärt.

2. **Rechtsgrundlagen für die Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten zu Forschungs-/Archivierungszwecken**

Alle personenbezogenen Daten werden nur mit Einwilligung des Forschungssubjekts verwendet (Artikel 6.1(a) DSGVO)

Übermittlung personenbezogener Daten außerhalb der EU/des EWR

Der Schutz Ihrer Daten ist die Priorität der Forschung.

Während der Untersuchung, werden Ihre Daten nicht außerhalb der EU/des EWR behandelt. Die Ausnahme davon werden die Länder bilden, die über einen guten Datenschutz verfügen.

Im Fall, wenn die Forscherin nach ihrer Heimat (Süd Korea) fahren werden muss, sie wird die Hinweise von der EU berücksichtigen (Art. 46.2 DSGVO) (*https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/law-topic/data-protection/data-transfers-outside-eu/adequacy-protection-personal-data-non-eu-countries_en)*.

Schutz personenbezogener Daten
In dieser Studie basiert die Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten auf einem ordnungsgemäßen Forschungsplan und es wurde eine verantwortliche Person für die Studie benannt. Ihre personenbezogenen Daten werden nur für Zwecke der historischen oder wissenschaftlichen Forschung oder für ähnliche Zwecke

(Statistiken) verwendet und weitergegeben und es wird im Übrigen sichergestellt, dass keine Daten über Sie an Unbefugte weitergegeben werden.

Verhinderung der Identifizierbarkeit
Direktidentifikationsdaten werden als Schutzmaßnahme bei der Generierung der Daten entfernt (pseudonymisierte Daten, dann können Personen später anhand eines Codes oder ähnlicher Daten identifiziert und neue Daten mit den Daten zusammengeführt werden)

3. Die Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten nach der Studie

Das Forschungsregister wird bis (August 2023) gelöscht.

Controller und Forscher:

a) Universität Jyväskylä, Seminaarinkatu 15, P.O. Box 35, 40014 Universität Jyväskylä. Tel.: +358 (0)14 260 1211, Geschäftsnummer: 0245894-7. Datenschutzbeauftragter der Universität Jyväskylä: tietosuoja@yu.fi, Tel.: +358 (0)40 805 3297.

b) Forscher (die Studie wird im Namen des Forschers zu seiner Zeit/auf eigene Kosten durchgeführt). Ahee Kim, Masterstudentin in Entwicklung, Bildung und internationale Zusammenarbeit, ahee.21.kim@student.jyu.fi, +491773314383, Universität Jyväskylä, Finnland

Rechte der betroffenen Personen

Art. 7 DSGVO Bedingungen für die Einwilligung
Sie haben das Recht, Ihre Einwilligung zu widerrufen, wenn die Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten auf einer Einwilligung beruht. Durch den Widerruf der Einwilligung wird die Rechtmäßigkeit der aufgrund der Einwilligung bis zum Widerruf erfolgten Verarbeitung nicht berührt.

Art. 15 DSGVOAuskunftsrecht der betroffenen Person
Sie haben das Recht, Auskunft darüber zu erhalten, ob Ihre personenbezogenen Daten verarbeitet werden und welche personenbezogenen Daten verarbeitet werden. Bei Bedarf können Sie eine Kopie der verarbeiteten personenbezogenen Daten anfordern.

Art. 16 DSGVORecht auf Berichtigung
Bei Ungenauigkeiten oder Fehlern bei der Verarbeitung Ihrer personenbezogenen Daten haben Sie das Recht, die Berichtigung oder Ergänzung Ihrer personenbezogenen Daten zu verlangen.

Art. 17 DSGVORecht auf Löschung ("Recht auf Vergessenwerden")
Sie haben das Recht, in bestimmten Situationen die Löschung Ihrer personenbezogenen Daten zu verlangen. Das Recht auf Löschung besteht

jedoch nicht, wenn die Löschung den Zweck der Verarbeitung zu wissenschaftlichen Forschungszwecken verhindert oder wesentlich erschwert.

Art. 18 DSGVORecht auf Einschränkung der Verarbeitung
Sie haben das Recht, die Verarbeitung Ihrer personenbezogenen Daten in bestimmten Situationen einzuschränken, beispielsweise wenn Sie die Richtigkeit Ihrer personenbezogenen Daten bestreiten.

Art. 20 DSGVORecht auf Datenübertragbarkeit
Sie haben das Recht, die von Ihnen bereitgestellten personenbezogenen Daten in einem strukturierten, gängigen und maschinenlesbaren Format zu erhalten und diese Daten nach Möglichkeit und bei automatisierter Verarbeitung an einen anderen Verantwortlichen zu übermitteln.

Art. 21 DSGVOWiderspruchsrecht
Sie haben das Recht, der Verarbeitung Ihrer personenbezogenen Daten zu widersprechen, wenn die Verarbeitung auf einem öffentlichen oder berechtigten Interesse beruht. Dies hat zur Folge, dass die Universität Ihre personenbezogenen Daten nicht verarbeiten kann, es sei denn, sie weist nach, dass die Verarbeitung auf einem wichtigen und berechtigten Grund beruht, der Ihre Rechte ersetzt.

Ausnahme von den Betroffenenrechten
Eine Abweichung von den vorgenannten Rechten ist in bestimmten Einzelfällen aufgrund der DSGVO und des finnischen Datenschutzgesetzes möglich, sofern die Rechte die Erfüllung wissenschaftlicher oder historischer Forschungszwecke oder statistischer Zwecke verhindern oder wesentlich erschweren. Die Notwendigkeit einer Ausnahmeregelung muss immer in jeder Situation gesondert beurteilt werden.

Profiling und automatisierte Entscheidungsfindung
In dieser Studie werden Ihre personenbezogenen Daten nicht zur automatisierten Entscheidungsfindung verwendet. Der Zweck der Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten in dieser Studie besteht nicht darin, Ihre persönlichen Merkmale zu bewerten, d. h. Profilerstellung. Stattdessen werden Ihre personenbezogenen Daten und Merkmale aus der Perspektive einer breiteren wissenschaftlichen Forschung bewertet.

Wahrnehmung der Betroffenenrechte
Bei Fragen zu Betroffenenrechten wenden Sie sich bitte an den Datenschutzbeauftragten der Universität. Alle Anträge im Zusammenhang mit der Ausübung von Rechten sind an das Standesamt der Universität Jyväskylä zu richten. Standesamt und Archiv, P.O. Box 35 (C), 40014 Universität Jyväskylä, Tel.: +358 (0)40 805 3472, E-Mail: kirjaamo@jyu.fi. Besuchsadresse: Seminaarinkatu 15, Gebäude C (Hauptgebäude, 1. Stock), Raum C 140.

Alle Datenschutzverletzungen oder der Verdacht auf Datenschutzverletzungen müssen der Universität Jyväskylä gemeldet werden.
https://www.jyu.fi/en/university/privacy-notice/report-data-security-breach

Sie haben das Recht auf Beschwerde bei der Aufsichtsbehörde Ihres ständigen Aufenthaltsortes oder Arbeitsplatzes, wenn Sie der Ansicht sind, dass die Verarbeitung der personenbezogenen Daten gegen die DSGVO verstößt. In Finnland ist die Aufsichtsbehörde das Amt des Datenschutzbeauftragten.

Kontakt für das Büro des Datenschutzbeauftragten:
https://tietosuoja.fi/en/home

Privacy Notice (ENG)

1. Personal data processed in refugee children's agency in host country's early childhood education setting

This research will focus on how refugee children display their agency in host country's early childhood education setting. As the main purpose of the study is to document and analyze how children display their agency, it is important to have the personal data recorded and processed ethically and safely.

The following personal data will be collected from the participants: names, video and audio recordings, field notes, photographs of the children's works, and interview notes.

This privacy notice was written in English and then translated into German so that the participants could have a higher chance of understanding it. It was also explained by the researcher and teachers for the research participants.

2. Legal grounds for the processing of personal data for research/archiving purposes

All personal data will be used only by the consent given by the research subject (Article 6.1(a), GDPR)

Transferring personal data outside the EU/EEA

Your data protection is the highest priority of this research.

During this study, your personal data will not be transferred outside the EU/EEA, except the countries that are recognized with general protective measures of data.

If the researcher has to travel home (South Korea) for emergent reason, the researcher will follow the *the Commission's model clauses (Article 46.2, GDPR)*, as the adequacy talks were concluded with South Korea on 30 March 2021. When the European Commission recognizes the data protection measures of South Korea, the research may be analyzed in South Korea (*https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/law-topic/data-protection/data-transfers-outside-eu/adequacy-protection-personal-data-non-eu-countries_en).*

Protection of personal data

In this study, the processing of personal data is based on a proper research plan, and a responsible person has been appointed for the study. Your personal data will only be used and disclosed for purposes of conducting historical or scientific research or for other similar purposes (statistics), and it is otherwise ensured that no data about you is disclosed to unauthorized parties.

Prevention of identifiability

Direct identification data will be removed as a protective measure when generating the data (pseudonymised data, in which case persons can be later identified on the basis of a code or similar data, and new data can be merged with the data)

The processing of personal data *after* the study

The research register will be erased by (August, 2023)
Controllers and researchers:

a) University of Jyväskylä, Seminaarinkatu 15, P.O. Box 35, 40014 University of Jyväskylä. Tel.: +358 (0)14 260 1211, business ID: 0245894-7. **Data protection officer of the University of Jyväskylä:** tietosuoja@yu.fi**, tel.: +358 (0)40 805 3297.**
b) **Researcher (the study will be conducted in the researcher's name in their own time/at their own expense).** Ahee Kim, Master Student in Development, Education and International Cooperation, ahee.21.kim@student.jyu.fi, +491773314383, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Rights of data subjects
Withdrawal of consent (Article 7, GDPR)
You have the right to withdraw your consent if the processing of personal data is based on consent. Withdrawing consent does not have any impact on the lawfulness of processing based on consent carried out before the withdrawal.

Right to access data (Article 15, GDPR)
You have the right to obtain information about whether your personal data is processed, and which personal data is processed. If required, you can request a copy of the personal data processed.

Right to have data rectified (Article 16, GDPR)
If there are any inaccuracies or errors in the processing of your personal data, you have the right to request your personal data to be rectified or supplemented.

Right to have data erased (Article 17, GDPR)
You have the right to request your personal data to be erased in certain situations. However, the right to have data erased does not exist if the erasure prevents the purpose of processing from being fulfilled for scientific research purposes or makes it much more difficult.

Right to the restriction of processing (Article 18, GDPR)
You have the right to restrict the processing of your personal data in certain situations, such as if you deny the accuracy of your personal data.

Right to have personal data transferred from one system to another (Article 20, GDPR)
You have the right to obtain the personal data you have given in a structured, commonly used and machine-readable format, and the right to transmit that data to another controller if possible, and if processing is automated.

Right to object (Article 21, GDPR)
You have the right to object to the processing of your personal data if processing is based on public or legitimate interest. As a result, the university cannot process your personal data unless it can prove that processing is based on a significantly important and justified reason which supersedes your rights.

Derogation from the rights of data subjects
Derogation from the aforementioned rights is possible in certain individual situations on the basis of the GDPR and the Finnish data protection act, insofar as the rights prevent scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes being fulfilled or make it much more difficult. The need for derogation must always be assessed separately in each situation.

Profiling and automated decision making

In this study, your personal data will not be used in automated decision making. In this study, the purpose of the processing of personal data is not to assess your personal characteristics, i.e. profiling. Instead, your personal data and characteristics will be assessed from the perspective of broader scientific research.

Executing the rights of data subjects
If you have any questions about the rights of data subjects, please contact the university's data protection officer. All requests related to the execution of rights must be sent to the registry office of the University of Jyväskylä. Registry office and archive, P.O. Box 35 (C), 40014 University of Jyväskylä, tel.: +358 (0)40 805 3472, email: kirjaamo@jyu.fi. Visiting address: Seminaarinkatu 15, Building C (Main Building, 1st floor), Room C 140.
Any data breaches or suspicions of data breaches must be reported to the University of Jyväskylä. https://www.jyu.fi/en/university/privacy-notice/report-data-security-breach

You have the right to file a complaint with the supervisory authority of your permanent place of residence or employment if you consider that the processing of personal data is in breach of the GDPR. In Finland, the supervisory authority is the Office of the Data Protection Ombudsman.

Contact for Office of the Data Protection Ombudsman:
https://tietosuoja.fi/en/home

Appendix 3 Consent (Parents) (GER/ENG below)

Einwilligung (Eltern)

Ich willige ein, dass mein Kind/ meine Kinder an der Forschung von Frau Ahee Kim teilnehmen darf/dürfen. Es ist mir bekannt, warum Frau Kim mein Kind/meine Kinder beobachten will und welche Methoden sie in ihrer Forschung benutzen wird. Mit dieser Einwilligung verstehe ich, dass mein/e Kind/er freiwillig und ohne Entgelt teilnehmen wird/werden und jeder Zeit auf die Teilnahme in jeder Zeit verzichten kann/können.

Einwilligung für Frau Kims Beobachtungen in der FBO
Ich stimme zu, dass Frau Kim im Juni und Juli 2021 zweimal pro Woche unser Kind/unsere Kinder in der FBO beobachten wird. ☐

Einwilligung für Aufnahmen von Kindern
Ich stimme zu, dass Frau Kim für ihre Masterarbeit mein/e Kind/er beobachten und Videoaufnahmen machen wird. Ich stimme zu, dass Frau Kim die Daten sammeln wird (Namen, Video, Aufnahme, Feldnotizen, Bilder von den Kinderarbeiten, Gespräche mit Transkriptionen). Für den Datenschutz werden die persönlichen Daten pseudonymisiert und nur für akademische Zwecke verwendet. ☐

Die Vertraulichkeit der erhaltenen Informationen ist für den verantwortlichen Forscher verbindlich. Alle Audio-/Video-aufnahmen werden nach der Analyse gelöscht.

Datum _____

Name des Kindes _____

Unterschrift des rechtlichen Betreuers _____

Datum _____

Unterschrift der Forscherin _____

Kontakt:

Ahee Kim, Masterstudentin in Entwicklung, Bildung und internationale Zusammenarbeit, ahee.21.kim@student.jyu.fi, +491773314383, Universität Jyväskylä, Finnla

Consent (Parents)

This consent is to confirm that I give permission for my child/ren to participate in a study carried out by Ahee Kim from the Faculty of Education and Psychology, University of Jyväskylä. The information on the study and the purpose of Ms. Kim's observation is explained, and I make the voluntary decision to allow Ms. Kim to observe my child/ren to join her study on children's agency in early childhood education. With this voluntary decision, I can ask Ms.Kim to withdraw from observing my child/ren at any time, but she can still come to observe the other children.

Consent for Ms. Kim's observation in the FBO:

By checking this, I give permission for Ms. Kim to observe my child/ren twice a week in June and July 2021. ☐

Consent for Ms. Kim's documentation of my child/ren:

By checking this, I also give permission that data produced during the observation (audio/videotape, photographs, and fieldnotes) to be used in academic research, lectures, articles, and publication on JYX archive. The information may be presented anonymously without any identifying information. ☐

Confidentiality with regards to the received information binds the researcher in charge. All audio/videotapes will be terminated after the analysis.

Date _____

Name of the child/ren _____

Signature of the guardians of child/ren _____

Date _____

Signature of the researcher _____

Contact details for obtaining additional information
Ahee Kim, Master Student in Development, Education and International Cooperation, ahee.21.kim@student.jyu.fi, +491773314383, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Appendix 4 Consent (Teachers) (GER/ENG below)

Einwilligung (Erzieherin)

Ich willige ein, an der Forschung von Frau Ahee Kim teilzunehmen. Es ist mir bekannt, warum Frau Kim die FBO beobachten will und welche Methoden sie in ihrer Forschung benutzen wird. Ich willige ein, dass ich an dieser Forschung freiwillig und ohne Entgelt teilnehmen werde. Unter dieser Einwilligung verstehe ich, dass ich am Ende der Beobachtung von Frau Kim zu einem Gespräch eingeladen werde.

Ich stimme zu, dass Frau Kim für ihre Masterarbeit die Arbeit mit den Kindern in der FBO beobachten und die Daten sammeln wird (Namen, Video, Aufnahme, Feldnotizen, Bilder von den Kinderarbeiten, Gespräche mit Transkriptionen). Für den Datenschutz werden die persönlichen Daten pseudonymisiert und nur für akademische Zwecke verwendet.

Die Vertraulichkeit der erhaltenen Informationen ist für den verantwortlichen Forscher verbindlich. Alle Audio-/Video-aufnahmen werden nach der Analyse gelöscht.

Datum _____

Unterschrift der Erzieherin_____

Datum _____

Unterschrift der Forscherin _____

Kontakt:

Ahee Kim, Masterstudentin in Entwicklung, Bildung und internationale Zusammenarbeit, ahee.21.kim@student.jyu.fi, +491773314383, Universität Jyväskylä, Finnland

Consent (Teachers)

This consent is to confirm that I give permission to participate in a study carried out by Ahee Kim from the Faculty of Education and Psychology, University of Jyväskylä.

The information on the study and the purpose of Ms. Kim's data collection is explained, and I make the voluntary decision to allow Ms. Kim to observe the class time for her study on children's agency in early childhood education. I also agree to join her informal interview which would take place in the end of her observation.

By signing this, I give permission for the data produced during the observation (audio/videotape, photographs, fieldnotes and interviews) to be used in academic research, lectures and articles, and publication on JYX archive. The information may be presented anonymously without any identifying information.

Confidentiality with regards to the received information binds the researcher in charge. All audio/videotapes will be terminated after the analysis.

Date _____
Signature of the teachers _____

Date _____
Signature of the researcher _____

Contact details for obtaining additional information

Ahee Kim, Master Student in Development, Education and International Cooperation, ahee.21.kim@student.jyu.fi, +491773314383, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Appendix 5 Questions for the Semi-Structured Interviews (ENG/GER)

1) How long have you worked with children / children with forced-migration background?
   Wie lange hast du die Erfahrungen mit Kindern oder Kindern mit Flucht Hintergrund?

2) In your experience, does their background influence their participation? If yes, how?
   Nach euren Erfahrungen, spielt der Hintergrund von Kindern/ Familie eine Rolle bei ihrer Partizipation? Wenn ja, wie?

3) What do you think is the goal of FBO?
   Was ist das Ziel der FBO?

4) What do you think that children experience in FBO?
   was sind die Wahrnehmungen, von der Kinder in der FBO? Was erleben Sie?

5) How do you think FBO can support the integration of these children in Berlin/ Germany?
   Nach eure Meinungen, wie unterstützt die FBO die Integration von den Kindern?

6) What kind of challenges do you experience as FBO teachers?
   Welche Herausforderungen erlebt ihr?

7) How could you be supported?
   Wie könntet ihr unterstützt werden?