Researching the Assemblage of Cultural Diversity in Norway: Challenging Simplistic Research Approaches

Camilla Eline Andersen, Hedmark University College
Ann Merete Otterstad, Oslo and Akershus University College

(Accepted for publication in International Review of Qualitative Research)

Abstract
This article’s point of departure is an(other) urge to practice other methodologies than those that are dominant and familiar within the educational research landscape in Norway. The authors are researchers in early childhood education and care (ECEC), and this urge comes from a desire to encourage new ways of researching cultural diversity within ECEC that might destabilize problematic binaries. Dominant research approaches can, following Koro-Ljungberg & Mazzei (2012), “rely on the authority and normativity of methods to produce knowledge devoid of critical reflections and contextual consideration” (p. 728). Avoiding methodological approaches that uphold stable representations of Otherness through overgeneralizations of findings and decontextualization of research is a well-known challenge. Koro-Lungberg (2012, p. 809) calls this the politics of simplification, which is powerful through its control of qualitative research. The authors try to poke holes in this scheme of representation in relation to cultural diversity by installing themselves in agentic realist positions with a piece of data - a snapshot of an Internet homepage informing future students about a bachelor degree model. To think otherwise about cultural diversity in research, the authors ‘thinkfeel’ (Lenz Taguchi & Palmer, forthcoming) and are on the ‘lookout’ (Boutang, 2011) for events and transformative moments (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) around the folding of ‘the assemblage of cultural diversity in Norway’. Inspired by new materialist theories the authors install themselves bodily within the assemblage, which creates them as active components of the assemblage, to be sensitive to events and transformative moments with the data material. Inspired by Lather we think of this as ‘to live’ the data in new ways (Lather, youtube1).

Introduction
This ongoing work is part of the Norwegian project within an international critical childhood studies collaborative focusing on early childhood policy and dominant childhood assemblages. As teacher educators and researchers, we are situated in the geo-political location that is early childhood education and care in Scandinavia, a site different from those that are Anglo-American historically, socially, politically and pedagogically (Biesta, 2011). We have in Norway a national framework plan focusing on children’s right to participate and influence curriculum decision making from one year of age. All children are also entitled to have a place in a kindergarten. There is a holistic approach to learning including care, well-being, humor, free play and access to cultural and democratic values which are based on idealistic ideas positioning children as democratic participants in the society. Within

1 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oaz2F3sYcGY (published 26th. of October 2012)
educational policies and early childhood institutional settings, cultural diversity is seen as one of the most important issues to deal with as part of the government’s social equalization project. Politics and arguments connected to equalization processes often deal with how the other (or the minority child) has to become fluent in the Norwegian language. This perspective, we believe, indicates that equalization is reduced to efficiency in Norwegian language, or put in another way, to become a Norwegian citizen.

As a way to challenge these processes that seem to, again and again and in innumerable ways, work on Norwegianizing in particular ways children with minority background, we here try to push our own bodily habits when researching within the field of cultural diversity. One way to confront such habits is to approach cultural diversity in Norway as an assemblage within early childhood locally and globally. Another example of how we have tried to work differently as researchers, is that we have asked the somewhat strange question ‘when is data?’ (see footnote 1) as a strategy to think otherwise within this field. These, and other related methodological approaches constituted within the post-human/new material/Deleuzian vain in social sciences has, for us, opened for an unfaithfulness towards an ‘original’ piece of data and also for reading data as something else than a piece of representation. Our research can be designated as an experimental and experiential inquiry where matter, here folds of cultural diversities, provides capacity of affect and be affected (Semetsky, 2010, p. 477). To open for uncertainty, brings in the un-known and the yet-to-come.

When the question ‘when is data’ is already posed, it is not so strange to say that our data in this paper starts with a snapshot of an Internet homepage for a Norwegian University College early childhood education teacher preparation program. The snapshot is chosen by Camilla, one of the authors of this article. She has suggested this piece of data because it can, in a traditional way of reading data, be understood as representing a dominant discourse in ECEC in Norway. A discourse that tends to identify multicultural pedagogy as that practiced in ‘the name of’ children and professionals with dark skin tones, and/or with dark skin serving as the face of cultural diversity. Instead of avoiding this somehow static and problematic ‘representation’, we try to engage in it, for us, in novel ways throughout the paper. We have chosen to display the snapshot here in the introduction so that readers might follow more intensively how we struggle when we try to disrupt representational thinking(s) through experimentation.
In the middle

Both of us have for years worked with various theoretical perspectives, and ways of approaching and analyzing data to encourage new ways of thinking about cultural diversity and challenge dominant ways of doing research. Dominant research approaches can, following Koro-Ljungberg & Mazzei (2012), “rely on the authority and normativity of methods to produce knowledge devoid of critical reflections and contextual consideration” (p. 728). We are indebted to researchers within the field of early childhood education and care (ECEC) who have inspired us to challenge what we understand as simplistic research methodologies (e.g. Cannella & Manuelito, 2008; Rhedding-Jones, 2007), methodologies that we see as part of a neo-liberal assemblage of cultural diversity in the Norwegian landscape of ECEC.

Koro-Ljungberg and Mazzei (2012) address what research simplicity can achieve or hinder. For example, in Norway there is an increased focus on evidence-based research projects that measure children’s language and behavior skills (specifically that of minority children’s). A recent national research project “Better Provision for Norway’s Children in ECEC” (Forskningsrådet, Utdanning 2020\(^2\)), a longitudinal study following and measuring 1600 children’s wellbeing in barnehager, is defining 300 out of 1600 children as marginalized. Children and families moving between translocational and transnational positioning are often designated as from an ethnic cultural background or as living in poor families in the Norwegian welfare state. As such, research in Norwegian ECEC is described as measuring economic investment for the future, a practice that is common internationally. We thus ask what common sense of ‘culture’ is circulating here, intrigued by the complexities of the lived world. Norwegian ECEC is also part of a complex global landscape in which

\(^2\)http://www.forskningsradet.no/servlet/Satellite?c=Nyhet&pagename=utdanning%2FHovedsidemal&cid=1253977807944
educational research seems to have an increased emphasis on neo-liberalist ideologies (Ball, 2003, 2012; Ozga, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009). Further, researchers within Norwegian ECEC seem to be caught up in ‘politics of technologies’ (Ozga, 2008) as standardization, quality benchmarking and data harmonisation is embedded in comparative studies aiming to controlling and shaping the students (Bologna). Such standardizations asks for result-based outcomes, and a (re)searching for ‘what works’.

Finally, when we in this paper elaborate on the ‘primacy of the cultural’ we might be in danger of giving the reader an idea that we focus on the discursive and the linguistic to the exclusion of the ‘stuff’ of matter and materiality (Barad, 2003). Barad presents a line of provocative post-humanist questions to social constructionist feminist research here that we attempt to continuously consider in our struggles against simplification:

What compels the belief that we have direct access to cultural representations and their content that we lack toward the things represented? How did language come to be more trustworthy than matter? Why are language and culture granted their own agency and historicity while matter is figured as passive and immutable, or at best inherits a potential for change derivatively from language and culture? (Barad, 2003, p. 801).

Regarding our positions and simplification, researchers could ask how they might work against their own simplicity in forms of representation and scholarship (Koro-Ljungberg & Mazzei, 2012). Through our collaborative thinking, rethinking and unthinking, the thinking becomes the doing among us in our participatory research. To get beyond description we have worked hard to create a vocabulary together, like a ‘conceptual speed dating’ on Skype, to always encouraging the doings in processes of entanglement of the yet un-thought of.

**Experimenting with new-materialities**

We are interested in reconfiguring the snapshot with an image of a girl holding her stuffed toy by installing our bodies, inspired of Barad’s (2007) *agentic realist* approach and new material/post-human theories (Lykke, 2010), together with a Deleuzian *lookout* for what might happen with this image. Koro-Ljungberg (2012, p. 809) says that “methodological simplification also has a material presence and implications,” and as such we are not satisfied with just this image to use as data-material. We put ourselves in a *lookout* position entangled with the assemblage of cultural diversity in Norway by manipulating the image into something else, by using manipulation to do the analyses rather than just creating textual descriptions of the image.

Heckman (2008) says we cannot privilege reality over construction, and we cannot privilege construction over reality either. What we need is a conception that does not presuppose a gap between language and reality as opposites that must be bridged; rather, we see language embedded in the materialization already there. Material feminisms (Barad, Haraway, Heckman, Lykke) aid in this understanding as theories and examples to experiment with how the body, reality and socially constructed discourse are in interdependent relationships and in processes of mutual on-going transformation by going beyond the nature/culture and reality/discourse binary divides (Lenz Taguchi, 2010). In this assemblage, we as researchers also appear as entanglements of bodies and discursive material positions

---

which are affected by and affect us; the transformation of the Internet page occurs. Because
the body, acting with experience, is defined by its capacity, it is equally impossible to know
‘the affects one is capable of’ (Deleuze, 1988, p.125, in Smetsky, 2010, p. 479). We do not
yet know what passion occurs when we try to stretch our thinking further in new moments to
come, as a de-stratification of ‘old ways of thinking’. As part of the theoretical skeleton of
this paper we now present our reading of a “logic of assemblage” (MacLure, 2013) before we
elaborate further on diffraction and intra-activity.

**Researching Cultural Diversity when Following the Logic of Assemblage**

The concept of assemblage might allow us as researchers to work with cultural diversity in
unthought of ways (Giugni, 2010; MacLure, 2013; Sandvik, 2012). In *A thousand plateaus*,
Deleuze and Guattari write that “all we know are assemblages” (1987, p.25), and by this they
introduce a radical notion of multiplicity into phenomenon that we usually understand as
being structured and stable (Haggerty & Ericson, 2000), as examples, the chair we sit on, or
motherhood. Patton (in Haggerty & Ericson, 2000, s. 608) states that an assemblage is a
“multiplicity of heterogeneous objects, whose unity comes solely from the fact that these
items function together, that they ‘work’ together as a functional entity’, and that ‘any
particular assemblage is itself composed of different discrete assemblages which are
themselves multiple”. What Deleuze and Guattari call an assemblage is thus something at
work, something with a spesific structuration that makes something happen (Bennett, 2010). It
is a togetherness or groupings of diverse elements (like birds outside our window, rash on our
skin, memories and intentions) that function and produce

Effects generated by an assemblage are emergent properties, “emergent in that their
ability to make something happen is distinct from the sum of the vital force of each
materiality considered alone” (Bennett, 2010, s. 24). Bennett (2010) states that although what
she names “proto-members” of the assemblage (or according to the above Patton cituation,
“different descrete assemblage”) have vital force, it is an effectivity proper to the groupings
(p. 24). Bennett names this effectivity the “agency of the assemblage” (p. 24), and by this she
challenges theories that only recognize humans as agentic. Agency here is something
heterogeneous where both humans and non-humans are working together and generating
effects. When thinking and rethinking of researching cultural diversity through the logic of
assemblage we understand our bodies, theories, expressions, discourses, computers, software,
and various other fragments as working together. What follows are a few more examples of
proto-members (what we also name *ongoings*) in a Norwegian ECEC landscape, that are
specific to our geopolitical location. The limited space in an article allows us to briefly point
to only three major components.

First, Norway and other Nordic countries (Sweden, Finland and Denmark) most
commonly represent themselves as outsiders in relation to colonial power relations. These
countries’ colonial ties are usually regarded as week and their international relations are seen
to be characterised by “development aid, peace building and cooperation, rather than
colonialism and imperialism” (Mulinari, Keskinen, Irni, & Tuori, 2009, s. 1). Although anti-
racist movements and academic commentary on issues of race and colonisation have been
active in these societies since the 1970’s, these countries have maintained an image of
themselves as untouched by the legacies of colonialism and imperialism (Mulinari, et al.,
This might be an effect of the case that these countries, in contrast to the colonial centres in Europe, never went through “a period of critique of colonialism and its presence in everyday environments and encounters” (p. 2). When connecting ourselves to our data we wonder if nations who have had their period of critique, could have chosen such an image to illustrate a bachelor degree model of education for future teachers who theoretically should be well prepared to work with cultural diversity within preschools.

Another aspect intertwined in the ongoing cultural diversity assemblage is how the educational system has shifted political values from Bildung/upbringing and solidarity in the Nordic countries towards a results based out-come pedagogy privileging competition embedded in neoliberal ideologies. This shift reconstructs research into a universal travelling trade/business (Ball, 2012; Ozga, 2006) and local aspects into comparisons between nations in and out of the European Union and OECD. On an individual level, neo-liberal politics seem to change solidarity into individual responsibility. Each individual becomes responsible for their own inclusion, usually connected to speaking Norwegian fluently as the foundation for participation in the society (Sarwar, 2010).

Third, cultural diversity is a highly visible topic in the contemporary Norwegian society after the event on July 22, 2011 (Reinertsen et al, 2013) where Anders Behring Breivik activated a bomb in the political centre of Oslo that killed eight people, and then shot dozens of people at a political summer camp for youth, of which 69 died. This event casts a large threatening shadow on what many (also globally) understood as a peace-promoting and including nation. This event has had, and will continue to have, effects on how Norwegians understands themselves as citizens in a multiracial, multicultural, multireligious and multilingual nation. One difference that can be seen after this cruel event is a larger focus on terrorism and extremist groups, and further affects the becoming of the Norwegian society. From within this context, we want to elaborate new materiality and diffraction as analytical stances, trying to do research data differently.

**Research Against Interpretosis: Becoming-Animal and Diffractive Reading (OR, What to do with data?)**

As already stated, we are striving to get beyond a dominant representational, simplistic approach to data. How can the data and we become something other than a return to the same old categories (majority-minority etc.)? Or as Deleuze and Guattari ask: “How can we unhook ourselves from the points of subjectification that secure us, nails us down to a dominant reality?” (1988, s. 177). Deleuze and Guattari, we believe, have created a name for the ‘thing’ we are working with and against - *interpretoses*. They (1988) state that “interpretosis” is a disease “of the earth of the skin, in other words, humankind’s fundamental neurosis” (s. 127).

In Colebrook’s (2002) reading of Deleuze and Guattari, interpretosis is “a Western disease that traces all becoming back to some origin” and this, she points out, is typical of the Western representational schema (p. 134). In such a schema all experiences are read as the signifier of some original scene, and desire is for the lost origin that requires some form of substitution. Desire in a Western representational schema is thus connected to lack; we desire what we have lost (Olkowski, 1999).

In a Deleuzianguattarian reading however, *life* is desire, and desire is the expansion of life through creation and transformation. Desire is a production (Colebrook, 2002). Rather
than chasing what data means, looking for a signifier or searching for representations of lack, this positive idea of life lets us approach research differently. Deleuze and Guattari use the idea of “becoming-animal” to express the “positivity and multiplicity of desire and affects” (Colebrook, 2002, s. 134). For Deleuze and Guattari, becoming-animal offers a new way of thinking about perceiving and becoming. Becoming-animal is “a feel for the animal’s movements, perceptions and becomings; imagine seeing the world as if one were a dog, a beetle or a mole” (Colebrook, 2002, s. 136). For us, the idea of becoming-animal activates a way of performing data analysis that might attend to “sensations, forces, and movements beneath the skin, in matter, in cells, and in the gut” (MacLure, 2011, s. 999). Combined with the logic of assemblage and diffractive reading, becoming-animal might open up for creations we did not thinkfeel before, and fuel our workings against interpretosis.

**Diffraction and Intra-activity – getting intimate**

We use feminist new-material approaches inspired by Barad (2007) and the idea of assemblage via Deleuze and Guattari (1987) to challenge simple/familiar research thinking. We are further inspired by Lather’s call for post-qualitative research, elaborating on when is data. To elaborate on cultural diversity we thinkfeel around the folding of assemblages, which is connected here to apparatus of socio-material intra-actions. We have worked hard to create a vocabulary together, twisted around a shift towards the ‘when is data’. Data is also our connectedness in the processes of changing concepts as lookouts for movements, trying to displace own thinking when one molecular spin in itself to the next. The image/object as ‘data’ can in our assemblage also be seen as diffractions in intra-activity with us as researchers. When doing zig-zag readings (Lenz Taguchi, 2012) it is the processes of pleasure and surprise that also takes us to places we did not think of before (Reinertsen, et al, 2013).

As such, companionship, and openness to data – in-between pleasure and joy have been our diffractions and intra-actions. Intra-activity point to the relationship between any organism and matter, human and non-human, a photo on the paper and bodies alive, blood, cells, viruses, materials and subjectivities. Through reconceptualizing new ways of thinking in our collaborative activities the doings of the blood in our bodies are affected by intra-active movements.

Leaning on Barad (2007), she refers to diffraction as a principle from physics concerning “the way waves combine when they overlap and the apparent bending and spreading out of waves when they encounter an obstruction” (Barad, 2007, p. 28). In collaborative thinking, rethinking and unthinking we are attentive to details, and intra-subjective movements, intertwined with energies, intensities, tempo that also create vibrations/resonance/between the moments as chains of movements in the image. Doing diffraction as analysis of the image(s) provides possibilities for mapping the complexities of cultural diversity as deflected spaces, entangled with the image(s) in transformation and our bodies as researchers - a flyer, a girl, a dress, holding a toy, shoes, a body, phenotypes, authority of inclusion discourses, resistance, desires, unspeakable presence of ‘voice’, all entangled with intra-agential becoming.

Resisting more of the same research regarding cultural diversity implies that the subject no longer can be understood as a fixed being, but rather a way of being, in the doings, a verb rather than a noun. The subject is an effect of, and affects, multiple encounters that
 entail the history of the previous encounters, the present and the potentialities of the future encounters that might take place. When we install our researcher bodies together with the images at play, both in the moment but also in history and the future, together with other organisms and encounters, we are part of all these relationalities that constitute and are constituted again and again, never separating the other from ourselves. Barad’s (2007) intra-active theory serves as an avenue to explore how bodies are materialised within a constant becoming(s) both inside and outside what is perceived as a physical body (Rossholt, 2012).

Situating Ourselves with the Assemblage

When we focus on an agentic realist positions we install ourselves bodily within the assemblages, with the data material, which involves us as an active component of the assemblage, not as objective outsider viewers of data. Instead our installing with the Internet image intra-act as a way to thinkfeel cultural diversity and transition processes. Our project is thus always shifting as long as our thinking, talking, writing, walking, texting, drop-boxing, telephoning, Skyping takes us to spaces we did not think we were going. It is the creative processes of assemblage and not the product/result of our research project that we are elaborating. In this optics of knowing, the body is put into the processes of seeing (Law, 2000).

Starting (in the Middle again)…..aaaand Cut!

What is presented here as data, or as a component of the assemblage that we call cultural diversity, has been chosen without following particularly rules or steps. In fact, it was a piece of data that Camilla has collected and put in her archive of data for an ongoing research project on professionalism and racialization in Norwegian ECEC. The piece of data that we presented in the introduction is a snapshot of an Internet homepage. The site is meant to inform and recruit future students for a bachelor’s degree in early childhood education. A bachelor degree can at this University College be obtained through various models, and the text information in the snapshot is about a model named ‘Internasjonal forståelse og flerkulturelt arbeid’ (English translation: International Understanding and Multicultural Work).

Camilla says that what first struck her (although not surprisingly) with this University College’s homepage was the different phenotypes the editor of this page had chosen to illustrate the different bachelor models. All the other models (with titles as ICT, aesthetic, children’s culture and cultural heritage, nature and outdoors, and main model) were ‘illustrated’ with a picture of a child with white skin. Without elaborating in depth on why we started with this snapshot for analysis we both felt that the image is more of the same already creating simplistic explanations for cultural diversity. The composition connects a child with a dark skin tone together with texts focusing on international and multicultural issues in ECEC, which is always already there. When we read with the text on the flyer - multiculturality, diversity, culture, identity, ethnicity, racism, equity, tolerance, human rights, and international recognitions - we are affected by these constructions as well as temporality and spatiality are affecting a 40-year immigration history in Norwegian ECEC. We continue to interrupt the text with Camilla’s interference with the ‘original’ image from the web.
Camilla writes:

There are all together seven images on this homepage, and in them one child with brown skin, seven with white skin. The snapshot we have chosen illustrates the international understanding and multicultural work-model. In my first reading I am critical of the frequent use of phenotypes signaling African decent when contextualizing multicultural work (and also in seemingly cool advertisement for children’s clothes). I am also critical of the particular image of this girl that is chosen. Her body makes me think of needing children, and may thus construct pedagogues as missionaries and as professionals that must help these “needing” children. This particularly emerges when juxtaposing this with images in the other models. However, when reading discursively it is possible to read strength in being severe and also agency in the power choosing not to smile for the photographer. Gullestad (2007, s. 223), when writing on missionaries and Norwegian self-understanding, states that technologies that objectify, as photography and movie, create possibilities in terms of self-understanding and self-defense, and new dangers in terms of essentialisation, alienation, separation and exclusion. This calls for a critical caution when making use of photography to illustrate diversity and multiculturalism.

Although this first reading can be transformative, something else happens when thinkingfeeling with the snapshot. Instead of looking at it from a distant and thinking of it as merely passive stuff or as representing discourses, I now allow my bodymind to ‘get caught up in’ (Bennet, 2010, p. xv) the entanglement of discourse and matter as it is affected by and affecting me. When getting caught up in the material and discursive intra-activity of the event of reading the piece of data diffractively or as a becoming-animal, another reality seems to be produced than the one that made me decide on collecting this image of an Internet site. In the latter I was only able to critique how dark skin tones seems to be the face of cultural diversity. That reality could only be described in terms of what this image together with the letters on top of the page forming the words ‘International understanding and multicultural work’ seem to represent in terms of discourses. And from that I could question such discourses. In a diffractive approach to this data excerpt, another reality evolves when I, inspired by Lenz Taguchi (2012), make ‘myself aware of my imaginary and bodymind sensibilities’ (p. 275). When I read with data by understanding the data as ‘a constitutive force, working with and upon’ me ‘in the event of reading it’ (Lenz Taguchi, 2012, p. 274), I sense a wanting to touch and hold the girl that is depicted on the webpage. I do not think of her as minority or as needing. I do not think of her as resisting a strong discourse of ‘the colonized’. In my ‘bodymind involvement’ (Lenz Taguchi, 2012, p. 276) I instead imagine myself holding her, stroking her skin, smelling her skins reaction to the hectic and warm event of being photographed in a studio surrounded by hot lamps with bright light. I can imagine us sitting together after the photographs have been taken. The girl on my lap. We are just sitting there together. Together with the smells, the happenings around us, the dog left somewhere at the floor, my attentiveness to what she might share with me, my experience of years as a preschool teacher, her ways of being with the world.

Ann Merete writes:
Both of us, as researcher are part of the assemblage writing-thinking-feeling. Hence, when we look at these imagine with our bodies, we can see as vibrant machinery – we see and hear impulses and sounds of neo-liberal politics, simplicity, provocations, familiarity, fabrications, cultural diversities connecting us into affections of the already known stories with/in/about early childhood education and care. Through this image it is possible to ask - who is who here and there? Somebody has instructed the girl’s body into disciplinary technologies objectifying children’s bodies into docile bodies, as objects to be manipulated (Jones, et al, 2012). From my position it is possible to read her body shape within and against simplistic representations of more of the same. Her dress code is gendered, white intra-act with innocence, her black shoes signals social-class connection, picturing a well behaviour body following the docile body practices. Her body doesn’t entangle with an institution – she looks more like she is going out visiting somebody, bringing with her a dog as a companion. An agentic cut on the dog normalises the child by reassembling her as other children – having an animal to hold on to. Winnicott (object relation theory) is still working through the affection for and becoming affected by the object. The girl is not totally alone - she is connected to her dog. This takes me further to Derrida’s conception of hospitality (2002, 2005). What happens with the girl if there have not been any prior invitations preceding her arrival? What hospitality is the girl given in such an event? Here it is possible to problematize the concept of our assemblage entangled with politics of inclusion. How is this girl entangled in the processes of inclusion if I install Derrida’s host and stranger at play? How is the Norwegian immigration politics working?

Transformations and Not
To do subversion of the already known Ann Merete asks Trine Lise Midtlie Elmholt, one of her students, to manipulate the original image, by making it more blurry to see if the anew can bend our optics in directions for new becoming. The original image is a frame and the frame is framing our seeing. How could we create new kinds of objects as data? An image can never tell us as researchers about the relationalities or what affects there are in play in the framing, but we can ask some intricate questions about bodily entanglement with the virtualities we encounter. To manipulate the image to become something else might frame other lines that we didn’t see/thinkfeel through the original image. At this moment we can see through Trine Lise’s compositions, trace the connections between the images and also make an agential cut in one of them. There are several routes, and we will not take all of them further here. It is possible to install intensities, flows, and difference to see what happens in the moment of the event.
These images are moments in time, which enabled me to capture pieces of what I see, which again exposes movements of negotiations and becoming. My eyes were drawn into other dimensions when looking at the girl standing as a triple sculpture by asking; who is looking at whom? And what positioning is the researcher taken? It reveals a complexity analysis as topological readings. Can diffraction as analysis open for new understandings of this event? When I install the image as sculpturing the girl’s body into the sculpture, what happens? Being a sculpture might become a transforming event. A resistance of being the same might occur embedded in new subjectivities and different belonging with the sculptures. She has become three. Tripled. And not.

In my thinkfeel (Lenz Taguchi & Palmer, forthcoming) involvement with the now tripled snapshot, the desiring machine of race categories that seemed to be at work when collecting this data is still at work. Further, a line that is activated is a feeling of aversion of how the face of multicultural ECEC seems to a specific skin tone, a much darker skin tone than my own. The now various skintones challenge a stable idea of phenotype, and the sentence: ‘No matter what you do to me, I am here’ is produced in my mind. This tripling somehow also affects me and is affected by me to engage in thinkingfeelings around how children live with things. I believe it is my openness to the stuffed dog’s (dis)appereance in this now serial-difference-image that evokes a difference in me. I get carried away thinking of how I lately, through readings within the feminist vain of newmaterialist perspectives, have become more attentive to how stuffed animals, blankets, chairs, sticks, water, patterns and oranges are not dead backdrops of children’s lives, or anyone else’s.
I ask how will it be possible to make new connections in everyday practices – when I think feel by seeing and hearing all these images together. I interconnect with my body and spacetimemattering, which make me, unpack material – to go beyond discursive practises about cultural ethnicity. If I bring in Deleuze’s concept of the fold it enables me to look for movements between ontology and epistemology which involves time and spaces. Black and white becomes something else, which can transform in multiple ways and in many directions. It is the moment in which the event is embedded in a state of affairs...by saying here the moment has come (Deleuze, 2004, s. 172). What kind of traces has been left out? Searching for new lines of flight might bring in other sensational moments to surprise normalized early childhood methodology. By searching for dynamics, struggles and complexities in everyday routines looking into other elements in practice as rhythm, smells and odors, spaces, sounds, materials, such bodily language can open up for intra-assemblages.

Staring at the three images for a while connects me to spacetimemattering. The images are now transformed into light and shadows, which in time and space brings my body back to a story my mother read for me in the 1950-ties. A vulnerable body feeling appears through the images of the girl(s) – she/they is/are here and I am there – here and there are playing in spacetimemattering - in motion. Her body(ies), mine suddenly intra-act with the story about Little Sambo. My imagination places him in Africa – together with the tigers blurring into butter. I remember holding this book, quite thin, read over and over again. Discomfort appears – of not having any possibilities of not liking (the story). Sambo eats 169 pancakes that his mother, makes for him. In 1972, the Central Committee of Teachers Against Racism complained that Sambo depicted a stereotypical image of African American greediness because Sambo eats 169 pancakes. How did I become part of this story? My pulse is working with and against in zigzagging.

By transforming the girl into different images we resist that she might be read into a stereotyped, essensialised black girl embedded in representation of more of the same. Today’s neo-liberal politics are continually asking for research project upholding dichotomies between majorities and minorities, building on universal standardized effects studies. Differences, disruptions and complexities in research methodology demand ethics of entanglement (Barad, 2010), which might challenge simplicity when cultural diversity is studied. Logic of sense is changing.

Thinking the doings of the Image Further
Camilla has chosen a virtual image from an Internet homepage as our data-production, and as such the image has a status as virtual. Barad argues that material feminisms and other new materialisms should embrace a post-humanist ethics by “taking account of the entangled materializations of which we are a part” (2007, p. 384). We do not meet the girl face to face, the girl is elsewhere but we treat her like a girl in the neighbourhood, in the barnehage

pretending that we do ethnographic work. She is though sometimes seen as another. Virtuality
is often described as thin or shallow, lacking the depth and length of a real/good/reason
research project. Such a critique privileges a certain way of thinking of research, based on
categories and physical proximity or sameness. An ethical stance for us has been to avoid
otherness of the other in research connected to culture and ethnicities. By using a virtual
image, transformed into several images, we see that it is difficult not to encounter the stranger
that pops up on our screens without invitation. Through the anonymity of the interface, we are
always already reminded of all the other others that might be outside our assemblage, or not.
Derrida (2005) talks about the (impossible) hospitality and we have here, among different
intra-activities, struggled to reconfigure the presences of the stranger/the other by entangling
ourselves researchers who are welcoming the other over and over again. This might spin
itself into movement of politics to come.

References:

Policy, 18(2), 215-228.
New York: Routledge.
Barad, K. (2007). Meeting the universe halfway: Quantum physics and the entanglement of
Barad, K. (2010). Quantum entanglements and hauntological relations of inheritance:
Dis/continuities, SpaceTime Enfoldings, and Justice-to-Come. Derrida Today, 3.2,
240–268. DOI: 10.3366/E1754850010000813
Press.
analysis of the Anglo-American and Continental construction of the field. Pedagogy,
Culture & Society, 19(2), 175–192.
worldviews, marginalized feminisms, and revisioning an anti-colonial social science. I
N. K. Denzin, Y. S. Lincoln & L. T. Smith (Red.), Handbook of critical and
Press
Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (1987). A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia (B.
University Press.


