Discerning competence within a teaching profession

Jonna Larsson

Abstract

Title:	Discerning competence within a teaching profession
Language:	English
Master thesis:	40 hp/ects
Program:	EMEC; European Master in Early Childhood Education and Care
Level:	Advanced level
Term/year:	Spring term 2009
Supervisor:	Niklas Pramling
Examiner:	Biörn Hasselgren
Report no:	VT09-2611-02 Master
Keywords:	Competence, Teacher, Preschool, Discern, Developmental pedagogy, Variation theory

This study gives voice to the discernment of competence within the teaching profession. The overarching aim of the study was to find out what teachers themselves perceive as competence in connection with what they do in practice. The aim is also to reveal if there are similarities and differences between the teachers' and the researcher's discernment of competence – and to discuss this in connection with teacher competence.

The theoretical starting-point of the study is *variation theory*, whose significant feature is the concept of variation, which can be understood as an interest in different ways that a phenomenon can be understood. *Developmental pedagogy* is also used as a theoretical perspective, where variation and discernment are used as tools for grasping the link between teachers' perceptions of competence and their actions. Further, developmental pedagogy is used as a means of enhancing the teachers' own meta-reflective ability.

Eight teachers were shadowed with a video camera in their ordinary settings for one day. These teachers then took part in stimulated recall sessions based on three sequences drawn from the video observations. The focus of all the stimulated recall situations was to give each of the participants an opportunity to discern what she considered to be her competence as a teacher judging from her own presence in the setting.

The results show that teachers' and researchers' discernments of competence fall into four qualitatively different categories: (i) pedagogical knowledge, (ii) pedagogical intentions, (iii) pedagogical considerations and (iv) pedagogical assets. The main difference between the teachers' and the researchers' discernments concern the notion of the space given to the children. While teachers appear to be passive, they reflect on what step to take next while putting their pedagogical intentions into practice. The study also shows that the participating teachers have no difficulty describing or talking about what they think is their teaching competence.

Preface

This Master thesis has been produced within the project European Master in Early Childhood Education and Care [EMEC]. The program is on-line based, and students in Norway, Ireland, Germany, Scotland and Malta have also participated. This course has broadened my knowledge and nourished my experiences, reflections and understandings as well as giving me an opportunity to gain an international perspective on Early Childhood Education and Care.

I have not walked this path alone, for which I am grateful! During the last two years I have had the pleasure of sharing knowledge and perspectives of Early Childhood Education and Care with many friends and colleagues. Your support has been important, and still is.

My thanks are due to Professor Ingrid Pramling Samuelsson for giving me the opportunity to be a part of the Aesthetics project financed by the Swedish Research Council[1], of which this Master thesis forms a part. Without this possibility, it would have been hard to find such interested and intrepid teachers, who willingly shared their reflections and discernment of their teacher competence.

Thank you Niklas Pramling for supervising the work with this thesis, both the content and the language - it could not have been done without your support. Thank you Livia Norström for solving a number of technical issues when needed.

Further, a scholarship awarded by the SAF foundation[2] gave me the opportunity to write in a more focused fashion, without interruption, on a rainy and windy Malta, where the pieces finally fell into their right places.

Anders, Jakob and Anna! Your love and support made this possible. I know I have sometimes been an absent-minded mother and wife.

Alingsås in May 2009

Jonna Larsson

Table of contents

Chapter 1
Introduction

What do Early Childhood teachers discern as competence, and what does this imply about the teaching profession? Is it possible to grasp what teacher competence is, and how it is perceived? The aspects of competence visible to outsiders perhaps only show a small part of the teachers' complex competences. In order to broaden the understanding of what teacher competence is, to visualize implicit aspects and meta-reflections of competence, we have to listen to the teachers and extend the methods of observation and add something else. In this study, that 'something else' consists of stimulated recall sessions based upon video-recorded observations of teachers working with children.

In the past few years demands upon Swedish teachers to be able to describe their work have increased, and all preschools evaluate their work annually in a Declaration of Quality (Skolverket, 2005). This calls for increased competence and improved awareness of the pedagogical content and understanding of what teachers are doing while working. Revealing implicit understandings of the profession and making them explicit and available to reflect upon could be one way to do this.

The main focus here is to capture what teachers themselves perceive as competence in their own actions performed in their regular settings, and to try to find structures which could help both teachers and other interested stakeholders to understand what competence entails from an insider's perspective and not just from an outsiders' perspective.

The teachers participating in this study have been part of a research project aiming to develop children's knowledge about aesthetics by using meta-cognitive dialogues. The aesthetics project has focused upon some dimensions in the aesthetic area such as music, poetry and dance. The work conducted within these areas in nine ordinary preschool and school settings has been video-recorded. While participating in the aesthetics project, teachers have been given in-service training based on a theoretical perspective called Developmental pedagogy[3], lectures and workshops in the aesthetic areas as well as opportunities to look at, and discuss, some of the video recordings made in their settings. The teachers have also been given feedback on their work in the aesthetic area (Pramling Samuelsson, Asplund Carlsson, Olsson, Pramling & Wallerstedt, 2008). The opportunity to ask the teachers to participate in the present study as well arose when some supplementary data were collected for the aesthetics project, The sample of teachers who agreed to participate forms a special group, which will be further shown in chapter four and discussed in chapter six.

In this document, some concepts appear that need to be defined. The word 'teacher' is used as a general term for every individual on the staff of participating adults. Some of them are preschool teachers, while others have a different education as nursery nurses or teachers for the early years. The word 'pedagogue' is sometimes used instead of 'teacher' and is synonymous. Another word which comes up is 'preschool'. In a Swedish context, preschool refers to the institutions which children aged 1 to 5 attend full-time or part-time. The preschools combine play, learning and care and have to follow a curriculum, *Curriculum for preschool* [Lpfö-98], and is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Science and Education.

---

[3] Developmental pedagogy was developed by the Swedish Professor Ingrid Pramling Samuelsson and researchers connected with her work. For further information, see reference list: Pramling Samuelsson and Asplund Carlsson, 2003, 2008.

The term 'preschool class' is mentioned. The preschool class is an intermediary school form between preschool and school. The children are 6 years old and participation is voluntary, but 96-98% of all 6-year-olds attend this preschool classes. Like the compulsory school, they have to follow a curriculum, *Curriculum for the compulsory school system, the pre-school class and the leisure-time centre* [LPO-94], focusing on children 6–16 years and are placed under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Science and Education. The term 'curriculum' in this document chiefly refers to the documents published by the Ministry of Education and Science in Sweden, Lpfö-98 and Lpo-94. Other governmental documents will be referred to as steering documents.

Guidance for readers

This document consists of six chapters, covering different parts of the thesis. The first chapter is the present chapter, introducing the reader to the context within which the thesis is written and the aim of the study. The second chapter gives the theoretical background based on research about reflection and meta-cognition, developmental pedagogy and variation theory. The third chapter describes related research into the development of teacher training in Sweden, teacher competence and professionalism and highlights important aspects of professional vision. The fourth chapter deals with the methodology and presents the procedure and the content of the empirical study. The results of the empirical study are described in the fifth chapter and, finally, the sixth chapter concludes the study by discussing its results and giving some insights into the possible implications for Early Childhood Education and Care practice.

The aim of the study

The overarching aim of the study is to find out what teachers themselves perceive as competence in connection with what they do in practice. The study will show what aspects of teachers' competence are visible – to the teachers and to the analyst, respectively - when teachers who are working in preschool or a preschool class are followed using the shadow technique. The various competences found will then be described.

The aim is also to reveal if there are similarities and differences between the teachers' and the researcher's discernment of competence – and to discuss this in connection with teacher competence.

In addition, there is an intention within the study to give voice to the teachers' discernment of competence from an insider's perspective and not, as is often the case, only from an outsider's perspective.

Research questions

What aspects of competence do the teachers perceive in their own actions when looking at and speaking about filmed sequences of their work?

What do similarities and/or differences between what the teachers and the analyst discern tell us about teachers' competence.

Chapter 2
Theoretical background

This section refers to previous empirical research and the theoretical framework on which it is based. It focuses on the importance of aspects such as reflection, meta-cognition and variation in the area of teacher competence. The section gives a picture of aspects that need to be understood in order to grasp the complexity of teacher competence and the teaching profession.

Reflection and meta-cognition

What is it that teachers do in their practice, and do they have words to describe those aspects to others? Have they reflected upon their actions, or are these just taken for granted? Schön (1983, 1987) implies that it is difficult to tell someone else what you know and what you do:

> Often we cannot say what it is that we know. When we try to describe it we find ourselves at a loss, or we produce descriptions that are obviously inappropriate. Our knowing is ordinarily tacit, implicit in our patterns of action and in our feel for the stuff with which we are dealing. It seems right to say that our knowing is *in* our action (Schön, 1983, p. 49, Italics in original).

The concept of knowing-in-action is an important aspect of Schön's theory about conditions for and aspects of reflection. Knowing–in-action is when the practitioner acts in a situation according to the knowledge embedded within the person (Schön, 1983).

Reflection can serve as a tool for understanding some of the tacit, implicit, actions or situations that practitioners experience while performing their profession. This effect is, however, not produced by reflection alone. Schön (1987) develops the aspects of not being able to tell and talk about the doing and says further that reflection combined with observations can make it possible to describe the understanding that the practitioner has of the current situation. This understanding will reveal the implicit knowing of the situation and, at the same time, the description of the implicit knowing will depend upon the language available as well as upon the purpose of the description. Schön (1983) says that reflection-in-action can occur while we experience something surprising, something that is different from what we expected it to be (cf. the principle of variation, explained below).

The reflections made by the practitioner are invaluable in the context of shaping a competent way of dealing with the wholeness of the profession. The reflection-in-action perspective will contribute to the practitioners' shaping of the actual context; it has, so to say, a constructivist starting-point, and this understanding of reflection makes it an important part of one's creation of a personal understanding. The reflection-in-action can then contribute to revealing the tacit knowledge which is embedded in the practitioner's doing (Schön, 1987), and the reflection and the doing interact rather than counteract (Schön, 1983).

Van Manen (1991) states that reflection is the starting-point of many decisions teachers make during their practice. He also points out that "we often tend to live out these pedagogical intents before we have become actively aware of them" (van Manen, 1991, p. 23). These intentions are the sum of not only theoretical philosophies but also personal understanding of who you are as a person and the way you view the world that surrounds you. He also points

out that the two pedagogical terms thoughtfulness and understanding are related to each other[4] even if thoughtfulness relates more to reflection and understanding relates more to illuminate what is important in different situations. Pedagogical understanding can also be viewed as tact[5] and contains the ability to take the child's perspective. Tact and understanding are intertwined with each other and are both part of a process in which teachers act instantly in pedagogical situations (van Manen, 1991). Van Manen (1991) also explores the relation between reflection and action, and considers reflection to occur while we are not active in other ways, when we have time to think. During activity, on the other hand, the teacher is constantly interacting with children, and then the opportunity for reflection is strictly limited. The balance between being reflective and acting depends not only upon the teacher herself, but also upon the working conditions and structures within the profession. Van Manen outlines three levels of reflection; the reflection we do all the time, and calls this 'the common sense thinking' (van Manen, 1991, p. 100), the limited reflection we do based on experiences, which also occurs every day, third the systematic reflection which will change our insights and understandings of both theoretical and critical assumptions. Then, finally, we reach the meta-level, which is when we become able to reflect upon our reflections, which according to van Manen will make us "come to a more self-reflective grasp of the nature of knowledge, how knowledge functions in action and how it can be applied to our active understanding of our practical action" (van Manen, 1991, p. 100).

Taking this perspective of reflection, one can understand that there has been some criticism of Schön's (1983, 1987) concept of reflection-in-action regarding the focus upon reflection as an act, and that this act performed by the practitioner is supposed to be of more importance than the thoughts generated in the process of reflection. In the former view, reflection as an act, the intent is to focus more upon what you as a professional try to accomplish than on problematizing the thoughts generated by the actual reflection (Carlgren & Marton, 2004; van Manen, 1991), and the reflection-in-action could be just a superficial thought, which does not acknowledge the complexity of teachers' work and interactions (van Manen, 1995 in Hensvold, 2003). Van Manen (1991) considers that all reflection needs time and opportunities to distance oneself from the situation and dismisses Schön's (1983, 1987) concept of reflection-in-action as not being reflection but a kind of thoughtful/tactful action, saying "a tactful action is thoughtful in the sense of 'mindful'" (van Manen, 1991, p. 108).

While reflecting upon something, at some point you are using a meta-cognitive thinking, which could be explained as thinking about your thinking, using the first thoughts as a base for raising the consciousness of your thoughts to a higher level. Meta-levels of different aspects are highly relevant in research about learning (Pramling Samuelsson & Asplund Carlsson, 2003). While investigating meta-cognitive aspects and what these consist of, Pramling Samuelsson and Asplund Carlsson write, with reference to Brown (1978), that meta-cognitive aspects are concerned not with the actual doing or problem but with the reflection about how the problem was solved or the doing was carried out (cited in Pramling Samuelsson & Asplund Carlsson, 2003). Brown (op. cit.) says that the knowledge of whether you understand something or not is important in the field of meta-cognition. Just to read something and understand what you have read is not the meta-level in this case, but to understand that you have understood the things you read in fact shows a higher degree of mental consciousness, and that you are mentally on a meta-level (Asplund Carlsson &

---

[4] "Someone who is generally thoughtful is more likely to demonstrate real understanding of another person in a particular circumstance than a person who is relatively thoughtless" (van Manen, 1991, p. 84).
[5] Pedagogical tact comprises what one does when trying to understand a certain pedagogical situation, used as a basis for 'mindful' actions.

Pramling Samuelsson, 2003). In connection with reflection and meta-cognition, you can also add the concept of meta-cognitive dialogues, which implies that it is not just any dialogue, but a dialogue with a specific purpose: to develop someone's ability to express their thoughts about what they are thinking. In their developmental pedagogy, Pramling Samuelsson and Asplund Carlsson (2003, 2008) use meta-cognitive dialogues to give children opportunities to develop their understanding of their learning, but in this study, the meta-cognitive dialogue is used as a tool for emphasizing the reflective aspects of the teachers' practice?, and it functions as a tool for achieving a meta-consciousness of what they consider to be competence.

Developmental pedagogy

Developmental Pedagogy has been developed by Pramling Samuelsson and Asplund Carlsson (2003) and evolved out of the fundamental base of *phenomenography*, which was later transformed into *variation theory,* which is based upon empirical studies of children and teachers. Developmental pedagogy has a mission to contribute to enhancing learning in relation to young children. The core of the theory is to create situations where children can reflect and think about different aspects of interests, without being expected to deliver a right answer, but just in order to share their ways of thinking about and understanding a subject. The theory provides an opportunity to recognize different ways that subjects can be understood, and these aspects of differences, e.g. variation, are then used to enhance alternative ways of thinking and learning, where learning is viewed not only as a change of personal understanding on the inside, but also as a change in the understanding about the surroundings. This is a result of the teacher's intention of focusing upon the object of learning.

Another aspect is the contribution to viewing children as playing learning children, where the aspects of learning together with the teachers' professional attitude are of importance. Allowing/encouraging children to share experiences and ways of understanding together with other children as well as adults is a way to understand different perspectives. The direction of the learning is central, as are the different dimensions within the learning object, an object that together with the act constructs two concepts within the theory (Pramling Samuelsson & Asplund Carlsson, 2003, 2008). The teacher's professional attitude is extremely important here, but also the combination with the content of learning. These two are considered indivisible, just as play and learning are from this perspective. In this perspective, language and thinking are also indivisible, which implies that the person's reflections and expressions are needed in order to develop the thinking about a specific object (Pramling Samuelsson & Asplund Carlsson, 2008)? The connection of language and learning is achieved by communication, which in developmental pedagogy focuses upon the communication about children's thoughts and communication about the different ways children understand and discern aspects of their surroundings. This is not enough, however. Children also need someone to support such discernments and understandings, a person who is able to enhance their conscious understanding of their own thoughts, as when teachers illuminate taken-for-granted aspects by creating situations where children can reflect (Pramling Samuelsson & Asplund Carlsson, 2003; Pramling Samuelsson & Mårdsjö, 1997).

In this study, developmental pedagogy has been used as a theoretical base, which the teachers who participated in the research project were introduced to earlier before data were collected for the present study. The aspects of sharing experiences and using variation and discernments as theoretical tools in order to grasp the link between teachers' perceptions and competence are used here as a tool for enhancing the teachers' own meta-reflective ability. The present

study also tends to use competence as a learning object and meta-cognitive dialogues as a tool for enhancing the knowledge of a particular aspect: teacher competence.

Variation theory

Variation theory places learning at the centre and problematises how people look at 'something' as an object of learning. The terms of 'discernment', 'variation' and 'experience' are central to variation theory and are also linked to the epistemological aspects of this way of constructing knowledge (Alexandersson, 1994; Marton & Booth, 1997; Runesson, 1999).

In order to be able to discern something, you must be aware of some aspect of 'something'. Runesson (1999) explains the concept as follows: you also must be aware of how 'something' varies and what 'something' is *not*. Marton and Booth (1997) explore the nature of awareness and say that there is a link between how someone understands a situation and how the same person understands the phenomenon that is linked to the situation. You are aware of the situation and its context, but at the same time you go beyond the 'here and now' and link them to previous experiences and understandings. This level of understanding can be referred to as the phenomenon, as an "aspect" that gives the situation meaning. Marton and Booth (1997) say further that the situation and the phenomenon are intertwined, but at the same time different, since the phenomenon is the aspect that gives meaning to the situation. "Not only is our experience of the situation molded by the phenomena as we experience them, but our experience of the phenomena is modified, transformed, and developed through the situations as we experience them in" (Marton & Booth, 1997, p. 83). Since meaning does not occur alone but is linked to structure, one must reflect upon what is discerned in a situation. Is it the object or the surroundings of the object? And what makes it possible to do this? Marton and Booth (1997) say that this relates to how we experience the whole and parts of the object (internal horizon) as well as the possibility separating the object from the surroundings (external horizon).

Marton and Booth (1997) believe that the specific way in which someone experience something tells us that this person is viewing this aspect in a certain way – in a way that makes this aspect stand out differently. The difference depends on which aspect he/she is most conscious aware of or perhaps the person discerns the particular aspect more clearly in his/her way than when using other ways of viewing the same or a similar object. In variation theory this is understood as explicit or implicit variations of understanding 'something'. This also implies that the understanding of 'something' is closely linked to the person who discerns the object and should not be separated, resulting in a non-dualistic view of the world (Marton & Booth, 1997).

Another significant feature of variation theory is the concept of variation, which can be understood as an interest in the multiple ways that a phenomenon can be understood. Since every person has his/her own unique way of experiencing the world, these variations can be more or less advanced, and they also can change, which Marton and Booth (1997) consider to be learning. The differences between the ways in which you experience something are called critical aspects, and these are of vital importance when determining categories of variation since they form the base for the hierarchical pattern that occurs in the empirical data (Marton & Booth, 1997).

There is always a multitude of ways of experiencing something. Carlgren and Marton (2004) and Runesson (1999) write that everyone does this in different ways depending upon how a

person combines and focuses his/her discernment of something, and also how he/she connects this discernment with the whole. The starting-point for this is variation; without this discernment is not possible, and in the long run this implies that no learning will occur. Carlgren and Marton (2004) also stress the importance of teachers becoming aware of the multitude of different understandings that occur about a specific subject, here understood as competence. Will teachers be better prepared to meet and take different perspectives if given an outsider's perspective of what competence could function as a wholeness to which the part could relate?

Chapter 3
Related research

This study is based upon teachers within a Swedish context. Provisions for early childhood education and care vary within countries as well as between countries, which motivates a review of the literature referring to the historical growth of the teaching profession in Sweden, teacher competence in general, and from a curriculum perspective. This part also outlines research outlining professional vision within the preschool area.

Development of teacher education in Sweden

The developments of preschool settings and preschool teacher education have a long history in Sweden. Johansson (1992, 1994) has thoroughly described this educational area from the early 20th century until today. Johansson (1992, 1994) has offered a detailed and broader history about children and teachers within those settings through his research about the development of kindergarten/preschool.

During the first part of 20th century there were three major schools for the education of teachers and carers of young children in Sweden: the Fröbel Institute in Norrköping, the South YMCA Pedagogical Institute Södra KFUK] and the School of Educational Sociology [SocPed] in Stockholm. According to Johansson (1992), these institutes combined scientific knowledge with reliable methods, using international contacts to develop the courses, often with very limited resources. The theoretical base for these schools was based upon Friedrich Fröbel's pedagogy[6] (Johansson, 1992, 1994).

The 1950s were marked by social change. Women in Sweden began to work outside the home to a large extent and demands for childcare increased. The title of the educated teachers had earlier shifted between kindergarten teacher [barnträdgårdsledarinna] and other names, but was now officially replaced by preschool teacher [förskollärare] (Vallberg Roth, 2002). Now the view of the child also changed from being considered a child of nature and a special character towards being viewed as a modern rational scientific child. The preschool teachers' task was to base their theoretical standing-points upon developmental psychology and. together with the parents, to make sure that the children became good citizens and developed a democratic point of view (Vallberg Roth, 2002).

The schools of preschool education mentioned earlier were independent until 1963 when the Swedish government became the responsible authority, and in 1977 the teacher education program changed from being a one-year vocational training into a college education, with 2.5 years of training. Advocates of preschool had desired this long before the reform took place (Johansson, 1994, 2004). Guidelines for preschool teacher education were developed and showed the way towards a future based on dialogue pedagogy (Hasselgren, 1981). During the late 1970s, about 6000 preschool teachers were educated, and the child-care system as a whole expanded at a remarkable rate (Johansson, 1992).

The main theoretical framework of teacher training programs during the late 1970s and 1980s was based upon a social developmental perspective relying both on the research of Jean Piaget and Erik H. Erikson and on the dialog pedagogy of Paulo Freire (Johansson, 1992, 1994). This perspective may be largely attributed to the 'Commission on Nursery Provision'

---

[6] Friedrich Fröbel's (1782-1852) pedagogy focused upon care and housework together with gardening. It was a contrast to the pedagogy in school, which emphasized discipline (Johansson, 1992).

[Barnstugeutredningen; BU] set up towards the end of 1960s. BU can be considered the first overarching governmental steering document, even if there were some general guidelines published in 1945 (Pramling Samuelsson & Sheridan, 2006). In BU, the focus of the pedagogical approaches shifted from a group-based perspective towards a more individually-based one, and the organization changed towards 'teamwork' where previous hierarchical structures were reduced (Vallberg Roth, 2001). The teachers were expected to plan the settings in 'activity stations' among which the children should rotate during the day. The BU emphasized aspects such as communication, development of the self and extending the knowledge of different concepts as important factors for teachers while enhancing children's knowledge and understanding (Johansson, 1994; Pramling Samuelsson & Sheridan, 2006). According to Strander (1997), the focus was on giving children opportunities for being free individuals who are connected with their feelings, but there were few links to what the children themselves wanted (Strander, 1997). The purpose was also, together with the parents, to give the children the chance to develop a stable self-confidence and develop the skills to communicate and interact with others. It also emphasized giving children opportunities to develop methods for learning and not just learning through transference of knowledge (William-Olsson & Krook, 1973). Now mixed-age groups, 'sibling-groups', replaced the previous divisions of children into infant, toddler, intermediate and other groupings (Vallberg Roth, 2001; Martin Korpi, 2007).

During the late 1980s the second steering document, the 'Pedagogical Preschool Program' [Pedagogiskt program för förskolan] (Socialstyrelsen, 1987), was launched, and the group rather than the individual came back as the focal point for teachers, and thematic work with children was again accepted. Johansson (1994) describes this as a re-introduction of the traditional preschool pedagogy advocated during the 1930s. The teacher training programs during the 1980s to late 1990s were divided into three major sections: preschool teachers (1-6 years), teachers for the early years in school (6-12 years) and teachers for the later years (10-16 years) (Johansson, 2004).

In 1998 the Swedish preschool was officially acknowledged as the first step in the education of the child. The responsibility also moved from the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs to the Ministry of Science and Education, which contributed to the view of the preschool as the first step in the educational system (Regeringskansliet, 1999; Skolverket, 2008), and the first curriculum focusing on children from 1 up to 5 years was a fact. This was the third governmental steering document focusing upon preschool settings. Lifelong learning is the prevailing concept, seen as a process, and the child is considered to be a competent child, active in its search for knowledge and not a passive receiver. The children's perspective becomes the central issue instead of the adult's perspective of what is considered to be the children's perspective. Methods for putting the curriculum into practice turned into a de-centralized issue, largely relying upon the teachers' knowledge and experiences (Pramling Samuelsson & Sheridan, 2006; Skolverket, 2008). The word 'förskola', preschool, becomes the accepted term that merges all previous terms used within the childcare for children aged 1 to 5. Internationally the term 'educare' is used to explain this kind of setting where education and care are combined, which the Swedish model does. Teachers and municipal authorities now share this view of education and care intertwined with fostering and see them as inseparable (Skolverket, 2008). Even today, during the 21st century, traces from the Fröbel heritage are visible in Swedish preschools, perhaps not so much among teachers using the pedagogy but very much through the structure and the activities during the day (Johansson, 1994). Free play, thematic work, circle time and outdoor play still form children's days in preschool (Nordin-Hultman, 2005).

In the beginning of the 21st century, the teacher training programs were raised to university level and integrated with one another, and teachers were educated for work with 'younger years', ages 1 to 8 or 'older' years, ages 6 to 12. The education of all teachers of young children was now the same length, but it was, and still is, shorter than the education focusing upon children aged 12 to 16/19 (SFS 2007:129). The possibilities for deepening the teacher's knowledge in a subject of interest make the teachers more prepared to interact and collaborate with preschool classes and school as a whole. Berntsson (2001) states that the teacher education consists of theoretical elements which give the students a common base of knowledge. This theoretical base also provides an opportunity to strengthen the practice as well as raising the status of teachers (Berntsson, 2001). The teacher education also comprises general studies, subject studies, in-depth studies and research methodology (Karlsson Lohmander, 2004). Karlsson Lohmander (2004) further states that the scientific knowledge base is connected with the aspects of becoming a reflective practitioner, which is also discussed by Carlgren and Marton (2004). In this education, the responsibility for educating teachers not only depends upon the universities, but also upon practitioners tutoring the students in the actual settings. The latter occupies at least 6 months of their 3.5 years in the teacher training program (Johansson, 2004).

In 2009 the government proposed a change in both the organization and structure of teacher training programs in Sweden. It is suggested that the education of preschool teachers should be one year shorter than all other teacher education programs in the near future, but no decision has been reached yet (SOU 2008:109).

Professionalism and competence in a contemporary context

Numerous studies on the subject of professionalism and teacher competence have been conducted in the Swedish preschool context (Hensvold, 2003; Johansson, Sandberg & Vourinen, 2007; Kihlström, 1995; Lindahl, 2002; Nordin-Hultman, 2004; Persson & Tallberg-Broman, 2002; Sheridan & Williams, 2007, among others). Even if the main focus of all these studies is not on the aspects of competence, these aspects are frequently discussed, since the preschool environment, children's play and learning, the curriculum and steering documents are related to and connected with teacher competence and the teaching profession as a whole.

Kihlström's (1995) findings about the meaning teachers attach to their profession can be assigned to three main categories based upon social and cognitive skills: teachers focusing upon (i) taking care of children, (ii) developing children and (iii) teaching/learning children (Kihlström, 1995). By documenting the relation between 16 preschool teachers' thoughts and actions during a 2-year intervention program with the help of video observations, Lindahl (2002) was able to both discuss and develop teachers´ professional attitudes. Her results show that teachers extended and changed their understanding of, and their approach towards, young children's competences over the two years. The program also changed the teachers' understandings of how to take children's perspectives and to appreciate the crucial role their own participation plays in the children's learning. Lindahl (2002) writes that the teachers have discovered that it is generally the small aspects in the interplay between adults and children that decide how things will develop. Nowadays, when the teachers view children as competent beings, this means that they are to be treated with respect and require challenging activities in order to develop their process of learning (Lindahl, 2002). Lindahl claims that

one way of accomplishing this has been to use these video-recorded sequences as a basis for observations and discussions both of the teachers' own actions and those of their colleagues. Through these sequences the teachers gradually became aware of their actions in terms of desirable or undesirable ways of interplaying with children. This also led to an increased awareness of being reflective and how to express their meta-cognitive thoughts, both regarding themselves as professionals and also in relation to the children (Lindahl, 2002). Sheridan and Williams (2007) also mention the importance of reflective ability in teachers when forming a preschool of high quality, in addition to an ability to create (and use) a learning environment and focus upon the aspects that they want the child to learn about, while using a variety of ways to enhance this learning (Sheridan & Williams, 2007).

Professionalism and competence can also be discussed in the light of postmodern perspectives, as done by Nordin-Hultman (2004). In her view, such theories are useful to preschool and school teachers when they are trying to form picture of the child in context. However, she stresses that developmental psychology alone does not give the whole picture of what a child needs. Teachers must look into aspects which are taken for granted in order to develop their practice as well as their own understandings. One could argue that this is not a new mode of reasoning, it is the traditional mode in which experienced teachers reflect upon their competence, but Nordin-Hultman (2004) wishes to show that it is nevertheless important to be aware of hidden aspects that could hinder the professional development of teachers.

An interview study conducted by Persson and Tallberg Broman (2002) implies that the preschool teachers are well aware of their mission, but they emphasize the aspects of their responsibility working with parents more than parents working with them, and they also find that they the responsibility for taking care of the children's childhood (Persson & Tallberg Broman, 2002) lies with them more and more. During their training, preschool teachers' view of their educational mission change towards enhancing the social and emotional dimensions of children's well-being more than their knowledge and understanding of cognitive dimensions. In contrast to teachers for the early years, the preschool teachers have seen increased recognition of their work and status compared to previous years (Persson & Tallberg Broman, 2002). This finding is supported by a small-scale study, in which preschool teachers attribute the improvement in their status to the introduction of the *Curriculum for Preschool*, Lpfö-98 (Larsson, 2007).

If we look at the curriculum Lpfö-98 (Ministry of Science and Education, 1998) for guidelines concerning professionalism and competence, we find no explicit statements concerning the required educational level of preschool teachers only several implicit intentions. Lpfö-98 does not formulate any methods for teachers to follow; the curriculum presents goals to strive towards, which takes for granted that the staff is able to put those goals into practice. The goals to strive towards focus on giving children opportunities to learn and develop during their entire day, indoors and outdoors, where play is to be used as a conscious tool. Learning is a process and the child is seen as a competent being, active in its search for knowledge and not a passive receiver. The focus is on every child's development, but not in terms of grades or evaluation, and the learning environment. Preschool staff, preschool teachers, nursery nurses, and the headmaster are responsible for ensuring that the curriculum goals are achieved in a professional and competent way, and they are obliged to maintain and develop the quality of the preschool on a continual basis. The National Agency for Education (Ministry of Education and Science in Sweden, 1998) checks the quality at regular intervals. Other steering documents such as 'Quality in preschool' [Kvalitet i förskolan] (Skolverket, 2005) are

developing the aspects of professionalism and competence further within the preschool sector. The municipalities are asked to strive towards recruiting teachers with a higher education (i.e. university training) for work with the younger years and are also obliged to give in-service training to their employees in accordance with the intention of the curriculum. The teachers should be informed not only about how children learn, but also about the way children think and reflect on the content that they are supposed to absorb (Skolverket, 2005). The ability of teachers to combine knowledge and experience is mentioned in a document called 'Ten years after the preschool reform' [Tio år efter förskolereformen] (Skolverket, 2008). According to their directors, preschools of high quality can only be achieved if these two aspects, combined with in-practice training and personal commitment, are given due consideration (Skolverket, 2008).

From an international point of view, Cheng (2008) stresses the importance of a meta-learning ability within the teaching profession, implying that it is important to have an inquiring mode of practice in order to develop as a teacher. These two, the meta-learning ability and the inquiring mode of learning are linked other by identification of the problems connected with the subject chosen (here 'learning through play'), persistence and determination in searching for alternative ways of teaching, reflection upon what prevents you from doing so, but also a willingness to adjust and regulate your teaching according to insights given by other stakeholders (Cheng, 2008). Another important aspect of the teaching profession is spelled out by Dalli (2008) who, from a New Zeeland perspective, emphasizes the importance of research taking a 'ground-up' perspective within the ECEC area. Dalli (2008) stresses the importance of acknowledging teachers and has clear views about what it is to be a professional - and what it does not mean.

A 'ground-up' perspective must comprise children's perspectives as well, and the teachers can support children's learning by making play one way to do it. When the teacher clearly focuses on supporting and interacting with children in play, the children are the great winners according to Johnson, Christie and Wardle (2005). They are able to "find their own unique talents and preferences" (p. 125). These authors further point out play and development go hand in hand and that it is the teachers who provide the opportunities for this to work out. Teachers should be ambassadors for understanding play as vital to learning, not only for the sake of the children, but also for the sake of the professional teacher developing her own learning and acting. The tools for this are reflection, documentation and participation in children's play (Johnson, Christie & Wardle, 2005).

Professional vision

In order to discern competence in something that occurs in a practice where the professionals function every day, and competence that is perhaps embedded within the profession and not fully reflected upon, it is necessary to extend the pedagogical vision within the profession. Goodwin (1994) states that "the theories, artifacts, and bodies of expertise" (Goodwin, 1994, p. 606) are the crucial objects that separate professions from each other. On the other hand, there are also similar concepts within these professions that form a unity of professional bases, or perhaps a starting-point in determining what a professional vision means. He considers these signifiers to be aspects of 'coding' and 'highlighting', and how certain aspects are 'produced and articulated'. These aspects are seen from a specific perspective embedded within the profession. But as Goodwin (1994) claims, there may also be different interpretations of how to classify the same experiences (e.g. classifying the color of dirt in a Munsell chart, used by archaeologists). When it comes to highlighting certain aspects of a

profession, Goodwin (1994) talks about aspects that stand out. This can be linked to similar thoughts within variation theory, expressed as discernments of internal horizons out of the external (Marton & Booth, 1997; Mårdsjö, 2005). Pedagogical vision does not just occur, however; it requires that several aspects take place at the same time; the coding, the highlighting, together with the articulation of the explicit and implicit contextual aspects within the professional area. This is, according to Goodwin (1994), what makes a profession a profession and enables professionals to perform more competently.

The pathway towards developing one's competence seems to be a "meander", as shown by Hasselgren (1981). In his doctoral thesis, he focused upon the aspects of how student preschool teachers view and talk about children playing as shown to them on a TV screen. These students were compared to a control group consisting of student physiotherapists. The analysis of the results shows a distinction between what the students are seeing and what this seeing means to them, and it is up to the student to judge or decide what is significant in the sequence of children's play shown on the screen. Their first expressions about the children playing were later replaced with a different meaning given to the play. These aspects of meaning could be grouped into several different categories. The results show that the student preschool teachers apprehend children at play in four different ways: 'fragmentary' or 'partialistic' to 'chronological' and further towards an 'abstracting' way of understanding play. The student preschool teachers develop according to a specific pattern, which can be considered to be stable, both on a group level and on an individual level. The development depends on how they start apprehending the play, but only by taking one step at a time. Hasselgren (1981) considers the time to be least significant determinant here; instead he says that the changed way of apprehending children at play is a result of what they have learned on their course, which is also confirmed by six out of ten student preschool teachers. These changes in the way of apprehending play were not found in the control group. It can be concluded that the student teachers changed from seeing children's play as something fragmentary or partialistic towards seeing it as something else – as a chronological wholeness or an abstract wholeness (Hasselgren, 1981).

A change in professional vision has also been experienced by teachers taking part in higher education at the same time as they are working in preschool. Mårdsjö (2005) shows that teachers report that develop their ability to reflect upon their own learning during the course. They also report a change in their understanding of their learning, as well as developing their understanding of the way they participate in children's learning. This change towards challenging children's understandings in a more focused way means that s/he became more aware of the learning object[7] than before. Different ways (variations) of viewing themselves and the children occurred when they connected theory and practice,. Mårdsjö (2005) shows further that there are different patterns of interactions between teachers and children depending on the way teachers view children, from (i) a child- centered perspective, where the teachers are sensitive to children and their intentions to (ii) a relational perspective, where the teachers challenge the children in their learning. These differences also become visible in the way teachers create space for children's initiative and dialogues. The teachers themselves state that their own learning on their higher education course concerns areas such as creating meaning through communication, professional practice and reflecting on their own learning (Mårdsjö, 2005).

---

[7] See Developmental Pedagogy

Chapter 4
The empirical study

This micro-ethnographic retrospective study has used video observations and stimulated recalls with the purpose of taking part in teachers' discernment of their competence.

As a preschool teacher with several years of practice combined with further education, the researcher claims that her pre-understandings of profession and context, may be viewed as an asset. .. Hence, these pre-understandings have been constantly reflected upon during the process, since such knowledge could also be a weakness if taken-for-granted aspects are not fully reflected upon.

This chapter deals with the use of video observations and stimulated recalls as described in the literature. It consists of a description of the sample and a closer look into the way the empirical data were collected: by shadowing teachers with a video camera and later on arranging stimulated recalls of some of the sequences. To broaden the understanding of background factors and other important issues, two questionnaires have been used. Further, the method used to analyse the data will be described as well as ethical issues in connection with the study. The validity and reliability of the study, along with its limitations, are also discussed.

Methodology

The theoretical perspective of this study is within the interpretive paradigm, "rather than simply *perceiving* our particular social and material circumstances, each person continually makes sense of them within a cultural framework of socially constructed and shared meanings" (Hughes in McNaughton et al., 2007, p. 35. italics in original). Methodologically, the study is inspired by ethnographic perspectives, as Robson (2002) writes, based upon the assumption that you can only understand what is going on in practice by visiting it. To follow the teachers in their daily work is one way of grasping its complexity (Robson, 2002).

Video observation and stimulated recall as described in the literature

Given the aim of this study, one must use a method that enables the teachers to recall what they have been doing earlier. In general, observations are carried out through taking part in a context and making field notes or other or other type of paper record, but here another method was considered more appropriate: using a video camera. Observing with a video camera could be called participant observation. It can also be regarded as direct observation as discussed by Czarniawska (2007), or open observation as conducted by Lindahl (2002). In open, direct observation, the researcher is considered a non-participating observer, but still a participant. While observing with a video camera, the researcher is not acting and observing at the same time but functions more as a shadow. Czarniawska (2007) points out the differences between 'shadowing' and stationary video observations in the aspects of mobility. While shadowing a teacher, the gathered data also constitute an opportunity for the teacher to take part in what has been going on during the day, and can also be used as a tool for reflection and knowledge (Czarniawska, 2007).

Using a video camera as a method for carrying out observations and gathering empirical data has increased in recent years, both in Sweden and elsewhere (Alexandersson, 1994; Goodwin,

1994; Haglund, 2003; Hasselgren, 1981; Johansson & Pramling Samuelsson, 2006; Lindahl, 1996; Lyle, 2003; Simeonsdotter Svensson, 2009). In some of these studies, stimulated recalls are used to make reflections in a retrospective perspective. Stimulated recalls can be used to remind the teacher not only of her earlier thoughts (Alexandersson, 1994) but also of her earlier actions, and to help her to discern her competence in a retrospective perspective. Video observation is considered to be one way to extend completed observations, since the material can be viewed several times, making it possible to review the observations from different perspectives. However, the video data obtained depend on the way the camera was positioned and what analyses could be made from this chosen perspective (Goodwin, 1994; Lindahl, 2002).

In this study video observations are combined with the retrospective opportunity 'stimulated recall' [SR] (Haglund 2003; Lyle, 2003). The retrospective aspects can be considered both help with gathering and a source of teachers' meta-thoughts (Calderhead 1981, cited in Haglund, 2003). Lyle (2003) discusses retrospective aspects both in relation to validity and methodological aspects. It is important to reduce anxiety by,   for instance, reducing the time between the observations and the session of stimulated recall and making the sessions as open as possible by not having a strict line of questioning or a set frame for conducting the SR session (Lyle, 2003) but giving the teacher opportunities to discern.

Following methodological recommendations made by Lyle (2003), the conversation during the SR will follow an unstructured interview process. According to Siraj-Blatchford I. and Siraj-Blatchford J. (2007) an unstructured process is *"a conversation with a purpose"* (p. 151), to make the teacher as active as possible. The role of the researcher in such an interview will be rather passive in order to avoid researcher biases and not to interfere with the teacher's discernments and the situation. But the researchers must also take the role of supporting the teacher in her 'talking aloud' sessions, i.e. helping her to explore her discernments of competence and to explain the content and base of such discernments. Keith (1988, cited in Haglund, 2003) claims that SR is used more for gathering teachers' professional knowledge than as a way of capturing their thinking at the moment of video-observation. Lyle (2003) discusses the advantages of using stimulated recalls in order to "learn through reflection" (p. 874) and relates the advantages of the method to teaching, where it may be used for evaluations, interventions and analyses of, and in, professional development.

Sample

The connection between researcher and teachers was established through the teachers' engagement in an ongoing project about children and aesthetic expression. The project is a large-scale study conducted in 'ordinary' schools and preschools, where the teachers have been given in-service education courses in the area of aesthetics as well as guidance in developmental pedagogy. They have also been discussing video sequences recorded in their own practice together with the researchers attached to the project (for a presentation of the project, see Pramling Samuelsson, Asplund Carlsson, Olsson, Pramling and Wallerstedt, in press). The questions of whether the teachers could participate in the present study came up while data[8] were being gathered for the project described above. One could regard this sample of teachers as a purposive sample (Robson, 2002).

---

[8] The data gathered to the Aesthetics project consists of teachers conducting a pre-decided circle time activity, where the teachers together with the children makes a poem based upon the input made by instrumental music.

Thirteen female teachers were asked to participate in the master thesis data collection, nine of whom accepted. Before the study started, however, one of them decided to withdraw for personal reasons. The remaining eight teachers are spread out geographically and represent two preschools and two preschool classes in the countryside as well as in the suburbs. The preschools cater for children aged 2-5 years, while the preschool classes combine their activities with both 6- and 7-year-olds. The teachers have been working in preschools and schools for between 10 and 34 years, and their first teacher education course took place in the period 1974-1999. In their present settings, they have worked for various lengths of time between 5 and 30 years[9]. Their qualifications range from nursery nurse[10], preschool teachers to teachers for the early years.

Before this part of the study started, the researcher met the teachers at their working places for an informal talk, in which the aims and methods of the study were described and the teachers were given the opportunity to ask questions. After the meeting contact was kept by email. By communicating in this way, it was possible to give further details about the structure of the pre-decided circle time as well as the shadowing. Forms for approval from parents were collected by teachers and handed over to the researcher. During the first informal meeting, the teachers had the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the environment, but the children were not met before the study started. The study follows the ethical guidelines given by the Swedish Research Council (2008).

Collecting data

Data were collected with the help of (i) video-recorded observations of teachers in preschool and preschool class, (ii) sessions with 'stimulated recall' of the video observations and (iii) two questionnaires. The purpose of using three different methods of collecting data was to capture as much of teachers' perspective of their background and their experiences of the situation as possible. The video recorded observations took place during a three-week period in January 2009. A pilot study was conducted before the collection of data began, in order to try the methods and the technical equipment. The pilot study led to minor changes of a technical nature and no sequences from that study are included in the empirical data.

Video observations
The empirical material of the study is based on video-recorded situations in preschools and preschool classes, and the teachers are in focus in the sequences. When using the camera, the researcher must pay attention to certain aspects that may affect the outcome, as mentioned by Goodwin (1994), Lindahl (2002) as well as Heikkilä and Sahlström (2003). These aspects can vary from the way you position the camera and how you arrange the microphone, whether you are using a stationary camera or a portable one, and if you are filming a sequence from start to finish. Here the video sequences focus on the teacher in different situations with the children. Lindahl (2002) mentions that video observations may affect the way teachers perform. In this study such aspects have been taken into consideration, and the teachers were asked in the second questionnaire to reflect upon whether they felt uncomfortable or disturbed during the video observations.

---

[9] The content of the questionnaire is shown in appendix 2.

[10] A nursery nurse was earlier trained on secondary level during a two-year-course. The education towards becoming a childminder has changed and it is now a training course given by municipalities during one year (http://www3.skolverket.se/ki03/front.aspx?sprak=SV&ar=0809&infotyp=15&skolform=32&id=4426&extraId=0).

Each teacher was observed at her regular workplace during an average day in her setting, and on the day of the visit the teacher took one pre-decided circle time[11]. The teachers had been observed by video camera before while participating in the Aesthetic Project and seemed to feel at ease with the situation, as did the children. The children were informed about my reasons for) filming their teacher during the day I visited the setting. None of the children expressed verbally, or nonverbally, any unwillingness to being filmed. Most responses, happy expressions when noticing their friends as well as curiosity, came from the younger children when they were standing beside me and could view their friends and teacher on the monitor on the side of the camera. Using the monitor rather than looking through the camera lens made it possible to have an overview of the setting and have eye contact with the children and use the camera at the same time.

One could say that that, in this study, the video recordings were carried out in-between shadowing (Czarniawska, 2007) and stationary video observations. The camera was handled by the same person on all occasions and angles varied as well as perspective, according to whether I was standing or sitting down near the teacher. I avoided walking around too much with the camera, since this could have affected the quality of the video data if the camera was shaken. Instead of walking around, the camera zoom was used, or the camera was put on hold while moving in order to follow the teacher. The recordings were done with a specific purpose: to catch the teacher while acting and interacting with children in the setting in different ways and in different activities, both in pre-decided and on regular occasions. The purpose was not to analyze the content of the actions taking place in the recorded situations but to give the teacher an opportunity to discern her own competence in her own actions and interactions, which she will express herself during the SR session. The same video-recorded situations which the teacher bases her discernments on will be used by the researcher to discern what is regarded as teacher competence.

The foci of the video observations and stimulated recalls among the participating teachers are similar: *first* the teachers are asked to watch themselves conducting a part of the pre-decided circle time activity in the area of music and poetry. The *second* focus of the stimulated recall session is a video-recorded observation of the teacher during an activity where she participates in children's play, and the *third* focus is on the teacher and the children during a mealtime. There can be discrepancies due to the teacher's activities during the day the observations were made. For example, it was not always possible to take part in a mealtime situation, since when a teacher in preschool class was shadowed, the mealtime took place in a large dining room where children and adults who were not participating in the study were present at the same time.

Stimulated recalls
The existing study is not about what teachers remember or think about what they did in a certain situation, as mentioned by De Grave (1996, cited in Lyle, 2003). Here the discernment of one's competence is central, but, as De Grave recommends, I applied the method of stopping the film in order to give the teacher more time to explain and develop her thoughts about why something was considered to be an aspect of competence. The samples of video-observations for the stimulated recall dealt with certain aspects and selected according to two criteria, one of which was the teacher's interactions with the children. The second criterion was to provide each teacher with films showing different situations in order to give the teacher a more totality of the time while the shadowing was performed. The selection of the

---

[11] This circle time activity is used for the Aesthetic project and sequences also constitute a part of the stimulated recall sequence.

sequences was made according to both the criteria mentioned but also with the focus on three different situations, (i) circle time, (ii) play situation and (iii) mealtime. The situations were also meant to contain both child-initiated and teacher-initiated situations.

The purpose of showing different situations to the teacher is to capture as much of their thoughts about competence as possible, since the discernments of competence could vary from one situation to another. The purpose of using both teacher- and child-initiated situations, as mentioned before, is to enable the teachers to discern their competence in three situations which could be seen as showing significant features from an ordinary day in such settings. Here the researcher has benefited from pre-understandings and knowledge of the field.

Each of the eight teachers watched three sequences, giving 24 sequences in total. The sequences were shown to them on a laptop screen. Table 1 presents a brief description of these selected sequences at a group level.

Table 1
Video sequences used for stimulated recall sessions. Content and number,

Kind of Situation	Number of situations	Comments
Play situations	5	These situations are child-initiated. The teachers are filmed when entering and taking part in children's play.
Mealtime situations	4	The pre-decided situations: mealtime and circle-time situations, are organized by teachers as well being built into the structure of the setting. The chosen sequences forming the basis for the SR situation within this area are mainly teacher- initiated, but in some cases the situations are initiated by the children.
Circle time or classroom situations	15^{12}	
	N=24	

Table 1 shows an overview of the selected situations forming the starting point of the SR situations

The sequences selected for the SR were of different length; some were 5 minutes long while others could last up to 10 minutes. The differences in time depended upon the content of the film sequence; for example, a sequence where the teacher was active and interacted with a lot of children and took an active part in their activities at the same time could be shorter than a sequence where the teachers were more passive (or did wait longer for the children to react or answer). The actual SR situation took place in a separate room, and was a private meeting between me and the teacher who had been filmed. The SR situation was prepared before the teacher entered the room, the sequences were transferred from the camera to the laptop, and on almost all occasions, the sequences were viewed and selected beforehand. When this was not feasible, the sequences were selected during filming and written down in order to be remembered.

After the SR session, the teachers were also given the chance to make supplementary comments about teacher competence that had not been developed during the session.

The teachers' discernments, in the original Swedish, were tape-recorded and then transcribed by the researcher herself. The transcripts consist of 43 written pages, which do not fully

---

[12] Two of the SR situations were during analyse handled as fall-outs since they focused upon a teachers work with children older than the focus of the empirical study.

reflect the way the teachers talk during the SR sessions - the teachers speech has been modified during transcription to make it easier to read. This way of dealing with transcribed material is discussed by Mårdsjö (2005), who implies that this can be a way to safeguard the identity of participants. The transcripts were coded with the date when the SR session was conducted. Later on, during the analysis of the data, this way of coding was changed to consist of a letter between A and H and a number between 1 and 3, referring to the teacher concerned and the film sequence that the statement refers to.. The coding also indicated who made the statement, the teacher (code 'Ped' and a letter) or the researcher.

All the transcriptions were shared with the teachers themselves in order to make sure that the text reflects their opinions. All participants were given the opportunity to make comments and reflect further on the transcriptions. This opportunity was taken by some of the teachers and their comments have been acknowledged as requested. After the data were analyzed, excerpts of the transcribed speech were added to the results to illustrate the content of each category. The excerpts have been translated into English, while being aware of the possibility that some connotations could get lost[13].

Questionnaires
The teachers were asked to fill in two questionnaires to supplement the information obtained through the video-observations and the SR. One was designed to obtain background information about the teachers' formal education and any in-service training that they had received. The second questionnaire was designed to catch any reflections that occurred after the SR and was also a way to find out how the situation was experienced, understood and considered by the teacher, to be an aspect of validity. Both questionnaires contained 'open questions' (Robson, 2002), and they have been interpreted and analyzed separately from the SR situation, but understood in the light of the whole of the study in order to gain a deeper understanding of the teachers' experiences of the SR and how they thought this method was appropriate for showing their competence as an aspect of validity.

Analyses of empirical data

The transcriptions of the SR deliberations have been analyzed by an established method in the field of variation theory (Marton & Booth, 1997). Earlier this way of analyzing the empirical data was called a phenomenographic approach. This implies that the teachers' discernments[14] of their own competences will be understood in terms of parts as well as the whole of qualitatively different ways of understanding competence. The purpose of the analysis is to search for variations in these ways of describing competence and to develop clear categories with logical relations which – as categories of description – will form the result of the study (Marton & Booth, 1997). The categories will be de-contextualized, the content of the categories described carefully and the significant aspects highlighted. It might also be possible to relate these categories to near-related contexts (Lindgren, 2002).

In this study the analysis was done in several steps starting from the transcribed material. The first step was to read the material through repeatedly in order to understand the content. Secondly, the analyses focused upon what is variant and invariant in each teacher's statements. Subsequently, the focus of the analyses was on those aspects of variance in all statements, which are also connected with the wholeness of the transcriptions. Thirdly, the

---

[13] The Swedish excerpts have been attached in appendix 1.
[14] In this study, discerning is used as an analytic term. When the word 'perceive' is used in the study, it is referring to the aspects of competence extracted from the video observations, made by the teachers.

parts that are derived from the material were divided into categories clearly separated from each other but still connected with each other. The ways the categories are connected with one another are the central result of the analyses (Alexandersson, 1994). The preliminary categories were extracted out of all the transcribed data, but when validating the categories back into the data, it was found that the preliminary categories were too narrow and simple to contain the complexity of the empirical data. This called for a second analysis between the whole and the parts of the data as well as variant and invariant statements made by the teachers. The final categories emerging had the capacity to contain the complexity within the teachers' discernments of competence.

The questionnaires were analyzed separately, by looking at similarities and differences between the written answers. These statements have not been categorized since the outcome was unanimous.

Validity, reliability and limitations of the study

Validity is linked to aspects as how well the method chosen is related to the aim of the study, but the method is not enough to ensure a valid study (Robson, 2008). It also must consist of showing how the aspects of validity have been established. For example, this concerns the researcher's competence, the pre-understandings held by this person and also the choices made during the study (Lantz, 1993). Validity is also about participants taking part in transcriptions of interviews and having the opportunity to comment on the statements made during the SR situations, i.e. respondent validation. It is about the feeling created between the researcher and the respondent, which is also discussed by Lindgren (2002). In order to ensure trustworthiness, one can strive towards establishing a relaxed atmosphere and letting the respondent choose the time and place of the interview (here SR situation). Validity is also about how well the process of gathering data has been established.

In this study the reliability concerns the sample and how the study has been conducted. Is the technical apparatus reliable, and how has the researcher managed to capture the essence of the teachers' work during the video observer sequences? In this particular case, the fact that the observations are recorded and not just a collection of field notes is an aspect of reliability, which makes it possible to look at the sequences several times and by this means ensure if you have been following your data.

The limitations of the study are linked to the fact that a small purposive sample comprising a group of teachers working with young children had to be selected. The type of settings have both a long history in Sweden of combining play and learning in a whole-day homelike environment (Johansson, 1994) and a shorter history of being an attempt to bring the preschool and school closer together (Thörner, 2005). Internationally, this makes the aspects of external validity limited, but aspects of 'recognizability' could be possible (Lantz, 1993). This means that it is possible that individuals will recognize aspects of the results of the study, and use them as a source of learning and professional development.

Another limitation could be traced to the methodology and to the choice of method of anlyzing data. Perhaps some other methods would have been more appropriate from another perspective. However, an awareness and understanding of some of the limitations could imply that they will be reduced. This could be so in the case when stimulated recall is used instead a method of immediate verbalization during the teachers' actions (Lyle, 2003) where the immediate response will interfere with the actions and also interfere with the setting and the

people with whom the teachers are interacting. If the stimulated recall is used with the special intention of not disturbing the interaction, then the method becomes a strength.

Ethical considerations

The Swedish Research Council (2008) stresses the importance of ethical issues in their document 'Research ethics principles in humanistic-social scientific research'. The responsibility to deal with the ethical issues within a research project is always the researcher's.

The aspect of informing the participants and getting their consent to take part in the study demands responsibility of the researcher. The information should be about their part in the project, and the terms that apply for their participation. The researcher must ensure that the participants are there of their own free will, and that they have the right to withdraw whenever they wish to. The participants must be able to do it without any negative consequences for them. The methodological issues of video recorded situations and tape-recorded interviews require special ethical attention regarding how they will be used and stored. As Lindgren (2002) writes, it is important to in every step of the research to take extra care to safeguard the respondents' integrity (Lindgren, 2002). It is the researcher's obligation to tell for what purpose the data will be gathered, and where and in what way the results will be published. In this study, the integrity of the respondents has been safeguarded by the way the data is stored, how the transcriptions are slightly changed (as stated earlier) and by coding the transcriptions in an early stage of the process.

Since the research has been conducted within an early childhood setting, this required extra consideration of the children participating in the research, even if they were not the main focus of this study. Taking part in an environment filled with children and teachers need special ways of approaching not only the participants of this context but also the interactions among them. as a teacher as well as a researcher, one must always be flexible and adapt to the situations that occur and be humble about being given the opportunity to take part in the daily activities of these children and adults.

In the document issued by the Swedish Research Council (2008), the children's consent is stated to be as important as the consent to participation given by their parents. In this study, extra care has been taken to exclude the children whose parents did not give consent to their taking part in the study. These children have been pointed out to me by the teachers and did not take part in the pre-decided circle time. Extra caution has been taken not to include them in any way during the shadowing of the teachers. A few parents gave limited consent to the children participating in the study. If any of these children is shown in the sequences, these films have been marked in order to comply with the will of the parents as well as the ethical aspects outlined by the research council.

Chapter 5
Results

This chapter consists of several parts: first an overview of the findings of the empirical study followed by four categories containing the teachers' discernments of competence. Secondly, the differences between teachers' and researcher's discernments will be presented, and thirdly the results of the questionnaires will be shown. Finally, there will be a part visualizing teachers' meta-reflections.

Teachers' discernments of competence

The teachers' discernments of competence are a multitude of things that the teachers find so important in the way they work that they regard them as aspects of competence. These discernments are in some way similar to each other, but at the same time they are different, and they also must be seen as parts of a whole. The word 'pedagogical' used in front of each category shows that it is not just any 'knowledge', 'intention', 'asset', or 'consideration' that is being discerned, but a specific kind of those areas mentioned: a pedagogical one, performed and discerned by skilled teachers in a Swedish preschool and school context.

Figure 1 shows the four categories: pedagogical knowledge, pedagogical intentions, pedagogical considerations and pedagogical assets along with some of the aspects of competence that are embedded within the categories. These categories will be described later.

Figure 1
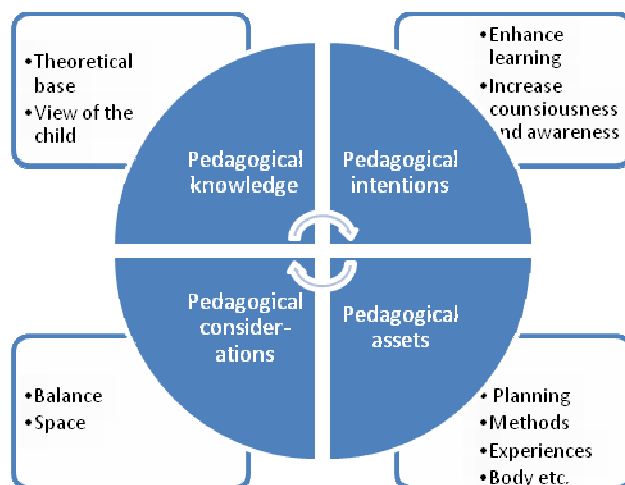Categories of teachers' discernments of competence.

Figure 1 is showing categories of the results of the empirical study.

Pedagogical knowledge

The category of pedagogical knowledge is expressed in two ways. The first is which *theoretical base* the teacher relates to the knowledge they base their perspectives upon. Pedagogical knowledge is also expressed as a *view of the child,* the way the teacher expresses her view of children and the aspects connected with this, such as participation and empathy.

Theoretical base is discerned as competence in different ways as stated above. One of the teachers (F) is saying, in connection to the way she is using the group of the children to make them aware of a concept that emerges out of a story which the teacher is telling,

[#1][15]Ped F: Yes, I would like them to learn together… Vygotsky… We learn in context and together and that is good interplay. One can learn by one self as well but this is optimal. In one context. Most of the time when getting a question, I send it back to the children. I hardly ever answer questions - I repeat, enhance, and then I use the group to see if someone knows… That's because I believe in the child's ability to help each other. I think that has another quality than just doing what 'the teacher says' (Ped F-3)

The teacher discerns her theoretical base as increasing her competence and she uses it to give children more opportunities, and it affects the way she works together with the children. It helps her in her work and it also implies that this base is not only theoretical but also put into practice. Theoretical base also can be discerned as a way to enhance a certain aspect of knowledge as the use of theories about making poems as well as Developmental pedagogy. This pedagogical knowledge forms the base of the teacher's (D) work and functions as a basis for the activities she conducts with children in the settings. The following excerpt illustrates that this is discerned as competence,

[#2] Researcher: 'What is it that you find important and that shows your competence in these situations?
Ped D: '..That you try to catch what the children are thinking about, and put it down in a few lines, to formulate it… 'Was it this you were thinking about?'.. The things that were part of our in-service training; to change the text, to shorten it down, move some words… then it becomes so governed by adults, and these children can't read yet' (Ped D-3).

The teacher talks about the model developed by Georgia Heard (1989), which governs the way she works, which she learnt about during her in-service training[16]. The children have been listening to music and have expressed what they ended up thinking about while listening and the teacher then puts these utterances on a piece of paper – but she also confirms that she is modifying the way she works. Working with the written language according to the model is problematic to her- she thinks it gives children less space to create their 'own' poem. On the other hand, she also uses her theoretical base of Developmental pedagogy by using open questions aiming to develop the children's understandings about a specific object, in this particular case, creating a poem. It is clear that the theoretical base is discerned by the teacher as competence.

The *view of the child* as a competent child is also belongs to this category. This view is strongly enhanced by the Swedish curriculum, and is seen as pedagogical knowledge. One of the video sequences shows a teacher (D) having breakfast with the children. They are talking and eating at the same time and the children are sending the bowl containing porridge around the table, they pour milk into their glasses and make sandwiches by themselves. During the SR situation the teacher says,

[#3] Ped D: 'I think it is very important that the children can decide for themselves how they want things… if they want milk to their porridge… for me it is taken for

[15] The number #1-24 refers to the original statements made by the Swedish teachers. See appendix 1.
[16] For more information about this particular in-service training, see page 17.

24

granted to have that, but it isn't everybody who likes it that way. Our pictures about how things should be… to put them aside.. to understand that everyone is an individual… and in those parts, I think the preschool in general has changed since I started working. Then everyone should have it in a certain way, but now you more and more are confident about children being competent and able to make choices by themselves. I think that is important. …//… The children can be in control, serving themselves and so on, that's important. Putting butter on the bread… that is important' (Ped D-1).

In this episode the teacher discerns her ability to view the child as a competent child who can handle a lot of situations, not only sending the bowl around the table but also deciding how much to eat and how to eat it. She expresses how things that she took for granted earlier are now being reflected upon and have turned into something else, a view of the child as a child able to make decisions for him or herself, to do things differently, to try out things on their own, to be competent.

In connection with a circle time episode focusing on creating different sounds to a song, another teacher (G) talks about the importance of acknowledging the child's own feelings and wishes – but at the same time she will not let the child rule the whole group. At the same time, she is doing this from a theoretical perspective where she refers to the developmental pedagogy which emphasizes variation.

[#4] Ped G: 'What is the competence within this? …//… Here one child is telling about this specific sound, and then I think it is important to raise this to the whole group, based upon the child's intention. …//.. Then there is one child saying – I don't want to take part in this (the circle-time, my comment) - OK, that's fine, you don't have to do it – and it is important to acknowledge that he doesn't want to take part. Many times 'I don't want to´ can be just a saying – because you don't know what is going to happen or that you prefer to play with something else right now. For the time being, I think that – **you** don't want to do this- and that's fine, but we (the others, my comment) will continue doing this, you don't have to participate. Respect and a feeling of joy are essential, it must not be forced' (Ped G-1).

The sense of her giving the child a lot of responsibility is strong here. The child is empowered by being given the opportunity to choose to participate or not. But she also makes him aware of that the rest will continue together anyhow. The teacher uses another child's way of making a specific sound is used as a variation of sounds and made into an object of learning by the teacher. Apart from acknowledging children's competences and giving the children opportunities to make choices, she is also founding the session upon a theoretical base which emphasizes the variation and the multitude of ways things can be done.

Pedagogical intentions

This category consists of teachers' focus on goal-oriented aspects which they discern as being competence. It is about *enhancing learning*, but also about their *intentions to increase children's understandings and consciousness* of their surroundings – as seeing and acting upon opportunities appearing everywhere, but also about viewing learning as a change in understandings. In the same situation as referred to above (#4), the teacher has an intention with the sessions.

[#5]Ped G: 'I have an intention with the activity, which is to make the variation visible by getting different sounds out of different instruments, but I don't make it explicit (to the children), but one child is into the special way the mopeds sound, and I want to make that obvious to the rest of the group' (Ped G-1).

The teacher discerns her intention of making children aware of the variation in sounds as a competence. Even if she is aware of her not making it explicit to the children, her intentions are there and are focused upon the learning aspect of the session. Teachers also discern their work to increase children's awareness and consciousness as competence as in the following excerpt.

[#6] Researcher: 'What do you, yourself, consider important in the competence you would like to talk about'.
Ped A: 'Perhaps it is that you want the children to try to understand, that they will try to feel how it would be if someone…if they think that 'I don't hide things because I don't want anyone to hide things from me'. I want them to try to see things from that particular person's perspective, if there really was someone that had hidden the toys' (Ped A-1).

In this situation the teacher aims towards enhancing the social aspects, she intends to make visible that you should be able to take someone else's perspective and increase your awareness of other people's feelings. Her intention is to enhance the children's empathic abilities.

The following situation takes place outside. The teacher is outside with some children. Most of the children are playing already, but one of them would like to play a particular game and is having trouble getting others to join him. The teacher gives some different examples but they are not the kind of suggestions that the child wants. After a while he manages to get some friends to come along, and the teacher is invited to join in. Even if they are lacking in material for the play, as a drum, the teacher does not get one, and neither does she suggest any solutions. She describes during the SR that this behavior was intentional.

[#7] Ped G: 'And then finally, the children divide the roles, and we don't have any drum, and the one of the children suggests that you can make the sound with your feet. So this is a game suggested by the children. I want to listen to the children and their intentions- and at the same time I like to hear what they think about not having a drum – and what they can use instead outdoors –to find solutions of their own. And then they find the plastic tube that can be used as a drum …//… and it turns into learning in many areas – if I don't have this (a drum, my comment), what shall I do then?' (Ped G-3).

This is a child-initiated situation – but the teacher is participating, and even if she seems to be 'just' following along with the children's play- there is a clear intention with her actions. She is acknowledging the children's own competences and enhancing their learning by letting them find out for themselves how to solve the problem they are facing. She enhances their learning by not "governing" them, but by playing with them and letting them organize their own game. In this way, she gives them opportunities to be aware of their own creativity and to view themselves as competent. Teachers' intentions of making children aware of specific

aspects of 'something' seem to be present just as much in child-initiated play situations as in teacher-initiated situations.

Pedagogical considerations

This category consists of two major parts, *balance* and *space*. These two aspects are derived from what teachers have discerned as situations where they are not sure how to handle things, and at the moment thinking of what to do. A pedagogical consideration is about *balancing* different situations that occur during the teachers' working-day in their setting. It is about whole and parts, to support or not to support children, balancing the group aspects in relation to the individual aspects. It is also expressed as *space,* both mental and physical. Children are given space in order to enhance creativity. It is about the teacher being open to children's expressions and interests and making sure of their opportunities for making their own choices. The teacher has to see the opportunity when it comes, and not continue with what was initially planned but follow children's interests and suggestions. One could say that this is about making quick choices, to be able to feel or know, perhaps in a tacit way, how you will handle the situation.

In the following situation, the teacher is just about to start a circle-time session. The children recognize some toys being stuffed away or perhaps hidden underneath a bookshelf. The teacher has to quickly decide whether to ignore the children's discovery, or to talk about it together with the children. Balance is expressed by the teacher as:

> [#8] Ped A: "I could have ignored what he said (about the hidden toys)…I could have let it go, but I don't think…, probably because of him being so focused upon them, I couldn't let it go - I had to bring it up for discussion" (Ped A-1).

Here the teacher has to *balance* the aspects of continuing with the things that she had planned to do, or to start a discussion with the children who had noticed the hidden (or forgotten) toys. The teacher uses the situation as an opportunity to talk about empathy and how to behave towards each other in a situation where no child is in focus, but about situations in general. She discerns this as a competence since she expresses her intention of extending the children's understandings of other persons' feelings when faced with a situation where they cannot find the toys they need for their play, for example. Another aspect of balance in this statement is about paying attention to what the child has discovered or not paying attention to it, which also sends out signals to the child that finding the toys was valuable. The teacher could have ignored it and just focused upon her plans, but then this opportunity would have been lost. This shows that the teacher discerns competence as the ability to make quick decisions based upon a pedagogical intention to develop children's understandings of different matters. Is probably also based upon her pedagogical knowledge in which the view of the child and the theoretical base form the base from which these considerations are made.

Another situation of *balancing* occurs while the same teacher is making a poem together with the children, who have been given inspiration by listening to classical music. The children are telling the teacher, one by one, what they have been thinking of while listening and the teacher writes what they say on the whiteboard.

> [#9] Ped A: ….When I'm there in the situation… I'm thinking of trying not to…, it is so easy to pick up the things which I like, so instead, I try to listen to 'what are they thinking about'? (Ped A)

27

Clearly the teacher is considering balancing the aspects of how much to steer the children towards what she herself thinks could make a good poem or letting the children create their poem out of the pictures and feelings generated by the music played to them. Here, too, she is considering different aspects of the situation.

Balance also can be expressed as teachers making choices between focusing upon the individual child or upon the group as a whole. The following excerpt is from a mealtime situation where the children are sitting together with the teacher at a table eating fruit after finishing the meal. In the video-recorded sequence you can see the children and the teacher talking with one another. One child is trying to get the teacher's attention more than others, and during the SR situation the teacher says:

> [#10] Ped H: '…there are things you are afraid of – there is always someone who wants your attention more than another and it is so easy to fall for it, to miss someone else, it is so easy to go along with it' (Ped H-3).

Here the teacher discerns competence to be the way she balances between letting one of the children have more opportunities to talk than another – but she is aware that the child is doing this on behalf of the other children, and that there is need to be aware that it does not happen all the time. A little earlier the same teacher watched a video-sequence where she is conducting a circle time, and she discerns that she is giving the children more *space* than she was aware of during the actual event.

> [#11] Ped H: "… I was thinking that he (the child) got more space to think about what he was thinking (about the music)… more than I was aware of, so one could think, that is was… well done" (Ped H-3)

It is interesting to notice that the teacher was not aware of the *space* she was giving the child, which gave him time to reflect upon what he was thinking in relation to the music he just heard. This became obvious to her when looking at the video-recorded sequence. She talks about it in positive terms, and thinks that her giving the child space was a good thing to do. One could suppose that she has become more aware of her own competence. Another teacher (F) also gives voice to the competence of giving children a lot of *space.*

> [#12] Ped F: '…I know why I'm doing what I'm doing and that is to give children a lot of space, and I have been doing that for many years, I back off, and that doesn't mean that I don't challenge children with questions, but I give children a lot of space. I want them to have the opportunity to talk to each other, as there is a lot going on, on the adults' terms anyway (Ped F-1).

The space given to the children in this situation, a psychological space, is thanks to the teacher taking a conscious 'step back' waiting for the children to use the space in their own way. This gives the children opportunity to talk to each other and to create discussions and highlight aspects that are important to them, but this does not mean that they are left on their own - the teacher is right beside them.

There is a multitude of situations discerned by the teachers as competence in this area of the decisions they make, the balancing they are doing within the situations, and the space they

give to the children. They are enhancing the children's opportunities to make choices of their own, to explore, to be creative and find their own way to learn.

Pedagogical assets

The fourth and last category derived from the teachers' discernments of competence concerns pedagogical assets. It consists of aspects as the *methods* they use, the *environments* they are working within, how they use their *bodies* and their *curiosity* along with their *experiences* and the *planning* of the work conducted. Also, the use of *play* is considered to be a competence.

Pedagogical assets are about aspects that are discerned by teachers as aspects of competence, which they use to enhance the pedagogical intentions, to make pedagogical considerations and to put their pedagogical knowledge into practice. In this light, these assets are inseparable from the other aspects of competence described earlier.

The teachers use their *bodies* a lot in their work, and this is discerned as competence. Statements about the body as an asset refer not only to the fact that they are present and close to the children, but to the way they walk around in the setting, know what is going on in the next room just by listening to children and are present not only physically but also psychologically. The body is also discerned as a way to enhance children's learning or to 'talk' to them while at a distance, to send out feelings to children, like communicating without words, as if the teacher is actually saying 'I am here, I will support you'. It is about using body language and eye contact in a conscious way and as a pedagogical asset, as described below.

> [#13] Ped A: "Something that I prefer to use, that is that I tend to use eye contact, since sometimes you just keep talking… I have a pretty strong voice, but I try to show with my body 'be quiet' or 'sit down' or 'wait' or something like that. I think that is pretty good, since I have a strong voice, and if I use it they will react directly" (Ped A-1).

This teacher (A) says that she uses her eyes as a conscious asset instead of using her voice. She has recognized that this will give her more opportunities to 'talk' to just that child she would like to 'talk' to, without disturbing the other children working, even if she is in the other part of the classroom. The following teacher (F) uses her body as an asset in another way, i.e. making the child feel safe and welcome at preschool.

> [#14] Ped F: '… now this particular child is arriving, and there is nothing special about that, they have this time (for leaving the child at the preschool. They arrive in the middle of breakfast time, and all the other children are sitting around the table, eating, my comment). She is used to sitting here (in the teachers' lap). Sometimes she sits with me, sometimes with my colleague, there is nothing strange about that and we have done that since she started. I perceive myself as giving a very calm impression (Ped F-1).

The teacher uses her body in a conscious way and the child gets a smooth transition from the parent to the teacher, feeling welcome and a part of the wholeness in preschool even if she arrives when all the others are occupied with something else (eating and talking). Body language is not used only by the teachers but the teachers also encourage children to use their

own bodies. In this excerpt the teacher (C) is having a maths session, and they are learning about the numbers and figures by using their fingers.

> [#15] Ped C: The thing is I'm trying to get the children to use their hands, and fingers, in a practical way, to make it easier for them to learn mathematics, and this should, of course, be done in many different ways' (Ped C-1).

Apart from using their bodies, different methods and planning the activities in the setting as assets, the teachers also discern *curiosity* and the *environment* as important factors in one's estimate of competence. Here one teacher (G) is telling that she in her work becomes curious of what the children understand and how they interpret the things that are the learning object in the situation.

> [#16] Ped G: 'The starting point is – what is it that I would like the children to discover? But at the same time, to be able to do it I discover that I myself am curious about how the children understand. How they interpret the things they understand – I need to know this in order to move on and to have something to build upon. (Ped G-1).

The fact that teachers discern *curiosity* as an aspect of competence may imply that they are aware of the importance of viewing the things that happen within the child as not only interesting but also essential to know about in order to enhance the learning that will occur based on the child's understanding.

Also the *environment* is discerned as an aspect of competence since the teacher uses and refers to it not only in a conscious way but also knowing that the environment will have an impact upon children. Teacher G is talking about the environment in the following excerpt, which is in relation to a video-sequence showing the children in a room with a sofa and a low table with chairs of the same height, listening to music, and moving and expressing what they think about at the same time.

> [#17] Ped G: "well… first, when we enter this room, we have done it in different ways… How the environment talks to the children, the things are talking to the children and the children are talking to the things… so my colleague and I had a bit of a chat about how we were going to do this activity…//… initially we had another thought about them sitting round the table (instead of being able to move around as they did now, my comment) – because what kind of feeling and impact would that have had on the children? (Ped G-2).

Apart from the environment, teachers also discern the fact that they have discussed how to do things differently as competence. They realize that if you vary the way you do things, you will get different experiences. Encouraging experiences is also discerned as competence by teacher E:

> [#18] Ped E: … But it is a competence to train yourself to read a story or a poem so it will attract the listeners, and that is something you can't do from the beginning, you have to learn to do it, that I know from the beginning of my career – reading aloud in front of the others….. but if you train yourself you will enhance that competence (Ped E-1).

The excerpt shows that she thinks the more training you get in reading aloud and doing things over and over again, the more experience you get and the better you become at reading aloud in front of the children. She discerns this as a competence.

Play is discerned as a competence when it is used to enhance both learning and children's awareness of specific subjects. Play also gives space for children to be active and to have time to explore things by themselves. Teachers are taking part in children's play throughout the video-recorded situations. Play is sometimes initiated by the children, sometimes by the teachers. In the following sequence, the teacher (D) is invited to take part in a game which is taking place in a small room fitted up as a home, and where the actors are three girls. While looking at the video observation the teacher says:

> [#19] Ped D: '…well, now it became… it developed a bit, the game. The three girls disagreed a bit about the dolls clothes … Sometimes I think, for them to be able to play the game properly?, they need adults to take part, since they sometimes have a hard time acknowledging each other …//… As when they are playing 'family', it comes out better if someone is helping them to divide the roles, because someone always ends up in the same role. You need to be there to support. But finding the right approach – and not being the one in charge isn't easy, but I can be there to support the play (Ped D-2).

While taking part in children's play, the teacher here uses the opportunity to enhance learning in terms of social aspects, as the children acknowledging each other, and helps them to develop their play without forcing herself upon them. She also shows her view of the child as competent, but this does not necessarily mean that they can manage on their own. She also expresses the aspects of balancing between steering the game towards something that she would find good or appropriate and giving the children space to play as they wish and to use their own creativity, and to explore things they want to explore.

In another sequence, the children have been building a cabin with cushions and blankets all morning. After a while the cabin turns into a shop, and the teacher asks them whether or not they need some money to run the shop, which they say they do. The teacher (B) helps them to get some paper and pencils as well as some 'homemade' numbers to use to make money and get the game going. The children are sitting at a low table talking and making money, the teacher takes part in the game and in the conversation, but she sits at the corner at the table, waiting. When looking at the video sequence, she says:

> [#20] Researcher: What do you think, when you can see yourself sitting there (together with the children, my comment)?
> Ped B: well, I think that I have a lot of things going at the same time… that I'm… communicating with several children at the same time – you have to do that since you don't only 'have one' to relate to. So you have to let go and to listen to more than one child at the same time, and I think that I am doing that here. They are helping each other as well. Like the thing with 1000[17]… it is a question of give and take, and not keeping things to oneself, you are working together (Ped B-2).

---

[17] The children are having a discussion about how to write '1000'. They are helping each other to get the right amount of zeros.

The play takes unexpected turns, and the teacher is a part of these turns. Her question to the children about needing money for the game makes the game grow, and she uses this to focus upon mathematical aspects. But she does not force them to do it, it is still a part of the children's play, but her presence as a co-player and not an authoritarian teacher with strictly a learning focus makes the children the owners of their play and learning. The children are using each other to learn, starting from the point where they are. The teacher's discernment of competence is about talking to several children at the same time. She is listening and she acknowledges such aspects as children having space to use their creativity, without having to do the money in a specific way, and their play has a chance to continue and develop.

The following excerpt has partly been used before (#7, Ped G), but then in terms of the teacher's pedagogical intentions to enhance learning. Here the sequence is used to show that the asset the teacher uses to enhance the proposed learning is play. She is not only referring to the learning as a competence since the learning is embedded in the play.

> [#21] Ped G: one child wants to start some kind of play, and he tries to get some friends to play with him but it isn't really working – and I try to take on a lot of roles but no one wants the third role…//… And then finally, the children divide the roles, and we don't have any drum, and then one of the children suggests that you can make the sound with your feet. So this is play which derives from the children…//… and it turns into learning in many areas – if I don't have this, what shall I do then? This turns into learning in many areas (Ped G-3).

This sequence shows that learning is intertwined with play, and that here the teacher uses play to enhance the learning within. But the teacher is just a follower on this trip, so she has to be very open to the children's suggestions since she does not know beforehand what learning she will be able to enhance.

Planning is discerned to be a competence when teachers see the video sequences. In this sequence, which is from the pre-decided circle-time activity, the children are to listen to a piece of music and to talk about the inner pictures that they get out of the music. These expressions will then be transformed into a poem by the children and the teacher together. The teacher (E) regards planning as competence. Three teachers plan the lesson together and use the planning as an asset in order to enhance learning.

> [#22] Researcher: "…here you are listening to the music for the first time…"
> Ped E: "Yes, that is what we had decided when we planned this session, the three lessons that we were to conduct…//…It was planned by us three teachers together, first they get to hear the music once, it is new to them and it can be hard to start thinking anything about it right away. So listen first – and then they get the task- it is to make it understandable to them that – ok, now we are going to do something with the music. This was an intention that we had" (Ped E-1).

Later on in the same video observation, when the children are creating the poem, one of the children tries to tell the teacher that he thinks that one of the sentences on the whiteboard should be changed in order to get a better poem. During the SR session the teacher discerns the way she handles the situation, how she is trying to grasp what the child is saying, as competence.

[#23] Ped E: "One of the children can't read so well, but he had found out that this 'long sentence' (had to be changed, my comment) and I didn't just take that for granted and change it, but I read it out loud as well… 'Is this the sentence you mean?' From what I can tell it is a competence, grasping this, and that you support the children in 'Is this what you were thinking about' and that is a way to make it more clear to them…"(Ped E-1).

While listening to the teacher, the researcher realized that the teacher probably acted in this way on a regular basis, that is, that it was a *method* that she uses to get children to develop their ability to express themselves. This method of challenging the children to express more clearly what they thought about, and what sentence they refer to, functions as an asset when the teacher is enhancing children's learning.

Teachers' and researcher's discernments: Similarities and differences

The main difference between teachers' and researcher's perspective seems to depend upon the perspective available, outsider's or insider's perspective. The teachers are given the opportunity to use both perspectives, but the researcher only has access to one, an outsider's perspective. The fact that the researcher is viewing the video-recorded situations only from an outsider's perspective, and the teacher has the advantage of viewing the situations from both perspectives is crucial. This difference means that the teachers have more knowledge of what is going on inside when they are in the video-observed practice.

The discernments from the researcher's outside perspective show similarities to teachers' discernments but also differences, in relation to the same situations. The similarities consist of the researcher's possibilities of discerning the aspects categorized as *assets*, as play, methods, curiosity, body and environment. The researcher can clearly see that the teachers are using these assets to enhance learning and to make children more aware and conscious. She also notes their genuine interest in children's way of understanding the world. Their curiosity is clearly visible and noticeable; it is apparent in the way the teachers ask questions and in their body language. Body language is discerned by both teachers and the researcher as a competence, but the focus of the discernments is slightly different. The teachers place greater emphasis on aspects as their voices and how they use their bodies, as when getting children to feel safe by letting them sit next to them or similar. The aspects that the researcher discerns more frequently are, for example, how the teachers are placed in the room, how they move and if they are looking relaxed or stressed. With regard to other differences in how some assets are discerned as competence, it is clear that the planning and the experiences mentioned by the teachers are not visible to the researcher. This could be connected with the inside and outside perspectives mentioned earlier.

When looking into aspects as *pedagogical knowledge*, it may be seen that the researcher's and teachers' discernments are closely related. Here the in-service training given is visible to the researcher, in terms of a theoretical base, and also in terms of the methods used while interacting with the children. The view of the child is discerned by the way the interaction and the interplay shown on the screen is interpreted. In the category of *pedagogical considerations,* balance is discerned by both teachers and researcher, but with the difference that it is not possible to the researcher to know what options the teachers are considering. But balance becomes visible by the way they look and the way they start to say something, but then stop and change direction. On the other hand, the space and time given to the children,

while striking a balance between aspects and reflection-in-action, are visible to the researcher, and perhaps even more discerned as competence by the researcher than by the teachers.

Pedagogical intentions are mostly discerned by teachers. During the SR situations they share their inner thoughts about what they were aiming at in the situation. These thoughts are not visible to the researcher – who discerns intentions as competence through the way the teachers work with the children – starting somewhere and moving towards an end-point. The researcher can follow the path outlined, meaning that their intentions become visible. Here the researcher's knowledge of the field could be of importance.

Teachers expanding the picture of competence

After the SR sessions were completed, six of the eight teachers[18] were asked if there was anything else that they would like to add about teacher competence in general. The picture that emerges from these comments is in line with the categories described earlier; the importance of being curious about what the children are thinking and of enhancing their learning by using variation, to which may added the competence needed to make the variation visible to the children. Also apparent are the teachers' view of the child in terms of respect and the importance they attach to starting from their experiences and striking a   balance between paying attention to the individual and the group. Some aspects that were not widely mentioned before come up during this talk: the social dimension, creating a relationship with the child which makes them feel safe and will make them want to go to school, the interplay and the importance of a mutual understanding between children and adults as well as having a good time together. Some teachers also bring up the aspect of reflection as a competence here, both individually and together with other teachers. To develop and being challenged as a teacher are mentioned as factors in teacher competence.

In the responses to the first questionnaire[19] the teachers reported that their in-service training during the years they have worked in preschool and school comprised both further university studies and taking part in different research projects or more content-focused courses, for example, mathematics for young children, children's emotional and social needs, and similar areas. In general, they say that these interventions have led to more complex and deeper understanding of different subject areas and learning in general as well as giving them an opportunity to keep abreast of new research. The opportunity to change existing ways of acting and thinking as well as developing professional attitudes towards a more conscious and reflective practice is also frequently mentioned.

The responses to the second questionnaire[20], which was completed some time after the empirical data had been collected show that teachers experienced the situation of viewing themselves on a screen as an instructive one, even if it was hard in the beginning. By talking about what they were doing on the screen and viewing their competence they were able to acknowledge their knowledge, and their professional actions were visible. Expressions as 'a picture says more than a thousand words' are common, but some teachers were of the opinion that perhaps a longer time between the video observation and the SR session could improve the ability to discern one's competence. All teachers agreed, however, that it was possible to describe and talk about their competence.

---

[18] The first two teachers were not given this possibility since the value of this opportunity was not revealed until those two SR situations had been transcribed. The following six teachers were given, and used, the opportunity.
[19] See appendix 2
[20] See appendix 2.

Reaching a meta-level

Throughout the SR sessions, the teachers not only describe the situations they are watching on the screen and discern the aspects they consider to be competence, they also talk about the things they were reflecting upon during the actual situation. They also use their reflective ability during the time they are watching the video sequence. One teacher (A) is expressing the reflection-in-action in the following quote:

> [24] Ped A: 'Yes, I really don't know what to do in that situation (shown on the screen making a poem), whether I should interfere, since I think it sounds better with *'something has happened; someone has died'*… So I was in two minds… but I think it sounds better with *'something has happened'*…I was thinking about that at the same time…' (Ped A-1).

Here the teacher describes her reflections during the time she was together with the children, and she is talking about it as it was something ordinary. This does not seem to be the first time she has had those kinds of thoughts during class. Later on the same teacher is reflecting-on-action, while looking at another video sequence.

> [#25] Researcher: 'Is there something else that you are thinking about based upon what we have seen?'
> Ped A; 'I think, perhaps I seem calmer than what I feel (during that situation, my comment), I have a bad temper, and I really have to think about that…' (Ped A-3).

The difference between these two statements by the same teacher shows the difference between reflection-in-action and the reflection-on-action (Schön, 1983, 1987). Being able to talk about what the previous reflections were showed the teacher's meta-reflective ability.

Throughout the SR sessions other teachers also make their meta-reflective ability visible while talking in terms of thinking about their thinking and doing in the sequences shown to them.

Chapter 6
Discussion

This chapter comprises both a methodological and an empirical discussion. The first takes up the methods described in chapter four, the second refers to the empirical results as well as the theoretical background and related research described in chapters two to five.

Methodological discussion

Underlying the methodological choices required for this study is the intention to grasp teachers' discernments of competence within their profession from an inside as well as an outside perspective. This implies that it was preferable to choose a micro ethnographic method of shadowing (Czarniawska, 2008), rather than a case study. A case study would have placed the teachers more 'between' each other, and not as they are now, together as a group. In this study, variation theory is used as a theoretical perspective, which puts learning at the centre and problematizes how people look at 'something' as an object of learning, which is central to this study. Also, data have been analyzed by looking at differences and similarities between the teachers' discernments, while different aspects of competence constitute the *figure* that stands out against a background. Letting the teachers discern aspects of their actions that they regard as competences, which they consider important enough to be 'highlighted' (Goodwin, 1994), implies that they are becoming more aware of taken-for-granted aspects within the profession, and perhaps also shows important features of the teaching profession.

The method used, video observations, was necessary in order to provide the teachers with a retrospective opportunity. This meant that the teacher not only had to accept being a part of the study and being observed, but also the fact that these observations would carried out with a video camera, in order to obtain material for their discernments of competence in specific situations. One could claim, with reference to Yinger (1986, cited in Lyle, 2003), that this would provide the teachers with a 'new' situation and that the discernments would not be made upon their actual doing but upon their viewing of the video sequence. When the teachers looked at the sequences, however, it was obvious that they separated their comments about the actual situation from an inside perspective from talking about the situation from an outside perspective. This is evident from the way they express their reflections, especially when reaching a meta-cognitive level. The opportunity to take two perspectives provides a basis for making discernments and sharing one's reflections. This could show the complexities within the way of you are able to view teacher competence since the simultaneously in taking inside and the outside perspective enhances the discernments.

In an earlier study in which video observations were used, Hasselgren (1981) draws attention to the distinction between what the students are seeing and what this seeing means to them, and says that it is up to the student to judge or decide what is significant within the sequence of children's play shown on screen (Hasselgren, 1981). In the present study, video data are also used as a tool for capturing aspects which perhaps were not visible to the teachers before, and the teachers discern the aspect that are important to them. The difference here is that the teachers are reflecting upon sequences where they are the ones performing the action, and they are not viewing someone else.

One could reflect upon the way the sequences for the SR situations were chosen. The researcher decided on situations that were in some way similar to each other. This was to

record the teacher's discernment in situations that could be significant parts of the day in the chosen settings. While analyzing the data, the researcher realized that most situations were initiated by the teachers. From a validity perspective, this is irrelevant, since the discernments are made upon the situations and not upon my previous intentions, which were unknown to the teachers. By adding an opportunity for teachers to share[21] other aspects of things regarded by them to be competence, which they thought had not been visible in the sequences, validity was in a way guaranteed. The opportunity to read, reflect and comment upon the things said during the SR situations also gave the teachers the opportunity to ensure the reliability of the study.

A questionnaire was added to the study in order to give teachers the opportunity to share their reflections about being video-observed, and whether they thought they were able to view and to describe their competences. This was done as a way to establish the validity of the study since the way the teachers experience the situation could affect the data. The overall results showed that the situations had been positive and the teachers felt empowered by participating in such a study, but there are also comments about the limited time between the video observation and the SR session. Here the researcher took her cue from Lyle (2003), who states that an extended period of time could make the teacher insecure and anxious. But some teachers in this study stated that a longer time between those two occasions could give time to reflect upon what happened during the day, and perhaps that could give another outcome. It is important to acknowledge these opinions, but the intention with the procedure was to get the teachers' discernments and reflections in situations that they had not had the time to reflect upon in a more focused fashion. This study was not about producing 'the right answers' or discerning 'the right aspects' of competence. Their spontaneous discernments say more than they perhaps imagine. The outcome of the questionnaire can thereby be regarded as strengthening the validity and the reliability of the study.

When the teachers' utterances were transcribed, some changes were made as suggested by Mårdsjö (2005). From a methodological perspective, this could have had an impact upon the study. Since the study is done within a Swedish context and the conversations carried out in Swedish, this could affect the way the reader will interpret the excerpts in the results chapter. When the conversations were translated into English, nuances and the teachers' implicit intentions could have been lost. To safeguard against this, the Swedish excerpts are attached to the study (see appendix 1). The analysis of the teachers' utterances has been based on these.

Empirical discussion

This study puts demands upon teachers to view themselves from a different perspective, and this demand not only needs a bit of courage but also an ability to reflect on and in actions (Schön, 1983, 1987) that they performed just a little bit earlier in their setting. But apart from this, they are also asked to lift out certain aspects which they perceive as competence, to discern something out of the whole (Marton & Booth, 1997).

Discernment as an opportunity to understand teacher competence

One could say that competences discerned by the teachers are just parts or perhaps different aspects of competence, but this study implies that competence is a part of whole. The

---

[21] This has been shown in the result and has been put together separately. It is not included in the analysis of the discernments of competence out of the sequences, and thereby not included into the categories.

competences are, when put into practice indivisible from the wholeness as well as being contextual. The result of the study shows that the teachers' discernments of competence fall into four categories: (i) pedagogical knowledge, (ii) pedagogical intentions, (iii) pedagogical considerations and (iv) pedagogical assets.

The first category refers to *pedagogical knowledge*. This consists of the theoretical base from which the teachers work, which also has an impact upon the way they view children. Their theoretical background can be traced to the teacher training programs during the 1980s to late 1990s, which were based upon the theories of Fröbel, Piaget, and Vygotsky, among others (Vallberg Roth, 2002) and also to the fact that the teachers, in order to find those theories useful, must fit them into their practice and find that they make a difference to them (Nordin-Hultman, 2004). Take teacher F for example, who mentioned using the thoughts of Vygotsky while talking about learning in context. While Nordin-Hultman (2004) claims that teachers should not rely only on developmental theories are not enough for teachers to rely on, the teachers in this study use a variety of theories to put their pedagogical knowledge into practice, and they discern their theories as aspects of competence. The theoretical base became visible in the way teachers act. In SR situations they relate their actions to pedagogical theories to support their interplay with the children. This inside perspective gives us an opportunity to share the teachers' theoretical base, which would not be possible if we only have access to an outsider's perspective.

The teachers discern the view of the child is an aspect of competence since it is applied in situations where teachers are supporting children in their learning process, empowering them, and acknowledging them as competent participants.

The second category refers to *pedagogical intentions,* which are discerned as enhancing learning and increasing children's awareness of different aspects of the surrounding world. The teachers' intentions are expressed as making variations visible to children, and here they use their knowledge as a base to be able to follow and enhance children's intentions. This is done in the moment and requires the teacher to have such knowledge embedded so she can do this without planning what to do next. As stated by Lindahl (2002), there are small aspects of interplay among children and adults which decide how things will develop. At the same time, some teachers express that they are not making their intentions visible to the children, and one could reflect upon this kind of aspect and how it relates to learning and learning abilities, and in what way a more shared thinking could enhance learning. While connecting this with variation theory, the aspects of awareness of what something 'is' and 'is not' (Runesson, 1999), one could believe that these implicit objects could be better understood by the children if they were more explicitly spelled out. Then both teachers and children could focus more on learning, and the children could perhaps participate more in the situations and would also be able to connect the parts with the wholeness, as mentioned in developmental pedagogy (Pramling Samuelsson & Asplund Carlsson, 2003). The teacher's use of developmental pedagogy becomes visible by the way they talk about what they want to achieve with the situations on the screen. These intentions are also related to the guidelines within the Swedish curriculum (Ministry of Education and Science in Sweden, 1994, 1998), which focus upon both goals to strive towards and goals to achieve. Another interesting aspect of pedagogical intentions from an outsider's perspective could be understood as neglecting children's abilities to learn, as the teacher being 'passive'. Teacher G's talk [#7] about enhancing children's learning by letting them find out alternative solutions by themselves, which is an active intention on her part could be interpreted otherwise from outside. This shows the importance of comparing and discussing different perspectives of the same situation.

Teachers' intentions of making children aware of specific aspects of 'something' can occur just as much in child-initiated play situations as in teacher-initiated ones.

The third category concerns *pedagogical considerations*, which refer to the teachers balancing different aspects that they face while being together, working, with the children and giving them space to make choices of their own and to use the time as they wish. To seize the moment is important, to be able to make sure that the children are part of the learning process and the environment. One interesting finding within this area is that statements during the SR sessions indicate the teachers' reflective ability. They are constantly reflecting upon both the aspects within the action and upon the action. Schön (1983) states that teachers have a problem with describing the things they are doing within their profession, but this was not the case in the present study. Here the teachers discern and talk about the things they have been doing in both specific and general terms, and they do not seem to find it difficult, as the responses to the second questionnaire confirm. The 'tacit' knowledge is not 'tacit', but it has perhaps been so embedded within the person that it is no longer being reflected upon. This implies that the teachers' awareness of the theories behind their actions had become taken-for-granted but was now made visible.

Confirming Schön's (1987) theory about the importance of reflection-in-action, the teachers in this study do in fact make pedagogical considerations while reflecting within their actions, and give space to children not only to reflect by themselves but also to give them the opportunity to be creative and active. When the teachers think about how to proceed next, they relate the considerations to pedagogical knowledge and their intentions within the situation and at the same time they are using several pedagogical assets. Schön (1983, 1987) says that reflection-in-action can contribute to revealing the tacit knowledge that is embedded in the practitioner's doing, and that the reflection and the doing interact, which is also shown in this study. On the other hand, only reflecting-in-action is not enough, the teachers must also be aware of the reflections-in-action that can be done by using reflection-on-action, perhaps by being given a retrospective opportunity enhanced by video observations. The last statement also confirms van Manen's (1991) thoughts about intentions generally being lived out before being conscious, but van Manen states that these reflections only take place when we have time to think and are strictly limited during activity. This study shows that the teachers create these spaces within their daily practice (here expressed as pedagogical considerations), which then contributes to the children having space for their reflections as well.

Johansson and Pramling Samuelsson (2006) also advocate giving children more space to be creative and active describing a teacher who says that she has changed her way of working towards creating more space for interaction and improvisation thanks to developmental pedagogy.

The last category refers to teachers discerning *pedagogical assets* as competence. One could let oneself be taken in by the belief that pedagogical assets can be picked and chosen by chance and if wanted, but that is not the case. The teachers in this study show that they connect the assets they discern as competence with their intentions, considerations, and their theoretical knowledge. The assets are not add-ons, they are an important part of the teachers' profession. Sandberg and Kuisma (2008) connect scientific knowledge to experiences in the teaching profession while interpreting professionalism and taking children's perspectives. This study also acknowledges the importance of linking up several aspects to be a professionally competent teacher, but in the present experience is viewed as an asset.

The teachers discern play as competence. From a Swedish perspective one could wonder whether placing play within the area of assets would diminish its value, but on the other hand, the pedagogical assets are indivisible from the wholeness of the other three categories and illuminate the importance of play, recognizing it as equal to planning and other aspects within this category. From a theoretical perspective where the world is viewed as a non-dualistic world (Runesson, 1999) and the children are viewed as competent citizens within society (Sommer, 2005), the importance of using all available assets in order to enhance pedagogical intentions and extend the pedagogical knowledge within the profession are important. Play becomes an opportunity to learn and also an opportunity to interact.

The professional teacher

Being a teacher is like having a tray full of marbles and trying to have all those marbles moving at the same time, without dropping any of them – which could be interpreted as a mission impossible, but in fact is conducted all the time within the profession. Is it really possible to judge teacher competence from an outside perspective or does one need to have both outside and inside perspectives in order to make it possible?

One of the aims of the study has been to investigate whether the aspects of competence discerned by teachers differ from those discerned by the researcher. As shown by the results, there are such differences, which could depend upon the fact that it is impossible to view and interpret what another person thinks and reflects upon. The differences are in a way connected with the results reached by Hasselgren (1981), when teacher students expressed a change within their ideas of the child but the research conducted did not show this, even though they had reported it. This emphasizes the importance, mentioned previously, of taking several perspectives upon the same aspect in order to grasp some of the competences embedded within the teacher profession. This is what Goodwin (1994) says is needed in order to create a professional vision. The importance of making teachers talk about and express verbally the reflections made individually and to make them available to others to reflect upon should not be underestimated. Mårdsjö (2005) also emphasizes these aspects of reflection.

By revealing implicit aspects of competence as done by using video observations and stimulated recalls, the teachers have been able to reflect upon such aspects as giving children space to reflect during activities. This could imply that new knowledge has been established within the understanding of profession and competence.

From a Swedish perspective, the teaching profession is not only about planning the work or putting methods into practice, which could be the fact within countries focusing more upon the outcome of, than the relations within, the learning. The teaching profession is about believing in children's competences, giving children space to be creative and reflective. It is about the teachers' intentions and focusing upon different aspects as social and emotional understandings as well as learning aspects. Only focusing upon teaching children subject matter is far too simple, and reduces the picture of teacher competences and the teaching profession into something that it is not. It is about giving children opportunities to learn and develop in a society where they are considered competent participants.

Even if the teachers discern many aspects of competence by viewing themselves on the screen, there are also further aspects of competence made explicit after the SR situation, as having a good time together with children and reaching a mutual understanding. The aspects mentioned afterwards broaden the picture even more, by enhancing aspects. This makes the

complex picture of competence even more complex and makes the importance of a 'ground-up' (Dalli, 2008) perspective even more obvious.

Even if the teachers within this study constitute a sample from both countryside and suburbs, the teachers form a homogeny within the aspects they discern as competence. As Goodwin (1994) points out, a professional vision consists of similarities forming a unity – which can give a picture of what the profession consists of – from my point of view, the teachers within this study give a picture of their profession by formulating, and highlighting, their specific competences in relation to their practice. Their discernments broaden the picture of the profession from being a complex profession into an even more complex one.

Refection and meta-level ability

The teachers are using their reflective ability in one way or another when discerning their competences from the retrospective perspective. A significant result of the study is the critical view the teachers have of their own actions. They are commenting upon the aspects of their doing which, according to them, should have been done in another way, or give constructive examples of how they could improve their doing. This links to Runesson (1999) stressing that you must be aware of how 'something' varies and what 'something' is *not* in order to discern aspects out of wholeness. This implies that the SR sessions and their reflections have an important function not only in confirming the teachers' reflective ability but also in enhancing their awareness of their competence and how this competence could contribute to the developing professionalism within teaching. Teachers' reflections and communications make them more aware of their own pedagogical learning and understanding. The retrospective opportunity within this study has made them aware of this, as the responses to the second questionnaire confirm.

It is interesting to notice that all teachers were not aware of the time and space they were giving to the children while they themselves were considering what step to take next. This became obvious to the teachers when looking at the video-recorded sequences. They talk about it in positive terms, and think that it was a good thing to do since it gave children more space and opportunities to reflect. One could suppose that by being able to reflect on this, the teachers have become more aware of their own competences. Perhaps by experiencing something new and viewing something familiar from a new perspective they have also been learning (Marton & Booth, 1997), as well as applying an active understanding to their practical action (van Manen, 1991). This could mean that their professional knowledge has improved.

The results of this study stress the importance of a reflective ability and also focus upon developing and further enhancing it by in-service training building upon earlier teacher training (also mentioned by Mårdsjö, 2005). The teachers in this study are reflecting upon different aspects all the time, and if you view their reflections as learning, their learning occurs all the time. Their awareness about their doing and their thinking make them take further steps in their professional development, by using meta-level thinking about their actions, which is mentioned by Pramling Samuelsson and Asplund Carlsson (2003) as being important factors in learning.

Implications for ECE society and further research

One contribution to society is presenting things that are always more complicated than one can ever imagine. Insiders' perspectives on competence within this study show the variety and

the multitude of ways that the teachers use to enhance and focus upon learning and understanding of what they are doing in their profession which, taken all together, could be called competence. This perspective is essential to understanding what is going on. To be able to support the work, it is essential to extend teachers' and others' understandings of the teacher profession, and to give these teachers more possibilities for extending their competences to be able to further develop and create opportunities for all children.

Further research in this area could focus upon comparing Swedish teachers' discernments of competence with those of teachers in other countries in a similar study. This could give teacher competence from an insider's perspective a strong voice as well as contributing interesting information on children's learning environments and teachers' competences.

References

Alexandersson, M. (1994). Den fenomenografiska forskningsansatsens fokus. In B. Starrin and P-G Svensson (Eds.). *Kvalitativ metod och vetenskapsteori* [Qualitative methods and theory of science] (pp. 111-136). Lund, Sweden: Studentlitteratur.

Berntsson, P. (2001). Möjligheter med förhinder. Den nya lärarutbildningen och förskollärarna [Possibilities with restrictions: The new teacher education and pre-school teachers]. *Pedagogisk Forskning i Sverige*, *6*(3), 206-217.

Carlgren, I & Marton, F. (2004). *Lärare av i morgon* [Teachers of tomorrow]. Stockholm, Sweden: Lärarförbundet.

Cheng Pui-Wah, D. (2008). Meta-learning ability – a crucial component in preparing teachers for a changing context. *Teacher Development, 12*(1), 85-95.

Czarniawska, B. (2007). *Shadowing and other techniques for doing fieldwork in modern societies.* Stockholm, Sweden: Liber.

Dalli, C. (2008). Pedagogy, knowledge and collaboration: towards a ground-up perspective on professionalism. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal, 16*(2), 171-185.

Goodwin, C. (1994). Professional vision. *American Anthropologist, 96*(3), 606-633.

Haglund, B. (2003). Stimulated Recall. Några anteckningar om en metod att generera data [Stimulated recall. Some notes concerning a method of generating data]. *Pedagogisk forskning i Sverige*, *8*(3), 145-157.

Hasselgren, B. (1981). *Ways of apprehending children at play. A study of Pre-school student teachers' development* (Göteborg Studies in Educational Science, 38). Göteborg, Sweden: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis.

Heard, G. (1989). *For the good of the Earth and the Sun. Teaching poetry.* Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann.

Heikillä, M. & Sahlström, F. (2003). Om användning av videoinspelning i fältarbete [On the use of videorecording in fieldwork]. *Pedagogisk Forskning i Sverige*, *8*(1-2), 24-41.

Hensvold, I. (2003). *Fyra år efter examen. Hur förskollärare erfar pedagogiskt arbete och lärarutbildningens spår* [Four years beyond the examination – how Preschool teachers experience their educational work and traces of teacher education]. Stockholm, Sweden: HLS förlag.

Hughes, P. (2007). Paradigms, methods and knowledge. In G. McNaughton, S. Rolfe, I. Siraj-Blatchford (Eds.), *Doing early childhood research: International perspectives on theory and practice,* (pp. 31-56). New York: Open University Press.

Johnson, J., Christie, J. & Wardle, F. (2005). *Play, development and early education*. USA: Pearson Education.

Johansson, E. & Pramling Samuelsson, I. (2006). *Lek och läroplan. Möten mellan barn och lärare i förskola och skola* [Play and curriculum] (Göteborg Studies in Educational Science, 249). Göteborg, Sweden: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis.

Johansson, I., Sandberg, A. & Vourinen, T. (2007). Practitioner-oriented research as a tool for professional development. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal, 15*(2), 151-166.

Johansson, J-E. (1992). *Metodikämnet i förskollärarutbildningen. Bidrag till en traditionsbestämning* [Methods as a subject in preschool teacher education] (Göteborg Studies in Educational Science, 86). Göteborg, Sweden: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis.

Johansson, J-E. (1994). *Svensk förskolepedagogik under 1900-talet* [Swedish preschool pedagogy during 20th century]. Lund, Sweden: Studentlitteratur.

Johansson, J-E. (2004). *Lärare för yngre åldrar: konstnär, forskare eller praktiker? Utvärdering av två inriktningar i den nya lärarutbildningen i Göteborg* [Teacher for the younger years: artists, researcher or practitioner?]. Retrieved April 16, 2009 from: http://scholar.google.se/scholar?hl=sv&lr=&q=Johansson+J-E%2C+2004.

Karlsson Lohmander, M. (2004). The fading of a teaching profession? Reforms of early childhood teacher education in Sweden. *Early Years, 24*(1), 23-34.

Kihlström, S. (1995). *Att vara förskollärare: om yrkets pedagogiska innehåll* [Being a pre-school teacher: on the pedagogical meaning of the profession] (Göteborg Studies in Educational Science, 102). Göteborg, Sweden: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis.

Lantz, A. (1993). *Intervjumetodik* [The methodology of interviewing]. Lund, Sweden: Studentlitteratur.

Larsson, J. (2007). *Förskolan, pedagogen och läroplanen. En kvalitativ studie om att erfara och omsätta Lpfö-98* [Preschool, the pedagog and the curriculum] (Examensarbete inom Påbyggnadsutbildning med inriktning mot Förskola och Fritidshem). Göteborgs Universitet, Institutionen för pedagogik och didaktik, Box 300, SE 405 30 Göteborg, Sweden.

Lindgren, E-C. (2002). *Empowering young female athletes – A possible challenge to the male hegemony in sport. A descriptive and interventional study* (Göteborg Studies in Educational Science, 186). Göteborg, Sweden: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis.

Lindahl, M. (2002). *Vårda - Vägleda - Lära: effektstudie av ett interventionsprogram för pedagogers lärande I förskolemiljön* [Caring - Guiding - Learning. Effect-study of an intervention program for educators' learning in pre-school environment] (Göteborg Studies in Educational Science, 178). Göteborg, Sweden: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis.

Lyle, J. (2003). Stimulated recall: A report on its use in naturalistic research. *British Educational Research Journal*, *29*(6), 861-878.

van Manen, M. (1991). *The tact of teaching: The meaning of pedagogical thoughtfulness.* Ontario: The Althouse Press.

McNaughton, G., Rolfe, S. & Siraj-Blatchford, I. (Eds). (2007). *Doing early childhood research. International perspectives on theory and practice.* Buckingham: Open University.

Marton, F. & Booth, S. (1997). *Learning and awareness.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Martin Korpi, B. (2007). *The politics of Pre-school – intentions and decisions underlying the emergence and growth of the Swedish Pre-school.* Stockholm, Sweden: The Ministry of Education and research.

Ministry of Education and Science in Sweden. (1994). *Curricula for compulsory school system, the preschool class and the leisure-time centre, Lpo-94.* Stockholm, Sweden: Fritzes.

Ministry of Education and Science in Sweden. (1998). *Curriculum for the pre-school, Lpfö-98.* Stockholm, Sweden: Fritzes.

Mårdsjö, A-C. (2005). *Lärandets skiftande innebörder – uttryckta av förskollärare i vidareutbildning* [The changing meanings of learning – expressed by pre-school teachers in further education] (Göteborg Studies in Educational Science, 225). Göteborg, Sweden: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis.

Nordin-Hultman, E. (2005). *Pedagogiska miljöer och barns subjektskapande* [The pedagogical space and children's subjectifications]. Stockholm, Sweden: Liber.

Persson, S. & Tallberg Broman, I. (2002). Det är ju ett annat jobb. Läraryrkets avgränsningar och lärares socialpedagogiska ansvar [That's a quite different job. The delimitations of the teacher profession and the teacher's social education responsibility]. *Pedagogisk forskning i Sverige, 7*(2), 257-278.

Pramling Samuelsson, I. & Asplund Carlsson, M. (2003). *Det lekande lärande barnet i en utvecklingspedagogisk teori* [The playing learning child – in a developmental theory]. Stockholm, Sweden: Liber.

Pramling Samuelsson, I & Asplund Carlsson, M. (2008). The playing learning child: Towards a pedagogy of early childhood. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research, 52*(6), 623-641.

Pramling Samuelsson, I., Asplund Carlsson, M., Olsson, B., Pramling, N. & Wallerstedt, C. (2008) *Konsten att lära barn estetik* [The art of teaching children the aesthetics]. Stockholm, Sweden: Norstedts Akademiska.

Pramling Samuelsson, I., Asplund Carlsson, M., Olsson, B., Pramling, N. & Wallerstedt, C. (in press). The art of teaching children the arts: Music, dance and poetry with children 2-8-years old. *International Journal of early Years education.*

Pramling Samuelsson, I. & Mårdsjö, A-C. (1997). *Grundläggande färdigheter och färdigheters grundläggande* [Fundamental skills and the foundation of skills]. Stockholm, Sweden: Studentlitteratur.

Pramling Samuelsson, I. & Sheridan, S. (2006). *Lärandets grogrund* [The basis of learning]. (2nd edition). Lund, Stockholm: Studentlitteratur.

Regeringskansliet. (1999). *Early Childhood Education and Care policy in Sweden. Background report prepared for the OECD Thematic review*. Stockholm, Sweden.

Robson, C. (2008). *Real world research. A resourse for social scientists and practitioners/researchers.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Runesson, U. (1999). *Variationens pedagogik* [The pedagogy of variation] (Göteborg Studies in Educational Science, 129). Göteborg, Sweden: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis.

Sandberg, A. & Kuisma, M. (2008). Preschool Teachers' and Student Preschool Teachers' Thoughts about Professionalism in Sweden. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, *16*(2), 186-195.

Schön, D. (1983). *The Reflective Practitioner. How Professionals Think in Action.* USA: Basic Books.

Schön, D. (1987). *Educating the Reflective Practitioner. Towards a New Design for Teaching and Learning in the Professions.* San Fransisco: Jossey-Bass.

Sheridan, S. & Williams, P. (2007). *Dimensioner av konstruktiv konkurrens. Konstruktiva konkurrensformer i förskola, skola och gymnasium* [Dimensions of constructive interplay] (Göteborg Studies in Educational Science, 258). Göteborg, Sweden: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis.

SFS 2007:129. Examensförordningen [Regulation about examinations]. Retrieved May 17, 2009 from http//: www.notisum.se/rnp/sls/sfs/20070129.PDF

Simeonsdotter Svensson, A. (2009). *Den pedagogiska samlingen i förskolan. Barns olika sätt att erfara och hantera svårigheter* [The pedagogical circle-time in preschool. Different ways children experience and deals with difficulties] (Göteborg Studies in Educational Science, 274). Göteborg, Sweden: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis.

Siraj-Blatchford, I. & Siraj-Blatchford, J. (2007). Surveys and questionnaires: an evaluative case study. In G. McNaughton, S. Rolfe, & I. Siraj-Blatchford, (Eds.), *Doing early childhood research. International perspectives on theory and practice* (pp. 149-162). New York: Open University Press.

Skolverket. (2005). *Allmänna råd och kommentarer. Kvalitet i förskolan* [General guidelines and comments. Quality in preschool]. Stockholm, Sweden: Fritzes.

Skolverket. (2008). *Tio år efter förskolereformen. Nationell utvärdering av förskolan.* [Ten years after the pre-school reform]. Stockholm, Sweden: Fritzes.

Socialstyrelsen. (1987). *Pedagogiskt program för förskolan* [Pedagogical Preschool Program]. Stockholm, Sweden: Modin.

Sommer, D. (2005). *Barndomspsykologi. Utveckling i en förändrad värld* [Childhood psychology. Development in a changed world]. (2nd rev edition). Stockholm, Sweden: Runa.

Strander, K. (1997). *Jag är glad att jag gick på dagis. Fyrtio ungdomar ser tillbaka på sin uppväxt* [I am happy I went to the day-care centre]. Stockholm, Sweden: HLS förlag.

Swedish Research Council. (2008). *Research ethics principles in humanistic-social scientific research.* Retrieved October 16, 2008, from Vetenskapsrådet. Web site: http://www.vr.se

SOU 2008:109. En hållbar lärarutbildning [A sustainable teacher education programme]. Stockholm, Sweden: Utbildningsdepartementet.

Thörner, A. (2007). *Att vara sex år och gå i förskoleklass* [To be six years old and in a preschool class]. Rapport från Institutionen för Pedagogik och Didaktik, Högskolan i Borås. Nr1:2007. Retrieved March 15, 2009 from Högskolan i Borås: http://scholar.google.se/scholar?hl=sv&lr=&q=Th%C3%B6rner%2C+A.+%282007%29.++ &btnG=S%C3%B6k.

Vallberg Roth, A-C. (2002). *De yngre barnens läroplanshistoria* [The history of early childhood curricula]. Lund, Sweden: Studentlitteratur.

William-Olsson, I. & Krook, Y. (1973). *Arbetsformer i förskolan* [Ways to work in preschool]. Lärarhögskolan i Stockholm, Sweden.

Appendices

Appendix 1
Swedish excerpts

#1	Ped F; 'Ja, jag vill att de skall lära i samspel… Vygotskij… Vi lär i sammanhang och samspel och det är goda samspel… Man kan lära sig själv också men det här är optimalt. I ett sammanhang. Jag bollar ofta tillbaka, det gör jag medvetet. Jag svarar nästan aldrig på en fråga… Jag upprepar, förstärker och sedan ser jag om det är någon i gruppen… för jag tror på barnens förmåga att hjälpa varandra… Jag tror det har en annan kvalitet än 'fröken har sagt' (Ped F-3)
#2	Researcher; 'Vad är det du tycker är viktigt och som visar din kompetens i dessa situationer'? Ped D; 'att man försöker fånga barnens tanke, den de har, och få ner den på några få rader, att formulera det…' var det så här du tänkte?'.. Det här som ingick i vår kompetens utbildning, att göra om texten, att förkorta ner, flytta, då blir det så vuxen styrt, dessa barnen kan ju inte läsa ännu' (Ped D-3).
#3	Ped D; 'Jag tycker att det är väldigt viktigt att barnen själva får bestämma hur de vill ha… om de tex vill ha mjölk i sin gröt… för mig är det självklart att ha det, men det är ju inte alla som vill det. Våra egna föreställningar… att kliva ur dem… att var och en är en individ… och där tycker jag att det har förändrats mycket i förskolan generellt sett sedan jag började jobba. Då skulle alla ha det på ett visst vis, men nu ser man mer att barn är kompetenta och kan välja själva. Det tycker jag är viktigt. Att man frågar …//…Barnen kan vara med och styra och ta mat osv. det är viktigt. Smöra och ta pålägg, det är viktigt' (Ped D-1).
#4	Ped G; 'Vad som är kompetensen här? …//… Ett barn kommer ju här nu och berättar om detta ljud, och då tycker jag att det är viktigt att lyfta utifrån själva barnet. …//… sedan är det ett barn som säger att 'jag vill inte', Nej, Ok du vill inte och det är viktigt att respekterat att han inte vill. Många gånger kan det vara jag vill inte bara som en fras för att man inte vet vad som skall hända eller för att man vill faktiskt leka med något annan just nu. Jag tänker … att du vill inte, men då vill inte DU - o och vi andra fortsäter , men du behöver inte. Med respekt och lustfyllt är viktigt, det får inte bli något tvång' (Ped G-1).
#5	Ped G; 'Dels har jag ju en tanke med själva aktiviteten, som är att få fram olika ljud i olika instrument och det här med variation tänker jag – men jag säger ju inte det så tydligt (till barnen min anm.), men barnet är ju inne på här att mopparna låter på ett sätt och då vill jag ju lyfta fram att det han säger det är viktigt och det är viktigt inför gruppen' (Ped G-1).
#6	Researcher; 'Vad tycker du själv är framträdande, som är viktigt, i den kompetens som du vill lyfta fram'. Ped A; 'Det kanske är det att man vill att de skall försöka se, att de skall försöka känna själva hur det är om någon, att man tänker att 'jag gömmer inte för jag vill inte att någon gömmer för mig'. Att de skall försöka sätta sig in i den situationen själva, om det nu var någon som hade gömt saker' (Ped A-1).
#7	Ped G; 'Och så fördelar barnen rollerna, och vi har ju ingen trumma, och då föreslår ju ett av barnen att man kan göra med fötterna. Så det här är en lek utifrån barnen – jag vill lyssna på vad barnen vill, samtidigt vill jag ju höra hur de tänker när de inte har någon trumma och hur man kan göra den ute när vi inte har någon trumma - och vad vi kan använda istället – att finna egna lösningar. Och sedan hittar de ju det röret

	som vi kan använda som trumma …//… Detta blir ett lärande i många bitar – om jag inte har detta hur skall jag göra då? ' (Ped G-3).
#8	Ped A; 'Jag kunde ju ha ignorerat det han sa (om de gömda leksakerna)… jag kunde ju ha struntat i det, men jag tror inte jag…, antagligen är han väl så tydlig att jag inte kunde ignorera det, liksom att jag var tvungen att ta upp det' (Ped A-1).
#9	Ped A; '…alltså när jag är där… då tänker jag att jag inte skall försöka…, det är så lätt att det är vad *jag* tycker, att jag plockar upp det som jag vill, så jag försöker att höra 'vad är det som dom tänker på'? (Ped A)
#10	Ped H; '… sen är det som man är rädd för - det är alltid någon som pockar på lite mer än en annan och det är så lätt att gå på det, att missa någon annan, och man halkar på det så lätt…' (Ped H-3).
#11	Ped H; '…jag tänkte att han (barnet) fick ju utrymme att tänka här vad han tänkte (om musiken)… mer än vad jag tänkte själv faktiskt, så där kan jag ju tänka att det är ju … bra' (Ped H-2)
#12	Ped F; ,… jag vet varför som jag gör som jag gör och det är för att jag vill ge barnen utrymme, såhär har jag gjort i många år, att jag backar, och det betyder inte att jag inte utmanar barnen med frågeställningar, men jag ger barnen mycket plats, för att jag vill att de skall ha möjlighet att samtala med varandra, för det är ändå mycket på vuxen villkor (Ped F-1)
#13	Ped A; 'Sen nåt som jag kanske gärna använder, det är kanske, att jag har ögonkontakt, det är något som jag brukar använda mig av, ibland kan man ju bara mala på.. jag har ju ganska stark röst, men jag försöker visa med kroppen, 'tyst' eller 'sitt ner' eller 'vänta' eller någonting, det tycker jag är bra för jag har ganska stark röst, om jag höjer rösten så reagerar de direkt' (Ped A-2).
#14	Ped F; '… nu kommer det här barnet och nu kommer de och det är ingenting… de har den tiden (för att lämna barnet på förskolan. De kommer när måltiden pågår och alla andra barn sitter runt bordet och äter, min anm.). Hon brukar sitta här (i pedagogens knä) Ibland sitter hon hos mig, ibland hos min kollega, det är inget konstigt. Så här gör vi och det har vi gjort sedan hon började. Jag uppfattar mig som att jag ger ett väldigt lugnt intryck (Ped F-1).
#15	Ped C; 'Det är att jag försöker få barna att använda sina händer, och fingrar på ett praktiskt sätt, för att underlätta deras matematik inlärning, och det får man ju göra på många olika sätt' (Ped C-1).
#16	Ped G; 'Grunden är – vad är det jag vill att barnen skall upptäcka?, men samtidigt för att kunna göra det så upptäcker jag ju att jag själv är nyfiken på hur barnen förstår. Hur de tolkar det de förstår - för att jag skall kunna gå vidare och bygga på nästa' (Ped G-1).
#17	Ped G; 'mmmm ja alltså först när vi kommer in i detta rummet – så har vi gjort på lite olika sätt. Hur miljön talat till barnen… tingen talar till barnen och barnen talar till tingen.. så vi hade väl lite diskussioner innan jag och min kollega, hur skall vi göra den här aktiviteten …//… att vi hade en annan tanke om att de skulle ha suttit runt bordet – för hur hade det pratat till barnen att sitta runt bordet?' (Ped G-2).
#18	Ped E; ' … Men det är ju också en kompetens att man tränar upp sig att kunna läsa en berättelse eller en dikt så att det fångar, och det kan man ju inte den en gång utan det har man ju tränat på, det vet ja ju i början att kanske läsa högt inför andra… men ju mer man tränar ju mer bygger man ju upp den kompetensen' (Ped E-1).
#19	Ped D- '…nu blev det ju… den utvecklades ju lite, leken. De var lite oeniga tre flickor om dockläder… ibland tror jag att för att de skall ro leken i land kan det behövas men vuxne som sitter med, de har lite svårt att bekräfta varandra. …//… Som när de leker 'mamma-pappa-barn', det blir lite bättre om man är med och

	fördelar lite, någon får alltid vara det… någon får alltid vara detta. Man behöver vara med och stötta lite. Men att hitta rätt infallsvinkel så det inte är jag som styr men att jag kan vara med lite som rollek tränare' (Ped D-2).
#20	Researcher; 'Vad tänker du om dig själv nu när du ser dig sitta där(tillsammans med barnen, min anm.)'? Ped B; 'jaaa, jag tänker att jag har många järn i elden, att jag är med… med flera samtidigt men det måste man ju vara, man kan ju inte har 'bara en' man måste släppa och lyssna mer än på en och det tycker jag att jag gör här. Sen hjälper de ju varandra också… det här med 1000… Det är ju tre nollor… det är ett givande och ett tagande, inte det där att 'det är mitt' att man jobbar tillsammans' (Ped B-2).
#21	Ped G; '…ett barn vill ju få igång något slags lek och han försöker få tag på kompisar men det blir riktigt inget - och jag tar på mej en massa roller men ingen vill ha den tredje rollen …//…Och så fördelar barnen rollerna, och vi har ju ingen trumma, och då föreslår ju X att man kan göra med fötterna. Så det här är en lek utifrån barnen…//… detta blir ett lärande i många bitar – om jag inte har detta hur skall jag göra då? Det blir ju ett lärande för många delar' (Ped G-3).
#22	Researcher; '… här lyssnar ni ju en första gång på musiken…' Ped E; 'Ja det hade vi ju bestämt då när vi planerade den här sessionen, de tre lektionerna, att vi skulle göra så… //…det hade vi planerat tillsammans vi tre lärare, först en gång så de får höra musiken, den är ju ny för dem, det kan vara svårt att direkt börja tänka något, lyssna först – och sedan uppgiften – för att göra det förståeligt för dem – att ok, nu skall v i göra något med musiken. Det hade vi en tanke bakom' (Ped E-1).
#23	Ped E; 'Ett av barnen kan ju inte läsa så bra, men han hade ju ändå konstaterat att den här 'långa meningen' (skulle ändras; min anm.) och där gjorde jag ju inte bara så att jag fångade upp det utan då läste jag den… 'Är det den här meningen du menar??' Det kan jag ju se att det är kompetens att man fångar upp och att man stödjer dem i att är det 'det här du tänkte på' och det är ett sätt att förtydliga för dem…' (Ped E-1).
#24	Ped A; 'Ja jag vet inte hur jag skall göra (på filmen), hur jag skall styra, för jag tycker det låter bättre med ' det har hänt nåt, någon har dött'…. Så jag var i valet och kvalet om jag skulle styra själv eller om jag skulle… men jag tyckte det låter bättre med ' det har hänt nåt'… jag stod och funderade samtidigt här…' (Ped A-1).
#25	Researcher; 'är det ngt annat du tänker på kring allt det vi har sett?' Ped A; 'Jag kanske tycker att jag verkar lugnare än vad jag känner mig (i den sekvensen, min anm), jag har dåligt tålamod, och jag får verkligen kämpa för…' (Ped A-3).

Appendix 2
Questionnaires

Questionnaire conducted before, or in connection to, the empirical study

Basic teacher training;
- Place and year of graduation
- Length of the education

In-service training or other courses to enhance your competence;
- What kind of activity/length/year?
- In which way do you think this activity enhanced/changed your competence?

Definition;
- What meaning do you put into the word competence?

General background questions;
- How old are you?
- For how many years have you worked as a teacher?
- For how many years have you been at this particular preschool/school?

Other aspects that you find important for me to know;

Questionnaire conducted after the empirical study

Personal feelings/reflections about the aspect of 'viewing and talking about oneself';
- How was it to watch yourself on video?
- How was it to talk about what you were doing?
- Do you think it was possible to discern your own competence?
- Do you think it was possible to describe your own competence?
- Did you experience something that could have affected your analyze of the video?

Personal feelings/reflections about the stimulated recall situation;
- Do you think there was something missing at the SR situation?
- Do you have any comment about how the SR situation could be changed?

Personal feelings/reflections about being shadowed with a video camera;
- How did you experience being observed by a video camera?
- Do you have any comments upon how one could change the video observations?

Further comments;