Questioning sociocultural approaches to young children’s literacy learning
in a global/local context: A photographic case study

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STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICATION

I declare that, except where due acknowledgement has been made; the research presented in this thesis is my own work. I hereby declare that I have not submitted this material in any form either in full or in part for another degree at any university or other institution. Information derived from the published or unpublished work of others has been acknowledged in the text and in the list of references that is provided.

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Linan Yao
18 June 2014
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AECE</td>
<td>Australian Early Childhood Educator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATM</td>
<td>Australian team members</td>
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<tr>
<td>CoC</td>
<td>Confirmation of Candidature</td>
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<tr>
<td>CoL</td>
<td>Community of learners</td>
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<tr>
<td>CoP</td>
<td>Communities of practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>EC</td>
<td>Early childhood</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECC</td>
<td>Early childhood centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECE</td>
<td>Early childhood education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL</td>
<td>English as Second Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIH</td>
<td>Futuro Infantil Hoy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FME</td>
<td>Fundación Minera Escondida</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FoK</td>
<td>Funds of knowledge</td>
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<tr>
<td>L2</td>
<td>Second language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEAF</td>
<td>National Ethics Application Form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>Doctor of Philosophy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom of Great Brattain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UWS</td>
<td>University of Western Sydney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZPD</td>
<td>Zone proximal development</td>
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Questioning sociocultural approaches to young children’s literacy learning in a global/local context: A photographic case study

Linan Yao

ABSTRACT

Sociocultural theory is becoming increasingly important in Early Childhood Education (ECE) for improving young children’s literacy learning, especially for children in disadvantaged communities. Many studies about sociocultural theory have been undertaken in ECE. This study investigates young children’s sociocultural literacy practices in a global/local context. The particular case that is the focus of this study is the Futuro Infantil Hoy (FIH) Program — “Children’s future is today”. The FIH Program is a transnational public-private educational intervention established by the Fundación Minera Escondida (a social agency established by BHP Billiton) and the University of Western Sydney (Australia). As a community capacity building project in ECE, the FIH Program has been working to strengthen educational leadership and pedagogy in 20 early childhood centres (ECCs) in extremely poor communities in the city of Antofagasta (Northern Chile). This study focuses on the five pilot ECCs in the FIH Program.

The research reported in this thesis draws on Ranciere’s (2009, 2010) concepts to develop a theoretical framework to address the question of learning in terms of the debate over intellectual in/equality. This provides the basis for analysing primary evidence which enables the questioning of sociocultural approaches to young children’s literacy learning in the global/local context of the Australian-Chilean program. Of course, it would be unreasonable to expect that the problems of poverty, inequality and education could be solved by the FIH Program. But as this thesis shows, it does provide insights into the opportunities children from disadvantaged communities need to learn. The thesis argues that more is likely to be achieved if such programs acknowledge – and engage with – the intelligence and conceptual knowledge of members of disadvantaged communities. Often this is unrecognised and undervalued.
This study examines the value of Australian sociocultural theory as developed by Australian EC educators for young Chilean children’s literacy learning in Antofagasta (Chile) in a local/global context through an analysis of various data. Sociocultural theory emphasises children’s interactions with their surroundings. While this may lead to an insistence on parochialism or insularity, literature and the data collected for this study show that globalization happens everywhere. Primary evidence analysed in this thesis shows that the local/global to be part of children’s everyday lives. Of course, the FIH Program itself is a transnational export educational program underwritten by a university committed to internationalisation and funded by BHP Billiton, an Australian multinational incorporation. Teacher professional development programs in Australia are centred on English-only pedagogies and Euro-American theories, and shown little interest in non-Western theoretical knowledge, and as a result transnational export educators tend to contribute to Westernisation (Singh, 2013). Although children’s language and literacy learning can be involved in the localisation/globalisation of knowledge, there is little research on the use of Australian sociocultural theory regarding to young children’s literacy learning in a global/local context. Therefore, it is worthwhile investigating what influences a transnational professional development program with Australian educators’ sociocultural theory will have on young children’s literacy learning in disadvantaged communities in Antofagasta (Chile). For a transnational export professional development program in disadvantaged communities, issues concerning the nexus between global knowledge and local knowledge as well as intellectual in/equality problems need to be addressed. Thus, this thesis draws on the concept of glocalisation (Almas & Lawrence, 2003) and Ranciere’s (2010) conceptual tools to question sociocultural approach to young children’s literacy learning in a global/local context.

This study analyses evidence of the manifestations of globalization in local children’s sociocultural literacy practices. Globalisation can be defined as the threat of westernisation; this is evident in disadvantaged communities where their knowledge and intellectual contribution is often undervalued in processes of internationalising education. While the concept of glocalisation (Almas & Lawrence, 2003) and Ranciere’s (2010) concepts provide this study with theoretical framework interrupts this stance, through recognising that vulnerable communities do have an
intellectual contribution to make to their own life advancement, including their own children’s literacy learning. This theoretical framework, presented in the Chapter 3 of this thesis provides the insight to answer the four problems concerning a sociocultural approach to young children learning in a global/local context through analysing different sources of data. The following paragraph presents these four research problems that arose from current studies in this filed and explain now these are answered through this research study.

There is potential of localisation/globalisation in young children’s literacy learning. The theoretical framework developed for this study explains the glocalisation of knowledge flows via popular culture and technology in young children’s literacy learning. Chilean EC educators are constructed as having limited knowledge about this for their roles and the importance of meaningful literacy learning environment in young children’s literacy teaching and learning. This study found that the FIH Program “export” Australian knowledge of sociocultural approach to Chilean educators, which changed their roles in literacy teaching/learning as well as the literacy learning environment in the ECCs. Chilean EC educators tend to create teacher-centred teaching/learning activities, while in this study the Chilean EC educators’ increasing knowledge of sociocultural approach to young children’s literacy learning helped them to create more activities to engage children’s funds of knowledge in their learning. The analysis of data through the lens of an alternative new theoretical framework shows that sociocultural theory fails to address the intellectual in/equality issues in the Program. In addition, Ranciere’s (2009, 2010) concepts may help the EC educators better diagnose and provide more appropriate intellectual materials, support and activities. Children’s families in Chile are reported as lacking engagement in their children’s literacy learning, however in this research study both EC educators and children’s families started to realise the importance of family engagement in children’s literacy learning through establishing an intellectual relationship. Ranciere’s (2009) concept of intellectual in/equality is introduced in this study to analyse the development of this intellectual relationship which is summarised as a Chinese concept屌丝逆袭^1 (diǎo sī nǐ xí). Therefore, this study

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^1屌丝 (diǎo sī) originally refers to people (mostly man, but it becomes more neutral now) who come from lower SES families and do not have higher
makes a small but nonetheless significant contribution to examining sociocultural approaches to young children’s literacy learning by engaging these concepts of local/global relations and intellectual equality, and theoretically opening up new questions.

The main research question of this study is what a photographic case study can reveal about the value of sociocultural approaches to young children’s literacy learning in a professional development program within a global/local context. Four contributory research questions were generated to answer this main research question, namely:

1. How does ‘glocalisation’ manifest itself in young children’s literacy learning in disadvantaged communities in Antofagasta? (Chapter 5)
2. How do changes in educators’ understandings of early childhood education influence their roles and the literacy learning environment they create for children? (Chapter 6)
3. How do educators’ understandings on sociocultural theory inform their uses of play and scaffolding to promote children’s literacy learning? (Chapter 7)
4. How to change family engagement in young children’s literacy learning? (Chapter 8)

The literature review chapter surveys recent literature on sociocultural theory and ECE, especially young children’s literacy learning. Literacy is no longer just about reading and writing. With the development of information and communication technologies, literacy now concerns children’s capabilities to use more diverse forms of texts. Some studies focus on the use of technology and popular culture in ECE programs. As a result of the influence of the globalisation of technology and popular culture, both are embedded into children’s everyday lives. However, this literature education and have very limited income, who cannot afford a car or a apartment or even a good girlfriend/boyfriend. But now many people (which is not limited to lower-income people) used it as self-mockery as well. In this study屌丝逆袭 (diǎo sī nì xí) refers to the people in the disadvantaged communities in Antofagasta who notice that they are intellectually equal with people in other communities and challenge the stereotype that they have limited education, knowledge or capability. This concept recognizes and acknowledges their knowledge, and encourages them to challenge these stereotypes.
dealing with sociocultural approaches to ECE does not engage in the intellectual conversation about globalisation and what it means locally.

Sociocultural theory emphasises children’s interactions with others and their surroundings. The literacy environment is significant; being as children’s third teacher in the Reggio Emilia School in Italy. There are different early childhood centre (ECC) environment rating scales to assess whether a centre is suitable for children’s development. The community and families are important in children’s literacy learning. While families are often excluded from formal schooling, they are important participants in children’s literacy learning. Young children’s literacy practices outside ECCs provide them more opportunities to learn. At the same time, educators and families need to be critical when they are choosing what funds of knowledge should be engaged in children’s learning, what kind of materials that children should be exposed to, and how to strengthen the intellectual relationship between families and educators/centres.

To enrich the view of the issues at stake in this thesis, Chapter 3 provides new theoretical resources that are not engaged within the literature on sociocultural literacy practices. The first section of this chapter reviews recent studies of globalisation and ‘glocalisation’ to provide the analytical needed to analysis the local/global nexus. If globalisation influences local people’s everyday lives, then it can be expected to have an impact on young children’s sociocultural literacy practices. The second section of this chapter extends the theoretical framework for this study by drawing upon Ranciere’s (2010) conceptual tools. His studies about intellectual in/equality and pedagogy bring new challenges to the role of educators and pedagogies employed in literacy learning. The concept of in/equality of intelligence provides a basis for analysing the evidence for possible contributions to young children’s education by disadvantaged families and communities. Together these concepts, and those canvassed in Chapter 2, provide the theoretical framework used in this study to reconsider children’s sociocultural literacy practices in relation to global/local context.

Chapter 4 explains and justifies the research design and the research methods used in this study. It explains explicitly the data collection and analysis processes. Four data
sources in this study, namely photographs, vignettes, photo elicitation and conference presentation. Here it is worth noting that the photographs are presented as photonovels which provide an image for the story which had to be generated through photo elicitation to gain the story behind the photographs, adding more details of them. Each of these data sources provides different insights which the analysis addressed to answer the research questions.

Chapters 5-8 are the evidentiary chapters of the thesis. Chapter 5 provides an analysis of the manifestations of globalisation in young children’s literacy learning. It acknowledges the local and global literacy resources in their local community and families, and presents the two-way knowledge flow between local and global in their community. Chapter 6 reports the results of my investigation into the changes in early childhood educators’ role and the literacy learning environment in the ECCs as a result of the FIH Program. Evidence of the educators’ understanding and role change is manifested in their changed pedagogies and relationships with families. Chapter 7 analyses the evidence of children’s literacy teaching and learning activities in the ECCs. Chapter 8 analyses evidence of family engagement in their children’s literacy learning.

The concluding chapter summarises the significant findings of this study. The concept of glocalisation and intellectual in/equality provide an alternative consideration of choice of different knowledge in young children’s literacy learning in the FIH Program. In consequence, EC educators and young children’s families in the FIH Program need to reconsider their engagement in changing the literacy learning environment and activities for their children. Additionally, Rogoff’s three planes and scaffolding which are used to analyse and facilitate young children’s literacy learning in the FIH Program are challenged by Ranciere’s concepts. The Conclusion Chapter explains my professional learning through this project as a beginning teacher-researcher as well. There is no flawless research, so therefore the limitations of this study are identified along further research possibilities.
CHAPTER 1 EARLY LITERACY EDUCATION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This research project aims to use the conceptual tools from Ranciere (2009) and glocalisation (Almas & Lawrence, 2003) to question the sociocultural approach to young children’s literacy learning in the FIH Program. This research project focuses on the challenges of sociocultural approaches to young children’s literacy learning in a local/global community through the lens of Ranciere (2009). There are increasing Australian studies of sociocultural theory in early literacy (Edwards, 2007b; Fleer & Raban, 2007; Singh, Han, & Woodrow, 2012). Because of the widespread influence of globalisation in people’s life, culture, economy and language, this study investigate the influence of this pheromone in disadvantaged communities in relation to the introduction of a sociocultural approach to young children’s literacy learning. It draws on the concept of glocalisation (Almas & Lawrence, 2003) and Ranciere’s (2009) theoretical framework to obtain a new understanding of sociocultural approach in ECE by critically analysing the result of Australian academics’ input of sociocultural theory in a transnational professional development program.

This Chapter explains the research focus of this study, presents the research problems address in research project reported in this thesis and their relationship to the research questions. Key terms in this study are defined, and the significance of this research is clarified. A brief overview of the research method is provided. Following the thesis statement and the overview of each Chapter in this thesis is presented. However, the first section of this Chapter introduces the research focus of this study.

1.1 RESEARCH FOCUS: DELIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY

This study aims to explore the influence of sociocultural theory in young children’s literacy learning in a global/local context through EC educators’ professional development. It focuses on a capability building Program undertaken by Australia educators in Antofagasta, in northern Chile.
Various studies show the importance and benefits to young children of participating in high quality early childhood education (ECE) programs (Baxter & Hand, 2013; Berlinski, Galiani, & Gertler, 2009; Davis, 2009; Reynolds & Temple, 2008; Temple & Reynolds, 2007). Its effects are especially beneficial for “children from socio-economically disadvantaged families” (Burger, 2010, p. 140). However, they are not the ones “that traditionally have received the least attention from the education world” (Davis, 2009, p. 3). There is an international attention on the “literacy and numeracy of young children, particularly those from the hardest-to-reach families.” (Fleer & Raban, 2007, p. 3). Therefore it is necessary to research efforts to improve ECE for young children in disadvantaged communities.

The definition of literacy contested and changed over time. Once literacy was defined as the skills of reading and writing (Freebody, 2007; Kellner & Share, 2007; Wickens & Sandlin, 2007). In recent decades as technology has developed, literacy is now defined as more than these traditional notion as involving more forms of texts and social communication, culture, language and knowledge (Wickens & Sandlin, 2007). Defined from a sociocultural perspectives literacy means:

writing, reading and language are not isolated and decontextualized; nor are they generalized skills separate from specific contents, contexts, and social-communicative purposes; rather there are multiple literates and reading and writing, and language are embedded in and inextricable from discourse (the way the communicative systems are organized within social practices) (Perez, 2004, p. 27).

From this perspective is better to understood as mulitliteracies (Cope, 2000), as occurring via activities in particular social and cultural contexts. Thus, the research project reported in this thesis focuses on an Australian professional development Program where Australian academics introduce sociocultural approaches to educators to teach literacy of young children in disadvantaged communities in Antofagasta (Chile).

Young children in disadvantaged community and families are reported as experiencing less success in their literacy (Arnold & Doctoroff, 2003; Mittler, 2000). There is an assumption that their failure in literacy and poor academic results may because that they are socioeconomically disadvantaged. However studies have found
that their socioeconomic status or residential location does not predict children’s literacy learning (Feiler, 2003, 2005; Hall, Larson, & Marsh, 2003; Mctavish, 2007; Siraj-Blatchford, 2010; Steensel, 2006). Because families are important participants in children’s everyday activities, it is necessary for EC educators to “seriously consider the importance of the home and the family as co-constructors of literacy development” (Mctavish, 2007, p. 476).

With the development of technology, globalisation is having a significant influence on people, cultural and society (Grieshaber & Ryan, 2005). The tensions between homogeneous and heterogeneity makes the impact of globalisation uneven (Ximena & Galdames, 2011). This may influence children’s literacy learning activities in their socio-cultural community. Therefore, this study investigates the introduction of sociocultural approach to young children’s literacy learning as this relates to in/equality in a global/local community. The next section introduces the research problem addressed in this study.

1.2 STATEMENT OF RESEARCH PROBLEM

To explore the value of engaging EC educators in employing sociocultural approach to young children’s literacy learning especially when considered related to global/local contexts, this study addresses the following interrelated four problems.

1.2.1 The potential of unevenness of globalisation in literacy and language learning

How does the global/local nexus relate to young children’s literacy learning in disadvantaged community? Edwards (2006) raise the issue of diversity in analysing educators’ understanding of sociocultural theory by presenting an example of speaking accent (while we all do). However, accents cannot be recognised as such until one speaks to someone who speaks different accents. People tend to insist their own accent and believe the others’ accent is wrong. The educators in her study were asked to express their views on diversity and sociocultural theory. There was a long silence, because the educators found it difficult to answer. In globalisation studies the tension between diversity (or heterogeneity) and homogeneity and are debated as
much as the relation between local and global. Local people’s beliefs, values and socio-cultural activities may differ in their response to and expression of global influences, in disadvantaged communities. Edward’s (2006) study indicates the need for further analyse of heterogeneity and homogeneity as sociocultural theory borne of its local/global flows, “local language literacy is one expression of localization” (Kosonen, 2008, p. 171). In other words, children’s literacy learning can involve the localisation of the global flow of knowledge in their community. This is a process of remaking through their local language and literacy (Pennycook, 2010). Language and literacy learning relates to and reflects the unevenness of local/global knowledge flow. Thus Chapter Five investigates the following research question of:

*How does ‘glocalisation’ manifest itself in young children’s literacy learning in disadvantaged communities in Antofagasta?*

**1.2.2 Educators’ limited knowledge about literacy teaching and learning in relation with their roles and meaningful literacy learning environment**

It is claimed that educators are often “unaware of how their beliefs and biases can be seen in how they talk, act and look … teachers’ personalities, attitude and beliefs may influence interactions with their students” (Dewar, Servos, Bosacki, & Coplan, 2013, p. 383). With respect to the FIH Program, the Chilean educators’ teaching beliefs, strategies and understanding of literacy teaching are summarised in Table 1.1. These educators were aware of the influence of their beliefs and values on their children’s teaching/learning activities because of the FIH Program.
TABLE 1.1: TEACHING PRACTICE OF CHILEAN EDUCATORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching disposition/philosophy</th>
<th>Cognitive and behaviourist teaching</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Educator maintains control of everything; teacher is the ‘boss’ of the class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>Teachers work within a prescribed curriculum to plan and implement activities they believe suit the children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching strategies</td>
<td>Teacher talk and direction “reward-driven” engagement of children. No engagement with parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy teaching model/content</td>
<td>Word-based</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source (Singh et al., 2012, p. 74)

In their teaching/learning activities these educators have the absolute authority. Their understanding of literacy teaching/learning was still ‘word-based’. In contrast, a sociocultural perspective of literacy involves different forms of texts and have children learn through participating in socio-cultural activities (Perez, 2004). It extends the roles of educators to “… facilitate … to support children’s learning … through ‘guided participation’[with the] emphasis on the active role of the teacher” (Thomas, Warren, & deVries, 2011, p. 70). The teacher-centred teaching/learning concentrates with “唯一的知识拥有者” (wéi yī de zhīshíyōng yǒu zhě) that is the only owner of the knowledge (Hu 胡芳, 2011, p. 5). Therefore, sociocultural approach to literacy learning introduced by the FIH Program encouraged the Chilean educators to reconsider their roles as educators.

Cai 蔡东霞, Tong 仝新霞, and Jia 贾庆莉 (2012) summarise the four new roles for EC educators based on the case of Reggio Emilia school as “儿童的伙伴、倾听者……学校环境的设计与布置者……儿童学习的支持和引导者……课程评价的记录与反思的研究者” In other words, children’s partners, listeners… the designers and organisers… supporters and guiders of children’s learning recorders of class assessment and critical reflective researchers (Cai 蔡东霞 et al., 2012, p. 135). The FIH Program has worked with educators in Antofagasta since 2008 to have them
rethink their work, their teaching/learning activities and the design of learning environment in ECCs. The Reggio Emilia view is that the environment as a third teacher and work along with families and educators (Danko-McGhee, 2009; Torquati & Ernst, 2013). There are many studies on the environment of ECCs by using different ECC environment rating scales (Bhagwanji, 2011; Herrera, Mathiesen, Merino, & Recart, 2005; Paro, Thomason, Lower, Kintner-Duffy, & Cassidy, 2012; Sakai, Whitebook, Wishard, & Howes, 2003; Sylva, Siraj-Blatchford, & Taggart, 2003; Warash, Markstrom, & Lucci, 2005). However, these focused on the physical or outdoor environment and not the literacy learning environment in ECCs.

Chilean ECE study by Herrera and her colleagues (2005) uses three environment rating scales to assess the quality of preschool and ECCs in Chile. The three rating scales are ITERS (Infant and Toddler Environment Rating Scale), ECERS (Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale) and SACERS (School Age Care Environment Rating Scale). The ECERS found that children are “happy at preschool but learning is poor” (Herrera et al., 2005, p. 26). The SACERS found that the ECCs in Chiles have “little room to choose materials, or for activities other than those related to the three Rs” (Herrera et al., 2005, p. 26). Through the three rating scales they found that there are “Good interactions between students and teachers and among children are considered important, as is the consideration given to their basic needs. However, learning is poor so actions to improve learning need to be considered” (Herrera et al., 2005, p. 26). Therefore, there is a need to a create high-quality literacy environment in ECC which encourages more meaningful learning interactions between educators and children.

Thus “Reggio Emilia approach to … early childhood learning environments often fail to fulfil the role of the ‘third teacher’ (Davis, 2009, p. 4). To fill in the blank in educators’ knowledge in relation with their roles and literacy learning environment in ECCs, this study investigates on the following question which is addressed in Chapter Six:

*How do changes in educators’ understandings of early childhood education influence their roles and the literacy learning environment they create for children?*
1.2.3 Educators’ knowledge of teacher-centred teaching/learning activities

The knowledge of EC educators impacts on their roles and their engagement in the creating literacy learning environments in ECCs and their design of literacy teaching/learning activities. Strasser and Lissi argue that research into ECE in Chile needs to explore the relation between educators’ beliefs, knowledge as well as their professional training and teaching (2009). Educators’ roles as guider, facilitator and supporter was noted in the previous section (Thomas et al., 2011) encourage them to reconsider their literacy teaching/learning activities. Educators’ belief about teacher-centred learning makes

…教师是教学中的主角，学生是观看教师表演的观众，学生没有或没有完全参与到教学中来，教学注重的只是教师个人的讲解而不是学生的个人感受，师生之间的关系只是单方面的“传递与接受”关系，并没有形成真正的、有效的和建设性的互动。(Hu 胡芳, 2011, p. 5)
…educators are the leading role, students are the spectators who watch the educators’ performance, they are not or not completely be engaged in the teaching. Teaching emphases on the educators’ teach/explanation, but not students’ feeling/experiences. This is a one-way “deliver and accept” relationship between educators and students. It does not form the real, effective constructive interaction.

Children as spectators are not actively engaged in their own literacy learning. Play is an important learning activity in sociocultural theory as it “positions children in control of their learning i.e. it identifies the children as the decision makers in their learning” (Thomas et al., 2011, p. 72). Through play children actively construct of the knowledge and skills they learn. Play has a key role in the curriculum and pedagogy. Strasser and Lissi (2009) reported that the professional training of EC educators in Chile lacks of supervised practice and reflection on their own teaching. The FIH Program asked the educators to critically reflect on their own teaching and to consider play in their curriculum and the design of literacy teaching/learning activities. To fill in the gap in knowledge about doing so the Chapter Seven in this study presents the results of my investigation into the question:

How do educators’ understandings on sociocultural theory inform the change of their literacy teaching/learning activities to promote children’s literacy learning?
1.2.4 Lack of family engagement in children’s literacy learning

Section 1.2.2 explained the need to explore the literacy environment in ECCs. There are many studies on the literacy learning environment which emphasise home/family literacy environment (Crawford & Zygouris-Coe, 2006; Dail & Payne, 2010; Douglass, 2011; Morgan, Nutbrown, & Hannon, 2009; Neumann, Hood, & Neumann, 2009; Siraj-Blatchford, 2010; Strasser & Lissi, 2009). These studies investigate family engagement in their children’s literacy learning. In the review of this literature, four studies use the term “families” instead of parents to investigate the influence of both core families (parents and siblings) but their extended family (Commonwealth-of-Australia, 2009; Crawford & Zygouris-Coe, 2006; Dail & Payne, 2010; Halgunseth & Peterson, 2009) . Most of the above studies use the term ‘parents involvement’ rather than ‘family engagement’. However, this study emphasizes engagement rather than involvement.

In so doing, it takes a strengths-based perspective that all families are involved in their children’s learning and well-being. … High levels of engagement often result from strong program-family partnerships that are co-constructed and characterized by trust, shared values, ongoing bidirectional communication, mutual respect, and attention to each party’s needs. … the partnership approach to family involvement had the greatest impact as it allows parents to be involved in all areas of school life…. Furthermore, the concept of family engagement (versus parent involvement) recognizes all members of a child’s family (not just parents) and emphasizes the importance of the reciprocal relationship between families and schools. (Halgunseth & Peterson, 2009, p. 6)

Children’s participation in literacy activities in their families and community is “an important factor for students whose homes and communities do not necessarily mirror the culture of the school and teachers’ literacies” (Dickie, 2011, p. 249). The Chilean families in the FIH Program reportedly had have poor attendance at school-parent meetings, and the EC, educators’ had a low awareness of the importance of family intellectual engagement (Singh et al., 2012). Compared with Australia, Chilean children are reported to have poor home literacy experience and poor knowledge of emergent literacy often there are said to be “caused” by their different cultural values and reading habits (Strasser & Lissi, 2009). The reason Chilean families experience challenges to actively participate in their children’s literacy
learning are likely to be more complex. This thesis explores the interactions between families and ECCs/educators as a result of the FIH Program. Sociocultural theory acknowledge the importance of families and community in children’s learning (Fleer, 2009). EC educators are responsible for connecting community families and ECCs to support young children’s learning (Cai 蔡东霞 et al., 2012). Therefore, with educators’ increased understanding of sociocultural theory as a result of the FIH Program there were changes in the family engagement in children’s literacy learning. Thus, the Chapter 8 of this study researches on:

*How to change family engagement in young children’s literacy learning?*

These four research problems lead to the four contributory research questions in this study. The next section introduces the main research question and elaborates the four contributory research questions.

### 1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This research focuses on the sociocultural approach to young children’s literacy learning in disadvantaged communities in Antofagasta with the influence globalisation. The current studies reveal the following problems: there is a potential of unevenness of globalisation in literacy and language learning (Kosonen, 2008; Ximena & Galdames, 2011); educators’ limited knowledge about literacy teaching and learning in relation with their roles and meaningful literacy learning environment (Cai 蔡东霞 et al., 2012; Lynch, 2009); educators’ knowledge of teacher-centred teaching/learning activities (Singh et al., 2012); and the lack of family engagement in children’s literacy learning (Strasser & Lissi, 2009). These problems require further study through following research questions. The main research question focuses on the *phenomenon* of socio-cultural literacy practices through a particular professional development programs namely the FIH Program, and asks: *What a photographic case study can reveal about the value of sociocultural approaches to young children’s literacy learning in a professional development program within a global/local context?*
In order to answer the main research question, four contributory research questions are addressed through specific reference to the case represented by the *Programma Futuro Infantil Hoy* (Children’s Future Today Program):

1. How does ‘glocalization’ manifest itself in young children’s literacy learning in disadvantaged communities in Antofagasta? (Chapter 5)

2. How do changes in educators’ understandings of early childhood education influence their roles and the literacy learning environment they create for children? (Chapter 6)

3. How do educators’ understandings of sociocultural theory inform changes in their literacy teaching/learning activities to promote children’s literacy learning? (Chapter 7)

4. How to change family engagement in young children’s literacy learning? (Chapter 8)

In this study, the influence of sociocultural theory in children’s literacy learning in the FIH Program is reflected in the consequence of Chilean educators’ learning Australian sociocultural theory, hence this study concentrates on the result of Australian team members’ input of sociocultural theory in the FIH Program. Addressing this first contributory research question, Chapter Five analyses how does Australian team members’ contribution of sociocultural approach to Chilean educators’ professional knowledge change their understanding of literacy resources. This indicates that the input of Australian sociocultural theory changes Chilean educators’ understanding of ECE. Thus the second contributory research question further investigate how do these changes influence the educators’ role in literacy teaching/learning and literacy environment through their practice. To answer the second contributory research question, Chapter Six analyses how do Chilean EC educators change their roles in children’s literacy teaching/learning practice and create literacy learning environment because of Australian sociocultural approach. The next contributory research question explores further step of literacy teaching/learning practice. It focuses on their literacy teaching/learning activities.
One of the most important and direct aspect of the Chilean EC educators’ role changing because of Australian sociocultural theory is reflected in their teaching practice. Therefore Chapter Seven examines more in the children’s literacy teaching/learning activities. Another significant role the educators have is connecting the community, families and centres. This is not just referring to the knowledge flows among the three, but more importantly the intellectual relationship between families and educators. Thus the last contributory research question explores family engagement in children’s learning and the development of their intellectual relationship with educators as a consequence of learning Australian sociocultural theory.

As it is shown in the Figure 1.1, the literature review (Chapter Two) and research method (Chapter Four) helped generate these research questions. The review of previous study helped to refine the research problem with method Chapter provided guidance in framing empirically researchable questions.

![Figure 1.1: Research questions](image)

1.4 THE SIGNIFICANCE AND INNOVATIVENESS OF THIS STUDY

This section elaborates on the theoretical significance and national significance of this study for both Australia and Chile. In doing so it introduces the theoretical framework of this study (see Chapter Three for details), and reviews literature on ECE in Australia and Chile.
1.4.1 Theoretical significance

Sociocultural theory is becoming increasingly important in ECE (Gauvain, 2009; Singh et al., 2012). It has been used in many ECE studies (Edwards, 2003, 2006, 2007a, 2007b; Fleer, 2002, 2003a, 2003b, 2006, 2009; Fleer, Anning, & Cullen, 2004; Fleer & Raban, 2007; Fleer & Robbins, 2006; Perez, 2004; Smidt, 2009) especially in early literacy learning. Given the increasing influence of globalisation on local language and literacy learning, this study investigates the work of a transnational education program in introducing to ECE in Antofagasta a sociocultural approach to the young children’s literacy learning in disadvantaged communities. However, some Australian studies (Edwards, 2007a, 2007b) on sociocultural theory tend to test EC educators’ knowledge of sociocultural theory rather than engaging their own theoretical tools in their professional development. Australian teacher education programs are privileged by Western theoretical tools, therefore it is important to know what an Australian-led transnational professional development program can contribute in a global/local context, and question the value of sociocultural approach by Ranceire’s (2009) conceptual framework.

As depicted in Figure 1.2 the Australian-led FIH Program aim to develop EC educators’ understandings of a sociocultural approach to literacy so as to help them to use the funds of knowledge (FoK) (Gonzalez et al., 1995) in children’s families and community. The Program served influence their role as educators by increasing their knowledge of sociocultural theory so as to have them to change the literacy learning environment and their literacy teaching/learning activities.

For disadvantaged communities inevitably the relationship between local and global can be compete and contradictory. As shown in Figure 1.2 Ranciere’s (2009) concepts are used to analyse issues of intellectual in/equality in reference to language and literacy learning process and pedagogies. These concepts are employed to investigate possibilities for generating a new understanding of sociocultural theory, literacy teaching/learning, the choice of FoK and in configuring the relationship between families and EC educators as an intellectual one. This may provide a small but significant contribution to re-theorising literacy learning in this field. Because
there are no study investigating sociocultural literacy in local/global context, through the use of Ranciere key concepts in ECE, this is an innovation through this study.

Figure 1.2 Theoretical significance

1.4.2 National significance for early childhood literacy education in Australia and Chile

This study draws on the concepts from Australian scholars and the policy in the state of New South Wales (NSW), because these are the knowledge that the Australian educators transfer to Chile in FIH Program. Australia’s Federal, State and Territory Governments recognise the significance of ECE (Fleer & Raban, 2007). They also pay attention to early childhood professional development and the engagement of
families in their children’s education (Warrilow, Fisher, & Valentine, 2004). However, a report from UNICEF (Adamson, 2010) shows that on average the Australian government invests is almost half of what other developed countries do in ECE. This deficiency in investment in the education of young children in disadvantaged families may contribute to a vicious circle.

Key ideas informing in the NSW Early Childhood Curriculum Framework (Stonehouse & Duffie, 2001, p. 16) include:

1. Children’s services are critical institutions in the broader community
2. Parents and the community share responsibility for all children
3. The child is a citizen with rights and responsibilities
4. Care and education are interwoven and inseparable, making it inappropriate to label some services, or even parts of the day in a program, as educational, and others as care
5. The roles of professionals working with children and their families are complex and require depth and breadth in the skills, knowledge and attitudes required
6. Collaboration in respectful relationships is superior to individualistic competition.

These claims suggest that the NSW Governments’ recognises a) the remarkable impact of ECE for individuals and society; b) the responsibility of parents and community in ECE; c) children’s cognitive capabilities and their membership of society; and d) the importance of ECE professionals’ knowledge. Reports of an early literacy project (Warrilow et al., 2004) in two areas in Sydney found that these provide opportunities for children from 0 to 5 years old to access more appropriate literacy education and maximise their learning potential.

The women’s movements in the early twentieth century caused a shift in Chile’s social structure and led to efforts to improve early childhood education in that country (Staab & Gerhard, 2010). As more women entered the workforce, and with changes to the family structure there led to changes in the ways of caring for young children. Chile’s ex-President, Dr. Michelle Bachelet gave national priority to reorganising ECE services (Team & Neuman, 2007). Under President Bachelet, Chile introduced several ECE services for children from disadvantaged families.
The Chilean Government divides children from 0-6 years old into three groups according to their age and undertakes different strategies to attract increased enrolment in ECCs. In particular these programs aim to increase the early education opportunities for children in disadvantaged communities (Staab & Gerhard, 2010). Herrera et al (2005) investigated effective ways to improve ECE in Chile. Strasser and Lissi (2009) explore on the reason for families’ low engagement in children’s literacy learning; and called for improvements in the professional training for EC educators in Chile, and in particular, for changes in their values, beliefs and knowledge on their teaching. The FIH program was designed to create such professional development possibilities through the exchange of knowledge about ECE between Australia and Chile by providing insights into ways of improving ECE programs for children in disadvantaged communities, and especially by involving their families and community (Woodrow, Wangmann, & Newman, 2008).

1.5 OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH METHOD

First this section introduces one of more important features of the method used this study, namely photographic case study, A brief overview is provided of the data sources and analytic strategies used. Then a more detailed presentation is about the ‘case’ that is the focus of this study, specifically the FIH Program.

1.5.1 Photographic case study

This research project is a case study. It focuses on a particular case which is an instance of a phenomenon that is studied within specific setting (Robson, 2002). In this study the case that is investigated is the FIH Program (Swanborn, 2010) theoretical framework used for the professional development of EC educators in Antofagasta, Chile. That framework is a particular instance of the larger phenomenon referred to as sociocultural theory (Smidt, 2009). As a form of educational research, I call it photographic case study is because of one important data source used in this study is the photographs generated by the Australian educators involved in the FIH Program. However, there are four data sources used in this study namely artefacts (photographs) of the FIH Program; vignettes which have been produced based on selected photographs; photo-elicitation or in
another words photographic interviews conducted with the Australian FIH Program team members of the FIH Program; and the Australian team members’ conference presentations and PowerPoint slides. The photographs were selected, categorised and then used to produce the photonovel presented in the evidences chapters of this thesis. Chapter Four elaborates on the processes of data collection and analysis. The next section introduces the specific ‘case’ that is the focus of this study.

1.5.2 FIH Program as the case

The FIH Program was funded by Fundacion Minera Escondida (FME), a mining foundation established by the Australian multinational corporation BHP Billiton, FME funds early childhood service provision in Antofagasta Chile. The FIH Program started from 2008 in Antofagasta in northern Chile, a city with high poverty and social disadvantage. The Australian Program team “mentored the Chilean EC educators in establishing distributed pedagogical leadership in their centres, and investigated its potential to contribute to the children’s literacy learning” (Singh et al., 2012, p. 70). This study focuses on the work of the Australian educators involved in the Programs’ five pilot ECCs for children aged from birth to five years.

The FIH Program was delivered in Antofagasta, the fourth largest city in Chile. However, the artefacts and interviews for this study were collected or generated in Sydney (Australia) because the focus is on the Australian educators’ use of conception of sociocultural literacy. While the FIH Program had multiple dimensions, this study only focuses on the Australian teams’ conception of socio-cultural literacy, in particular those aspects that are represented in project artefacts, especially digital images. Literacy, families and community were the key issues for the Australian FIH Program team. They worked to provide educators in the centres new knowledge about ECE and an appreciation of the potential contributions of families and community to children’s early literacy development. To do so workshops were conducted by the Australian FIH Program team (Woodrow et al., 2008). The Australian FIH Program team defined literacy as:
knowledge and understanding to participate effectively in society and achieve personal growth … In today’s world literacy often involves screen-based texts such as internet sites, computer games, television and DVDs as well as paper-based texts such as books (Woodrow et al., 2008, p. 47)

Literacy includes learning to read and write, and it also involves composing various texts using images, sounds and words given the available artefacts this is one of the reasons why I decided to explore the possibilities for creating this photographic case study. In the twenty-first century, literate children are now expected to be able to be: “speaker, listeners, viewers, creators of visual images and multimodal texts, critical thinkers, researchers and writers” (Woodrow et al., 2008, p. 47). Learning literacy from a sociocultural perspective differs from traditional literacy learning and teaching. Literacy teaching and learning addresses the multi-literacies in children’s daily experiences. The literacy approach developed by FIH Program built on research into Literacies, Communities and under 5’s (Woodrow et al., 2008).

This professional learning Program was conducted to provide Chilean educators a better understanding of sociocultural theory and its practice in literacy education. It encouraged these educators to engage children and families in various literacy activities based on technologies, including visual and written texts composed by children and educators. Professional resources for early childhood curriculum were provided by the Australian FIH Program team. Initially a community literacy mapping activity documented the literacy practices of families and their communities. The Australian FIH Program team explored the rationale for creating a curriculum based on children and families’ prior knowledge, and how to make this knowledge part of relevant and meaningful learning experiences. A literacy environment assessment scale was used to assess and improve the literacy environment (Woodrow et al., 2008).

To develop a comprehensive ECE system, it is important to create an integrated network of service providers. The FIH Program established a local Community Committee, and introduced them to a sociocultural approach to children learning and its relationship to families, communities and their culture. The ECE professionals were encouraged to engage families and communities in their literacy education Program. The key concepts that were addressed during their professional development workshop included:
1. Social and cultural capital
2. Funds of knowledge
3. Zone of proximal development
4. Communities of practice and learning
5. Co-construction of knowledge
6. Co-creating curriculum
7. Negotiating the curriculum
8. Inter-subjectivity
9. Pedagogy of listening
10. Pedagogy of relationships
11. Scaffolding
12. Guided learning

The Australian FIH Program team worked to build the capacity of the ECE professionals to enhance the literacy learning of young children through having them encourage children and families to actively participate in each centre’s educational program. They learnt that ECCs can be sites for community learning where children and families share their experiential knowledge. Through the FIH Program the Chilean EC educators developed their pedagogical knowledge and leadership capabilities for enhancing the literacy learning capabilities of their communities (Woodrow et al., 2008). Or at least there were the FIH Program’s aspirations; this thesis explores endurance of how these concepts were manifested over time.

1.6 THESIS STATEMENT

The thesis – or argument advanced here is as follows:

*Sociocultural theory supported early childhood educators to improve the literacy learning of young children in disadvantaged global/local community through changing their roles, literacy learning environment, literacy teaching/learning activities and engaging their families, but it fails to address the intellectual in/equality issues in a transnational program.*

To do so this photographic case study situates the debated over a sociocultural approach to on early literacy learning in a global/local context. It addresses issues concerning the in/equality between global and disadvantaged local; changing
educators’ roles; changing literacy learning environments; changing literacy teaching/learning activities; and intellectual in/equality between families and EC educators. Sociocultural theory is shown as providing educators the knowledge to change their roles in children’s learning; to improve their literacy learning environment in the ECCs, and literacy teaching/learning activities to engage children’s families to participate in and contribute to their children’s learning. A major contribution to knowledge by this photographic case study is that it argues that sociocultural approach makes the EC educators to improve children’s literacy learning from changing their roles, literacy learning environment, literacy teaching/learning activities and engaging their families. However, sociocultural approach fails to address the intellectual in/equality issues among the educators and the relationship between educators and families in the FIH Program.

1.7 OVERVIEW OF STRUCTURE OF THESIS

This thesis scholarly or argument is developed through the following structure.

Chapter Two provides review of the recent literature on sociocultural theory and early literacy learning. The literature reviewed concerns concepts such as funds of knowledge (FoK), popular culture, educators’ role, literacy learning environment, literacy teaching/learning activities and family engagement in early literacy learning. It provides knowledge of different aspects of sociocultural approach to early literacy learning.

Chapter Three introduces a range of novel theoretical concepts which are also used in the evidentiary Chapters to provide a new and deeper understanding of the themes which are addressed. Specially, it draws on the concepts of glocalisation (Almas & Lawrence, 2003) and more extensively on concepts from Ranciere (2009), including the ideas of in/equality of intelligence, ignorant schoolmaster and, seeing, saying and doing. These concepts are need to analyse evidence relating to the issues of in/equality, children’s learning and educators’ pedagogies.

Chapter Four explains and justifies the research methods used in the research project reported in the thesis. It elaborates upon the process of data collection and data
analysis. Focusing on the principles for doing educational research, the flexible 
research design for this photographic case study is explained. The principles and 
procedures for data collection and analysing the case study evidence are detected, 
including these relating to research ethics.

Chapter Five presents an analysis of the literacy resources in disadvantaged 
communities in Antofagasta (Chile). Photo-elicitation and a conference presentation 
are analysed by coding and concepts analysis. The selected photographs are 
described as a vignette. Photographs relates to interview excerpts are presented as 
photonovels. The analysis focuses on the different literacy resources available for young children to access to in this local/global community. A key concern is how educators and families might choose appropriate ones for children literacy education.

Chapter Six analyses the influence of educators’ knowledge of sociocultural theory on their roles and the literacy learning environment in ECCs. The changing of educators’ role is analysed through evidence generated by means of photo-elicitation. Evidence of the changing of literacy learning environment is depicted through photonovels, Wordle images and a vignette. Educators’ role extended because of their knowledge increasing. Their roles are reflected in their participation in different communities of practices (CoP). The literacy learning environment reflects and relates to children’s multiple identities.

Chapter Seven provides an analysis of evidence of literacy teaching/learning activities. Changes their literacy activities is analysed using evidence presented through a vignette excerpts from photo-elicitation and a conference presentation, and photonovels. The data of young children’s literacy learning activities are analysed through sociocultural concepts and Ranciere’s (2009) concepts. Play and scaffolding are two important concepts in sociocultural theory. Evidence of the increasing play and scaffolding in the ECCs in the FIH Program are analysed in this Chapter.

Chapter Eight analyses evidence of family engagement in their children’s literacy learning through a vignette, excerpts from photo-elicitation, a conference presentation, and photonovels. It presents evidence of the changing of family
engagement in children’s literacy learning, different forms of their engagement, and shows the development of their intellectual relationship with educators.

Chapter Nine provides a summary of this thesis in terms of research capability developed throughout this doctoral research project including the recent writing involved in preparing this thesis both the argument and the text. It presents the key findings from this study, pointing the original contributions to knowledge that arises from this study. It also points out the limitations of this study and associated recommendation for further research. Implications for literacy teaching/learning are presented, specially in reference to learning English as a second language (ESL) and second language (L2) education. The thesis concludes with my reflection on building my capabilities as a beginning educational researcher.
CHAPTER TWO SOCIOCULTURAL APPROACHES TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This research focuses on the phenomena of sociocultural literacy practices in transnational professional development programs. It aims to investigate the characteristics of sociocultural literacy practices produced through professional development via a capability building program undertaken between Australia and Chile. Further an analysis using the concern of glocalisation (Almas & Lawrence, 2003) and Ranciere’s (2009) theoretic-pedagogical framework (Chapter 3) provides a deeper understanding of young children’s literacy learning and a basis for research on sociocultural theory. In to do so, this study explores the sociocultural literacy practices demonstrated in a particular early childhood professional learning intervention,—namely the Futuro Infantil Hoy (FIH) Program. The purpose of this research project is to use the concepts from Ranciere (2009) and glocalisation (Almas & Lawrence, 2003) to question the sociocultural approach to early literacy learning in the FIH Program. To do so, it uses conceptual tools for Chapter 2 and 3 to analyse the Australian early childhood educators’ artefacts and accounts of the sociocultural literacy practices promoted through the FIH Program. Given the purpose of this research project, the intention of this project is not to study the origin of sociocultural theory. The purpose of Chapter Two is to review the theory including the work and documents of the FIH Program Australian members which informed their work in Chile. To answer the main research question I analysed the artefacts and conference presentation of the FIH Program and interviewed the Australian team members while provided answers the following contributory research questions:

1. CRQ1: How does ‘glocalisation’ manifest itself in young children’s literacy learning in disadvantaged communities in Antofagasta? (Chapter 5)
2. CRQ 2: How does educators’ learning of Australian sociocultural approach influence their roles and the literacy learning environment they created for children? (Chapter 6)
3. CRQ 3: How do educators’ understandings on sociocultural theory inform the change of their literacy teaching/learning activities to promote children’s literacy learning? (Chapter 7)

4. CRQ 4: How to change family engagement in young children’s literacy learning? (Chapter 8)

To answer these contributory research questions I used the analyses of the artefacts of the FIH Program to generate a series of vignettes. Then I interviewed the FIH Program team member, and asking them questions (see Appendix 1) about the sociocultural literacy practices promoted by in the FIH Program. In addition, they interviewees were asked to make critical comments on the vignettes that I had produced. I collected and analysed one of their latest academic conference presentation about the FIH Program (See chapter 4 for research method).

Before the data collection and analysis it is necessary to review the previous studies on sociocultural theory, especially those of most relevance to approach taken in the FIH Program. The FIH Program was initially conducted in disadvantage community in Antofagasta where family have limited resources for financial reasons. Some studies tend to assume that their low SES is related to their poor academic performance. Thus section 2.2 reviews the literacy resources that research suggests are available for young children in disadvantage community (Hedges, Cullen, & Jordan, 2011; Howard & Lipinoga, 2008; Rios-Aguilar, Kiyama, Gravitt, & Moll, 2011; Zipin, 2009). The next section 2.3 analyses the roles that early childhood (EC) educators play in young children’s education (Cai, 2012; Dewar et al., 2013; Hughes & MacNaughton, 2002; Hu, 2011) and the literacy learning environment in the early childhood centres (ECCs) (Arthur, Beecher, & Downes, 2001; Bhagwanji, 2011; Danko-McGhee, 2009; Paro et al., 2012; Sakai et al., 2003; Sylva et al., 2003; Torquati & Ernst, 2013; Warash et al., 2005). The section 2.4 analyses studies on literacy teaching/learning as social practices specifically, in reference to literacy learning activities in ECCs (Fleer, 2009; Frydenberg, Deans, & O’Brien, 2012; Sumaroka & Bornstein, 2009; Thomas et al., 2011; Wood & Bennett, 1998). The last section elaborates on research relating to the family engagement in their children’s literacy learning (Crawford & Zygouris-Coe, 2006; Dail & Payne,
2.1 SOCIOCULTURAL THEORY

There are different theoretical frameworks concerning children’s cognitive development. For instance, cognitive theory regards learning as an internal process that does not relate to the learner’s surroundings (Hoffnung, Hoffnung, Seifert, Smith, & Hine, 2010; Piaget & Szeminska, 1952). In contrast, sociocultural theory “defines human learning as a dynamic social activity that is situated in physical and social contexts, and distributed across persons, tools, and activities” (Johnson, 2006, p. 237). Sociocultural theory argues that children learn through other individuals, implements, and various activities that occur in their social and cultural contexts. Therefore, to understand children’s sociocultural literacy practices, it is necessary to investigate their social activities with other people (such as educators, families, and peers) and their community and how these people are involved in these activities.

Figure 2.1 shows the development of sociocultural theory as taking a different if not opposing focus to that of Piagetian theory. Piagetian cognitive theory holds that development occurs “in a series of increasingly complex stages, or periods, each of which incorporates and revises those that precede it” (Hoffnung et al., 2010, p. 46). This cognitive development theory focuses on individual development (Fleer, 2002; Gregory, Long, & Volk, 2004). However, Vygotskian sociocultural theory emphasizes the interactions of individuals with others in the community (Berk & Winsler, 2002; Smidt, 2009). Although the concept of scaffolding is not developed by Vygotsky, it is closely relate to sociocultural theory and zone of proximal development (ZPD) (Shabani, Khatib, & Ebadi, 2010). Children’s development is scaffolded within their zone of proximal development (ZPD) (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994; Hoffnung et al., 2010; John-Steiner, Panofsky, & Smith, 1994). Based on Vygotskian sociocultural theory, Rogoff (2003) argues that children’s development occurs along three interrelated planes namely, intra/personal, interpersonal and community/institutional planes. With the development of sociocultural theory, it has gained increasing influence on early childhood education (ECE). Based on studies by Edwards (2003,
2006, 2007a, 2007b) and Fleer (2002, 2006; Fleer & Raban, 2007) of sociocultural theory in ECE has been further developed and better understood.

Figure 2.1: The development of sociocultural theory in ECE

2.1.1 Your Children’s cognitive and sociocultural development

Recent studies of ECE are moving from focusing on individual development to highlight the social and cultural influences on young children’s development (Singh et al., 2012). Piagetian theory of children’s development emphasises the individual’s role in acquiring and digesting new knowledge (Fleer, 2002; Gregory et al., 2004). In contrast, Vygotskian sociocultural theory studies “how changing historical and cultural contexts within which children’s activities occur influences their cognitive development” (Hoffnung et al., 2010, p. 50). Young Children learn knowledge through their interactions with others in the community where they grow up (Edwards, 2003). This underlines the importance of community interactions to your children’s educational development. They learn by participating or observing in their community with adults or more experienced peers.

Piagetian theory and Vygotskian theory are not two completely opposite ideas, because they share the same basic development beliefs. Arguably, they complement
each other to some extent. Berk and Winsler (2002) compared these two theories. Piagetian emphasises the natural line of children’s development, but its later development also recognises the contribution of the social experience to children’s cognitive development. Vygotskian emphasizes the social and cultural dimension in children’s development, stressing the contribution of the interactions between young children and more capable individuals. However, it also addresses children’s natural line of development.

Berk and Winsler (2002) also analysed these two theories in terms of conflicts (Piaget) and collaboration (Vygotsky). Piagetian theory addresses the conflicts, particularly these between peers are important for children’s cognitive development. Children can reflect on their own ideas and learn from others’ ideas when they hold opinions that differ from their peers. This may encourage their learning of critical thinking. However, studies based on Vygotskian theory highlight the contribution of collaboration to children’s cognitive development. Through “cooperative dialogues with more knowledgeable members of their society during challenging tasks, children learn to think and behave in ways that reflect their community’s culture” (Berk & Winsler, 2002, p. 19). Collaboration is an important term in the FIH Program. The Australian team encouraged the Chilean educators and families to work cooperatively to support their children’s learning through engaging the funds of knowledge (FoK) (Gonzalez et al., 1995) in their families, community and ECCs. The Program encourages practices that viewing young children as learning through their cooperative interactions with significant others like their families, educators and peers.

Sociocultural theory has a particular emphasis on literacy learning in children’s development because language is a “critical bridge between the sociocultural world and individual mental functioning” (Berk & Winsler, 2002, p. 12). As the key vehicle for communication language is the “central means of communication” (Berk & Winsler, 2002, p. 12). Moreover, it was been established that “literacy skill development in early childhood provides the foundation for children’s long-term academic success” (Gettinger & Stoiber, 2007, p. 198). Therefore, it was important for ECE professional development like the FIH Program to focus on improving EC educators’ capability to enhance young children’s literacy learning.
A central tenet of Vygotskian sociocultural theory is that “people are products of their social and cultural worlds and that to understand children, we must understand the social, cultural, and societal contexts in which they develop” (Berk & Winsler, 2002, p. 1). Young children learn from their social and cultural context, which also shapes who they are. This social and cultural context relates to their community, families and educational centres. Therefore, it is necessary for EC educators to reconsider the role of community and families in young children’s learning. However globalisation is “affecting places, people, societies, cultures, economies and markets in different ways through space and time” (Voisey & O'Riodram, 2001, p. 34). It has an impact on the culture, economy, and ways of living among educators, families and children in Antofagasta especially on, the information spread through media and technology including ICTs as well as transport. Thus, this suggests educators need to consider children’s literacy learning in a local/global context, and education academics to consider sociocultural approach to literacy learning in terms of the influence of globalisation (see local/global in Chapter 3).

A sociocultural explanation of children’s education emphasises the interactions between individuals. Vygotskian sociocultural theory promotes analyses of children’s learning along two planes: “first on the social plane and then, on the psychological plane i.e. first between people as an inter-mental category and then within the child as an intra-mental category” (Vygotskii, 1997, p. 106). In 2004, Perez rephrase inter-mental and intra-mental into “inter-psychological” and “intra-psychological” (p. 31). In terms of the young children in the FIH Program, the EC educators were encouraged to have them participate in social interactions with others, and then to monitor their intra-psychological development. These social and ‘intra-psychological’ planes are similar to Rogoff’s (1995) ‘interpersonal’ and ‘personal’ planes (see section 2.1.2). Some other studies have found this as well (Edwards, 2003; Gregory et al., 2004). Different individuals with different knowledge participate in the same practices. So that young children acquire knowledge through the assistance of other tools like language.
2.1.2 Rogoff’s three planes of development

Drawing on Vygotskian theory (two planes) Rogoff (2008) developed her three planes framework (Perez, 2004). Rogoff’s three planes of early childhood development are “the intrapersonal, the interpersonal and the community/institutional” (Edwards, 2006, p. 239). The intrapersonal plane focuses on the individual’s thinking. The interpersonal plane moves the focus to the interactions between individuals. It involves individuals’ experiences and discussions with others. The community or institutional plane emphasises the overall social context. Young children develop through their participation in community activities, therefore their learning occurs individually and through engagement with other people in their community.

In Rogoff’s (1995) words, the three planes are “community, interpersonal, and personal planes” (p. 46). The community plane refers to participation in formal institution like ECCs and schools, and also informal systems of learning (Rogoff et al., 1995). The EC educators in the FIH Program learnt to have young children participate in activities in their community which is guided culturally, historically and economically. In the FIH Program young children learnt to arrange these activities and communicated with others in and through these social and cultural activities. Then they learnt through their own participation in these activities. It is “a process of transformation through people’s participation rather than acquisition” (Rogoff et al., 1995, p. 46). This three planes framework has used by other educational researchers in analysing and assessing young children’s learning (Fleer, 2002, 2006, 2009; Fleer et al., 2004). Thus, the next section focuses on their contribution to sociocultural theory in ECE.

2.1.3 Sociocultural theory in ECE

There is an increasing interest of using sociocultural theory in ECE studies (Singh et al., 2012). In this thesis Australian studies of sociocultural approach in ECE mainly focuses on the work of two scholars namely Edwards (2003, 2006, 2007a, 2007b), and Fleer (and some with her colleagues) (2002, 2003, 2006, 2009; Fleer et al., 2004; Fleer & Raban, 2007; Fleer & Robbins, 2006; Fleer & Hammer, 2013). This section
Edwards (2003, 2006, 2007b) researched EC educators’ understandings of sociocultural theory and its impact on their curriculum. Sociocultural theory is being increasingly used in ECE, it is now useful to interpret it in terms of three different forms namely, “transformative, assimilated-positivist and socio-constructivist” (Edwards, 2006, p. 239). Each of these different orientation to sociocultural theory are applied in early childhood curriculum (Edwards, 2006).

But first let us correct what ‘culture’ refers to in sociocultural theory. According to Edwards (2006), at first early childhood educators’ understood the term ‘culture’ as used in sociocultural theory as referring to children’s diverse ‘ethnic’ cultures. This led them to emphasise their role in helping children to recognise and respect different cultures, especially children who come from language backgrounds other than English. However, as a result of Edwards’ (2006) training of these teachers they learned that the ‘culture’ in sociocultural theory refers to their community context rather than the children’s ethic-linguist background. This is what Rogoff (2008) calls ‘community/institutional plane’, whereby children are seen as developing by participating in community activities (Edwards, 2006).

These Australian studies (Edwards, 2006, 2007b; Fleer & Hammer, 2013) focus on Western knowledge. For instance, Fleer and Hammer (2013) drawn on sociocultural theory to position European fairytales in education program. They analysed educators’ use of three classic European fairytales, namely “Little Red Riding Hood”, “Goldilocks and the Three Bears” and “The Three Little Pigs” to effect children’s
emotional regulation. Edwards (2006, 2007b) uses sociocultural approach as “a tool for challenging teachers’ existing understanding of curriculum…” (Edwards, 2007a, p. 89). The educators’ knowledge was tested to see if they meet the standard of sociocultural theory rather than appreciation of what they know. In this way educators’ knowledge was underestimated and they were placed at a lower level and had to accept the knowledge that researchers provided to them. The researchers positioned the educators as those who have no theory and/or use few in practices. They needed what the researchers produced. This is likely to strengthen the intellectual inequality (Ranciere, 2009) between educators and researchers, and enlarge the gap between theory and practice.

Edwards’s (2006) research was conducted in a municipality in outer Melbourne. It examines the educators’ understanding of sociocultural theory as it related to their educational values. The educators’ views on sociocultural theory were categorised into four phases. The first was viewing sociocultural perspective as multicultural, which focused on children’s geographic, ethnic or linguistic attributes. The second phase tended to see the prevailing western Anglophone culture as the defining norm. The third phase considered culture as the context where young children grow up. In the fourth phase educators started to reflect and value the use of sociocultural theory in their own practice and young children’s development. In Edwards’s (2006) research EC educators finally achieved the fourth phase as a result of their professional learning improved by Rogoff’s and Vygotsky’s theory. They understood sociocultural is not as a geographic place but the community where young children as much as they themselves develop and learn.

Edwards (2007b) reconfirmed this finding in a subsequent study. First, 14 early childhood educators presented their own understanding of early childhood education. Then the researcher introduced new knowledge about early childhood education in terms of sociocultural theory. At the end of this intervention she assessed their understanding of sociocultural theory and how they applied it in their practice. Based on the results, she categorised them into three groups. The two teachers in the first group indicated no significant change in their understanding as a result of project. They claimed what they were already using sociocultural theory to inform their practices, but used different terms. Six teachers in the second group stated that they
had gained a deeper understanding. They were aware of the role of relationships and different cultures in children’s development, as well as expressing respect for ethnocultural diversity. In addition, these teachers also appreciated the concept that children learn from their observations. The teachers reported that they applied these ideas about different ways learning by children, and thought about why and how they provided different learning experiences to suit children’s different situations. Another six teachers in the third group had a different understanding of sociocultural theory. They said they tried to accept children’s family experiences as a basis for understanding their culture and designing relevant learning experiences. They started to rethink what is meant by community and culture, and how these were associated with their teaching. Edwards (2007b) argues that early childhood educators’ developed their understanding of sociocultural theory in the following terms:

Teachers may engage with sociocultural theory as an initial level that positions the theory as an explanation for difference rather than an explanation for development across all cultural communities. Coming to understand the theory as a theory of development for all children is significant, and once achieved allows teachers to engage with questions regarding their own beliefs and values and the implications these hold for practice and consequently what children actually experience in their classrooms (Edwards, 2007b, p. 142).

This would seem to mean that early childhood educators are expected to develop their understanding of sociocultural theory by moving from focusing on the children’s ethnic and linguistic differences to raising questions about their own belief, knowledge and practices. To understand it “as a theory of development for all children” (Edwards, 2007b, p. 142) means encouraging the EC educators to include all students, and consider the values and beliefs in their home community especially for children from disadvantage community. The next section aims to explore the literacy resources in disadvantage communities.

2.2 LITERACY RESOURCES IN THE COMMUNITY

Sociocultural theory emphasises the importance of surroundings and children’s interaction with their surroundings. The concept of funds of knowledge (FoK) (Gonzalez et al., 1995; Hedges et al., 2011) is used to encourage educators to explore
the out-of-school literacies and family literacy practices and their potential richness and importance as educational resources in the community, families and ECCs (Crawford & Zygouris-Coe, 2006; Dickie, 2011; Gonzalez et al., 1995; Perez et al., 2004). Sociocultural theory focuses on children’s learning especially literacy and language learning, while FoK is a strategy. Both of them point out the importance of learning beyond the textbook and beyond the classroom. There is an assumption that the lack of materials in a disadvantage community causes the poor literacy performance among their children. Many studies showed the richness of the literacy resources and activities in poor communities and families (Feiler, 2003, 2005; Saracho, 2007; Steensel, 2006; Witt, 2009). Therefore, it is necessary for the families and early childhood educators to be aware of these.

Many studies (Feiler, 2003, 2005; Saracho, 2007; Steensel, 2006) demonstrate that children’s socio-economic status does not necessarily decide their school outcomes. A child’s “… SES or residential location does not determine a child’s literacy …” (McTavish, 2007, p. 476).

2.2.1 Funds of knowledge

The concept of “language as local practice” (Pennycook, 2010) underpins the importance of young children’s everyday social practices. The concept of FoK “highlights and values the resources embedded in students, families, and communities…” (Rios-Aguilar et al., 2011, p. 170). Furthermore, the concept “funds of knowledge” (Moje et al., 2004) provides useful explanatory insights into children’s learning and development beyond the classroom. FoK means that learners can gain knowledge through diverse ways from different locations and groups:

…different funds of knowledge such as homes, peer groups, and other systems and networks of relationships that shape the oral and written texts young people make meaning of and produce as they move from classroom to classroom and from home to peer group, to school, or to community (Moje et al., 2004, p. 38).

Young children acquire knowledge from various groups, and exchange knowledge among these groups. Building on this, educators can ensure that their literacy capabilities are better formed. Community are places people share similar values,
beliefs and histories. Meanwhile in the community individuals apply their knowledge which is appropriate and suitable for this community. Access to the community’s knowledge is mediated by early childhood expertise:

The knowledge of a community is mediated by more expert members through the ways that the tools and artifacts of the community are used and most particularly through the meanings ascribed to the tools. (Edwards, 2006, p. 242)

The concept of FoK emphasises children’s literacy learning outside the classroom, and notes the importance to linking their literacy activities outside school with the literacy activities in class. The concept of ‘dark FoK’ (Zipin, 2009) brings to the fore the dark side of young children’s lives such as drugs and violence which educators and families need to consider for child need for safety.

2.2.2 Popular culture

Much popular easily culture draws the young children’s attention. It can be used to encourage children to be involved in literacy activities. Children’s literacy activities at home more involves computers, television and video games (Marsh, 1999, 2000). Popular culture, is “part of the everyday life experience of most children and adults, embedded in film and news media, cartoons and television programs, in comics, music and advertising” (Ashton, 2005, p. 34). Therefore families and early childhood educators need to consider these media text and popular culture elements and related consumer culture in children’s literacy learning within the classroom and outside the classroom.

Children from different communities may access popular culture through different media. Throughout the western countries, children’s popular culture mainly focuses on toys and television. Children from middle class families in the UK may have more opportunities to access to computers, video games, toys and magazines (Marsh, 2000). Whereas children from working class families may often know the popular culture icons from books, television programs and comics. In the UK the family literacy of children from poor communities is often been ignored in early childhood centres or schools (Marsh, 1999).
2.3 THE ROLE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS AND LITERACY LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

In the previous sections sociocultural theory and the concept of FoK are argued to provide different professional knowledge for EC educators, which may encourage them to rethink their previous knowledge and practice. It is also reported that this can influence how they organise the literacy learning environment in the ECCs. Thus, this section reviews literature on the role of EC educators, and the literacy learning environment for children.

2.3.1 The role of early childhood educators

EC educators’ is not only responsible for providing proper environment for children to learn, but also actively engage children in their everyday activities. With this knowledge about children, EC educators:

… set socially valued goals on the shared values of teachers and parents. They do not just try to encourage the children indirectly by offering them the right environment; they also invite children to actively participate in their world as adults. Besides this, they will accord a great deal of importance to the cooperation of children amongst themselves (Singer, cited in Edwards, 2006)

Thus EC educators are responsible for creating appropriate learning environment for young children that express ideas, encourages active participation and promotes cooperative interact with others. The emphasis is on the cooperation among the children’s

learning, and their relationships and socio-cultural contexts … it is the role of early childhood teachers to facilitate these relationships and contexts to support children’s learning. … there is an additional emphasis on the active role of the teacher … (Thomas et al., 2011, p. 70).

EC educators are responsible for connecting children’s learning with their sociocultural contexts. This includes bringing ECC, community and families together
for educational purpose. Chapter 6 analyses evidence of the changes the FIH Program worked to achieve in this regard.

2.3.2 Communities of practices (CoP)

Another important concept for this study is communities of practice (CoP) (Wenger, 2002). It refers to “people who are all involved in the same activity. We could think about how a child is inducted into the community of practice of the playground or into the community of readers” (Smidt, 2009, p. 17). CoP are increasingly used by different individuals and organisations to improve their learning capacities (Wenger, 2009). Communities of practice can be created where knowledge is used in action and developed into forms that are acceptable within the community. Communities of practice have shared histories and values and as a result ascribe common meanings to objects and events (Edwards, 2006, p. 242).

It might seen that the idea of communities of practices as involving people having shared values and histories. In Chapter Six we will see what this needed for the FIH team to apply their knowledge in Antofagasta and whether it was appropriate and suitable for this community. The different cultural and historical background of English speaking Australian academics and Spanish speaking Chilean also raised challenges for establishing agreed accounts among the FIH CoP. Nonetheless, Wenger’s (2009) definition of communities of practice focuses on the engagement of the members in cooperative practice around the same interest. Communities of practice are “group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly” (Wenger, 2009, p. 1). Thus, communities of practice are supposed to exhibit three key features, namely a shared “domain”, a sense of “community”, and a focus on the “practice” (Wenger, 2009, p. 1). In other words, a community of practice involves members with shared area of interest working on activities cooperatively.

Wenger’s (2009) concept of communities of practice has been applied in early childhood education at different times, including for in-service teachers’ professional learning. In addition, it has impacted on education in three key ways. First, there are
different parties involved in education for which it has to be adapted; this includes teachers, children and parents who it might recently arrived from different CoP. Second, students’ educational experiences are linked to the communities outside schools. Third, plans are made to satisfy students’ lifetime developmental needs. From this point of view, schooling cannot be thought of a closed learning environment, but part of children’s lifelong learning and development: “The class is not the primary learning event” (Wenger, 2009, p. 4). Therefore it is necessary to explore children’s learning and development within and also outside schooling.

2.3.3 Literacy learning environment

There are different studies about the environment in ECCs, many of what emphasise the physical environment of the ECCs (Paro et al., 2012; Sakai et al., 2003; Sylva et al., 2003). Many of these studies use the Revised Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS-R) (Paro et al., 2012; Sakai et al., 2003) to evaluate the environment in ECCs. Most of them are conducted in the U.S.A (Paro et al., 2012; Sakai et al., 2003; Warash et al., 2005). Another study was conducted in China to evaluate the ECC environment in Beijing (Pan, Liu, & Lau, 2010). However, an Australian study does not focus on physical environment but using computer in ECCs in Australia (Arthur et al., 2001).

There are studies that focus on literacy environment in children’s home (Neumann et al., 2009; Steensel, 2006). The metaphor “environment as third teacher” (Danko-McGhee, 2009, p. 1) in a Reggio Emilia school emphasises the importance of the learning environment in young children’s education. A learning environment in ECC needs to be “intellectually stimulating” (Danko-McGhee, 2009, p. 2). The section 6.3 in Chapter 6 analyses the evidence of Chilean EC educators improve the literacy learning environment in their ECCs in Antofagasta.

2.4 LITERACY LEARNING ACTIVITIES

EC educators’ understanding of literacy relates to their literacy teaching. This section reviews literature on different literacy learning activities that have been found from a
sociocultural perspective. First, it reviews different contemporary debates on the definition of literacy.

2.4.1 Sociocultural literacy practices

What my review of the literature for the period 2008 to 2013 found is that there is no single agreed definition of a ‘sociocultural approach to literacy’ or ‘sociocultural literacy practices’. Instead there are multiple definitions of ‘literacy from a sociocultural perspective’, which of course poses problem for teaching others this idea, and for observing it in practice. Literacy seen from a sociocultural perspective refers to:

the skills of (a) recording information of some kind in some code understood by the person making the record and possibly by other persons in some or less permanent form and (b) decoding the information so recorded. That is the essence of writing and reading.

(Oxenham et al. cited in Wickens & Sandlin, 2007, p. 281)

Similarly, Kellner and Share (2007, p. 5) states that traditional literacy has a monolingual emphasise or “a standard national language and phonetic decoding”. Traditional ideas about literacy focus on conventional reading and writing skills. Nevertheless, as technology has developed and the sociocultural perspective has entered literacy education (Freebody, 2007; Kellner & Share, 2007; Wickens & Sandlin, 2007), literacy has been redefined as a broader and deeper idea. The idea of multiliteracies includes gestural literacy, visual literacy, linguistic literacy, spatial literacy, multimodal literacy and audio literacy (Cope, 2000). It involves more forms of skills for engaging texts like books and letters to include reading and writing email, short text messages and images on electronic screens (Strickland & Riley-Ayers, 2007).

Thus, literacy is now understood in countries such as Australia to include “the multifaceted act of reading, writing, thinking, as well as constructing meaning from printed and other texts within a sociocultural context” (Perez et al., 2004, p. 4). Children’s literacy develops in the cultural, history and social context where they grow up (such as Antofagasta in this study), so the community and their families engagement are crucial for their literacy learning (Hall et al., 2003). However, in
Chile EC educators understand literacy as alphabetic reading and writing (Singh et al., 2012), and the FIH Program had to develop their understanding of literacy. The definition of literacy and the engagement of their families in their literacy learning was reported to have positive impact on children’s literacy performance especially those who live in disadvantaged community (Saracho, 2007; Steensel, 2006).

Recently in English speaking countries such as Australia there has arisen a consensus that literacy learning “is not just the learning of the ‘abc’s, it is learning to use the resources of writing for a culturally defined set of tasks and procedures” (Olson cited in Freebody, 2007, p. 15). Literacy is comprised of the knowledge and skills about these resources and the purposes to which these resources can be put. These purposes relate to politics, social communication, culture, language, linguistics and knowledge (Kellner & Share, 2007; Wickens & Sandlin, 2007). UNESCO (cited in Wickens & Sandlin, 2007, p. 283) explains literacy from sociocultural perspective as “how we communicate in society. It is about social practices and relationships, about knowledge, language, and culture”. This emphasises the skills that develop through the communication practices as well as knowledge, language and cultural information embraced in the society. Meanwhile, Kellner and Share (2007, pp. 4-5) have reconfirmed this conception literacy:

Literacy involves gaining the skills and knowledge to read, interpret, produce texts and artifacts, and to gain the intellectual tools and capacities to fully participate in one’s culture and society.

Literacy skills refer to the social skills and knowledge embedded in different forms of texts in particular communities. To acquire these individuals need to participate in the interactions and activities in their communities. Moreover, literacy is also contained in multimedia. In this sense literacy is “the flexible and sustainable mastery of a repertoire of practices with the texts of traditional and new communications technologies via spoken language, print, and multimedia” (McDougall, 2010, p. 680). Technology development provides more paths for literacy learning, and requires more high-technology skills and knowledge as part of literacy learning. Consequently, literacy for the twenty first century, at least from a sociocultural perspective, is the written, oral, and communication capabilities,
knowledge, and values in diverse texts and media, which can be acquired through the participation in activities in particular communities.

Nevertheless, young children’s literacy learning is also linked with their cognitive development (Freebody, 2007). Very young children may be too young to read or write in conventional ways. Their interactions with resources during this period is called emergent literacy (Hall et al., 2003; Neumann et al., 2009). The idea emergent literacy was first conceived in the 1960s, and refers to “the behaviours used by young children as they interact with books and print materials, even prior to the children actually reading and writing in the conventional sense” (Parette, Hourcade, Dinelli, & Boeckmann, 2009, p. 355). In other words, emergent literacy is the skills and knowledge young children develop through their interactions with the print material provided by their families before they can really ‘read and write’. This includes “phonological awareness” (e.g. hearing and pronouncing smaller sounds in words), “letter knowledge” (e.g. recognizing alphabetic letters), “print awareness” (e.g. be aware of print materials), and “oral language” (e.g. narrating and story—telling) (Gettinger & Stoiber, 2007, p. 198). Emergent literacy refers to the range of “skills, knowledge, and attitudes that are presumed developmental precursors to conventional forms of reading and writing” (Nordtveit, 2008, p. 416). This is fundamental for children’s subsequence literacy and academic achievements. Interestingly, in the literature I reviewed only one researcher highlighted the assistance provided by parents in early literacy by drawing on Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory (Neumann et al., 2009), while the other researchers did not relate it to sociocultural theory (Dickinson & Neuman, 2006; Gettinger & Stoiber, 2007; Witt, 2009).

This teaches me that sociocultural theory is one way to understand young children’s literacy learning. There are studies on concepts like emergent literacy (Aram & Levin, 2001; Neumann et al., 2009; Parette et al., 2009; Strasser & Lissi, 2009; Witt, 2009), family literacy (Crawford & Zygouris-Coe, 2006; Jordan, Snow, & Porche, 2000; Morgan et al., 2009) and out-of-school literacy (Dickie, 2011) that point out the importance of young children’s literacy learning with multiple materials in their daily life.
Young children’s literacy learning also includes but is not restricted to “oral language, alphabetic code and print knowledge” (Strickland & Riley-Ayers, 2007, p. 15). Literacy from sociocultural perspective encourages EC educator to “understand the cultural context within which children have grown and developed, understand how children interpret who they are in relation to others, and how children have learned to process, interpret, and encode their world” (Perez et al., 2004, p. 4). Children communicate and learn cultural and social knowledge in their own communities. Children’s literacy develops in the cultural, historical and social context where they grow up, so the community and their family environment are curial for their literacy learning (Hall et al., 2003). In addition, in their literacy learning their parents’ engagement is a predictor of their academic outcomes.

2.4.2 Play

Play is important in ECE, because it “… identifies the children as the decision makers in their learning” (Thomas et al., 2011, p. 72). There are “two main types of play that are evident from infancy: interpersonal (dyadic) forms of play and object-focused (extradyadic) engagements” (Sumaroka & Bornstein, 2009, p. 294). In play, young children “…are positioned as having to move outside of everyday concepts, and begin to consciously consider the behaviours of everyday practice” (Fleer, 2009, p. 5). Therefore, young children transfer the everyday concepts they experience during play to become more conscious of their everyday lives.

Play “creates zones of proximal development in which children can progress from their actual development level to a higher potential level” (Wood & Bennett, 1998, p. 19). Coming from Vygotskian sociocultural theory ZPD is where young children develop and learn (Hoffnung et al., 2010). It also relates to the learning process that Ranciere (Ranciere, 2009) identified as ‘seeing, saying and doing’, which argues that children learn from their observation, interactions with others and their practices (see Chapter 3 and section 7.3 in Chapter 7). Children seem to be able to go through these three stages in their play. From this perspective play is an important strategy for young children’s learning.
2.4.3 Scaffolding and ZPD

This section reviews the activities that may happen in the ECCs that may support young children’s literacy development. Because young children build new knowledge based on what knowledge they already have, scaffolding is believed to be an important strategy for their literacy learning. In the ECCs, young children need the educators’ support to develop new literacy knowledge based on their prior knowledge. ZPD provides the focus for scaffolding learning during these interactions. Adding to the complexity of understanding what is at stage see is the observation that, a group of early childhood educators working together to support young children’s literacy learning and small group of children playing together may be regarded as different CoP.

Scaffolding is a key concept relates to sociocultural theory. It is broadly understood that “socio-cultural theory of mind and the concept of ZPD form the basis of the notion of scaffolding.” (Shabani et al., 2010, p. 240). Scaffolding is regard as “a direct application and operationalisation of Vygotsky's concept of teaching in the zone of proximal development”, though some studies believe it “only partially reflects the richness of Vygotsky's zone of proximal development” (Shabani et al., 2010, pp. 240-241). It refers “to the use of tools or techniques to allow [children] to achieve a goal that would otherwise be beyond [their] unassisted efforts” (Neumann et al., 2009, p. 313). Scaffolding is a strategy used by educators so that young children achieve a new level of knowledge with the support of more capable peers, adults or tools. Because young children build their new knowledge on their previous knowledge, early childhood educators need to monitor the children’s capabilities and support the deepening and extension of these.

Effective scaffolding aims to involve “joint problem solving”, “warmth and responsiveness”, “keeping the child in the ZPD”, and “promoting self-regulation” (Berk & Winsler, 2002, p. 26). Therefore EC educators work with children to concentrate on the problem solving, show their care and respect for the children and keeping them move through their ZPD. Additionally, the learning environment should include appropriate tools so that children may use to assist their literacy learning.
One of the key concepts in Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory is the idea of zone of proximal development (ZPD), which compares two development levels. The zone of development lies between the actual current developmental level of the children where an individual solves the problem by himself/herself, and the next potential developmental level where an individual can actually complete a task with the guidance of a more mature or experienced mentor. There mentors can include teachers, more experienced learners, their families and the cultural history of a community. Vygotsky (1978, p. 86) defines ZPD as:

The distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers.

ZPD indicates the potential outcomes that individuals can achieve with adult or more skilled peers scaffolding their learning. In addition, it can involve individual engaging in conversations with other people in their community. This is similar to Rogoff’s (2008) community/institutional plane, which sees adults or more experienced peers’ scaffolding the development of young children’s knowledge.

2.5 FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IN LITERACY LEARNING

Children’s literacy development occurs when they participate in literacy-related activities in various places including their home, school and community (Fleer, 2006; Hall et al., 2003). Children from disadvantaged communities tend to experience less school success which might suggest school are not really designed for them (Feiler, 2003, 2005; Hall et al., 2003; Steensel, 2006). Because children’s academic failure may lead to greater failures in the future, it is necessary to provide good-quality literacy programs to support for children’s early and continuing literacy development (Fleer & Raban, 2007). Their failure in literacy and poor academic results may be mitigated if their parents are encouraged to engage in home literacy practices (Feiler, 2003, 2005; Hall et al., 2003; Steensel, 2006).

ECE researchers in the UK acknowledge the importance of parents and other family members in early childhood home literacy activities (Commonwealth-of-Australia, 2009; Dail & Payne, 2010; Feiler, 2003, 2005; Halgunseth & Peterson, 2009; Hall et
al., 2003). They advocate families’ engagement in home literacy activities as a way to improve their children’s literacy achievement (Feiler, 2003, 2005; Hall et al., 2003). Home visiting may be needed to support parents’ involvement in home literacy practices. Further, because home literacy and school literacy interact with each other, they might be designed to support each other (Hall et al., 2003). The suggestion is that having children’s culture and context in their family reflected in school literacy program rather than school literacy being disconnected their home literacy will improve the children’s literacy learning.

Research by Lagos and Blanco (2010) shows that children from disadvantaged community are more likely to have poor literacy and academic results, and thus to behave badly in schools. Feiler’s (2003) research found effective intervention programs in both the U.S.A. and the UK, include a home visiting programs that are conducted to help young children from disadvantaged communities with poor performance in literacy. Feiler’s (2003) study demonstrated the importance of older siblings being involved in young children’s family literacy practices. In addition, school and parent support for children’s literacy learning school/parent relationship flowing in directions. The culture and values of children’s families are brought to school as well as the opposite process. However, the latter is typically the case. Importantly, this study found the home visiting program also prevented child abuse and improved children’s health (Feiler, 2003).

ECE studies in the U.S.A. focus on children from Mexican immigrant families especially, their low SES and the limited literacy of their parents (Saracho, 2007; Steensel, 2006). Researchers claim that young children’s literacy achievements can be predicted by measuring their home literacy environment rather than their SES or their cultural background (Saracho, 2007; Steensel, 2006). Although Hispanic fathers spend less time than their spouse on their children’s education, they do influence their children’s education. Their own education, literacy levels and habits influence their children’s literacy development (Saracho, 2007; Steensel, 2006).

Families have a significant influence on children’s literacy development. Children may participate in different literacy activities in their community and families. Family literacy is a concept that encompasses the ease with which “people learn and
use literacy in their home and community lives” (Crawford & Zygouris-Coe, 2006, p. 261). It shows families’ impact and support to their children’s literacy learning. In family literacy practices

family members using literacy as part of their daily routines show that children’s early understanding of literacy is learned socially and culturally within their family and community, and that the types of literacy experience children encounter differ according to families’ social and cultural practices (Morgan et al., 2009, p. 168).

Family literacy programs “involve the three separate, but highly connected constituencies of family, school, and community” (Crawford & Zygouris-Coe, 2006, p. 262). These programs link young children’s community, families and ECCs together to support their literacy learning. Their literacy program “focus on and acknowledge, and make use of, learners’ family membership” in their literacy development (Morgan et al., 2009, p. 168). Parents, siblings and other extended family members are considered. These programs mainly concentrate on disadvantaged communities, where children are thought to have most difficulties with school literacy. They generally are judged by children’s literacy outcomes (Nutbrown et al., 2005; Hannon et al., 2006).

The concept of emergent literacy (Hall et al., 2003) noted above highlights the significance of families in their children’s early literacy learning. Young children’s learn to be literate through their daily activities with their families. Because of the increasing research attention on culture and context in early literacy development, literacy practices in families are now seen as vital for children’s literacy learning (Hall et al., 2003).

Researchers from different countries have demonstrated that involving siblings and other family members (like grandparents) is an effective way to improve children’s participating in home literacy activities (Feiler, 2003, 2005; Hall et al., 2003; Steensel, 2006). Most children are interested in doing activities with their siblings or grandparents. As will be seen in Chapter 8 the FIH Program family members were encouraged to engage in home literacy practices (Woodrow et al., 2008).
Literacy is a series of social practices in diverse contexts rather than a set of particular skills that are only learnt in schools (Feiler, 2005). Some home literacy activities such as older family members reading to young children are strongly linked to their school literacy. Suggested models of parents’ intervention include the supply of suitable and interesting literacy resources which can attract children’s interests. If they are sensitive to their children’s literacy progress and give positive responses to encourage them this is also beneficial. Parents are also recommended as literacy and communications models by understanding such activities at home. Further these home literacy practices can be extended from parents and guardians to all family members including brothers, sisters and grandparents. Not only older siblings but also younger siblings have important influence on their siblings. To involve younger siblings in home literacy practices can assist parents to present appropriate materials for their older children (Feiler, 2005).

Literacy practices in families involve more media and popular culture than in school. Although curriculum defines literacy in a broad way and confirms the importance of home literacy, the literacy activities in schools do not reflect children’s interests at home. Marsh’s (2003) research reiterates the need to change traditional literacy practices to focus on literacy in sociocultural contexts. In ECE, home literacy and school literacy might better support each other, and working-class should be considered in these regard and not only middle-class communities.

2.6 SUMMARY

This chapter reviewed the development of sociocultural theory and its implications for early childhood education. Then it reviewed the research and concepts about the rich literacy resources in communities, focusing children’s FoK and popular culture icons. These concepts provide the knowledge for EC educators to reconsider their roles as educators. One of their roles is creating literacy learning environments for young children. Their understanding of literacy and sociocultural theory influence their literacy teaching/learning activities. Thus, I reviewed literature on play, scaffolding and ZPD as important dimensions of sociocultural theory. The last section considered the importance of family engagement in young children’s literacy learning.
Globalisation influence the culture, economy, and people’s way of living in every local community. Sociocultural theory highlights the contribution of children’s community and their families to their literacy learning. Therefore, it is necessary to consider children’s sociocultural literacy learning in a local/global context. Ranciere’s (2009) theoretic-pedagogical framework about intellectual equality provides the basis for a new understanding of young children’s learning, educators’ role and family engagement. By introducing these concepts in the next Chapter, this study emphasis the knowledge present in disadvantage communities and families, knowledge which is often excluded from their children’s formal schooling, and aims to provide more opportunities for young children’s literacy learning.
CHAPTER THREE INTELLECTUAL IN/EQUALITY IN GLOCALISATION

3.0 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter reviewed recent literature concerning the development of sociocultural theory, the literacy resources in a disadvantaged community, the role of EC educators, the literacy learning environment, literacy teaching/learning activities and young children’s family engagement in their learning. It pointed to some limitations in current studies of sociocultural approaches to early literacy learning. This Chapter focuses on glocalisation (Almas & Lawrence, 2003) and Ranciere’s (2009) intellectual in/equality rather than intellectual capital (Singh & Han, 2010). Figure 3.1 shows the connections between the concepts in previous chapter and this chapter. Sociocultural theory emphases children’s learning through their social, historical and cultural interactions with others. However, globalisation impact on “all spheres of life to all concerns of the world” (Almas, 2003, p. 182). Considering the local/global social and cultural influences on children’s learning, there is a need to think sociocultural theory through the influence of global forces, flows and imagining on local communities. The Australian FIH Australian team members encouraged Chilean EC educators to engage the concept of FoK (Gonzalez et al., 1995) and sociocultural approach to literacy learning in disadvantaged communities and families. As reported in Chapter Two, Australian studies tend to draw on Euro-American centred knowledge or theoretical framework to test educators’ knowledge and practice in a multicultural context. Therefore educators have limited chance to engage in their own theoretical tools. The knowledge flows between Australian academics and Chilean educators in this transnational Program (FIH Program) will be analysed from the lens of glocalisation and intellectual in/equality (Ranciere, 2009). Another influence of global/local flows of ideas and images on children’s FoK is “… popular culture, which is consumed throughout the world…”(Almas & Lawrence, 2003, p. 9). This Australian FIH team asked the EC educators to consider what FoK they want their children to access for their literacy education. As significant participants in young children’s sociocultural literacy practices, families were engaged in their children’s literacy learning. Their engagement was extended and deepened through the FIH Program. However, the Chilean EC educators were
assumed “knew the ‘absolute truth’ about their children the teachers gave the impression that parental participation was unnecessary” (Singh et al., 2012, p. 69). In this Chapter Ranciere’s (2009) concepts of intellectual equality is introduced to address the un/even knowledge flow between Australian and Chilean team members as well as the equal participation of families and educators in their children’s learning. This might be useful for strengthening the intellectual relationship between families and educators, and so improve their children’s learning. Ranciere’s (2009) other key concepts namely, ‘ignorant school master’, ‘emancipated spectators’, ‘see, say, do’ and ‘knowing and not knowing’ bring different insights into the roles of EC educators. They are used in the evidentiary Chapter to open up the concepts of scaffolding/ZPD, play and Rogoff’s three planes in young children’s literacy learning to critical analysis (Edwards, 2006; Fleer, 2009; Rogoff et al., 1995).

**Figure 3.1 Sociocultural theory Versus glocalisation and Ranciere**

This chapter draws on concept of glocalisation and key concepts from Ranciere’s (2009) studies to provide a theoretic-pedagogical framework for investigation into the Australian FIH Programs’ conception of sociocultural approach to young
children’s literacy learning manifested in the professional development Program. In particular, this framework broadens the analysis of issues of intellectual in/equality in the Program that the sociocultural approach to literacy learning, as employed, did not necessarily address.

### 3.1 GLOCALISATION

To consider the influence of globalisation on a local community in Antofagasta (Chile), I needed to know what is meant by globalisation, how the relationship between local and global is considered and what glocalisation means. Therefore this section starts with the definition and influence of globalisation and these associated concepts.

#### 3.1.1 Globalisation

This section analyses some of the debates that have produced different definitions of globalisation and its influence on people’s life, particularly young children’s learning. Global/local flows of popular culture plays an important role in children’s learning, and families and educators have to be cautious when selecting literacy materials for their children. The ideas of ‘globalisation-from-above’ and ‘globalisation-from-below’ (Falk, 1999) names two different emphases. Understanding these concepts is necessary for analysing the local/global relationship manifested in, and otherwise radiated by and/or mitigated through the FIH Program.

#### 3.1.1.1 What is globalisation?

The “technological revolution in transport [and] information technologies” (Almas, 2003, p. 190) are the prior conditions for the process of globalisation. Globalisation is supported by technological developments in air transport (between Australian and Chile) and communication media for distributing images and ideas (such as Euro-American concept in Chile via works from Australia). That is to say, what happens at one location can be reached from – and have an impact upon – anywhere in the world, which brings both threats and possibilities” (Almas, 2003, pp. 181-182). Globalisation is a process that shorten the time/space relationship distance between
people and places, which Franzway (2005) explained as the “compression of world space and time … and the accelerated integration of capital through the internationalization of trade, labor, finance, cultures, and communities” (p. 266). The concept of globalization is a “stage beyond internationalization in which forms of capital extend beyond the nation-state but where the nation-state remains the significant unit of analysis” (Moreira, 2003, p. 191). Therefore, globalization affects different “places, people, societies, cultures, economies and markets” (Voisey & O'Riodram, 2001, p. 34) through trade in education, the flows of labour, the exchange of finance and the exchange of knowledge about educational culture. Thus, both the local communities in Antofagasta and Australian FIH team were part of the financial flows between BHP Billiton and Chilean consumers of copper. The FIH Program’s affected knowledge flows between Australian and Chilean educators’ through visits and collaborate-work.

The FIH Program was an expression of and response to globalisation accelerating the dense and frequent cross-cultural interactions knowledge exchange between Chilean EC educators and Australian educators (Grieshaber & Ryan, 2005). Through the advanced technologies like airplanes, cars, laptops, mobiles and credit card the Australian FIH team has increasing opportunities to share their information and knowledge, and make connection with the local communities in Antofagasta (Almas & Lawrence, 2003). This process of globalisation influences people and places “across the various spheres of social existence” (Singh, Kenway, & Apple, 2005, p. 4), in this instance the sociocultural activities in young children’s community. This impacts on children’s “…relations of affiliation, identity, and their interaction within and across local cultural settings” (Burbules & Torres, cited in Grieshaber & Yelland, 2005, p. 195). Sociocultural theory holds that children learn their literacy through their interactions with others (Edwards, 2007b). In this instance, the globalisation processes impacted the literacy learning of children in Antofagasta through the work of the Australian FIH team changing the literacy learning environment and the interactions. The influence on their identity is referred to by Almas and Lawrence (2003, p. 9) as the formation of ‘global citizens’ ². This identity provides some more opportunities than others to work abroad as international workers.

² …globalization both ‘stretches’ and ‘deepen’ social interactions … political, socio-
3.1.1.2 Globalisation and popular culture

Popular culture is included in children’s FoK (Hedges et al., 2011), and is “embedded in film and news media, cartoons and television programs, in comics, music and advertising” (Ashton, 2005, p. 34). In the FIH Program, there are different popular culture icons in children’s everyday life (see Chapter 5). While popular culture is consumed throughout the world [it] is produced by people in those[Euro-American] nations most closely associated with globalization – with advertising and movies clearly depicting the lifestyles and attitudes of the west. Culture flows move around and under state border controls. (Almas & Lawrence, 2003, p. 9)

Global popular culture is dominated by western countries. It presents western lifestyles and beliefs through images, ideas and commodities. As a literacy resource in children’s everyday activities, popular culture has an important influence on children’s learning. The values and beliefs embedded in popular culture may be differently responded to and expressed in local communities. The content of particular culture typically includes ‘violence’, ‘gender stereotyping’, ‘race, national identity and power’ and ‘sexual images’ (Ashton, 2005, p. 36). Thus, families and EC educators are challenged with the responsibility to choose the appropriate ones for their children.

3.1.1.3 Globalisation-from-above and globalisation-from-below

In the definitions presented in the section 3.1.1.1 (Almas, 2003; Almas & Lawrence, 2003; Franzway, 2005; Grieshaber & Ryan, 2005; Singh et al., 2005; Voisey & O'Riodram, 2001) globalisation is not identified with as Westernisation that as a process likely to decrease the diversity. Hallebone, Mahoney and Townsend (2003, p. 221) define globalisation as “the promotion and domination of Western culture and capitalism to the exclusion of other cultures and economic systems, a loss of social
cultural and economic effects are being felt around the world in a more profound (deeper) way with the result that people, increasingly, come to see themselves as global citizens (Almas & Lawrence, 2003, p. 9).

\footnote{In some studies, Western refers to “USA centred western power, it is European heritage, and then it includes Japan” (Bonnett, 2004, p. 5).}
diversity and the disappearance of local distinctiveness and community in favour of
global culture and society.” Kincheloe (2011, p. 11) defines it from economic
perspective as

the expansion of corporations across national borders and the development
of a group of cross-border economic relationship. … promoting the value of
the privatization process and its supposed inevitable triumph around the
world… it was never approved democratically by people around the planet.

From an economic view, globalization is expressed through the privatization of
public goods, and is a process likely to increase homogeneity. What Hallebone,
Mahoney and Townsend (2003) and Kincheloe (2011) refer to as globalization is
similar to what Falk (1999) defines as globalization-from-above, which “tends
towards homogeneity and unity…” (p. 135). Whereas, Falk (1999, pp. 135-136)
states that

… globalization-from-below tends towards heterogeneity and diversity. …
This contrast highlights the fundamental difference between top-down
hierarchical politics and bottom-up participatory politics. It is not a zero-sum
rivalry, but rather one in which the transnational democratic goals are
designed to reconcile global market operations with the well-being of
peoples and with the carrying capacity of the earth.

As will be seen in the evidentiary Chapters the FIH Program tended towards the
process of globalisation-from-below. It encouraged EC educators and families in the
disadvantaged community in Antofagasta to contribute to their children’s learning.
The contribution of the families’ knowledge gave the FIH Program a point of
difference, rather than having Western ideas to dominate this Australian Program.
This brings the discussion of the relationship between local and global.

3.1.2 Local/global connectives

The concepts ‘globalisation-from-above’ and ‘globalisation-from-below’ (Falk, 1999)
present the two interrelated processes in globalisation, one that ostensibly promotes
homogeneity and one that seemingly promotes heterogeneity. This raise question
about how to conceive the relationship between the local and global; and what this
means for the relationship between disadvantaged communities in one country and privileges workers from another.

The local may be thought as “the site of everyday experience that produces diverse knowledge and practices of named, known actors who are both the victims and the opponents of globalization from above” (Franzway, 2005, pp. 266-267). The local expresses the peculiarity of different areas, and the diversity of knowledge there. This view of the local resorted with the idea of globalisation from below. However, the global/local connectivity is explained in terms of how that the global now shapes “our every-day worlds and by our every-day acts we help to shape the global” (Singh et al., 2005, p. 4). Local people in the community in Antofagasta are influenced by the global forces, and manifestation of globalization in their life, while on the other hand their local life and the locality constitute what is global. Thus, what is local might be global to others. The local states its identities in other localities by participating in the process of globalisation.

Globalisation-from-above is expected to result in “greater homogeneity, hybridization and interdependence …” (Voisey & O'Riodram, 2001, p. 26). On the other hand, the localization of global forces, images and flows involves the

“adaption of these processes, a reaffirmation of what is local in the face of other localities. … is not a struggle to counter globalization; rather, it is the restatement of identity within a structure of multiple identities. …” (Voisey & O'Riodram, 2001, p. 37)

In this process to confirm the distinctiveness of a local disadvantaged community in Antofagasta are distinguish from other localities. Localisation is not a process that runs counter to globalization, but is “part of wider globalizing processes. … a consequence of the global spread of institutions of national self-determination and democratization” (Voisey & O'Riodram, 2001, p. 37). The local is a manifestation of and response to increasing global interconnectedness. Therefore, it can be difficult to recognise what is local.

The power relations between local and global finds expression in the global/local consumer culture and consumers’ preference and choices for products, shopping
habits and lifestyles as a result of their exposure to mass media, including that from other countries (Nijssen & Douglas, 2011). The problem with the global/local relation is that

...local is the weaker force. ... globalization from above inevitably overwhelms the local... [This could mean] accepting a discourse of globalization from above in which capitalism and the multinational corporation are hegemonically represented as superior and ultimately invincible... (Franzway, 2005, p. 267).

Nijssen and Douglas (2011, p. 113) found some consumers in Netherlands, for example, believe that “global brands more power, higher quality, and a stronger image than local brands”. In the poor communities of Antofagasta whether they prefer their local or global brands, of ECE rise to their preferences and choices are likely to affect their local/global lifestyles and industry. The social and cultural activities given expression in these communities are likely to influence their children’s literacy learning.

3.1.3 Globalisation and postcolonialism

Colonialism and postcolonialism may reflect some people’s experience and knowledge about globalisation. Those who colonized others tend to “think of themselves as superior, enlightened, modern and civilised” colonised are likely to be regarded as “lacking, inferior, ignorant, traditional and barbaric” (Andreotti, 2009, p. 219). The danger for the FIH Program was to inherited the academic posture from colonialism which assumes that “‘Western’, ‘colonial’, ‘Eurocentric’ culture and knowledges are the global and universal norm from which indigenous, local knowledges and cultures deviate.” (Andreotti, 2009, p. 219).

Globalisation may be understood as the “global dissemination of the imposed universalization of Western/Enlightenment ideals”, while postcolonialism has “particular attention to the production of knowledge about the other and the (Western/European) self” (Andreotti, 2011, p. 3). Postcolonial studies contribute to theorising a possible non-coercive relationship or interaction with the excluded ‘Other’ of Western humanism” (Andreotti, 2011).
A metaphor about the colour of corn is used in Andreotti’s (2011) study to explain the inequitable power relations between local/global groups. The harvest of ripe corn cobs presents most people outside some regions of Latin America images of corn cobs as yellow and more or less uniform. Some may even question whether the picture is digitally modified to show those corn cobs of impossible colours. In contrast, she presents a picture of multicoloured corn cobs, which are the reality in certain regions in Latin America. Four tendencies may arise because of the ethnocentric assumption about the yellow corn cob’s ethnocentric global hegemony. A first tendency is that yellow corn cobs may see other varieties as deficient or lacking. This is likely to lead to the desire to turn multicoloured corn cobs into yellow. A second tendency is that some yellow corn cobs may see other colours of cobs as superficial. This may encourage the yellow corn cobs to “forget” their own cultural roots and project their “substance” or “essence” as the substance and essence to all corn cobs around the world. Third is a tendency by the many multicoloured corn cobs that have been historically and continually exposed in such situation to see yellow corn cobs as advanced. They may aspire to become yellow, seeing themselves and other multicoloured varieties of cobs as lacking and deficient. A fourth tendency is that some multicoloured corn cobs resist the yellow ethnocentric global hegemony by reiterating their multicolour in often locally hegemonic ways. This metaphor also highlights a procedure for producing conceptual or theoretical knowledge:

rather than seeing varieties of corn cobs as static and unchanging, it shows that different varieties are always in negotiation: they change in their interaction with each other and with their environment (Andreotti, 2011, p. 5).

As a result, this metaphor of yellow corn cobs addresses issues relating to the arrogance of ethnocentricism and the knowledge/power involved in the production of global theoretic linguistic hegemony. The relations between yellow corn cobs and multicoloured corn cobs refer to the struggle over intellectual in/equality between the Australian educators and Chilean educators as local/global intellectual agnets, as well as the intellectual relationship between EC educators and the children’s families. In each of these relationships, the former tend to be act as yellow corn cobs, that is presuming to be more “advanced”, while the latter are like the multicoloured corn cobs which are constructed as deficient or lacking. Therefore, the following sections
elaborate on the challenge of balancing the intellectual in/equality between them or at least developing a more dynamic interaction between them.

### 3.1.4 Glocalisation

The idea of globalisation may give impression that Americanization or Westernization contributes to standardization and ignores the contribution of the local. The concept of glocalisation (Almas & Lawrence, 2003) is meant to capture the dialectical relation between the global and the local. Roberston’s (cited in Almas & Lawrence, 2003, p. 10) “…employed the term ‘glocalization’ to remind us that global forces do not override locality and that homogenization and heterogenization are both crucial features of modern life”. Glocalization refer to

how the global and local levels interact in the current intense period of capitalist restructuring, [It is] “a single process but are made up of two often contradictory forces which affects how space is perceived in economic and social interaction (Voisey & O'Riodram, 2001, p. 38).

The meaningful integration of local and global forces images and focus is reflected “in the way that local, national, and global interrelationships are mediated by local, national, and political dynamics” (Brooks & Normore, 2010, p. 53). The concept of glocalization is meant to capture the dialectical relationship between the local and global and to remind us of the importance of local forces in globalisation.

### 3.2 INTELLECTUAL IN/EQUALITY

The previous section explored the complexities in defining the globalisation and indicated its possible in relations to young children’s learning. Globalisation from above is an overwhelming force that positions the local and global as unequal. Ranciere’s (2009) concept equality of intelligence and associated ideas open up to renewed consideration of the contribution of the local to glocalisation.
3.2.1 Equality of intelligence

Ranciere (2009) argues that people are equal to use their intelligence as:

Intellectual emancipation is the verification of the equality of intelligence. This does not signify the equal value of all manifestations of intelligence, but the self-equality of intelligence in all its manifestations (2009, p. 10).

This does not mean that everyone has equal intelligence. It means that people have the equal right to use their intelligence in various activities. This underpins the argument of equal participation of different localities in globalisation noted in the section 3.1.2. Through “our every-day acts we help to shape the global” (Singh et al., 2005, p. 4), however “…local is the weaker force. … globalization from above inevitable overwhelms the local…” (Franzway, 2005, p. 267). The unequal power relations between the different localities that together constitute the global makes some localities dominate forces in globalisation, which leads to homogeneity.

This shared power of the equality of intelligence links individuals, makes them exchange their intellectual adventures, in so far as it keeps them separate from one another, equally capable of using the power everyone has to plot her own path (Ranciere, 2009, p. 17).

The concept of equality of intelligence encourages educators to share their intellectual power through their activities. This suggests that in working with a disadvantaged community in Antofagasta, the FIH Program might be expected to value – and to add value – to the local educator’s knowledge as a contribution to global knowledge flow. This the Australian FIH team members might be expected to recognise the Chilean EC educators’ knowledge by working forward the two-ways rather than one-way flow of empirical and theoretical knowledge.

This concept can be used to address the intellectual relationship between the Chilean EC educators and children’s families as well. The assumption that educators known “the ‘absolute truth’ about their children” (Singh et al., 2012, p. 69) and that children’s families as non-contributors to their children’s learning makes their intellectual relationship one-way traffic. Thus, educators are the ‘authoritative source’ of educational knowledge, and families learn from the educators. This assumption
weakens families’ intelligence and limits their work as intellectual partners in their children’s education.

The process of establishing an intellectual relationship between Chilean EC educators and Australian team members, and the intellectual relationship between families and Chilean EC educators can be defined by a Chinese concept derived from internet slang – 屌丝逆袭 (diǎo sī ni xí, some people translate it as loser counterattack). This concept is often used to refer to people with a low income, powerless and lacking in higher education (sometime not good-looking) who succeed in their career or love life. For instance, they have a girlfriend/boyfriend/wife/husband who is totally ‘out of his/her league’. In this study diǎo sī (屌丝) refers to the people in the disadvantaged communities in Antofagasta who became involved in the FIH Program. Nì xí (逆袭, counterattack) is a word comes from Japanese. It is often used in Japanese fighting cartoons, and means an abnormal attack whereby a small army defeats a large, better equipped army. In this study屌丝逆袭 (diǎo sī ni xí) refers to the people in the disadvantaged communities in Antofagasta who notice that they are intellectually equal with people in other communities and challenge the stereotype that they have limited education, knowledge or capability. This concept recognizes and acknowledges their knowledge, and encourages them to challenge these stereotypes.

3.2.2 Distribution of the sensible

Another concept in Ranciere’s (2009) framework seeks to redress this issue of intellectual in/equality through the re/distribution of the sensible. People are linked together by their shared sensations. ‘What is common is “sensation”. Human being are tied together by a certain sensory fabric, a certain distribution of the sensible, which defines their way of being together …’ (Ranciere, 2009, p. 56). Ranciere (2009) reports the story that hundred of years ago two workers whose leisure time

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4 It originally refers to people (mostly man, but it becomes more neutral now) who come from lower SES families and do not have higher education and have very limited income, who cannot afford a car or a apartment or even a good girlfriend/boyfriend. But now many people (which is not limited to lower-income people) used it as self-mockery as well. It is very similar to the word 草根 (Cao gen means ‘grassroots’, which is another cyber word has the similar meaning with Diǎo sī in Chinese).
was quite ‘aesthete’, did what was unexpected for workers. There workers claimed a “right to intellectual leisure time” (Lambert, 2011, p. 374), and in doing so

… disrupted the distribution of sensible which would have it that those who work do not have time to let their steps and gazes roam at random; and that the members of a collective body do not have time to spend on the forms and insignia of individuality (Ranciere, 2009, p. 19).

Their intellectual work and their desire for equality meant a redistribution in their distribution of what it was sensible for them as worker to be doing. Their intellectual leisure their activities revealed their intelligence to themselves and could not be separated from their work:

These workers … were spectators and visitors within their own class. Their activity as propagandists could not be separated from their idleness as strollers and contemplators. Their simple chronicle of their leisure dictated reformulation of the established relations between seeing, doing and speaking. (Ranciere, 2009, p. 19)

Ranciere (2009, p. 42) explains further about the relationship between intelligence and occupation:

It is Plato’s community, where artisans must remain in their place because work does not wait – it does not allow time for going to chat in the agora … and watch shadows in the theatre … because the divinity has give them the iron soul … that adapts and fixes them to their occupation.

For Ranciere (2009, p. 42), there could exist:

a ‘harmonious’ relationship between an occupation and an equipment; between the fact of being in a specific time and place, practising particular occupations there, and being equipped with the capacities for feeling, saying and doing appropriate to those activities.

However, intellectual emancipation breaks this fit between an ‘occupation’ and a ‘capacity’, which entailed an incapacity to conquer a different space and a different time. It signified dismantling the labouring body adapted to the occupation of an artisan who knows that work does not wait and whose sense are adapted to this ‘absence of time’. The emancipated workers fashioned in the here and now a different body and a different ‘soul’ for this body – the body and soul of those who are not adapted to any specific occupation … (Ranciere, 2009, p. 42-43).
Thus people are employed for occupations by what they can see, can say and can do. However, they need to belonging to a particular class does not entail particular or limited intellectual capabilities. Therefore, it might be expected that in the FIH Program the young children’s families in the FIH Program will not necessarily be regarded just as lower SES families with no intellectual to contribution made to their children’s. Further, the assumption that educators know ‘absolute truth’ about the children might be expected to be questioned. Thus, the FIH Program might be expected to change the assumptions about the intelligence of both the families and EC educators as a basis for them to establishing an intellectual relationship.

However, in terms of community development in context of globalisation from above capitalist development “continues to be uneven development… Communities are assigned particular roles in the global economy … local regions having to perform particular tasks as part of the overall global plan” (Almas & Lawrence, 2003, p. 5). When each community is assigned with a particular role in the global economy, then these communities are expected to maintain their existing places. Thus this means the disadvantaged communities in Antofagasta have to be kept disadvantaged place to maintain the capitalist development of the world. This viscous circle makes income differences even greater. To interrupt this using Ranciere’s (2009) concept of place/occupation and capability, people’s place/occupation is not fixed even though it may be assigned by others. People’s knowledge and capabilities are not limited to what place/occupation they have. So too with their community. A community’s intellectual position in world is not fixed.

3.3 IGNORANT SCHOOLMASTER

Ranciere’s (1992, 2009) theoretic-pedagogical framework addresses intellectual equality issue, through refer to teaching and learning. In Ranciere’s (1992) The Ignorant Schoolmaster he recounts a story of a teacher, Joseph Jacotot who teaches the students French who do not speak French, even though he does not speak their language (Flemish).
An ‘ignorant schoolmaster’ is “a teacher who teaches that which is unknown to him or her” (Ranciere, 2010, p. 1), and what is unknown to him is a sense of intellectual inequality. In the 1820s, Joseph Jacotot was teaching Flemish students whose language he did not know and who did not know his, by using a fortuitous text, a bilingual edition of Telemaque being published in Brussels. He put it in his students’ hands and told them, through an interpreter, to read half of the book with the aid of the translation, to constantly repeat what they had learned, to read the other half quickly, and to write in French what they thought of it. He was said to be astonished at the way these students, to whom he had not transmitted any knowledge, had, following his command, learned enough French to express themselves very well, how he had thus educated them without teaching them anything (Ranciere, 2010, pp. 1-2).

For this ignorant schoolmaster, an educator is one who “obliges another intelligence to exercise itself was independent of the possession of knowledge, that it was indeed possible that one who is ignorant might permit another who is ignorant to know something unknown to both…” (Ranciere, 2010, p. 2). Therefore, Chilean EC educators, who are ignorant of children’s FoK (Gonzalez et al., 1995) in their families and community might teach the children by engaging this knowledge into their learning environment in their ECCs. This is because an educator does not teach his pupils his knowledge, but orders them to venture into the forest of things and signs, to say what they have seen and what they think of what they have seen, to verify it and have it verified (Ranciere, 2009, p. 11).

Educators can provide opportunities and pathways for young children to learn from their exploring the intellectual assets in their families and communities. Different forms of play provide Chilean children opportunities to learn from exploration. Through children’s play educators work involves ‘facilitation of learning opportunities’; ‘guided participation’, … ‘supporting’… (Thomas et al., 2011, p. 70). The concept of ignorant schoolmaster suggests a way of learning, which challenges conventional understanding of educators’ roles in education. EC educators’ role of facilitating and guiding is important because

In pedagogical logic, the ignoramus is not simply one who does not as yet know what the schoolmaster knows. She is the one who does not know what she does not know or how to know it (Ranciere, 2009, p. 8).
If young children do not have the knowledge and do not know how to know it, educators guide and facilitate children’s learning instead of transmitting their knowledge. The children do not “learn that schoolmaster’s knowledge” (Ranciere, 2009, p. 14). Thus, the ignorant schoolmaster is an educator “who teaches … without transmitting any knowledge” (Ranciere, 2010, p. 2). “Teaching focus on learnability it is not about transmitting knowledge, but enabling another to learn” (Pelletier, 2012, p. 615).

When children learn through their exploration they have the opportunities to learn what the educators do not know, transmission of the teacher’s knowledge limits their learning. The children can create and construct their knowledge when they are learning not when knowledge is transmitted to their. Learning educators’ knowledge, children will develop have less knowledge than their educators. A Chinese suyu (proverb) 青出于蓝而胜于蓝 (qīng chū yú lán ér shèng yú lán) says that students should achieve more than their educators. 青qīng is indigo-blue. 藍lán is the indigo plant. The colour indigo-blue comes from the indigo plant, but it is better than it. This metaphor says that student learns from their teacher, but learn more than their teacher taught them. Learning through exploration rather than the knowledge transmitted by educators is a strategy for children to achieve a better education. Another Chinese suyu授 (shou)人 (ren)以 (yi) 魚(yu), 不 (bu)如 (ru)授 (shou)人 (ren)以 (yi) 漁 (yu) points out that teaching means teaching students how to learn rather than transmitting the knowledge to them. Literally this suyu or metaphor means it is better to teach a person how to fish rather than give her a fish. Give a woman a fish and you feed her for a day. Teach a woman to fish and you feed her for a lifetime. The role of the Australian FIH team was not to give the Chilean EC educators the knowledge, but lead them to the pathway of learning. So does the Chilean EC educators and young children. Their changing pedagogies as a result of the FIH Program aim to help the young children to build their capacities of learning, rather than give them the knowledge.

5 From 《荀子》 (Xun Zi) URL: http://baike.baidu.com/view/1951516.htm?fromId=192467 Translation: http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_9ec3fe5801014bmq.html
3.4 EMANCIPATED SPECTATOR

Another key concept that relates to teaching/learning and educators’ role is that of emancipated spectators. Ranciere (2009) addresses many issues concerning emancipation. The concept emancipated spectator refers spectators in the theatre who are visiting while acting as well. This concept challenges the idea of them being passive spectators. In terms of an educational research it refers to children as active learners.

The word ‘emancipation’ means: “the blurring of the boundary between those who act and those who look; between individuals and members of a collective body” (Ranciere, 2009, p. 19). It blurs the boundary between spectators and actors. It blurs the boundary between the the Chilean EC educators and the young children. When a more capable child scaffolds other children, s/he plays the role like an educator. In their play activities, they learn through their interactions with their peers (Fleer, 2009), thus they are the learners as well as educators. In other words, spectators can be actors as well. They connect what they have observed or experienced before to what they are seeing:

The spectator also acts, like the pupil or scholar. She observes, selects, compares, interprets. She links what she sees to a host of other things that she has seen on other stages, in other kinds of place. She composes her own poem with the elements of the poem before her (Ranciere, 2009, p. 13).

In young children’s play activities in the ECCs in Antofagasta, it can be expected that they observe, connect their current experience with their previous experience, and learn through this observation and comparison. “We also learn and teach, act and know, as spectator who all the time link what we see to what we have seen and said, done and dreamed” (Ranciere, 2009, p. 17). In teacher-centred literacy teaching/learning activities, educators are the actors who participate in different performances, and children are the viewers who watching the teachers’ performance. The concept of emancipated spectators encourages us to see the young children as active learners.
3.5 KNOWING AND LEARNING

The last two concepts in Ranciere’s (2009) framework used in this study were chosen to analyse the FIH Program’s learning processes. The two concepts are ‘knowing and not knowing’ and ‘seeing, saying and doing’. They are used to better understand the key concepts in sociocultural theory (Edwards, 2003), namely scaffolding/ZPD and Rogoff’s three planes (Rogoff et al., 1995).

3.5.1 Knowing and not knowing

Young children learn new knowledge based on their previous knowledge; the same applies to their educators. They relate and compare what have learnt before to what they are new experiencing. Therefore, they learn what they do not know from what they already know:

The human animal learns everything in the same way as it initially learnt its mother tongue, as it learnt to venture into the forest of things and signs surrounding it, so as to take its place among human beings: by observing and comparing one thing with another, a sign with a fact, as sign with another sign. … She can learn, one sign after the other, the relationship between what she does not know and what she does know (Ranciere, 2009, p. 10).

Educators and young children learn new knowledge by observing and comparing what they already know with what they do not know about what they are learning. Scaffolding is a process while more capable people, adults or other children, supports children to achieve a higher level of learning based on their previous knowledge (Neumann et al., 2009). This requires the more capable person to observe children’s learning and knows the children’s learning situation and what challenges they are facing. Children’s learning happens within ZPD with the aid of scaffolding by others. Although they both highlight the connection between previous knowledge and current experience, Ranciere’s (2009) understanding of learning focuses on the personal learning process, rather than the interaction with others. To “… learn a written language … One must have the student relate what he or she does not know to what is known …” (Ranciere, 2010, p. 5). Later he points out that the educators’ role is to facilitate children making connection between their previous knowledge with what they are learning. Therefore, in studying the FIH Program it is necessary
for me to observe and record how the Australian educators understood the learning progress they are shaping and learning from.

### 3.5.2 Seeing, saying and doing

The learning process may be summarised in three steps. Learners observe and then repeat or describe what they have seen to others. After that they practice to verify what they have seen and said. For instance, young children learn their mother tongue “by listening and repeating, by observing and comparing, by guessing and verifying” (Ranciere, 2010, p. 5). Listening and observing are integrated to the stage of seeing, where learners see other people’s practices. Repeating and comparing is the stage of saying where they interact with others about what they see. Guessing and verifying is the stage of doing where they practice and testify to what they have learned. A learner, whether as adult or child, “can do this if, at each step, she observes what is before her, says what she has seen, and verifies what she has said” (Ranciere, 2009, p. 10).

In sum, seeing is the process that whereby the learner observes, experiences and gets to know the new knowledge they are trying to learn. Saying is the process whereby they interact with other people about their observations. Doing is the process through which they practice so as to verify what they have observed and said.

Thus, for example, through many play children communicate with others about their seeing in the real community, and verify what they have observed and learnt from others. In terms of scaffolding, seeing is done by a more capable person who observes the children’s learning. Saying refers to their interactions. Doing occurs as children practice and to testify what they have learned to others’ support, because once they achieve the higher level, the more capable person need to withdraw their current scaffolding, or create a new level of learning and scaffolding. These considerations about learning are likely to be apply to the adults in the FIH Program as they are to the children.

Rogoff’s three planes are often used as a tool to assess children’s learning process (Fleer, 2002, 2006, 2009). These three planes are “the intrapersonal, the interpersonal
and the community/institutional” planes (Edwards, 2006, p. 239) or in Rogoff’s (Rogoff et al., 1995) own words “community, interpersonal, and personal planes” (p. 46). Community plane refers to learners’ participation of social, historical and cultural activities in the community. Interpersonal plane focuses on learners’ interactions with other in their social, historical and cultural activities. Intra/personal plane focuses on learners’ change through their participation of these activities. This three planes framework captures the participants, activities and locality of learning. Seeing, saying and doing does not clarify the context or location of the learning process, but it explains the process of learning. Young children do not just learn through participate the activities and interactions. Seeing, saying and doing illuminates the steps that children take to build up their knowledge. Because children’s learning process is also the process to construct their multiple identities (Wenger, 2002), in this study, community includes both local and global context. In terms of the process of professional learning for the Chilean EC educators in the FIH Program, the concept of seeing, saying and doing is likely to capture the steps that these educators took to build up their professional knowledge. Because their professional learning is a process constructing knowledge includes consideration of local/global knowledge flows.

3.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter provide a theoretic-pedagogical framework to examine the process of glocalisation (Almas & Lawrence, 2003) evident through the FIH Program and Ranciere’s (2009) concepts to provide a new understanding to sociocultural approach to early literacy learning. First it reviewed concept of globalisation and localisation to investigate the FIH Program as an represent to, and expression of glocalisation in disadvantaged communities in Antofagasta and what these means for children’s sociocultural literacy practices. To interrupt the unequal relationship between local and global, the concepts of ‘globalisation from below’ and ‘glocalisation’ as well as ‘intellectual equality’ were introduced as key analytical tools. Intellectual equality argues for the equal right of using intelligence, which interrupt the unequal intellectual relationship between families and Chilean EC educators, and between latter and Australian educators in the FIH Program. This asks the EC educators to reconsider their role in ECE. ‘Ignorant schoolmaster’ and ‘emancipated spectator’
provide more challenges to EC educators. They are no longer the centre or authority in literacy teaching/learning. Young children are encouraged to be active learners to explore their learning through activities like play. Then two more concepts are introduced to analyse children’s learning. These two concepts – knowing and not knowing and seeing, saying and doing confirm the importance of play and challenges Rogoff’s three planes. They clarify three possible stages in children’s learning.
CHAPTER FOUR PHOTOGRAPHIC CASE STUDY IN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

4.0 INTRODUCTION

To explore the value of sociocultural literacy theory in literacy learning in a global/local community in the FIH Program, I employed four data resources namely artefacts (photographs), vignettes, conference presentations and photo-elicitation (nearly photographic interviews). The artefacts were photographs I collected from the FIH Program’s evidentiary archive (14 gigabyte). I selected and categorised the photographs into four categories, namely, community, environment, activities and family engagement. Each category was selected on the basis of and also used to refine the contributory research questions.

In the category “community” (n=79) I selected artefacts that represented the literacy resources embedded in the local community along with some those depicting the Antofagasta more generally. The second category “environment” (n=102) refers to the literacy learning environment and which shows changes over time (2008, 2009 and 2010) in the literacy environment in the early childhood centres (ECCs). The third category “activities” (n=34) refers to photograph of changes in the literacy teaching/learning activities in the centres. The forth category “family” (n=15) were collection of photograph showing changes in family engagement in their children’s literacy learning at the centres.

For each category of artefacts I generated a vignette to describe them. Before conducting interviews with the Australian FIH team members (n=4), I asked each of these interviewees, to choose their own photography from the FIH archive prior to my interviews with them, artefacts that reflected their understanding of sociocultural theory, literacy learning and the role of families in their children’s literacy practices. The interviews explored the literacy resources in the socio-economically disadvantaged communities of Antofagasta where the FIH team worked on the local ECCs. These photo-elicitations also explored how they saw the EC educators changing the literacy learning environment of the ECCs and changing the pedagogies
to use children’s funds of knowledge (Hedges et al., 2011) and how they developed their intellectual relationship with the families to help with their children’s literacy learning. Each interview was a purposeful conversation which focused on the Australian FIH teams’ perspectives on sociocultural literacy practices, and their experiences, the artefacts and the Program.

As part of each interview I asked the team members to read one of my vignettes and provide critical comments on it. Then, the photograph they selected and explained and their comments to my vignettes were used to elicit each interviewee’s understanding of sociocultural literacy. Along with analysing their conference presentation, these interviews added much depth and richness to the exploration of their conceptualisation of the key issues under investigation.

This chapter explains and justifies the research principles and procedures employed to conduct the project reported in this thesis. It illustrates how the three sources of data were collected and analysed to answer this research questions (see Figure 4.1). This research process was designed to investigate manifestation of sociocultural theory in early literacy in the artefacts and accounts of Australian early childhood educators undertaking the FIH a capacity building project for early childhood leaders in Antofagasta (Chile).
The initial, sensitising early literature review of the research literature regarding sociocultural theory and early childhood literacy provided the basis for generating the research questions which provided the focus for this study. As the research developed, and data was collected and analysed, and the literature review was updated and modified, the research questions were refined accordingly. The refined questions helped to strengthen the focus of the literature and the research process itself. This Chapter explains and justifies the research method, research principles, ethical procedures, how the data were collected, how they were analysed, and how this report was constructed (see Figure 4.2).
4.1 RESEARCH STRATEGY

The phenomenon this study focuses on sociocultural approach to early literacy learning with the global/local knowledge flow through the programme of the transnational professional learning by and for EC educators. To investigate this phenomenon, this study uses the *Futuro Infantil Hoy* (FIH) Program as the specific case. The FIH Program is a professional development intervention program undertaken between Australian and Chilean EC educators in Antofagasta, Chile. Case study is a research strategy which takes an intensive approach to explaining or describing a phenomenon through exploring one case as in this study, or a series of cases. Thus, the research strategy employed in this study reported in this thesis focused one specific instance of the phenomenon that could have been studied.
through various cases. If it was tenable in terms of resources, especially time and funding, more instances could have been investigated in order to study the phenomenon in greater depth (Swanborn, 2010). The one instance or example or “case” studied here was investigated specially in terms of the Australian FIH team, as they constructed the key intellectual agents for offering their global/local flow of knowledge. Phenomena are events or activities happen to one or a group of people in a certain context.

### 4.1.1 Case study research

“Case study”, “ethnographic studies” and “grounded theory studies” are the three methods that have a well-establish tradition in educational research (Robson, 2002). An educational ethnographers need to be involved in a group’s scholastic or academic life over an extended period to gain acceptance as a legitimate participant. In this study the researcher did not go into the field to participate in the local community in Antofagasta (Chile), and thus this is not ethnographic study. Moreover, it investigated the Australian team’s work of using sociocultural theory to effect children’s education in a global/local community through Chilean EC educators’ professional training, predetermined conceptual framework of the FIH Program therefore it is not a grounded theory study either. Grounded theory studies employ a research strategy that claims to draw their theory for the specific social situation which is the focus the research (Robson, 2002). The situationally generated theory is supposedly based solely on the empirical data generated through the field research.

*Case study* is research that focus on a case which is a particular instance of a phenomenon that is being studied in a particular setting. Both quantitative and qualitative procedures can be employed in case studies. As a well-established educational research strategy, a case study focuses on “a case (which is interpreted very widely to include the study of an individual person, a group, a

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6 Ethnographic studies represent and interpret a group’s educational culture: “An ethnography provides a description and interpretation of the culture and social structure of a social group” (Robson, 2002 p. 186). Usually it requires participant’s observation for a long period of time and may be supplemental with other methods or quantitative data.
setting, an organization, etc.) in its own right, and taking its context into account” (Robson, 2002, p. 178). Case study involves “an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence” (Yin cited in Robson, 2002, p. 178). Therefore, the case study reported in this thesis employs three different data sources to explore the Australian EC educators’ effort to effect the introduction of sociocultural theory in ECC in disadvantaged communities in Antofagasta (Chile), in the FIH Program.

However, this study focuses on one particular aspect of the Australian-Chilean FIH Program, namely the Australian team’s conceptions of their professional learning intervention for EC educators in Antofagasta in Northern Chile. This is the core that was chosen to investigate the phenomenon of sociocultural approach to early literacy in global/local context.

Further, this employs a novel research approach to case study, because usually visual methods are employed in ethnographic studies (Collier, 1986; Pink, 2001; Prosser, 2001). Because this study focuses on this specific case of FIH Program, it employed the artefacts produced in Chile by the Australian team to explore sociocultural approach to early literacy learning in a global/local community. In this sense, this thesis is a report on a photographic case study.

Case studies can be distinguished according to different types depending on their purposes. A case study can focus on individuals, group, a community, an association or organisation, an issue or a project. This research process can also be employed to study a series of individual cases which have the same features (Robson, 2002). Different types of case study suits different research questions and requirements. Their research only focuses on one particular case—the FIH Program which is used to explore the phenomenon of sociocultural approach to early literacy learning in a global/local context in ECE. Therefore this is not a holistic, critical, extreme or multiple case study.

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7 A holistic case study is a study “where the concern remains at a single, global level is referred to as holistic” (Robson, 2002, p. 182).

8 The critical case happens in a situation when understandings of the theories are clear, and predicted results can
As noted above, case study is a well-established strategy in educational research. Like all research, case study also has its own disadvantages, and therefore different research design features are necessary to strength this research strategy. There is no perfect research strategy; this applies to case study as to any other method. A major problem is, as Bromley (cited in Robson, 2002, p. 180) states, is that “case studies are sometimes carried out in a sloppy, perfunctory, and incompetent manner and sometimes even in a corrupt, dishonest way”. To prevent these issues I have developed a clear research design that uses different approaches to improve the validity and reliability of this study. These issues are discussed in the subsequent sections of this chapter.

4.2 A FLEXIBLE DESIGN FOR THE STUDY’S STRUCTURE AND SEQUENCE

Developing the research design for this case study entailed making an explicit the plan or “blueprint” for conducting the research. This plan, submitted for confirmation of candidature (CoC) explicitly showed other educational researchers how this study was to be conducted so they could judge its worth and advise on improvements (Prosser, 2001). The study started with initial research questions based on an initial review of the research literature and establishing a basic knowledge about the case that is the FIH Program. Then after confirmation of the proposal and ethic approval, the research questions were refined as the data analysis progressed and a deep understanding of sociocultural theory and the FIH Program itself.

This thesis draws on Robson’s (2002) arguments for explaining and justifying the flexible design to its research process. The research design for this study emphasises flexibility as distinct from fixity. Liked fixed research designs flexible research designs can also include the use of qualitative and quantitative approaches to data collection and analysis. However, the research questions are refined as the research progresses with such refinement, taking as its focus making a significant original

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9 The extreme case study indicates that if succeed the findings suit for any other situations (Robson, 2002).
10 In multiple case study he subsequent cases may replace the first one, or based on the first one, or focus on an area indicated in the first one, or explore areas which are covered in first one (Robson, 2002).
contribution to knowledge. In contrast, fixed research designs claim to stay rigidly with their initial research questions as well as their initial data collection and analysis procedures. What are the key features of flexible research design? Cresswell (cited in Robson, 2002, p. 166, italics added) argues that in has the core characteristics while have summarised in Table 3.1.

**TABLE 4.1 THE FEATURES OF FLEXIBLE RESEARCH DESIGN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Details or suggestion</th>
<th>Application in this study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. <strong>Rigorous data collection</strong> procedures are used.</td>
<td>Typically, multiple data collection techniques are used. Data are adequately summarised (e.g. in tabular form). Details are given about how data are collected and analysed.</td>
<td>Four different forms and sources of data are used to ensure its validity and reliability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The study is framed within the assumptions and characteristics of a flexible approach to research.</td>
<td>Characteristically this includes such as an <em>evolving design</em>, the presentation of multiple data sources with multiple accounts a focus on participants’ views, concepts and experiences the researcher as an instrument of data collection.</td>
<td>Data all focus on the Australian team members’ accounts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The study is informed by an understanding of existing traditions of enquiry</td>
<td>The researcher identifies studies of existing methods and employs one or more traditions of enquiry</td>
<td>This research project follows Yin’s (2009) and Robson’s (2002) suggestions for data collection, analysis and report writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. These traditions are not ‘pure’, and procedures from several can be brought together.</td>
<td>The beginning researcher is recommended to stay within one tradition initially, becoming comfortable with it, learning it, and complex studies, by experienced researchers may features elements from several traditions.</td>
<td>As a beginning researcher I opted for an established research process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The project starts with a single idea or problem that the researcher seeks to understand. The focus is not a casual relationship among variables or a comparison of groups (for which a fixed design might be appropriate).</td>
<td>Relationships might evolve or comparisons might be made, but these emerge during the course of the study.</td>
<td>Start with one idea—sociocultural literacy theory and practices, but as the analyse progressed, the study focused on how this idea was manifested in the partnership between family and centres.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. The study includes detailed methods, a rigorous approach to data collection, data analysis and report writing. The researcher has the responsibility for verifying the accuracy of the account given. The data collection and analysis procedures clearly reported in the following sections.

7. Data are analysed using multiple levels of abstraction. Often, researchers present their studies in stages (e.g. multiple themes that can be combined into larger themes or perspectives), or layer their analyses, moving from the particular to the general. The are different layers of themes in the data analysis which are presented in the evidentiary chapters.

8. The writing is clear, engaging, and helps the reader to experience ‘being there’. The research report and its findings need to be believable and realistic, accurately reflect the complexities of real life; counter-evidence is valuable in this regard. The artefacts and interviews with of the Australian FIH Program team members who have been to the research site provide a series of “being there”.

As a case study, this educational research project has been improved by the key features of flexible research design as summarised in the Table 3.1. It has three different forms and sources of data to enhance its validity and reliability. The evidence, in the form of photographic artefacts, vignettes, conference presentations and interviews they all focus on the Australian team members’ concepts of the issues lead investigation. This study started with the idea of investigating sociocultural approach to early literacy learning in global/local community made possible by the FIH Program. As the analysis progressed, it was decided to explore this focus through reference to the intellectual relationship between families and the EC educators. The research project reported in this thesis mainly follows Yin’s (2009) and Robson’s (2002) advice regarding procedures for data collection, analysis and report writing. The different layers of themes that emerged from the data analysis are presented in the evidentiary Chapters. The key themes are namely the local/global community (Chapter 5), the literacy learning environment (Chapter 6), literacy teaching/learning activities (Chapter 7) and family engagement (Chapter 8). An advantage of collecting and analysing the artefacts, conference presentations, vignettes and interviews conducted with Australian FIH Program team members has been gaining knowledge of their rich conceptual understandings what global/local knowledge flows means for transnational professional learning with respect to sociocultural approach literacy learning.
4.3 PRINCIPLES OF RIGOROUS RESEARCH

This section explains the principles used to ensure the rigor of this study by means of data control, generalisability, reliability and validity. Also explained is how I worked to improve the reliability and validity of this study as well as the ethical principles that I followed. These principles helped make this case study more rigorous and thus the knowledge reported in this thesis more useful and practical for other educators interested in the phenomenon under study.

4.3.1 Data control

As the researcher I had ability to exercise control over my data sources, namely the artefacts, vignettes, conference presentation and interviews during the processes of collecting and analysing the data. Different researchers apply different approaches to controlling or managing data. Some researchers may have no or limited control initially, but this grows during the latter stages of their study. Some researchers may decide to share the control with their interviewees at different stages of their project. Some may prefer to retain most of the control over the creation and analysis of the data. However, such researcher control can limit the study’s participants’ interactions with the data. In this study, the interviewees and I shared some degree collaborative control of the data. I categorised the artefacts and generated the vignettes and digital stories first, but I then they were revised based on the interviewees’ accounts.

4.3.2 Generalisability

There are two types of generalisability that I needed to distinguish for the program of this research, namely internal and external generalisability. Internal generalisability refers to the “conclusions within the setting studied”, while external generalisability is “generalisability beyond that setting” (Robson, 2002, p. 176). Because external generalisability is a secondary concern in flexible design research, internal generalisability was the first concern for this study. When researchers are selecting interviewees or making observation (of photographs for instance), their feelings about the people and what they are observing are likely to influence their analysis. As a researcher I carefully considered these matters occurring during the research
process. My personal feelings do not affect my choice of the interviewees. Even if my feelings were impacted on my categorisation of the artefacts or the vignettes generated, the interviewees’ were asked to select and talk about their own artefacts and to critique my vignettes. The findings from this study of the phenomenon of sociocultural approach too literacy learning in a global/local community are likely to be of relevance to ECE and teacher professional learning. They might be related to files such as other languages than English and Spanish or to other regions with necessary adjustments depending on site specific needs.

4.3.3 Reliability

Researchers using flexible research designs consider the reliability of the methods of data collection and analysis because they want to minimise errors in the research process. It is possible for mistakes to happen during data collection due to “equipment failure, environmental distractions and interruptions, and transcript errors” (Robson, 2002, p. 176). Therefore, as the researcher I listened to each of interview recordings at least three times to ensure there were no mistakes in my transcripts. Additionally Appendix 7 and 8 record the procedure of producing Wordle images. The procedure was recorded to minimise the errors and to show other interested parties my honest consideration of all relevant evidence, including counter-evidence.

4.3.4 Validity

Reliability, validity and generalisability are keys to develop an effective rating design for teaching observation in educational research (Hill, Charalambous, & Kraft, 2012), therefore in an educational research design it is important to consider them. The trustworthiness of findings from educational research is a much debated issue. In educational research, validity refers to “whether the findings of a study are true and certain – ‘true’ in the sense that research findings accurately reflect the situation, and ‘certain’ in the sense that research findings are supported by the evidence” (Guion, Diehl, & McDonald, 2011, p. 1). The validity test’s used for flexible research designs in education need to be appropriate for the particular study. Elegance, coherence and consistency are relevant standards for this type of research (Robson, 2002). There are
three main types of threats to the validity of flexible research: “description, interpretation\textsuperscript{11} and theory\textsuperscript{12}” (Maxwell as cited in Robson, 2002, p. 171). In terms of description Robson (2002, pp.171-172) explains that the “main threat to providing a valid description of what you have seen or heard lies in the inaccuracy or incompleteness of the data”. Therefore in this study, interviews with the team members of the FIH Program are recorded. This ensured the validity of the interviews. To guard against errors occurring in the transcripts that I produced, I checked each against the original audio-record. In addition, interviewees’ critical comments on my vignettes corrected any misinterpretations I made of the artefacts.

**Triangulation**, which is an important strategy in flexible research, can involve four types, namely “data triangulation, observer triangulation\textsuperscript{13}, methodological triangulation, and theory triangulation\textsuperscript{14}” (Denzin as cited in Robson, 2002, p. 174). It is a method used in qualitative research to “check and establish validity in their studies by analyzing a research question from multiple perspectives” (Guion et al., 2011, p. 1). Maxwell (2005, p.112) defines it as “collecting information from a diverse range of individuals and settings, using a variety of methods”. Therefore in for the purposes of data triangulation this study used four different data sources, namely artefacts, vignettes, conference presentation and interviews to explore the research question from different views and ensure the validity of this study. Theoretical triangulation was made possible by bringing ideas in the literature (Chapter 2) in contact with the interview key concepts, and both of which subjected to analysing concepts from Ranciere (2009) (see Chapter 3).

**Peer debriefing** was also a strategy used in this study. I had my peer group contribute to making me aware of any bias in my research. My peer group consisted of research candidates who were also using a flexible research design in their studies, as well as experienced researchers. They included other research candidates and some of their

\textsuperscript{11} **Interpretation** is a threat because it is dangerous to impose “a framework or meaning on what is happening rather than this occurring or emerging from what you learn during your involvement with the setting” (Robson, 2002, pp. 171-172).

\textsuperscript{12} This can be countered by actively seeking data which are not consonant with your theory (Robson, 2002).

\textsuperscript{13} Observer triangulation means employing a few observers in the research. Theoretical triangulation employs different theories and views.

\textsuperscript{14} Theoretical triangulation employs different theories and views.
supervisors in the Centre for Educational Research. During the course of weekly in research training workshops (n=120 weeks) where we shared our research progress and commented on each others’ work. They often contributed by questioning my research process, argument and findings, thereby challenging me to improve the rigor of my work.

Recording the research procedure is important for researchers to check their progress, and to enable others to do likewise. For this study, I kept a record of my research activities for review when necessary. This record or audit trail is “a full record of [my] activities while carrying out the study” (Robson, 2002, p. 175). My record of producing Wordle images is presented in Appendix 7 and 8. I kept this because it is challenging to analyse the photographs especially the second category ‘environment’, which I used Wordle as an analytical tool. I kept all the folders every time when I organise and reorganise, categorise and categorise the photographs. I keep these records when conducting this research in order to reduce threats to the study’s validity. In flexibly designed studies such as this it is essential to minimise the threats to the validity by checking during the course the research that are requirement are being addressed, and when the thesis is finalised (Robson, 2002).

Because the interviewees were very busy academics, it was time consuming to contact and arrange interviews times with them and for them to provide feedback on the transcripts of their photographs and interviews. Therefore, I did not use member checking\(^\text{15}\). However, I gave them the copies of digital stories that I produced based on their selection of artefacts after I finalised this thesis. Moreover, since there no negative examples were found in the evidence used in this study, no negative case analysis\(^\text{16}\) has been conducted.

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\(^{15}\) It involves returning (either physically or through correspondence, phone, email) to respondents transcripts, accounts and interpretations that researcher has made (Robson, 2002).

\(^{16}\) It is a strategy might seek evidence which is against my thesis (argument) by using existing data or collecting new data (Robson, 2002).
4.3.5 Research ethics

Ethical principles and procedures are essential in an education research. Researchers can form their own situated ethics to suit their research, for a world that “lays multiple ethical and moral traps and poses multiple dilemmas” (Prosser & Loxley, 2008, n. p.). Anonymity is important in research. To protect the participants, in this study the interviewees are all anonymised, even though the FIH Program is known internationally. Their names will be replaced by the term Australian Early Childhood Educator (AECE) 1, 2, 3, 4 according to the interview sequence. To use pseudonyms

... is the way their use can lead researchers to unreflectively produce representations of the world that obscure or ignore the connections linking places, writers, participants, and readers. Although usually treated as an aspect of research ethics, anonymization is an engine of detachment, a technique of “spatiotemporal distancing” (Fabian, 1983, p. 159) (one of many used in academic writing) that obscures these connections (Nespor, 2000, p. 555)

My research questions helped me to decide on ethical procedures for accessing the artefacts, because they show the environment and interactions better than the text words (Prosser, 2001). To protect the participants in FIH Program, people’s face in the selected artefacts used in the photonovels in this study have been covered. Other selected photographs in the digital stories on a (CD) Disc are attached in Appendix 9. The interview transcripts have also been included on the CD with the digital stories too.

Researchers gather data from informants for research for different reasons. However, participants may not be rewarded fairly for their contributions the research, and can see themselves as informants as being used, and potentially exploited. Some researchers offer gifts to informants as a reward for providing information. Another way of rewarding informants is for researchers to work cooperatively with the participants to make the research report or parts of it into jointly-authored publication. For example, a researcher may produce wedding photographs of a newly married couple and gave them a copy so that the couple are able to keep them as memories of the wedding and the research. Therefore, the investigation actually benefits both of parties (Pink, 2001). Being inspired by these ideas, I decided the interviewees’ in this
study will receive a CD with the digital stories which they may use in their presentations to show the progress of the FIH Program (Appendix 9).

Except for asking the interviewees to choose their own artefacts and critically comment my vignettes, I tried to avoid causing them stress, anxiety, nervousness and other negative emotions. I followed their schedule to make appointments for the interviews, and let them decide the interview venue and time. I did not ask them to work after hours and I kept the atmosphere of the interview positive and as delightful as possible. I found good way to avoid anxiety was to work cooperatively and share the ownership of the data with the participants. I have done this through producing the CD. Together these strategies gave the interviewees more power and strengthened the presence of their concepts in this study, thereby reducing possible negative influences.

4.4 DATA COLLECTION APPROACHES

In this study there were four data sources, namely artefacts, vignettes, conference presentation and interviews. The artefacts were produced by the FIH Program, the vignettes were produced based on the selected artefacts, other documents produced in the FIH Program and photographic interviews were conducted with Australian team members. This study questions the influence of Australian sociocultural theory on Chilean educators and their practices regarding to children’s literacy teaching/learning via the accounts provided by the Australian FIH Program team. Sociocultural theory emphasises interactions between children, significant others and children’s everyday life (Perez, 2004). Therefore, I collected, selected and analysed the visual images (14 gigabytes) produced by the FIH Program. These artefacts recorded what the Australian FIH Program team saw as changes in the Chilean teachers’ practices in children’s literacy teaching/learning. They capture the situation in ways that cannot be expressed in words, thus they provided valuable information for data analysis. Further, the artefacts tended to be an “icebreaker”, helping me to get to know the case FIH Program better. They needed to be carefully to find the patterns and key features analysed from 2008 to 2010. A series of vignettes were then generated to describe different categories of artefacts to draw out directly the key concepts rather than leave them mute. The photographic interviews with
Australian FIH Program team members provided their interpretations of the selected artefacts and their understandings of sociocultural approach to literacy learning and its influence as it related to their experiences in the FIH Program. These interviews were vital for me as I have not been to Antofagasta and I have had no direct connection with the participants in Chile.

4.4.1 Artefacts produced by the FIH Program

The first source of data for this study was artefacts from FIH Program, specifically its photographic archive. These is a range of visual data produced by the FIH Program including videos, photographs, diagrams and brochures (Wiles et al., 2008). The term ‘visible’ refers to physical-optical attributes of artefact, regardless of how interesting or meaningful they are to researchers or the research participants (Wagner, 2006, p. 55). In visual research diagrams, photographs, charts and pictures are visual artefact, as is “a wide range of visual media including cartoons, doodles, pictograms, pictographs, and advertisements” (Prosser & Loxley, 2008 n. p.). In this study the visible data were the photographs produced by the FIH Program team members: these constituted the largest range of visible artefacts produced by the team.

Photographs were considered a source of scientific data when they were first analysed as evidence. For example, in the 1870s, a set of “before and after” photographs were analysed to reveal the assumed positive influence of a person’s home on changing life of a child (Prosser, 2001). In the 1880s, the systematic analysis of photographs was used to identify criminals (Prosser, 2001). In the 20th century, a photographic record of children’s life was produced, but this research was regarded as “lacking academic rigor and integrity” (Prosser & Burke, 2008, p. 258). In the late 20th and early 21st century photographs for educational research have gained acceptance as indicated by the work of Collier (1986), Pink (2001), Prosser (2001), Prosser and Loxley (2008) and Banks (2001).

For the research reported in this thesis, artefacts were selected and categorised according to the four different themes relating to the contributory research questions. A vignette was generated for each category of artefacts. Although the artefacts make
the description “real”, I was modest in what I expected I called achieve by using visual data (Pink, 2001). Further, because it was difficult to identify the key concepts associated with this large amount of artefacts (14 gigabytes), I used Wordle to explore these (see 4.5.2). Additionally, because I have not been to Antofagasta (Chile), the site of the FIH Program, to find further details about the story behind the artefacts I interviewed the Australian early childhood educators who led the Program and who had been there. That is why I needed to conduct photographic interviews with the Australian team members. These data collection procedures will be explained in the following sections.

4.4.2 Vignettes produced based on the artefacts

Different researchers employ vignettes for different purposes. Vignettes “enable participants to define the situation in their own terms” (Barter & Renold, 1999, p. n. p.). Vignettes are often used along with other data collection methods to triangulate data sources. It is not reasonable to present the large number of artefacts produced by the FIH Program team in this thesis, moreover as a research study, it was necessary to identify the key features in these artefacts. I did this by linking them to the key sociocultural concepts in this study and then I generated as a series of vignettes. In this study, the vignettes are a series of short scenarios I have written about sociocultural literacy practices evident to me in the artefacts of the FIH Program. These vignettes were subsequently used as stimuli in the interviews with the FIH Program team members.

To explain how I generated the vignettes, it is useful to review two of Wenger’s (2002) vignettes. This first vignette describes a person’s working day in plain non-academic language with many colloquiums and much dialogue. It shows an example of what Wenger (2002) argues can best be understood by the concept of “community of practice”. The second vignette provides an explanation of major issues about using a worksheet. Although it provides an explanation of the issues, it does not explain these theoretically. Wenger (2002, p. 16) states “I include these vignettes to give some life to my theoretical development … reading the vignettes is not an absolute necessity...”. In other words these vignettes were used by Wenger to make his concepts more accessible, vivid and interesting. In addition, they provide real world
examples to facilitate his theoretical development. This use of vignettes helped me to form my strategies to structure the vignettes based on the artefacts used in my study.

The four vignettes were produced for this study to describe the general features of selected artefacts in each category namely, community, literacy learning environment, literacy activities and family engagement. The artefacts provide a good insight into the community and children’s literacy teaching/learning practices. The vignettes were generated by myself to provide added value through linking the information shown in these artefacts to key concepts from sociocultural theory in order to answer the research questions addressed in this study. They reflect the key concepts of this study and relate to the views of the Australian FIH Program interviewees’ who are all experts in the field and the related research literature. As noted above, the first category of artefacts is about local community, so the corresponding vignette is about the physical landscape, human geography, economy and the literacy resources in the local community. The second category shows the changing literacy learning environment in the ECCs over three years (2008 to 2010), as the artefacts are sequenced chronologically. This vignette discusses the observable changes in the literacy environment. The third category is the literacy teaching/learning activities in the ECCs. The last category presents evidence of changes in family engagement in children’s learning, so the associated vignette explains the development of the intellectual relationship. All four vignettes were modified based on the interviewees’ responses.

4.4.3 Photographic interviews with Australian team members (ATM)

How have the artefacts in this thesis been given meanings? Phototropic images are considered evidence from which researcher could produce and/or generate knowledge. Prosser and Loxley (2008, n. p.) state that research uses the “photographs, drawings, diagrams and artefacts are a widely accepted technique,... In its most basic form photo-elicitation is the use of photographs in a research interview to stimulate a response”. To find the story or stories in and behind the FIH Program produced photographic artefacts I needed to find informants with the relevant knowledge to tell the story. Therefore, in this research I interviewed the key Australian participants in FIH Program to obtain more detailed knowledge about
their experiences of the sociocultural approach to literacy teaching/learning practices as represented in the photographic images. The photographic interviews were conducted in English, while the FIH Program was conducted through interpreters and translators working in English and Spanish. Some of the Australian team members were learning Spanish as part of this Program in that language, but they were not fluent enough to conduct the Program. This strategy of using artefacts in the interviews to stimulate the key informants’ responses is called photo-elicitation or photographic interviews. It is an approach to using images which invite responses from informants, so as to reveal more knowledge about the content of the photographs (Pink, 2001; Stanczak, 2007). In this study, the interview informants and myself discussed the images and exchanged our different understandings about them. These interviews thus provided a ‘bridge’ that connected our different interpretations via the photographs (Pink, 2001).

For my interviews the interviewees selected their own artefacts prior to the interviews I also brought a different vignette to each interview and asked the interview for her critical feedback. Sometimes the interviewees mentioned also absent artefacts as they told their own stories when they showed the artefacts they had chosen to discuss. I paid close attention to the absent artefacts the interviewees mentioned (Pink, 2001). I made a note in the transcript based on the informants’ comments, and found them from the FIH Program’s data archive and described them in my revised vignettes.

The conference present ation mentioned before was an academic conference presentation about the FIH Program presented by AECE 3 and 4. This was analysed and used in a similar way to that of the interviews generated for this study. There was an audio recording and a digital copy of their PowerPoint slides used in the conference presentation. I have used them in this thesis with the permission of the authors.

There are five interviews in this study. Three interviews were conducted for the first round of interviews in this study in 2011 with interviewees AECE 1, 2, 3. Each interview contains three parts namely demographic details, substantive issues concerning the interviewees’ selected artefacts and substantive issues concerning my
draft vignettes. The demographic details addressed questions about interviewees’ educational and working experiences. The substantive issues focused on the artefacts that the interviewee had chosen and how these related to their conception of sociocultural literacy practices as manifested in the FIH Program. The substantive issues focused on the vignettes that I produced based on the artefacts I selected from the FIH Program data archive. I asked each interviewee to provide their critical comments on one of my vignettes. The second round of interviews was conducted in 2012. I interviewed AECE 4 and the interviewed AECE 3 who is the leader of the FIH Program. Table 3.1 presents my reflections on these five interviews.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features of interviews</th>
<th>1(^{st}) interview</th>
<th>2(^{nd}) interview</th>
<th>3(^{rd}) interview</th>
<th>4(^{th}) interview</th>
<th>5(^{th}) interview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interviewees</td>
<td>AECE 1</td>
<td>AECE 2</td>
<td>AECE 3</td>
<td>AECE 4</td>
<td>AECE 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td>Interview questions and consent form and artefacts</td>
<td>Tables for interview questions as check list and consent form and artefacts</td>
<td>Modified interview questions and consent form and artefacts</td>
<td>Combine 1(^{st}) and 2(^{nd}) round of interview questions and consent form and artefacts</td>
<td>Modified interview questions and consent form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence factors during the interview</td>
<td>Limited to the knowledge about sociocultural theory and ECE</td>
<td>Skills learnt from the first interview helpful.</td>
<td>Previous 2 interviews, the analyses of them, and a draft concept map based on the analyses</td>
<td>Very rushed decision, limited interview skills, Previous draft chapters</td>
<td>Previous interview, and previous draft chapters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feelings</td>
<td>Very nervous interviewer</td>
<td>Nervous under control</td>
<td>Nervous under control</td>
<td>Nervous and frustrated</td>
<td>Nervous under control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship</td>
<td>Met interviewee once before the interview</td>
<td>Met interviewee once before the interview</td>
<td>Know each other for more than one year</td>
<td>Met interviewee couple of time before the interview</td>
<td>Know each other for about two years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Layouts</td>
<td>Long table in between interviewer and interviewee</td>
<td>Round table, open area</td>
<td>Round table, open area, note on the door says that interview in progress</td>
<td>Conference room, big round meeting table</td>
<td>Round table, open area</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 4.2 COMPARING THE FEATURES OF INTERVIEWS**

Before each interview I contacted the interviewees several times to confirm the location and time for the interviews, and what they needed to prepare before the interviews. I asked them to choose five to ten artefacts from data archive of the FIH Program which demonstrated their understanding of sociocultural literacy theory and practices including family engagement. I asked them to send copies of these to me via email before the interviews. I also reminded them to do this the day before their
interview. In addition, the list of interview questions (see Appendix 1) and consent forms (see Appendix 5) were printed for each interviewee prior to the interview.

I was very nervous before the first interview, because it was my very first interview and I worried about my interactions as a research candidate with the interviewees who were all experienced academics. I was confronted with the possibility of my failure. At the beginning, I followed interview questions and read out the first few questions. But sometimes the interviewee’s responses confused the settled sequence of interview questions I had prepared. This disorder caused more nervousness and confusion for me during the interview. Some questions I forgot to ask because the interview did not follow the sequence of the questions on the printed list. Such is the life of a neophyte to researcher.

Because of the experience from the first interview, I changed my strategy for asking questions during the two hour break before the next interview. In case of forgetting to ask some questions I made a table with the key words from the questions to serve as a table of check list for myself (Appendix 2). Consequently, the nature of the second interview was very different from first one. My learning to be a real world researcher was progressing. First, the layout of the office was different. We sat around a small round table so we were more open and closer than during the first interview. The interviewee even offered me some ginger tea by way of her greeting me. Because she was also a PhD candidate, this interview tended to show her understanding of my situation while reflecting her experience in the FIH Program.

Because the third interviewee was a senior academic, who knew me, that interview progressed very well. Our well-established relationship was very helpful in the conduct of this interview. Additionally, I was very familiar with the interview site, her office. This helped to reduce my nervousness and anxiety. She also wrote a note on the door to advise people that she was in an interview, so there were no interruptions. I was also better prepared compared with my previous interviews, and because of both my learning experiences and the analysis I had done of the first two interviews. Not surprisingly this interview was more effective. Since the interviewee was also a team leader, the evidence she provided was rich and broad.
However, there were two challenging issues about this interview, which may have affected the quality of this interview. First, because of my rushed decision to do this interview, this led to my insufficient preparation. Another challenge was asking interviewee questions about terms she did not explain and reflected matters. This has a highly challenge necessary for me to develop my skill of asking probing question.

There were some other factors that may have influenced the evidence gained through their interviews. First, there was the inevitable in knowledge difference between interviewer and interviewees. The first interviewee specialised in the sociocultural theory and ECE, and she was one of the leaders in FIH Program. Because she is an expert in this area, I was afraid of her judgement and the ideas she had which differed from my understanding as a novice. However, it seems common, even normal for them to be some divergence in understanding about key terms in this field, as in others. This sense of the contested nature of key concept proved useful for the data analysis. Second, the layout of the interviewees’ offices may have affected the interviews. In the first interview, the large table between us was more like a boundary that indicated the hierarchical differences in the power relations between us and blocked us making different kinds of connections. That is why I felt more powerless and nervous during the first interview.

4.5 DATA ANALYSIS APPROACH

Data analysis was the most challenging stage in research as this is where my original contribution to knowledge emerged. However, there is no formula to guide researchers to generate such original contributions to knowledge through the analysis of the evidence. By way of definition ‘originality’ calls for some new, novel or innovative knowledge. To this end I took care to integrate my own logical but analytic thinking and imagination with appropriate analytical procedures to give meaning to the evidence. Yin (2009) suggests three steps to start a case study analysis which I adopted this strategy to start the data analysis undertaken for this study. My first step was to choose a research question from the case study proposal. The next step was to organise the evidence to find that part which addressed that question. I commenced by answering a specific contributory research questions by generating subsidiary evidence focused questions then answered each of these in turn
in order to finally answer the contributory research question. Then move on to the next contributory research question and repeat this procedure until all the research questions have been answered.

During data analysis some case study researchers employ computer software to assist them in categorising and coding the large amount of interview or other written texts (Yin, 2009). After that, researchers use the coded data to complete the subsequent thinking and analysis. In this study, there were only five interviews so I did not need the assistance from computer software. However for case studies with abundant interviews or written texts such software (such as NVivo) would be very useful.

As a research practice, data analysis is an extension of ordinary practices which combine “science and insight” (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973, p. 109). Through my analysis produce an evidence-driven theoretically informed, scholarly argument by structuring and organising data in a systematic way. During data analysis, my analytic thinking was undertaken in a critical, but logical, systematic, focused way. This was an active process whereby I thought, preferably imaginatively about the data that was being analysed. During the data analysis process I thought carefully about my analytical focus and approach, and adapted these to my emerging understanding of what really useful meanings could extracted from the data (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973).

The data sets and the analysis of each piece of data was related to the other data; this influenced the projects considerably. I know different data I had different strengths and limitations, and in particular that poor data invalid, implausible or untrustworthy is not worthy of analysis (Prosser, 2001). That is why multiple sources of data have been included in this study, and why I undertook several cycles of artefact selection and categorising. The artefact analysis was the starting point for data analysis, and also provided the initial framework for the collection and analysis via the other two data sources. The vignettes, conference presentation and interviews provided deeper understanding of the artefacts, as well as the literature. The vignettes and the analysis of the conference presentation and interviews helped reconfigure the key concepts and the initial analysis of artefacts, reshaping the focus of the evidentiary chapters.
4.5.1 Analysing artefacts produced by the FIH Program

Depending on the research design, data collection and analysis may happen simultaneously, or at different places and periods throughout the research process. In some education research, analysis takes place after data collection, while in other research designs analysis is a process that occurs continuously with data collection (Pink, 2001). In this study, some of the analysis occurred at the same time as the data collection such as categorising the photographs and producing the photonovels. The vignettes were generated based on the analyses of artefacts and were revised after the interviews. The generation of the vignettes occurred at the same time as the analysis of the artefacts, in effect the analysis of the artefacts and the writing of these short stories help me to explain how and why selected certain photographs. These vignettes contribute to the integration of these selected artefacts, giving an overall impression of the analysis of the visual data before reading the digital stories on the attached compact disc (CD). This brought the different data sources into close interaction. As might be expected the five interviews in this study, did not occur at the same time. The first two were conducted in one day, several weeks before the third interview in 2011. The fourth interview is a week before the fifth interview in 2012. The analysis of the first two interviews was started before, and informed the third interview. These three interviews were conducted and analysed before the fourth and fifth interview.

Artefact analysis was not only a matter of converting the visual images into words. It also integrated shared features of the artefacts with the knowledge of sociocultural theory in early childhood literacy learning. Visual data analysis is not like interpreting written texts (such as interview transcripts), but it entails investigating the links between the visual data and other forms of knowledge (Pink, 2001). Artefacts produced in one context, specially Antofagasta (Chile) were transformed by the knowledge discussed in the vignettes and research literature.

Data analysis was not just limited to my interpreting the content of images, but also included evidence from different the Australian FIH team members about how they understood the images (Pink, 2001). Basic skills of visual data analysis are “counting, measuring and comparing information” (Collier, 1986, p. 175). However, these base
level analytical procedures were not the focus of this research, because the artefact analysis focused on changes and themes. This made the artefacts selection and analysis quite challenging. The comprehensive mode of analysis developed for this study was based on Collier’s (1986) recommended procedure (Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3: Data analysis process
(Source adapted: Collier, 1986)

This study adapted the four steps of systematically photographic analyses model developed by Collier (1986). In the Figure 4.3, the data analysis is conducted in four steps. First step, I viewed all the artefacts (14 gigabytes of electronic photographs) to become familiar with this visual data set. As a result of the long time invested in organising the photographs I developed a detailed and intimate knowledge of this data. Second step, I selected and categorised them into different themes according to whether the content of each image related to the main concepts of sociocultural
literacy practice in early childhood literacy. During the next step I explored the key features of the artefacts in each of the four different categories, and constructed tables, produced Wordle images (see section 4.5.2), generated digital stories (see next section) and wrote vignettes. These two steps were repeated eight times with the growth in my knowledge and understanding of sociocultural theory, children’s literacy and the FIH Program as well as their evidence archive. As I acquired more knowledge about the sociocultural theory and practices of early childhood literacy, I refined the categories used to analyse the artefacts and clarify the meaning I assigned them. Moreover, because this research is data driven, these categories became fundamental to refining the research questions and modifying the interview schedule, and establish the basis for me to make an original contribution to knowledge through this thesis.

One of the main purposes of categorising all their images was make comparisons, which is an effective method for data analysis. It involved comparing the photo image for their differences and/or similarities. In this study the one of the main strategies I used for generating categories number two (literacy learning environment), number three (literacy teaching/learning activities) and number four (family engagement) were to identify visual evidence of changes over time. To analyse changes over time, artefacts taken at different times but in the same place or of same subject or same activity are compared (Pink, 2001). There are three key approaches to systematic time-based analysis of the visual data, namely ‘repeat photographs of the same site over time’, ‘repeat photographs of participants in the change process’, and ‘the rephotographing activities and processes’ (Prosser & Loxley, 2008n. p.). In this study it was found that the FIH Program’s photographic archive allowed for the latter procedure. The artefacts of the second (literacy learning environment), third (literacy teaching/learning activities) and fourth (family engagement) categories were sequenced chronologically, for comparative analysis; of course other researchers might make similar or different choice depending upon the concept they bring to the analysis. Because the artefacts of the FIH Program were taken randomly by team members, it was difficult to find artefacts taken in same place at different times, or with the same participants or same activities. To reduce or avoid the influence of these uncertainties, in this study I have compared the overall features of the artefacts within each category in across different times rather than
focus on a particular object or person. However, in terms of this study’s research project it was not necessary to count either the artefacts or the items in the artefacts.

The basic criteria for the selection of the photographs were that they had to be of good quality, with no blurring or poor focus, and no repeated images. Because of the different focuses of each of the four categories, the artefacts were selected according to the specific and differing criteria for each category. The artefacts in the first category (community) were selected to show the geographic environment, human geography and literacy resources in the local community of Antofagasta. I read them some books and papers about the city’s geographic environment and human geography (Estadísticas, 2012; Haverstock, 1994; Lagos & Blanco, 2010) which helped me to refine the selection of the relevant artefacts. In terms of literacy, artefacts were selected to show the literacy resources in the daily life of Antofagasta. The most difficulty one was the second category (literacy learning environment) which focuses on the changes of the literacy learning environment. The third category was the literacy teaching/learning activities in the early childhood centres. My first task was to remove the poor quality artefacts from consideration. Then the literacy elements captured in the artefacts were grouped into different categories. The selected artefacts needed to show a variety of relevant images. The third category of artefacts provided visual evidence of the intellectual relationship between the EC educators and families. I selected artefacts showing interactions between families and the children or educators, or parental participation in their children’s learning at the ECCs. These selected image show family engagement in various educational events, without any repetition. In addition, the second, third and forth categories had to be sequenced chronologically, this criteria affected the selection of image.

Because of the differences in the requirements for the four categories of artefacts, they were analysed through different strategies. The first theme ‘community’ focused on answering the first contributory research question which concerns the environment and the literacy resources in the local community. From a sociocultural perspective, it was important to show the overall social and cultural environment, and capture an appreciation of the potential literacy resources in the community. As might be expected there were no significant changes in the community environment during the three years of the FIH Program under study (2008 to 2010). Therefore, the
artefacts in this category were not analysed to present a chronological sequence. The artefacts selected according to the second theme ‘literacy learning environment’ show the changes in the literacy learning environment in ECCs over these three years. This analysis brings into focus the impact of the professional learning associated interventions arising from the work of the Australian FIH Program team. Perhaps, not surprisingly this category contains more artefacts (n=102) than the other two.

To document the changes in the literacy learning environment in the five ECCs over time using these artefacts, it has also been important to work presenting my observations in a clear, direct and interesting way. Therefore, the following section explains how I used Wordle in my analysis of the photographs for the second category ‘environment’. The third category presents the changing of the ‘literacy teaching/learning activities’ over time. The artefacts in the fourth category are about family engagement and their intellectual relationship with the EC educators. There were 15 artefacts in the fourth category. I did not need the assistance of other tools for analytical purpose. The artefacts were sequenced chronologically.

4.5.1.1 Digital storytelling

A series of four digital stories (Banaszewski, 2005) were produced after categorising the selected artefacts, to display the artefacts in each category using Windows Moviemaker\(^\text{17}\). One view of digital storytelling is that it is the practice of “combining personal narrative with multimedia (images, audio and text) to produce a short autobiographical movie” (Banaszewski, 2005, p. 1). However, Banaszewski (2005, p. 1) prefers to define digital story as “anything that involves the computer in the creation of a digital artefact (slideshows, multimedia scrapbooks, PowerPoint presentations).” In this research, digital stories refer to a series of artefacts produced using Windows Moviemaker slideshows.

Although the digital stories were produced during the course of analysing artefacts, they were revised based on the interviewees’ selection of artefacts and the

\(^{17}\text{For technology problem these digital stories made by Windows Moviemaker were not be able to copy to a CD, therefore, they were reproduced in PowerPoint.}\)
information they provided during these interviews with them. One digital story was produced to show the artefacts in each category, so any changes that happened in these categories has been incorporated into the digital story too. Corresponding to the first category of the artefacts as well as the first contributory research question, the first digital story is about the geographic environment and literacy resources in the local community. According to the second category of artefacts and its related contributory research question, the second digital story presents changes in the literacy learning environment in the ECCs. The third one is the literacy teaching/learning activities in the ECCs. Likewise, the fourth digital story represents the development of the intellectual relationship between EC educators and the children’s families. Each of these digital stories also incorporates the FIH Program members’ artefacts. As Pink (2001) did in his study to reward the participants with wedding photographs, I will give these digital stories to the interviewees and the five pilot early childhood centres in Antofagasta (Chile) in appreciation for their contribution to this study.

These digital stories present key features of sociocultural literacy practices in the FIH Program according to the FIH Program team members’ accounts, and do so in a clear, direct and interesting way. They demonstrate the sequence, links and relationships more directly than a folder of single artefacts can. It is part of the photographic analysis, which provided basis for generating the vignettes. Importantly, for myself as a researcher, my multiliteracies have been greatly developed through this work.

4.5.1.2 Photonovel

Photonovel is a popular genre in Europe. It is often used in health study and ESL learning (Nimmon, 2010). A photonovel is was a script, which contains the story’s plot, to link pictures, via written dialogues or voice-over commentaries. Graphically, a photonovel is “very close to the strip cartoon… the page is divided into boxes, dialogue is presented in balloons. (Dorance, 2008, p. 4).

In this study, photographs and interview/vignette provide a direct and interesting way to present two different sources of data. In this study, I used published photos from
the FIH Program reports or in the case of unpublished photographs I have blotted out people’s faces. The dialogues bubbles accompanying the photographs are either excerpts from the interviews or vignette or captions I created. The photographs in the photonovel were selected from the four categories that created for the digital stories. The most typical photograph was chosen to refer to the issues or topics addressed in that section, and especially those ones that the interviewees referred in their interviews, and then combined with other related photographs in the creation of the photonovels. In Chapter 5 there are five photonovels, eight photonovels in Chapter 6, seven photonovels in Chapter 7, and four photonovels in Chapter 8.

4.5.2 Using Wordle to analyse artefacts produced by the FIH Program

To generate a vignette describing key features of the changes in the ECCs’ literacy environment, I investigated these changing features across three years (2008 to 2010). As explained in last section, counting was not a suitable analytical process given the research questions posed for this study. However, managing a large numbers of artefacts (n=102) was a challenging, especially remembering the content of every artefact. Therefore, I needed a tool to identify the key features of the artefacts in this category – ‘literacy learning environment’. Because Wordle illustrates the frequency of the words in a text (McNaught & Lam, 2010), I used a series of key words and phrases to portray the key features of literacy environment presented in the selected artefacts in category two (see Appendix 8).

Admittedly, Wordle is low-level text analytical tool. However, it has the advantage of different font sizes to represent word frequency via a “word-cloud”. It transformed the collection key words and phrases I generated into word clouds that revealed the “frequencies of the different words that appear in a piece of text” (McNaught & Lam, 2010, p. 630). The initial cloud was generated randomly with no particular purpose visual parameters. From this starting point, I customised the creation of the word cloud. That Wordle shows the key concepts in different font sizes and various colours, providing an interesting, direct and eye-catching account of the frequency of these words. In particular, the patterns across time capture changes in the literacy environment.

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Each sub-category in the second category of “Literacy learning environment” contained relevant artefacts produced during that period. Each of the selected artefacts in these sub-categories was coded with a series of key words or phrases to explore these themes. These key words identified all the features of the literacy environment evident in the photographs of the early childhood centres during the period 2008 to 2010. These descriptions represented by these key words were then entered into the Wordle system, and a word cloud was produced to show the frequency with which these key words were the feature in the literacy environment.

However, the use of Wordle in this research did not proceed smoothly. After a few trials I found Wordle is not a tool that suited all my research needs and texts. This limitations with Wordle have been noted by other researchers (McNaught & Lam, 2010) too. For example, although it ignores articles and prepositions like “the” or “of”, it recognises capital letters but does not show phrases as a unit of analysis. Therefore, I needed ensure that there were no capital letters and the same word was spelt exactly the same, by using Australian English rather than American English. I also used an en dash “-” to connect words in phrases to form a joint-word. Further, McNaught and Lam (2010) have identified another two limitations of Wordle, but these were not concerns for this study. One is that there is no way to trace back to the original text from the codes. Another limitation is that it does not show negative meanings. Therefore, it is more effective and useful to use the key words rather than a paragraph of text. The Wordle ‘word clouds’ are included in Chapter 6 with their URL and each of them is explained. During the analysis process, before the final version of the Wordle images there was a Table 4.5 (see Appendix 7) has been created based on the trial word clouds to show the changes in the literacy elements in the ECCs, which helped with the analysis process and the producing of vignette.

4.5.3 Coding to analyse Photographic interviews with ATM

Coding was the main strategy I used for analysing the interviews and conference presentation. This generated a range of themes and excerpts from the interviews and the conference presentation (see section 4.4.3) related to particular research questions. Coding is defined as “the analytical process for identifying themes or concepts that
are in the data” (Ezzy, 2002, p. 86). According to Ezzy (2002), there are three steps in coding by thematic analysis, namely open coding, axial coding and selective coding. Open coding is as an approach to “generate an emergent set of categories and their properties” (Ezzy, 2002, p. 88). For the purposes of open coding, I printed the interview and conference presentation transcripts with large margins and assigned code words beside each unit of analysis (normally a paragraph) on the transcripts. Then I generated conceptual commentaries based on these thematic or conceptual codes. Axial coding aims to “integrate codes around the axes of central categories” (Ezzy, 2002, p. 91). For instance, axial coding might concentrate on “the four dimensions of context, strategy, processes and consequences” (Ezzy, 2002, p. 91). To find the relations between the themes I categorised them along different axes.

The final step in coding process was selective coding when I identified the major categories (Ezzy, 2002), that would enabled me to identify where I might make an original contribution to knowledge through this study. To reduce the redundant data and focus on my research problem in a way that would make an original contribution to knowledge I undertook selective coding. During this step, the transcripts were printed with margins and the information relating to local community, EC educator’s roles and literacy learning environment in ECCs, literacy teaching/learning activities, and family engagement were highlighted and assigned a code. Here local community refers to the interview excerpts related to specific geographic site and local/global literacy resources in the community. The Chilean educators’ role and the literacy environment they created for children are represented in the interview excerpts and what the Australian interviewees saw as the change of educators’ professional knowledge, their role and how the literacy environment changed. The literacy teaching/learning interview excerpts are about what the Australian interviewees regard as changes in the literacy teaching/learning activities. Likewise family engagement in the interview excerpts refer to what the Australian interviewees claim demonstrate changes of the intellectual relationship between while educators and families. My next step in axial coding was to confirm the core concepts or themes and discuss relationships between each other. In this way, the coding procedure became more focused and this effective in terms of research agenda.
By coding I noted the useful and important information in the interviews and the conference presentation. I then used the following step to turn this selected data into evidence and explore the links between them, and their connections with the existing research literature. This stage focused conceptual analysis. The focus was on the concept or concepts which could be assigned to the evidence, and using the literature to add depth of understanding to these concepts. Excerpt unit analysis has been explained in the following terms:

It focuses attention through an analytic point \(^{18}\) illustrates and persuades through a descriptive excerpt introduced by relevant orienting information \(^{19}\); and explores and develops ideas through commentary grounded in the details of the excerpt \(^{20}\). We use the term excerpt-commentary unit to characterize this basic component of ethnographic writing (Emerson et al., 1995, p. 182original italicization).

In this study for each unit of analysis, there are four elements, namely the conceptual analytic point; the orienting information; the evidentiary excerpt; and the conceptual commentary. However, while this is the order in which these elements are read, the actual wiring process differs. First, the evidentiary excerpts were selected from the interviews because of the evidence –driven nature of this study. Then a key concept was identified for each selected excerpt because this is a theoretically informed study. And the conceptual commentary was written. Following this the introductory statement, the conceptual analytical point was written. This process provides an analytical point to each evidentiary excerpt.

Next, each of these units of analysis with their four key elements was related to one of the four contributory research questions. Each evidential conception unit with related to the first contributory research question about local community and their literacy resources were listed under that question. The same was done for the second question which is about the educators’ roles and literacy learning environment. The

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\(^{18}\) A statement sentence, which links the previous part and summarizes the themes in the excerpt (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995).

\(^{19}\) A short sentence that introduces the participants in the excerpt (Emerson et al., 1995).

\(^{20}\) Researchers explore and discuss the reasons of the description in the excerpt (Emerson et al., 1995).
third one is about the literacy teaching/learning activities. The fourth question concerning the intellectual relationship between families and EC educators also had its list of concepts and excerpts.

There were two ways I used to identify the concepts. I either selected the key words (concepts) from the excerpts or chose concepts from related research literature. Then the conceptual commentary was written after the excerpt, which also include a explanation of the key concept. The last step was to write a conceptual statement and orienting sentence to link the concept with the evidence.

4.6 RESEARCH AS REPORT WRITING

Report writing is crucial for any form of research and in this project it started with the writing of the research proposal, well before any data collection. While writing the final report, the thesis I turned my attention to considering its potential readers (Yin, 2009). Because a research report such as this thesis is an effective way to communicate with a large audience, I have worked to compose it was as to speak to prospective readers.

4.6.1 Explanation building

For (Yin, 2009, pp. 136, 141, 144, 149, 156) there are five techniques conducting a case study, namely “pattern matching”, “explanation building”, “time-series analysis”, “logic model”, “cross-case synthesis”. The approved I choose to use in writing this report (thesis) is explanation building, which is a like pattern matching, but is more complex. My aim has been to write a case study report by “building an explanation about the case” (Yin, 2009, p. 141), that is the FIH Program, after providing information and a rationale for the phenomenon under investigation that is

21 It is an approach to test whether all of the outcomes the study correspond with the predicted results. It compares “an empirically based pattern with a predicted one (or with several alternative predications)” (Yin, 2009, p. 136).

22 In time-series analysis, “there may only be a single dependent or independent variable” (Yin, 2009, p. 144).

23 It provides a set of events which are causal relationships (Yin, 2009).

24 This approach is designed to analyse multiple-cases study (Yin, 2009).
the sociocultural approach to literacy learning with global/local knowledge flows. Mostly, this thesis is written in a narrative style, and some of the explanations using concepts which are part of original contribution to knowledge. The explanatory structure of this thesis can be summarised in the following four steps, which are based on Yin’s (2009) suggestions:

1. State in writing the original theory or proposal about the FIH Program
2. Modify this statement or proposal as the study progresses based on a written account of the research literature and primary evidence
3. Check correspondence between the details written about the case with the modified statement as written
4. Repeat this research writing process progressively as necessary as the study proceed.

It was through this research-writing process that the explanation presented in this thesis was constructed, step by step. The preliminary literature review was written to help generate the research proposal and initial conception of the research questions. The research questions were refined over the course of this study as I read more literature, acquired more knowledge about the theory and collected evidence for the case. The three sources of data also assisted the refining of the research questions. In addition, when the categorisation of the artefacts changed, the vignettes and research questions were changed to more clearly correspond with what original contributions to knowledge were emerging from the primary evidence. As this study’s focus was refined as the research writing progressed, I periodically referred to the initial research statement about the case (FIH Program) to update the research literature and progress the data analysis so to avoid being dragged away from any one of them.

There are at least six structures for case study report writing. (Yin, 2009) characterises these as They are: “linear-analytic structures”, “comparative structures25”, “chronological structures26”, “theory-building structures27”, “suspense structures28” and “unsequenced structures29” (Yin, 2009, pp. 176, 177, 178). This

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25 Comparative structure repeats the same case several times from different perspectives.
26 In chronological structures the evidence of case study are illustrated in chronological sequence.
27 Theory-building structure is used in explanatory and exploratory case study, based on a theory-building logic.
28 Suspense structure starts with the research outcomes, and often used in explanatory case study.
29 Unsequenced structure is usually adopted by descriptive case study.
study employs a linear-analytic structure, which is a typical way to write a report for explanatory, descriptive and exploratory case studies. Thus, this thesis began with the research problem to be investigated (Chapter 1) and then an account of the related research literature which was revised as the study and research-writing progressed (Chapter 2). The theoretical framework has been introduced in Chapter 3. Then this thesis moved on to exploring the research methods used in the study (Chapter 4). The results of the analysis from the data collected (Chapter 5-8) are presented in the four evidentiary Chapters that follow. Then the key findings, implications and recommendations from this study are presented in Chapter 9.

4.6.2 Reflection as a Chinese researcher

Conducting a research study in a second language doubles the challenge for a beginning researcher. First challenge is that most data in this study are “second-hand” produced by Australian team members. As an international student study in Australia, the time issue and funding problem makes it difficult to visit the site and collect data directly from the Chilean team members. This asks the researcher to be more critical and creative when analysing the data. Second challenge is the cultural incompatibility (Shi & Cai, 2013), or some may call as “cultural clash”. This is like a double-edged sword. In one way, coming from different language, cultural, education and academic background may provide me with a fresh eye. In another way, the differences may have negative influence on my cooperation with my colleagues. I doubted the use of Chinese concepts in research study, but now this is appreciated as my theoretical tools. Sometimes I was also surprised to see the similarities of what I have observed in this study and what I have experienced in China. Now I turn to Chapter 5 to analyse the evidence of global/local literacy resources in a disadvantaged community in Antofagasta.
CHAPTER FIVE LOCAL/GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE FLOWS IN A DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITY

5.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores the local/global knowledge flows in disadvantaged communities\(^3\) (namely communa in Spanish), and is composed of four parts. It aims to explore in ways the funds of knowledge in the local community are a response to and/or an expression of globalization, and what this means for young children’s literacy development. To find out about local/global knowledge flows, it is necessary to know what the ‘local’ looks like, so the first part of this chapter introduces the local community of Antofagasta (Chile) which is a key site in this study. I present the overall features of this community. The second part of this chapter analyses evidence of the funds of knowledge (FoK) in this community, in order to ascertain the richness of resources available in the local community for children’s literacy learning. The analysis presented in these two sections reveals the influence of globalisation in local people's everyday lives. Therefore, part three directly analyses the evidence for influence of globalization on this local community especially technologies and popular culture given these local/global knowledge flows in people’s daily lives, then the fourth part of this chapter analyses evidence of the local/global knowledge flows in ECE in the FIH Program. There are five photonovels in this Chapter to present to relevant photographs of the key concepts in each section. There is a caption in the dialogue callout to describe the photographs.

5.1 SEEING THE LOCAL/GLOBAL IN A ‘POOR’ COMMUNITY

This section introduces the local community. It has two sections. One is a vignette generated from selected artefacts (photographs) and references (Haverstock, 1994; Lagos & Blanco, 2010) about the landscape, economy, social and cultural features of the community. It provides a picture of the local community as evident in these artefacts. The FIH Projects artefacts captured the literacy resources and landscape

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\(^3\) The five pilot ECCs in FIH Program are located in the socioeconomically disadvantaged communities in Antofagasta. These ECCs are free and build for children in lower income families.
feature in the disadvantaged community in Antofagasta, where the five Chilean early childhood centres are located is in. The second section illustrates the local community from the Australian FIH Program team members’ perspectives and conceptions. Together these sections portray the community, showing the influence of globalization in this local community.

5.1.1 Vignette—the local community

The early childhood educators of University of Western Sydney (Sydney, Australia) departed from the Sydney airport to Antofagasta, Chile to conduct the FIH Program. Antofagasta is the largest city in northern Chile. It is a port city, which is known as “La Perla del Norte” (The Pearl of the North), because of its history and economic contributions to the country. It is the capital of the Antofagasta Province. A recent population estimate by the National Institute of Statistics of Chile (Estadisticas, 2012) said that in 2012 the estimated population in the city is 588,130.

Antofagasta's economic development mainly depends on the mining or copper copper mining and non-metallic minerals such as nitrate and iodine. Therefore, the port activity is also an important industry in the city. As a coastal city, shipping and trading are essential to its economic development. It is the major mining area of the country. The mining industry dominates the development of the city (Lagos & Blanco, 2010). Because of the mining industry Antofagasta is regarded as one of the most expensive city in which to live in Chile (Lagos & Blanco, 2010). The average residents have a higher income and purchasing power than the national average. This may explain why there are many cars in the city. The population of the city changes depend on the mining industry as some temporary residents come from other parts of the country to find a job in Antofagasta.

The urban area of Antofagasta is located on the coastal plain on the Atacama Desert. The city has little vegetation because it is in the edge of Desert, which is one of driest places on earth (Haverstock, 1994). Therefore, the city has very low rainfall. However, it has been affected by mud flows and landslides because of the occasional heavy rainfall and the geomorphologic situation of the city. Antofagasta is built on hard rocky ground, but over the rock is dense soil, sand and broken stones. Hence
there is more vegetation near the coastline, but in and around the early childhood centres near the rocky mountains, the ground is very dry and is covered by loss soil and grit. Without a doubt the mountain area looks dusty and barren, vegetation is totally absent. It is reported that the Antofagasta region has the concerns of the “lack of plazas and green areas (73.8%), drug and alcohol consumption in the streets (59.4%) and cleanliness of the cities (57.6%)” (Lagos & Blanco, 2010, p. 270). The cleanliness problem and the lack of green areas are captured by the photographs produced by FIH team. The houses surrounding the early childhood centres are built with thin iron or wooden boards and are poorly constructed. Rubbish and stones litter the roadside near the houses. These contrast with the colourful fancy buildings and paintings in the centres. While the bright coloured buildings and fences of the early childhood centres are decorated with the colourful images from fairy tales and animals, the poor houses are plain, dusty and broken. The early childhood centres are highly-secured with iron fences with sharp arrows on the top of the fences to protect against unwanted intrudes.

Looking over the city from the early childhood centres, you have a birds-eye view of Antofagasta, the coastline and the shipping. There is an elephant format rock called La Portada, which is a famous sightseeing landmark in Antofagasta. The coastal edge of Antofagasta is rocky and steep, so there are very few natural beaches, and those that can be seen are artificial. When looking from the coast to the mountains, you notice that all the tall buildings are near the ocean. The buildings and living spaces are better near the seaside; while those near the mountains the neighbourhoods look poor. In addition, there is more vegetation near the seaside than towards the barren brown mountain.

The last decade has seen a steady growth in construction, retail, hotel accommodations, and population in Antofagasta. Many retail chains, supermarkets as well as various high-quality hotel chains have been established in the city, which promote business tourism to attract more business partners in mining and port activities. Business mainly occurs in the centre of Antofagasta, where several national retail chains operate. There are also some national supermarket chains like “Lider” and “Jumbo”. The influence of globalisation can be seen in the commercials for international brands. On billboards advertising international brands can be seen
everywhere. Also in Antofagasta the lottery business is developed, with many advertising billboards on the streets. The city has a Casino. In addition to these industries, the potential of public services for literacy is also notable in the community. The different road signs, sightseeing images, buses and public telephones are available in the community for children’s literacy learning. Notices indicate that in Antofagasta, the most popular sport is soccer. It is easy to find children playing soccer and wearing soccer uniforms in primary schools near the early childhood centres.

Globalisation is not only occurring in business but also in democracy. There are election posters and wall paintings propagandizing peace and liberation on the street. In Antofagasta in the municipal elections of 2008, the first woman mayor of the city was elected—Dra. Marcela Hernando. Globalisation has also introduced Japanese popular culture to the city with young children playing card game with a famous Japanese animation—Naruto at home.

Despite the mining industry’s role in Antofagasta there are poor communities lying between the desert and the ocean-side suburbs. While there are people in the city who have higher than average income there are also notable income gaps. Although the data I collected shows that FIH program had no artefacts showing the mining industry which is undertaken hundreds of kilometres inland, there were a few of the shipping. The shops, restaurants and various commercials signs in the community are all literacy resources for the education of the local young children. The data analysed in next sections include interview excerpts that show the influence of the physical landscape, economic situation, and social culture on local young children’s lives.

5.1.2 Locality—the local community shapes who you are

To use the knowledge of the local community we first need to know the local community. The previous part provided a picture of Antofagasta (Chile) where the five early childhood centres associated with the FIH Program. You may have noticed some unexpected features of the local community such as lottery business in the forgoing vignette. This part analyses evidence from the Australian FIH Program
team members’ experience and knowledge to explore two aspects of this community namely, *industry and shopping*.

### 5.1.2.1 Industry in the community

The industry of a community influences the economic situation, their employment rate, incomes, consumption, life styles and positions in the local/global environment. It decreases the unemployment rate of the Antofagasta region since the mining boom which contributes “56.3% of the regional GDP in 2006” (Lagos & Blanco, 2010, p. 266). Industry reflects and gives expression to people’s values, beliefs and way of living. In the photo elicitation, the Australian FIH Program team members demonstrate their knowledge about the local community gained through their visits to Antofagasta. Because different team members had different periods of involvement in the FIH Program, they had different level of knowledge about the community.

One of them was not familiar with the lottery business before her visit: “I didn't know there was lottery business there” (AECE 2, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p. 24). Lottery is an important industry in this community. It might be assumed that gambling is a business that exists in a developed community, and not be expected to seen in Antofagasta’s poor communities. However, the photographs with advertising posters reveal that the lottery business had appearance in the community. The ignorance of this local business may because this Australian team member did not know the community very well and were not familiar with the local industry. Knowing more about this local industry and the income differences of those in the community who used it might help to understand the local people’s values, beliefs and way of thinking.

In this disadvantaged community although the average income and purchasing power is high, there is large difference between the people with high income and people who are underpaid. The Australian team members of the FIH Program were aware of situation in the local community:
… the residents have higher income, purchase power certainly on average. This was one thing struck me was the spread. (AECE 2, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p. 24)

There are wide gaps between people who are pretty well off and people who are pretty badly off – who are very poor people. Antofagasta is a city of extremes, because the cost of living is very high. The city services the mining industry [which] is a very lucrative activity. People are paid highly in the mining industry on the whole, so rents are high; the cost of food is high. … some people are working in lowly positions and not getting paid very much, that makes it very difficult for them. There is whole lot of people who can’t get suitable work for a range of reasons. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 30-31)

Both of these two team members noticed the differences in income and consumption. While a study argues that the income distribution of the Antofagasta region is “more equal than that of every other region of the country” (Lagos & Blanco, 2010, p. 269). These different understandings need further investigation on their standards of equal distribution of income, and the particular cities or communities of Antofagasta region they focus on. The reasons for these income differences need a deep knowledge of the local community. These differences may be caused by the mining industry. Because the local industry is closely related to people’s life, it increased the cost of living, and people who are underpaid forced into difficult situation.

The mining industry not only influences local people’s way of living in some respects, but also influences their ideas and thinking. An Australian FIH Program team member explained the influence of the mining industry on the children’s values and choices:

… mining dominates the … city. …if you think about the mining accident that happened and how that influenced what happens for the family, what the children want to talk about, what was on the radio, what’s in the papers, what the families talk about. It’s around the safety of the family and they know someone. … Or they don’t want that type of job for their children…. But at the same time, they might love mining. That’s what my father and my father’s father have done. That’s a good profession and a proud profession contributing to the resources of the country, “I’m proud to be a miner”. … we can’t know what’s important to these family and we can’t make judgements about what’s important. (AECE 2, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p. 27-28)
To know the local community and through the work – their business and industries may be a first step to understanding local people’s values, beliefs and ways of thinking. As the major industry in the community, mining has significant impact on the local people’s lives and their children’s life and education. Mining influences but does not decisively determine people’s way of thinking, their values, beliefs and choices. People migrating to here from other communities may value different things, and may find it is difficult to understand the choices of local people. Therefore, people from more developed communities – in Chile and Australia may not know or understand the local people’ thinking and what they value. Hence, it is necessary for foreigners, such as the FIH Program team to get to know the local people’s lives, understandings and values in order to appreciate their ideas and perspectives on their children’s education.

5.1.2.2 Shopping and daily life

The availabilities of work influence and shape local people’s lives and ideas. The physical environment and their everyday life activities such as shopping do likewise. An Australian FIH Program team member pointed to the literacy learning resources for the young children in the local community:

It’s a very different physical landscape, and socially it’s very different too. … This photo is a picture of the local community. This is the big brown hills behind the community which I guess are part of people’s identity. The railway line is where the copper comes in on the trains. The rail-way line and the shopping centre are resources for learning. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood)

The local community provides different literacy learning resources for young children. To understand the purpose of rail line, and participate in social activities in the shopping centre, recognise labels and signs are all considered as literacy practices for young children, who live in the community. The local people’s everyday social practices as workers in the mining industry and their everyday activities like shopping provide families and educators literacy resources for young children’s literacy education. Children have opportunities to learn the signs of the train station; images and texts in shopping centre. These are educationally helpful sociocultural literacy practices. Families and educators who use the richness of these literacy
resources engage these in children’s literacy learning to develop a diversity literacy skills and knowledge.

The local community has a variety of shopping places that provide literacy resources for young children’s literacy learning. An Australian FIH Program team member explained her experience of two different shopping styles in the local community:

We went to a really large, very flash supermarket. A very American shopping place. Then we went with someone to a market, the street market. (AECE 2, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p. 24)

The North American style supermarkets are a result of the globalisation of consumer culture. A key to their profit making is that they minimise labour cost by self-service the customers, who do much of the work. The outdoor market is a traditional way of shopping in the local community, being a place where customers and sales people engage in interaction with each other. Both of these markets are part of people’s everyday lives, and provide literacy learning opportunities for young children. The globalisation of consumer culture and supermarket corporations influences the local people’s shopping habits. The environment and social history of the local community are important factors in forming people’s ideas and values. The FIH Program worked with Chilean EC educators to have families in the community use these as literacy resources to support the young children’s literacy learning.

5.1.3 Photonovel—Community

Photonovel is similar to the idea of strip cartoon which has pictures/photographs in different boxes and has dialogue in speaking bubble or balloons (Dorance, 2008). In this chapter the dialogue will be replaced by the description of the photographs (see Figure 5.1). It is used to present the photographic evidence in this Chapter.

These geographic features and the local/global businesses and industry in the community have a significant impact on local people’s values, beliefs and life styles. Mining as a major industry in Antofagasta strongly relates to local people’s social and cultural activities, while at the same time it is experiencing the influence of globalisation. Almas and Lawrence (2003, p. 5) argue that in this era of capitalist
globalisation, “Communities are assigned particular roles in the global economy … local regions having to perform particular tasks as part of the overall global plan.” However the uneven development in the local/global economy makes the rich richer and poor poorer. If each community now has to struggle to secure a particular role in the local/global economy, then a community such as Antofagasta has to maintain its industries so people can keep their current position. In this situation, the local community has to keep its mining industry and be an energy supplier year after year. Most people have a limited choice of jobs, they either work as miners or engineers or any work that relates to mining generation by generation. When the local community shifts its focus to industries other than mining, the local people’s jobs and social activities would change as well.

Another mining town in Chile is Calama which is known as ‘Chile’s wallet’, but it has “the highest rates of HIV, alcoholism, suicide, domestic abuse and homelessness in the country” (Duggan, 2013, n.p.). It provides huge economic profits to the government, but the local people’s quality of life is very low. The government is funding interventions to address these issues. The region deputy said they want “a fair distribution of mining resources”, and they want Calama to “look away from

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Figure 5.1: Photonovel 1 Community
copper mining to diversify its economy” (Duggan, 2013, n.p.). The influences of globalisation – Chile’s need for copper and multinational mining corporations effort to meet demand bring different experiences to Calama, reshaping local people’s views and practices. This is because globalization involves the “expansion of corporations across national borders and the development of a group of cross-border economic relationship.” (Kincheloe, 2011, p. 11). BHP Billiton and the University of Western Sydney (UWS) are among the corporations that cross national borders to develop their role in the local/global economy. However, the local communities are not just a cog in local/global economy. The following section uses the concept of ‘funds of knowledge’ to analyse evidence of the local/global literacy resources in this disadvantaged community.

5.2 LOCAL/GLOBAL FUNDS OF KNOWLEDGE

The previous section explained the importance of local community in forming local people’s ideas, and indicated some of the impacts brought by globalization. This section will analyse children’s funds of knowledge in the local community and explore the influence of globalization. Then section 5.2.2 compares the notion funds of knowledge and language as local practices, because both emphasise the local. Hence how the local as a response to an expression of globalization is shown to be an important consideration.

5.2.1 Funds of knowledge in a disadvantaged community

The concept of ‘funds of knowledge’ (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992) emphasises the richness of literacy resources in the local communities and families, especially the poor communities and families. This concept was developed to change educators’ often negative attitudes to the literacy resources in poor communities and families. Through the lens provided by this concept people inside and outside the local community notice and acknowledge the knowledge present in the local community and families. For EC educators, this concept is expected to affect pedagogical changes in ECCs by engaging them with the literacy resources of the community and families. In other words, the concept of FoK stimulates a reconsideration of the intellectual relationship between the EC educators and families
in children’s education. One of the Australian FIH Program team members suggested that a first step toward acknowledging the funds of knowledge in a ‘poor’ community is to know the community and families. The team indicated the idea of ‘funds of knowledge’ as children’s daily literacy experiences:

Funds of knowledge … is particularly used for families who are ‘at risk’ or vulnerable – poor who has not much to offer to their children’s educational lifes. … [FoK] draws on the idea that if you get to know the families you will find out the families have something to offer, something that they can do, something that they know about, and something that they value that you can use as a resource to make children’s learning more meaningful in the classroom. (AECE 4, 2012, 14th Sep., Kingswood)

The concept of FoK focuses on the intellectual resources in the community and families rather than their economic status. Other Australian team members provide more examples and explanations for this concept:

Because we are looking at ‘funds of knowledge’ we see that there are lots of literacy activities in the families and communities. These are the sorts of literacy activities children are experiencing. So they are the funds of knowledge. Television, popular culture, McDonald’s, the corner store – all of these texts make up their funds of knowledge. (AECE 1, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p.6)

… I picked those because they are part of children’s everyday experiences. … So children might have experiences with lotto, newspapers. What I was also looking for were posters of local elections. (AECE 1, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p.12)

Here FoK tends to related to the consumer culture of local people which involves different literacy practices. Another Australian team member claimed that this concept acknowledges the availability of the literacy resources in the children’s families and community:

The concept of ‘funds of knowledge’ draws on the work of Moll and Gonzalez. It is an easy idea to understand. It means that in families and communities there are many forms of knowledge, skills and capabilities that can provide resources for learning. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 37-38)
The literacy resources embedded in the local community and families, language it seems by consumer businesses are the potential funds of knowledge for the education of young children. Young children’s literacy learning occurs during their everyday social activities especially when they watch television, know about and plays with popular culture commodities, recognise the advertising signs, images, texts and print at the corner store, and observe other people engaging in these literacy activities. These FoK are the “historically developed and accumulated strategies (skills, abilities, ideas, practices) or bodies of knowledge that are essentials to a household’s functioning and well-being” (Gonzalez et al., 1995, pp. 446-447). It is the knowledge accumulated and embedded in the community that reveals the local people’s identities as consumers. The television programs, elements of popular culture and items produced by multinational corporations such as McDonald’s and Coca-Cola as an example of FoK in the FIH Program. The global consumer cultural (Nijssen & Douglas, 2011) has an impact on the local people’s preference and choices of goods and their lifestyles. This also revealed the influence of globalization on local people’s life style (see more in section 5.3). Because these have become part of local people’s everyday life, which are reported as Fok for children’s literacy learning by the FIH Program.

With the technology development globalization ‘compresses’ the time and space through the flows of information, ideas, labour and money, and makes the distant actions greater influence on local community. It extends and accelerates the interactions between local and global. It is

   a process through which time and space are ‘compressed’, as new technologies, information flows, trade, and power relations allow distant actions to have increased significance at the local level. … a widening, deepening and speeding up – of global and regional interactions.” (Almas & Lawrence, 2003, p. 3)

Almas (2003) argues that a developed community productively and more quickly adapts to globalization than does a disadvantaged community, because they have the rich financial and physical resources to facilitate them. This suggests that for disadvantaged communities it is more challenging to adapt to globalization, because of their limited physical and financial resources. The use of the concept ‘adapt to’ rather ‘shape’ is significant here because:
… it is possible for communities and regions to simply adapt to outside forces, rather than to shape those forces … the type of political culture and the level of participation strongly influence the regional adaptation and outcomes of pressure from market forces and globalization. … communities with a high level of public participation and a vigorous civic society fare better than those communities that are not as well endowed with social capital. (Almas, 2003, p. 182)

By using the term ‘adapt’ it means that the focus is on making an advantage of existing local/global FoK to shape one’s responses to outside global forces. This may lead developed communities to use globalisation for the process of homogenization, such that the Australian FIH Program as an adaptation to outside forces might have done in Antofagasta (Chile). Alternatively globalization need not be about “the destruction of the locality in favour of great homogeneity” (Voisey & O'Riodram, 2001, p. 41). The FIH Program’s use of the concept of FoK attempted to highlight the local, but the evidence showed the need to consider the global force in the local community. So FoK become an adaptation to global forces (such as popular culture, technology and multinational corporations in the local community). This process is called localization, which is part of the wider process of globalization. Local people “interpret and rework global cultural practices and meanings to fit their local context” (Nijssen & Douglas, 2011, p. 115). Voisey and O'Riodram (2001, p. 41) define localization as:

an adaptation to these processes, a reaffirmation of what is local in the face of other localities. Therefore, it is not a struggle to counter globalization, but the restatement of identity within multiple identities.

The local is inescapable part of global. It forms, transforms and sometimes goes against global trends through producing and disseminating its own. Thus, this idea of FoK contributes to the process of globalisation. The FIH team encourage the Chilean EC educators to engage the FoK in young children’s families and community in their learning. The FoK in young children’s families and community is influenced by both local and global forces. Therefore this process of engagement children’s FoK in the FIH Program becomes a process of globalisation and localisation. Almas and Lawrence (2003, p. 10) explain localisation and globalisation as having a dialectical relationship:
Localities are forces to interact with wider forces to maintain their economic future. … the local is not the ‘other’ of the global. The local – in a dialectical manner – absorbs, shapes, alerts and opposes wider tendencies while creating and promulgating its own … in turn, [the local] contributes to the eventual shape of macro of global forms.

In 1995, Roberston (cited in Almas & Lawrence, 2003, p. 10) used the term glocalization to “remind us that global forces do not override locality and that homogenization and heterogenization are both crucial features of modern life”. This novel word captures the importance of both local and global forces.

The knowledge of poor communities and families are often undervalued or overlooked. The concept of FoK is meant to affirm the richness of literacy resources produced by poor communities and families. An Australian FIH Program team member argued that this concept was introduced to the EC educators in Antofagasta to change their attitude to the local community and children’s families:

The idea of funds of knowledge … has been a very rich resource for motivating [the Chilean] educators in the [FIH] Program to begin to think about their children, families and communities [in Antofagasta] differently. … The way families are doing things, the knowledge they have maybe marginalised. If they are from poor communities their knowledge is often discounted or not recognised. The families see the knowledge they don’t have rather than the knowledge they do have. What the concept of ‘funds of knowledge’ does is to help [the Chilean] educators to think about knowledge in a different way, and think about the capabilities and resources in [Antofagasta] communities that can be used as resources for children’s learning. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 37-38)

The concept of funds of knowledge is meant to acknowledge diverse literacy resources and knowledge produced in disadvantaged communities and families that are of potential educational value. Accordingly, the idea there being lack of literacy resources in disadvantaged communities is meant to be challenged. The Chilean EC educators in this FIH Program were meant to be inspired by this concept to rethink the contribution of local community and children’s families in their children’s literacy development. By the evidence above suggested that they were encouraged to bring knowledge about consumerism from the community and families into children’s literacy learning.
An Australian FIH Program team argued that these FoK available to the local community and families are more interesting to children because they are relevant to their daily lives, engaging this kind of FoK into children’s literacy learning is seen as a necessary:

So you can draw on what it is they know about and care about, and build that into a learning program in the classroom, rather than the learning in the classroom in the program be something remote, something that just comes out of the curriculum or the book that doesn't really have very much to do with children’s real life and their interest. (AECE 4, 2012, 14th Sep., Kingswood)

Funds of knowledge approach also draws on the idea that in the community and the neighbourhood, children learn from the people that they respect and people who love them by asking questions about what they interested in, watching people around them doing things … so the adult then giving a genuine response helps them to learn about things that they are interested in, rather than in the classroom where the question is more of a test. (AECE 4, 2012, 14th Sep., Kingswood)

However, the concept of FoK is meant to legitimate the bringing of knowledge and materials that the children are familiar in their home and community into their school-based learning. For some EC educators it would seem that this is preferable to books which are not closely relate to children’s everyday experiences. For children from disadvantaged communities in Antofagasta, their everyday experience may not be included in these books:

Many children enter early childhood settings to be confronted by texts which … are constructed largely by an educational elite, and resonate with cultural capital for middle class children … Whilst these texts are familiar to those immersed in the dominant discourse, … they reveal a world unfamiliar to many, the cultural practices and life experiences are not reflected either within the text or illustrations. (Ashton, 2005, p. 34)

Therefore, the concept of FoK is meant to provide teachers a more natural and interesting way to motivate and engage children in disadvantaged communities. Children learn their literacy knowledge through their observation and interactions with others in their community, so they learn what they are interested in their everyday life. Thus young children in disadvantaged community like Calama have more opportunities to know about violence, drugs and self-harm from the dark FoK (Zipin, 2009) in their community. The highly secured ECCs in the community in
Antofagasta reveals the safety concern in their community as well. Therefore it is necessary for EC educators and families to consider the impact of these dark FoK in young children’s education.

FoK is understood to include more than just cultural knowledge. A family or community cultural heritage is part of children’s FoK, where it is part of their everyday life practices. As a result of some FIH Program participants’ understood of this concept mainly in cultural terms:

… the people in the FIH Program are beginning to learn about and to work with ‘funds of knowledge’. It is not an easy thing to do in a deeper meaningful way. … they tend to use the idea for things like people’s family background and multicultural backgrounds … if the person comes from Mexico originally than they would know about cooking and making Mexican foods. They will come in explain what they will know, cook Mexican food with children, and share with them what they know about Mexican food. They tend to be draw on mainly the national, heritages of people as a funds of knowledge. They don't know yet to draw on things that are just part of everyday life. … They are focusing more on the culture, … cultural heritage at the moment. (AECE 4, 2012, 14th Sep., Kingswood)

Cultural identity and knowledge is included in funds of knowledge, but FoK is more than that. It is the “historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being” (Moll & Gonzalez, 1994, p. 443). The participants need deeper understanding of this concept. Because the interviewee’s visit is in 2011, the Program participants’ understanding of this concept may develop as they progress. The participants’ understanding of cultural heritage as FoK shows their awareness of individual’s cultural background in constructing his/her knowledge.

Although FoK is beyond cultural heritage and food/cooking culture, cooking activities are used in early literacy program in the USA to connect the families and schools and to improve children’s different literacy knowledge learning (Crawford & Zygouris-Coe, 2006).

Food has always been a means of bringing people from different backgrounds together. Many educators have developed programs that involve food to bridge parents, communities, and schools, and in turn help
develop better cultural understanding … cooking activities provide the opportunity for sharing cultural specific recipes, practicing reading skills, using oral language, and the practical exploration of math and science concepts such as measurement, temperature, and changes of state. (Crawford & Zygouris-Coe, 2006, p. 266).

The literacy resources and knowledge in disadvantaged communities or families may be marginalised in curriculum. A notion of FoK recognizes the rich literacy resources in disadvantaged communities and families. Reference to the influence of globalisation through corporate production of literacy resources in local community and families would seem to be useful for children to develop their critical thinking. The multinational corporations, popular culture and technologies are part of local people’s life. They may be used to facilitate local people’s curiosity and desire to know about an ever widening community of which they are a part and to understand other knowledge that makes this a local/global community. In other words it may threaten the local community as boundaryless.

5.2.2 Language as local practice VS funds of knowledge

There are diverse forms of texts – print and visual materials as well as various sociocultural practices in the Antofagasta region, which provide important funds of knowledge for children’s literacy learning. These rich literacy resources and sociocultural literacy practices need families’ participation in the ECCs to make them into literacy and language learning activities. An Australian FIH Program team member also pointed this out:

… children are exposed to different sorts of texts, visual texts, print texts ... They see lots of texts in their environment. Some families will engage in conversations with their children about what that text says, or what the text means some more explicitly than other families. Children are talked to as they are ‘dragged around’ by their parents to the shops, the post office, the bank, restaurant, friends’ house, they driving or catching a bus. If kids participate in these experiences with their families then they are all literacy experiences. (AECE 1, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p.5)

Using children’s everyday sociocultural literacy practices as the FoK for their literacy learning relates to Pennycook’s (2010) concept of ‘language as local practice’. The latter concept focuses on the language used in people’s everyday
social activities in their local community. People make and remake the language through these repeated practices:

What we do with language within different institutions – churches, schools, hospitals – for example, depends on our reading of these physical, institutional, social and cultural spaces. We may kneel and pray, stand and sing, direct classroom activity, write on the margins of a textbook, translate between patients and doctor, ask when a cut hand might get seen to, or spray-paint the back wall; and as we do so, we remake the language, and the space in which this happens. (Pennycook, 2010, p. 2)

The concept of language as local practice regards language as a social activity. Taking language to be a local practice, it is defined as “a central organizing activity of social life that is acted out in specific places, … is part of a multifaceted interplay between humans and the world ” (Pennycook, 2010, p. 2). Local people enact their daily life through making and remaking the meaning of their language. From a linguistic perspective the concept of funds of knowledge has an education purpose, while language as a local practice can mobilise everyday social activities to engage children’s literacy learning. While they both focus on locality, it is important to remember that globalization happens everywhere, and not ‘out there’. McDonald’s in Antofagasta, shops sell Coca Cola and Pepsi and English speaking Australian educators funded by a multinational corporation disseminates other countries’ ideas. Children wear school bags and clothes with Disney cartoon images and they play Japan cartoon card games at home. In Antofagasta people practice their language in terms of these international industries and popular culture commodities. As Pennycook (2010, p.128) argues “everything happens locally. However global a practice may be, it still locally.” The local community absorbs these global forces; it may transform them or be transformed by them. Therefore it is necessary to study how global knowledge flows into local people’s everyday life.

Because globalisation is experienced locally all over the world, the ideas, images, and finance that are manifestations become part of local people’s everyday lives and their funds of knowledge. It is necessary to analyse the influence of globalization on the local community and children’s literacy learning in Antofagasta. The following section analyses evidence about the influence of globalization on the local
community and families in Antofagasta, focusing specially on the place of technology and popular culture in their everyday lives.

5.2.3 Photonovel—funds of knowledge

Figure 5.2 shows different literacy resources in the local community which could be used to enrich children’s funds of knowledge. They are part of the children’s daily life. No. 1 and 3 reflect the influence of globalization of corporate consumer “goods” and graffiti, a counterculture commodity. Pennycook (2010) suggests that local people’s responses to, and experiences of globalisation are important. In one way, local people transform global knowledge to fit into their local community. However in another way, it is important that ECE contribute to making local knowledge and activities global, globalising local knowledge is especially important for children from a poor community in Antofagasta whose knowledge has been ignored or undervalued. The global and local work as dialeical forces: “The global now helps to shape our every-day worlds and by our every-day acts we help to shape the global” (Singh et al., 2005, p. 4). Through Figure 5.2 the influence of globalisation on the life of people in Antofagasta is evident (such as multinational corporation products), it is part of their life and shapes their ways of living. On the other hand, the everyday activities, sees these local practices combined with modified global forms to generate potentially new global activities. Therefore it is not only worthwhile to engage global knowledge in Antofagasta children’s literacy learning, but also to have them produce the new global knowledge through their practices in their local community.
5.3 THE LOCAL INFLUENCE OF GLOBALIZATION

The previous section explored different literacy resources in the local community, evidence of and analysed what challenges children’s funds of knowledge may face due to the influence of globalization. Technology is important for globalisation, because it is one of driving forces of globalisation. Globalisation through the FIH Program has been driven by technology advances in air travel, the growth of the informational tools and international cooperation between Australia, Chile and China (Voisey & O'Riodram, 2001). Popular culture is also important in children’s everyday lives. Therefore this section also analyses evidence of popular culture in children’s daily life and its relationship with children’s literacy learning in Antofagasta.
5.3.1 Globalisation and technologies

A community shapes but does not decisively determine people’s educational values and beliefs, in part because people from different communities can share their different values and beliefs about education, teaching and learning. This intellectual encounter may cause changes in the assumptions of the developed community and the disadvantaged community. The five ECCs located in disadvantaged communities in Antofagasta are the sites where the FIH Program team from Australia engaged in just such an intellectual encounter. If seen in terms of what they lack – resources, information and technology, EC educators in Antofagasta disadvantaged communities might have been asked to learn from the more developed educators of Australian. However, the Australian FIH Program team members reflected on their assumptions before they went to this vulnerable community in Antofagasta (Chile). One of the team members revised her expectations about this socially and economically disadvantaged community:

I was quite surprised about the extent of technologies that people had in this very poor community. They had mobile phones, and many homes had televisions. Even in the market there were little televisions. … that was interesting because I made the assumption that they won’t afford things like this: “They are poor therefore they wouldn’t afford them.” Some of the houses have nothing but a few bits tin. They don’t have electricity but they sort of somehow pull it down from somewhere. They all had TVs. … The kids say they like the Disney channel. (AECE 1, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown)

If it is assumed that disadvantaged communities do not know about or have technologies in their everyday life, what mistaken assumptions might educators make about their knowledge? However, the emphasise in conducting the FIH Program team members learnt that the people in the community had access to these technologies, it is not clear about that they catabolised how they might use the knowledge families and children accessed via these technologies. This is why Moll and Gonzalez (1994) emphasises conducting ethnographies of local people’s knowledge so initiatives like the FIH Program could start with their knowledge.

Coming from a developed country did not know about local Antofagasta community very well, the Australian FIH Program team member consider the following example of them dealing with their possible negative assumptions:
… I can go with my own bias, and say “Mining is a terrible thing”, “People do not might have car” and a lot of other things. [but] We don’t want to be biased. (AECE 2, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p. 27-28)

Without visiting the local community in Antofagasta, team members from Australia, may not know or understand the local knowledge, values and beliefs.

On the one hand, globalisation of media provides more opportunities for children in Antofagasta to access to different knowledge and information. However, on the other hand, the globalisation of education presents challenges to educators and the theories they are training. An Australian FIH Program team member observed the influence of globalisation:

Globalisation has had a significant impact on the FIH Program. When we defined the sociocultural approach we were only talking about local communities in a contained way. But we know now that through globalised digital technologies children have access to knowledge about other communities and other ways of living in the world. That poses some interesting challenges for educators to connect to the local and global for children. It’s not so easy now to make assumptions about what children do or don’t know. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, pp. 29-30)

Sociocultural literacy practices had to be reconsidered given that the local community is not isolated and self-contained, but part of global media flows. This brings the globalisation of popular culture and the new technology. It is not clear that how these constituted literacy resources are used for the young children’s education even though they were part of their everyday practices. This raised new challenges for the FIH educators to link this and balance global/local knowledge in the education of young children in the Antofagasta ECCs. What local/global knowledge would they engage in children’s literacy learning and how?
5.3.2 Globalisation and popular culture

As one of the driving forces of globalization, technology (Almas, 2003; Voisey & O'Riodram, 2001) is one reason why young children in Antofagasta know global popular culture icons. They know about North American popular culture (e.g. Barbie, Disney) as well as some Asian popular culture (e.g. Naruto). An Australian FIH Program team member stated that young children are interested in popular culture from different regions:

That’s what happens with globalization. … that’s why I’m interested in popular culture because the globalisation of technologies brings popular culture from everywhere, China, Japan, North America. That’s all there. Kids are very interested in it and are very engaged with it. (AECE 1, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p.13)

The FIH Program artefacts show the local children of Antofagasta playing cards displaying Japanese cartoons. These poor children know about and can access popular culture from different areas; they are in certain ways globally connected. This is what young children around the world are interested in. Whether they are in Australia or Chile actively engage with these global cultural icons (Marsh, 2003). Global popular culture is “part of the everyday life experience of most children and adults, embedded in film and news media, cartoons and television programs, in comics, music and advertising” (Ashton, 2005, p. 34). Children in Antofagasta know them from Television programs, books, toys, magazines and video games. Because of the globalisation of popular culture, the children in Antofagasta disadvantaged communities now have access to knowledge and information that their families did not have a generation ago. This means that sociocultural theory (Edwards, 2006) can no longer only focus on the local community, as children’s access to information is broad and wide, crossing the whole country to the globe.

This popular culture can be used to increase children’s learning interest and link their everyday lives and families together into a global/local context (Ashton, 2005). Two of the Australian FIH Program team members considered the impact of popular culture on children’s learning:
Here is a perfect example of popular culture in children’s bags, the words the images. … Using popular culture to connect children’s interests and literacy, to connect to their real life, their home, their families … they have their own literacy materials which already have meanings for them. (AECE 4, 2012, 14th Sep, Kingswood)

… we need to look at is the influence of popular culture on children’s life, identities and values. (AECE 1, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown)

Popular culture is used in young children’s literacy learning to capture their interest using it to catch young children’s interest, connects literacy learning, daily lives and families together (Ashton, 2005). Popular culture is not only an interesting stimulus for children’s literacy learning; it can be used to help the children to realise their connections in the community, families and early childhood centres. Children may consider these differently when they learn knowledge from outside their local community. International corporations like McDonald’s, Coca Cola and Pepsi may influence young children’s dietary habits and life style (Kincheloe, 2011). North American cartoon characters such as Disney fairytales and super heroes (Superman, Batman and Wonder Women) and Japanese cartoons (Naruto, Bleach and One piece) may impact on young children’s values (Ashton, 2005; Marsh, 1999).

5.3.3 Photonovel—Technology and popular culture in the Antofagasta community

Because of globalisation, the local communities in Antofagasta use a range of technological products and popular culture icons (see Figure 5.3 and 5.4). This is a response to and an expression of globalization processes involving flows of finance, people, information, values and ideas between different nations through different media. Both the technology and the popular culture start as business products, and then they take a social life that contributes to politics interdependence and even homogenisation.

Globalization through popular interpretations (journalistic and media representations) is a process of primarily economic, but also social and political, change that encompasses the planet, resulting in greater homogeneity, hybridization and interdependence … money, people, images, values and ideas [now find] smoother and swifter flows across national boundaries. (Voisey & O'Riodram, 2001, p. 26)
The flows across these five different fields involve “national/global flows of technology, media, people, finance and knowledge.” Singh (2005, p. 127). These five aspects sometimes crossover as part of the process of globalisation. Highly skilled workers develop the latest technology which then provides the tools for the media to spread certain ideas and values. At the same time, this all needs financial support and mediation via different languages to keep this knowledge flowing.

Figure 5.3: Photonovel 3: Technology in local communities in Antofagasta

The media connect the children of Antofagasta to this global consumer culture via the content as well as the languages. The concern is that the prevailing of popular culture which is produced by developed countries such as Japan and the USA, and this means globalisation is processing more westernized homogeneity:

… popular culture, which is consumed throughout the world, is produced by people in those nations most closely associated with globalization – with advertising and movies clearly depicting the lifestyles and attitudes of the west. (Almas & Lawrence, 2003, p. 9)
The values and ideas conveyed by popular culture images impact young children’s identity. For example, the pink dresses in the Barbie clothes shop give children the impression that pink is for girls and girls should wear dress rather than blue pants (Ashton, 2005) (See Figure 5.4). Therefore to use the term ‘glocalization’ (Almas & Lawrence, 2003) reminds educators and families to be critical when engaging popular culture in children’s literacy learning, and encourage them to notice the importance of their local knowledge.

This photonovel presents popular culture icons that are part of children’s everyday sociocultural literacy practices. No.1 is school bag with Disney cartoons. No. 2 is Simpsons. No. 3 is the image of SPD video game on a table mat. No.4 is a Sponge Bob picture in an early childhood centre. No.5 is a Barbie clothes shop for young girls. No.6 is children playing Naruto card at home.

Figure 5.4: Photonovel 4 Popular culture through the everyday lives of children in Antofagasta
The global/local forces are now having more intense interactions than in previous generations. This influences the local parents, teachers and children’s way of living, and way of thinking in Australia, Chile and China as elsewhere. These impact on young children’s literacy learning through the global literacy resources (technology and popular culture in particular) in local community. However, it also impacts the ECE in local communities through the efforts of the FIH educators to affect knowledge exchange. Therefore, the following section analyses evidence of the knowledge flows between the Chilean and Australian EC educators.

5.4 LOCAL/GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE FLOWS IN ECE

The previous sections analysed evidence of the knowledge in the local Antofagasta community, and indicated some possibilities for two-way knowledge flows. The same educational principle applies to the relationship between Australian and Chilean educators involved in the FIH Program. This is because, in transnational professional intervention programs educators in poor communities might expect to, and/or be expected to learn from educators from developed communities. Does the FIH Program give experiments the one-way knowledge flow or two-way flows? This section analyses primary evidence of the knowledge exchange between Australia and Chile via the FIH Program.

5.4.1 The Australian early childhood education and educators

Educators from different communities may have different values, beliefs and different ways of thinking. In the FIH Program, Australian team members and Chilean early childhood educators were brought together to share their knowledge and experiences of ECE. The FIH Program team’s experiences of ECE within Australia differed as it did from their experiences in Chile:

… quite a lot differences in starting school age, the arrangement of early child education in preschools, kindergartens or a kindergarten year in school. Each Australian States has very different arrangements, but since 2011 some of these things are becoming more similar. There is a national quality framework for early child education [2009], there is an Early Years Learning Framework [2009] which is the curriculum framework for early childhood. A lot is starting to be made more similar with the national focus, but there
are still differences. The systems in the different States are still different. New South Wales (NSW) is the most difficult place for parents to access early child education, because it’s very expensive. Preschool education is very expensive in NSW. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p.30)

If parents want to access preschool education through child care centres, then there is plenty availability. But if they only want to access preschool, it’s very hard. If kids are home with one of their parents or extended family and their families want to put them into an early child program when they are three and a half or four, then it’s very expensive. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p.30)

ECE differs across Australian States differences informed the FIH Program team’s experiences. National action about Early Childhood Education across Australia (Council-of-Australia-Governments, 2009) is stimulating increasing homogenisation. In some places accessing early childhood education, because it is very expensive can be difficult. In Chile “the ECCs … are free for lower income families …” (AECE 3, conference, 29th June, 2012, Terrigal). One of the key educational features of ECE in Australia is child-focused centres: “Australian early childhood centres, a lot of them will use children’s arts and framing them and putting it on the wall.” (AECE 2, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p. 25-26)

That the early childhood centres in Australia display children’s work in this way was different with the centres in Chile. This became a focus for the changes put in place as a result of the FIH Program in the early childhood centres in Antofagasta. Because the children’s work confirms this learning achievement, these displays reveal the children and their families could observe what was being learnt in the centres. These were Australian EC educators’ experience of ECE that were re-established in Antofagasta. The next section analyses evidence of selected EC practices in Chile.

5.4.2 Chilean early childhood education and educators

This section analyses evidence of the Australian FIH Program team’s experiences of Chilean ECE. It focuses on what they saw to be different or similar with regards to Australian early childhood education. One of the team members described her experience this:
In Antofagasta, the teachers did the drawings, the books. They brought the pictures in. They decorated the walls. They decided all the focus, not the children. (AECE 2, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p. 25-26)

In Antofagasta, the literacy environment in ECCs was not a focus for the children’s work, and it was largely contributed by the educators. This does show these educators’ passion for their jobs. It also shows that the families’ cared for their children as well as being willing to engage in their children’s education. The following account was said to be typical of the five early childhood education centres in Antofagasta: “That activity was happening as part of the group time. So they worked there sitting in a group. That’s the Chilean way of doing some of the teaching” (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood). The young children in these Antofagasta centres were used to working in groups. This may benefit their sociocultural development, as they learn from the interactions with others and more scaffolding is possible by teachers during these interactions.

There was more academic work of ECE happening in Chile. An Australian FIH Program member noticed the growing of intellectual work by Chilean academics:

Now it would be Chilean PhD research on the Project. Those insights around the project would be researched and created by Chileans, so that builds and generates knowledge for themselves rather than by western university. … it needs to be balanced by Chilean scholars undertaking this intellectual work and building these resources to their own country. (AECE 3, 2nd, 21st Sep 2012, Kingswood)

The features of early childhood education in Antofagasta relate to their educational culture which encourages pleasant connections between people. The ECCs in Antofagasta did not display the children’s work. The Australian educators considered this important as to families’ engagement in creating the literacy learning environment in the classrooms. The young children in these ECCs were used to doing group work. This was helpful for extending sociocultural literacy practices that called for even more interactions between them. At the same time it is important to have more Chilean academics who know their local community better to build up their intellectual work.
5.4.3 Knowledge exchange between Australian and Chilean educators

Australia and Chile have different ways of doing and thinking about ECE. Each of them has advantages and disadvantages. Hence it would seem to be important for the two parties to work together to make the best use of their resources and strengths to provide more learning opportunities for the young children’s literacy development. An FIH Program member reflected on her experiences:

We were not going in try to ‘fix it’. … “What can we do together?” “How can we support each other for you to develop your knowledge? In a way for us to develop our own knowledge about how we do things? Are there other ways of doing it?” … It’s about working together. (AECE 2, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p.17)

The Australian educators from a developed country need to respect and understand the values and beliefs of the educators’ crossing the poor communities of Antofagasta rather than try to import of foreign ‘fix’. The two parties worked together, respecting and supporting each other develop their knowledge. According to the Australian educators they Chilean exchanged ideas, practices and knowledge with the Chilean educators during the FIH Program:

We have a relationship with the educators [in Antofagasta] and the educators have it with the families and also with the children. In this way we were helping them to understand it can go around to the children. But it is also about us sharing that knowledge. This is they say, “Look, what we’ve been doing. This is how it’s been successful.” We are saying, “This is really important what we’re doing … This is the lesson we’ve learnt …” we are not just going in and teaching, but also going to learn. (AECE 2, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p.19)

The Australian team members and Chilean EC educators exchanged their experience and knowledge in the FIH Program, which helped them to reflect on their ECE:

… this two-way knowledge exchange means we have to learn about their educational culture and their understandings. We cannot just go inside say, “Oh, this is what we do, you know isn’t that perfect?” They have different ways of doing things. We need to respect that. … When I came back, I reflected about the way we do things and what we could learn from them. (AECE 2, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p. 20)
The educators from Australia and Chile shared their knowledge and ideas via the FIH Program. The Australian educators came to understand the knowledge of the local early childhood community so as to better understand what and how they might contribute. The knowledge they learnt from the local community in Antofagasta was different from theirs, and so made them to rethink their original ideas for the FIH Program. Hence the exchange of knowledge was helpful for them to critically rethink the knowledge they had learnt in Australia.

The Australian FIH Program team came to know more and understand more about the local community, and how it relates to their education:

One is political history and the country and how some of that particularly around the leadership, positions of people and positions of power and submission. … I certainly understand and am more respectful for some of the educational practices that I saw in the early childhood practice that I found surprising. The children sit on the chair. I understand now the social importance of that. They are actually teaching children how to be polite and take turns … I have come to understand more about the hospitality ... (AECE 3, 2\textsuperscript{nd}, 21\textsuperscript{st} Sep 2012, Kingswood)

Australian educators acquired more social and historical knowledge about the local community Antofagasta and this helped her to understand more about the Chilean ECE. This increase in knowledge was said to enhance their respect for these people and they claimed to value more of the knowledge and practices in the local community. This could encourage deeper and wider knowledge flows, so globalization can increase the interactions between educators through social, economic and other activities such as the FIH Program.

Comparing some of differences (and similarities) between early childhood education in Australia and Chile indicated what the former might learn from the latter:

In many ways their interactions with very young children are warmer and more physical. In Australia, there was physical contact but because of the legal implications no more I’ve got great respect for the warmth and humanity of these Chilean educators. They have some approaches and strategies to early child education that are very strong. There is no doubt that we’ve learnt from the way they interpreted some of the ideas of the FIH Program to make their own. The literacy café is an outstanding example of practices that can be shared here in Australia. At the policy early child
education is free for these families. New policies made early child education free for families that are below a certain level of income. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 42)

There could be much that Australian ECE might learn from Chilean ECE. First, the good relationship between the children and educators saw more physical contact than legally possible in Australia. Second, inviting the families to join a conversation with the educators at a ‘literacy cafe’ helped the families learn more about their children’s development and the educators to know more about the children and their families. Third, government policy which made ECE free for families below a certain income level provided opportunities for more young children from the poor communities to access early childhood education. While the access relates to government policy may be difficult to adopt elsewhere, the literacy cafe is now being advocated in some of Australian schools.

Chilean early childhood educators visited Australia early childhood centres and to ‘learn’ what might appropriate for their situation:

Two intensive study tours in Australia provided some staff with the opportunity to visit early childhood sites here and discuss and deliberate what might be appropriate or adapted to their own context. (AECE 3, conference, 29th June, 2012, Terrigal)

Australian EC educators come to recognise the advantages of Chilean ECE through their observations, and considered how to localise these into their own practices. Likewise, the Chilean educators can observe and discuss what they can borrow and adapt into their practices.

Without knowing about the safety issues in the community foreigners might be very surprised to see the closed gate and sharp arrow fencing surrounding the ECCs. While this normal for local people but it may deter parents’ attitude from forming educational partnerships with the centres. The Australian FIH Program team members reflected on the safety issues on young children’s education. Like Calama, this poor community in Antofagasta is not a completely safe place for children. Safety issue is one of the reasons that the ECCs have high fences and locked gates:
There are families really struggling, you cannot get away from the fact that there are things there that are not safe for children. That’s not an entirely safe environment. (AECE 2, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p.17)

In another mining town Calama which provides huge economic profits, but has violence and self-harm issues in its community (Duggan, 2013). This poor mining community in Antofagasta has the similar struggle. The Australian team members identified this as influential factor in the relationship between ECCs and children’s families.

… It was a safety issue but it wasn’t the only issue because the practise had been to do it that way. Nobody really stopped to think about what messages it was giving families. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 40)

Safety is a key reason that the ECCs are highly secured. Families no doubt feel happy that the centres ensure that their children are safe; this is important message for both parents and children. However, at the same time it may send a message of “No entry” to the families and may make them feel unwelcomed and uncomfortable about sending their children to the centres. Moreover, they though this may contribute the challenge of establishing partnerships between the families and centres. But because the local people have lived with insecurity for a long time, and they understood the fence and locked gates as a sign of safety. Thus, educators from two different communities saw the fence differently. For the Australians it was a barrier. For the local educators this was not the case. However, this gap provided a basis for learning from the new knowledge from each other and reconsidered the way they are organise the centre’s security. In terms of security, it is important to understand that physical contact between educators and children in prohibited in Australia in order to protect children.

5.4.4 Photonovel—knowledge exchange in ECCs

Figure 5.5 shows evidence of the knowledge exchange between Chilean and Australian EC educators. They learn from each other’s advantages and apply what is suitable in their local community. In Singh’s (2005) five scapes of globalisation, knowledge flow is as important and as it is challenging, because it needs the support of other four. While every flow may become an innovation, there are also various
checkpoints – gates and fences not all of which are possible. Thus, globalisation entails “the accelerating circulation of people, the increasingly dense and frequent cross-cultural interactions, and the unavoidable intersections of local and global knowledge” (Grieshaber & Ryan, 2005, p. 8). Therefore it is important for international education initiatives such as the FIH Program to include the knowledge of disadvantaged communities, and keep the knowledge flow in two-ways. Otherwise globalization will just be westernisation.

Figure 5.5: Photonovel 5 knowledge exchange in ECCs

No.1 is the literacy cafe invitation. No.2 and 3 is children’s work in the ECC. No.4 and 5 are the gate and fence at two ECCs in Antofagasta.
5.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter aims to analyse evidence of the influence of globalisation (Voisey & O'Riodram, 2001) on young children’s learning through funds of knowledge (Moll & Gonzalez, 1994). The concept of FoK appreciates the literacy resources in the local community and families, especially in disadvantaged communities. Literacy materials and everyday social life become important for children’s literacy learning. Therefore, the first part section 5.1 demonstrated the importance of the local community in forming local people’s values and beliefs, which revealed traces of globalisation in the local community. Then section 5.2 explored evidence of the richness of the literacy resources in the local community through the concepts of funds of knowledge and language as local practices. The evidence indicates the knowledge and threats brought by globalisation/westernisation, and highlighted the significance of recognising knowledge in disadvantaged communities. The influence of globalisation in the local community was out of the Australian educators’ expectations, thus section 5.3 investigated the role of technology and popular culture in the local community. This also raised challenges for Australian early childhood educators when they were engaging local/global FoK present in young children’s literacy learning environment. The last section 5.4, analysed evidence of differences ECE practices in Australia and Chile, and the knowledge flows between the educators. This could mean that the knowledge in disadvantaged communities like Antofagasta could be excluded due to globalisation/westernisation, which involves the issue of intellectual in/equality (see Figure 5.6). However, they have rich literacy resources for young children’s development and knowledge in ECE that it is worthwhile for others to learn about.
CHAPTER SIX CHANGING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS AND THE LITERACY LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

6.0 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 5 analysed evidence of local/global knowledge flows in relation to children’s sociocultural literacy practices/learning in Antofagasta. The focus was on the community outside the early childhood centres (ECCs). This Chapter analyses evidence of Chilean early childhood (EC) educators’ learning of Australian sociocultural theory as represented by the Australian FIH team, and the changes their professional knowledge and the literacy learning environments in they created for children. Once again the research site is the five ECCs in Antofagasta. It illustrates their learning and those changes with evidence from the selected artefacts, a vignette generated based on the selected artefacts and interview excerpt produced through photo-elicitations with the Australian FIH Program team members. Representative artefacts of the selected artefacts are generated into photonovels which is a set of photographs with dialogue callouts. The dialogue in these photonovels come from the vignette or interview excerpts.

6.1 AUSTRALIAN SOCIOCULTURAL THEORY CHANGES THE ROLE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS

This section analyses educators’ knowledge development through the FIH Program, and its impact on their roles in young children’s literacy learning. Their developing knowledge of sociocultural approach to young children’s literacy learning extended their roles within young children’s literacy learning. Furthermore, the FIH Program had an impact on the ECE pedagogies and their relationship with families. With these changes there also arose some challenges for the EC educators as well.
6.1.1 Australian educators changing Chilean EC educators’ professional knowledge

The Chilean early childhood educators in this study included both teachers and teaching assistants (technicas) in the five ECCs in the FIH Program. Their knowledge of sociocultural approach to young children’s literacy learning was developed through the FIH Program. An Australian FIH Program team member reported that this sociocultural theory (Berk & Winsler, 2002) was less familiar than developmental theory (Edwards, 2003) to these Chilean educators:

…teachers … they do understand the importance of interaction but I’m not sure that they have the maturity and implementing that may optimize the learning opportunities. They certainly know about Piaget, so that developmental perspective. That developmental theory of sequences is quite strong. The socio constructive is less strong in the history of their professional teacher education. (AECE 3, 2nd, 2012, Kingswood)

The focus of the Chilean educators’ previous professional learning was more on Piagetian developmental theory (Edwards, 2003) rather than sociocultural theory. Piagetian theory emphasises children’s linear social development, while Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory focuses on children’s social interactions with others (Berk & Winsler, 2002). According to the analysis of the Australian FIH team member’s responses, this program of transnational export education for professional development tended to change the focus of the Chilean educators’ professional knowledge and their understanding of ECE by introducing Australian sociocultural approaches to children’s literacy learning. This professional development Program had influenced these EC educators’ understanding of their role as leaders because:

这种认知在过去几乎在社会达成共识，并被填充到各种各样的教师培训材料、师范院校教科书、教师行为规范、教学和课程实施标准中……因此，教师自身在理解和解释自己的角色及其行为时自然而然地接受了内化了“蜡烛”和“春蚕”式的教师角色的知识，并主导了自己的角色行为。(Hu 胡芳, 2011, p. 4)

This cognition reached a consensus in the past, and filled in various of teacher training materials, the text books in normal colleges and universities, teachers’ code of conduct, teaching and curriculum implementation … Therefore, teachers accepted and internalized their role as “candle” and “spring silkworm” when they understand and explain their role, and dominated their role behaviour.
Candle and spring silkworms are two words that are often used as metaphors to describe educators’ role in Chinese literature. A candle burns itself to bring light to others. Silkworms continue to makes silk until their last breath. These both used to describe the sacrifice spirit of the educators. In Chinese educators’ professional learning, there is a strong emphasis on the concept of sacrificing as candle or silkworm, which has significant influence on establishing their role as educators. The prior knowledge provided these educators during their initial teacher education had a significant influence on their understandings of their role. Against Piagetian theory, the FIH Program tends to provide different understandings for their roles via exporting Australian knowledge of a sociocultural approach.

Based on the analysis of the Australian FIH Program team members’ account, the Chilean EC educators reportedly lack of Australian knowledge of sociocultural approach but also critical thinking. The Chilean EC Educators were reported as not familiar with the concept of critical thinking, which is an important concept for their teaching and young children’s learning, according to an Australian FIH Program team member:

I don't think critical thinking is something they were familiar with, but it’s an idea embedded in our literacy concepts and processes. They might be aware, but it is not something where they spend huge amount of time on in their teaching. They do tell us that they are now more reflective about their teaching. They think a lot more about their teaching than they used to in the past. But I can’t think of any examples of one of the Chilean educators who was critiquing what they were doing. We’ve try to get them to give us photo stories with a critical analysis of what they can see in them. But we now not been able to get to a stage that I would call critique. (AECE 4, Kingswood, 2012)

But I haven’t seen evidence in their teaching, ... It may happen anywhere. … There is small moment of time in the centres, but not enough I feel confident to say this is happening or this is not happening. Because we just don't get enough time to spend in the centres to know that. (AECE 4, Kingswood, 2012)

An Australian team member stated that critical thinking is an important concept for EC educators’ professional education and their teaching practice. Apparently the team thought criticality was is not a common concept for these Chilean EC educators. Additionally, she explained that they did not spend long enough time at these ECCs
to observe these educators. Even so, they claimed that they did not notice many of these Chilean EC educators being critical in the FIH Program. This would have required them to demonstrate:

the ability to explore and examine situations, assumptions and hidden values, as well as to evaluate evidence and assess conclusions through the process of observing, reflecting and reasoning (Dewar et al., 2013, p. 388).

In the FIH Program the Chilean EC educators were asked to be critical by of observing, assessing and analysing their situation, attitude, values and beliefs present in their teaching and community life. They were encouraged to reflect on their own teaching, as well to question and analyse it. This was sent to help these Chilean EC educators obtain a deeper understanding of theoretical knowledge of their professional education. However, as in Antofagasta this is reportedly challenging for EC educators in other countries as well. The EC educators in Dewar and her colleagues’ (2013, p. 383) self-reflection research project in Canada, come to “recognize and understand their role in the teaching process and their role in the learning of students. … by taking part in reflective practice they are able to make better-informed decisions.” It was important for the FIH Program Chilean EC educators recognise their role in young children’s learning could be improved through critical reflection in their teaching. Such critical pedagogical reflection “involves probing how one’s beliefs, values, expectations, assumptions, family imprinting and cultural conditioning impact upon students and their teaching” (Dewar et al., 2013, p. 382). The Australian FIH Program team encouraged the Chilean educators to perform their critical thinking in the way the team expected. Although the Chilean educators were regarded as lacking critical thinking, they were able to demonstrate the different forms that were appreciated or valued by Australian team.

One Australian team member claimed that the Chilean EC educators now “feel more professional about their teaching” (AECE 4, Kingswood, 2012). This statement places the previous performance of these Chilean EC educators in an “unprofessional” position. These issues are similar to what is reported in other Australian sociocultural theory studies where it is used as “a tool for challenging teachers’ conceptions of curriculum leading to reflection on practice as outcome of the activity system in
which they teachers and researchers were involved” (Edwards, 2007b, p. 133). In Australian EC professional development programs, sociocultural theory tends to be used to challenge the educators’ existing knowledge; to test whether they know about this theory, and whether to ascertain this theory is applied appropriately in their teaching practice. As a consequence, the Chilean EC educators are more likely to be assumed as having no useful knowledge, which means they are not presumed to be intellectually equal with Australian educators. In contrast, Singh (2013) argues that “the assumption of intellectual equality provides a useful starting point…” (p.144). Although Chapter 5 presented evidence of the possibility for the two-way knowledge flow between Australian and Chilean educator, the issue of intellectual in/equality needs further investigation.

6.1.2 Changing educators’ role and its influence

The Chilean EC educators’ beliefs, values and knowledge influence their role in promoting young children’s learning and their own teaching. However, as they acquired new knowledge about young children’s education through the FIH Program, their role and teaching changed. This section analyses evidence of their role change and how this impacted on their teaching. One of the key changes was the redistribution of their work.

6.1.2.1 Role changes for teachers and assistants

Both the teachers and teaching assistants performed different kinds of work in the early childhood centres. However, one significant change that happened as a result of the FIH Program was them recombining their roles. Before the FIH Program there was a strong boundary between what the teachers did and what the assistants did. Now the assistants have more opportunity to participate in children’s learning as a result of the FIH Program’s intervention:

… in some of the other centres there was an understanding that the teachers did certain things and the assistant did different. That is one of things that has changed because of the Project. The assistants are now given much more opportunity to actually work with the children, engage in learning activities with children and plan activities. This is preferable to them just doing the
assistant type of work, like putting out the equipment, cleaning up the room. I think that shift has come because of the staff centre teachers and assistants – participating together in the workshops so they all learn the same things. I think there is now much more mixing up roles in the centres. I think there is questionable assumption that the teachers have more knowledge and they should to be teaching because they have more education and longer course of studies. (AECE 4, Kingswood, 2012)

The teaching assistants were paid to facilitate the work of the teachers. The FIH Program engaged them in children’s learning and by increasing their work with the young children. It is easy to assume that teachers have more knowledge about children’s education than the assistants because of their higher education. In the FIH Program sociocultural approach made these changes but it fails to address this intellectual in/equality issue between teachers and assistants. Ranciere (2009, p. 17) argues for intellectual equality in education:

This shared power of the equality of intelligence links individuals, makes them exchange their intellectual adventures, in so far as it keeps them separate from one another, equally capable of using the power everyone has to plot her own path.

While people’s knowledge and ability is not limited or determined by their occupation, their pay and conditions are. The technical assistants’ knowledge could not be predicted based on what they do. Thus, the FIH Program gave effort to the belief that everyone has the equal power to use their intelligence. The teachers had more education than the teachings assistants. The FIH Program brought them together the workshops as a sharing the work of educating the children. The teaching assistants’ knowledge and capabilities were not ignored or undervalued in the FIH Program.

6.1.2.2 Bringing community and family funds of knowledge into children’s learning

The development of the EC educators’ knowledge extended and explored their different roles of the people’s involved in young children’s literacy learning. The FIH team explained the concept ‘funds of knowledge’ (Gonzalez et al., 1995), which helped them to notice the rich literacy resources in the community and families. This concept leads expanded influence on their choice of literacy materials for their teaching. This provided them a new role in connecting the children’s funds of
knowledge into their literacy learning in their ECCs. The early childhood educators developed their understanding of funds of knowledge (FoK), and used it to create different settings for their young children’s literacy learning. The Australian team members of the FIH Program pointed out:

The educators use their understanding of funds of knowledge. They used that to set-up a market that was something children would be familiar with. (AECE 1, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p.9-10)

The link between play based learning and literacy rich experiences was gradually developed. (AECE 3, 2nd, 2012, Kingswood)

The Chilean early childhood educators used their understanding of the concept of FoK to rebuild the setting for children to play. This concept increased their understanding of “the strengths and resources in students’ communities, in addition to an enriched perspective on the historical, economic and social forces that have produced current racial, labour and class dynamics” (Howard & Lipinoga, 2008, p. 630). The Chilean EC educators’ understanding of this concept helped them to recognise the rich literacy resources in the young children’s community and families. This was reflected in their teaching. The play settings were recreated and imitated the children’s everyday experiences, so that they played with materials with which they were familiar. Moreover, the children practiced what they have learnt through play. Therefore the Chilean educators played an important role in bridging young children’s community and families’ knowledge and their literacy learning.

The Chilean early childhood educators learnt to use their understanding of funds of knowledge to bring the literacy resources from the community and families into the ECCs. They also took the children into the local community to observe the literacy environment outside the ECCs. An FIH Program member explained this with reference to one of her selected artefacts:

On an excursion the children go outside the early child centre into the community. That’s very much the sociocultural approach to strengthening their learning by strengthening their links to the community and early childhood centre. This is preferable to having them separated. Therefore, seeing the community as rich in learning resources even though it’s poor there are people, activities and relationships there that provide important resources for learning. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 32)
To develop the children’s literacy learning the Chilean early childhood educators learn to bring the community literacy resources into the ECCs, and they also took the children to the community to observe and experience different literacy activities. These strategies strengthened the links between children’s everyday life in the local community and their literacy learning. Although the community has limited financial and physical resources, they had changed literacy resources which were useful for children’s learning (see Chapter 5). The educators’ attitudes and beliefs influence their interactions with the young children. Their reflection on their teaching and learning improved the quality of their teaching by facilitating the young children’s learning (Dewar et al., 2013). The Chilean EC educators’ knowledge developed during the concept in the FIH Program – sociocultural theory providing them new understanding about young children’s literacy learning.

Here Rogoff’s (1995, p. 46) community plane is relevant to this analysis, as it “focuses on people participating with others in culturally organized activity, with institutional practices and development extending from historical events into the present, guided by cultural values and goals.” Young children participate in everyday life in their community, and learn through their observations and interactions with others. Their social practices reflected the historical, economic and cultural values and beliefs in their local community. Ranciere (2009, p. 10), explains young children’s learning process as “She can do this if, at each step, she observes what is before her, says what she has seen, and verifies what she has said.” In other words, young children learn through the interrelated processes of seeing, saying and doing. The FIH Program developed these Chilean educators to critically to have young children see and observe the social activities in their life, and interact with others about what they have seen, and then they practice it in their daily life.

Although the sociocultural approaches provided the Chilean EC educators alternative understanding of ECE, it failed to address the challenges it posed for them. They teach children their community and family FoK. In this sense these Chilean educators are “ignorant schoolmasters” (Ranciere, 2009) who teach children the knowledge they do not know or not familiar with. This changes the teaching practice of the Chilean educators from what ATM called as “instructional teaching” to more exploratory teaching/learning practices. Therefore, children are more likely to
experience the three interrelated elements of learning – “seeing, saying and doing” that Ranciere (2009) proposed.

**6.1.2.3 Changing the connect form among families, community and centres**

The EC educators’ knowledge developed through the FIH Program that impacted on their work of educating the children as well as their teaching strategies. As their knowledge about sociocultural theory and FoK developed, they changed their role in young children’s literacy learning. An Australian FIH Program team member summarized their new roles:

They had the idea that their role was to tell children things, to teach children things and those things they did teach them came out of the curriculum. … Now they see their role that is broader than that. Their role is to connect the families and communities and their funds of knowledge to learning. This is a broader process connected into children’s lives. It sees their role as somebody who works with the child to understand things. They now develop understandings and meanings to facilitate the children to go through that process. This is preferable to them being someone who is just tells them everything that they need to learn. (AECE 4, 14th Sep, 2012, p.9, Kingswood)

From the FIH Program the EC educators’ work went beyond teaching the children what is in the curriculum, to draw on community and families’ FoK so as to link children’s literacy learning to real life. Engaging the literacy resources and social practices in children’ families and community took the educators beyond the curriculum and textbooks. They come to see young children as having FoK that includes their “social and cultural resources from their home settings” (Dickie, 2011, p. 248). In the FIH Program, the Australian knowledge of sociocultural approach changed the Chilean EC educators’ professional knowledge and provides them the awareness of these knowledge outside ECCs which helped them to form pedagogies to relate to these young children’s situations.

As the EC educators’ connected the young children’s community, families and ECCs, at the same time their relationship with the young children’s families changed (see more in Chapter 8). An Australian FIH Program team member pointed out the EC educators now had a bridging role between the families and ECCs:
They talk about their relationships with the families have changed. They talk about how the families are much more engaged in the children’s learning. … It is more about the families and how to use documentation through photographs to set up a communication bridge between the centres and the families … they enjoyed their teaching more than they used to. … Now they are documenting what’s going on more. They are able to go through the documentation to explain to parents more about their children’s learning. (AECE 4, Kingswood, 2012)

The documenting of the centres’ work helped the EC educators to demonstrate the young children’s literacy learning, and to share this with the children’s families. When the families were provided with this new information about their children’s learning, they could see what their children were learning the ECCs and many were more willing to participate in their children’s learning. At the same time the EC educators’ confidence made the ECCs a more inviting place for the families.

6.1.2.4 Role changes influence pedagogies

As the EC educators’ knowledge developed through the workshop of the FIH Program, their teaching changed, and they interacted more with the young children. Their role as “authority” (权威) or “knowledge owner” (知识拥有者) tended to change to be more welcoming and more facilitative of young children’s active engagement and explorative learning (Hu 胡芳, 2011, p. 5). Through their professional development, they started to notice the importance of exploration in young children’s learning. An Australian FIH Program team member noted these changes in their teaching:

Their practices in the classroom are very different. They stood in front of group of children and talking at them, as they did at the start of the Program to present information and facts to them. They are now working with children. They work with small groups to give the children more opportunities to do things themselves, to try things out, to experiment with them own ideas, to be involved more active in their own learning. They try to find out the children’s interest so as to incorporate these into their learning. (AECE 4, p.8, Kingswood, 2012)

Standing in front of a class to present children what they have to learn is one way to teach. With their learning of sociocultural approach, these educators gradually started
to work with the children and their interests, explore what they could learn. This represented a change from teacher-centred to student-centred teaching:

……这意味着教师是教学中的主角，学生是观看教师表演的观众，学生没有或没有完全参与到教学中来，教学注重的只是教师个人的讲解而不是学生的个人感受，师生之间的关系只是单方面的“传递与接受”关系，并没有形成真正的、有效的和建设性的互动。（Hu 胡芳, 2011, p. 5）

This means that educators are the leading role, students are the spectators who watch the educators’ performances, they are not or not completely be engaged in the teaching. Teaching emphases on the educators’ teach/explanation, but not students’ feeling/experiences. This is a one-way “deliver and accept” relationship between educators and students. It does not form the real, effective constructive interaction.

In teacher-centred teaching, young children were not actively engaged in the teaching and learning process. The EC educators worked as a carrier of the knowledge who delivered and presented it to the young children. The young children watched the educators’ presentation of her knowledge and/or her understanding of it. There was very limited opportunity for them to interact, and the young children can only learn the educators’ knowledge. Ranciere’s (2009) argues that the child learns new knowledge “as an effect of the mastery that forces her to search and verifies this research. But she does not learn that schoolmaster’s knowledge” (p. 14). Therefore, the EC educators need to provide opportunities for the young children to learn from their exploration and investigation. Then they may have the opportunity to learn knowledge that the educators do not have, so they can

青出于蓝而胜于蓝 31（qīng chū yú lán ér shèng yú lán）It is a Chinese suyu, means that student learns from their teacher, but achieves more and better than their teacher).

6.1.3 Challenges for early childhood educators

The Chilean EC educators’ developing knowledge of sociocultural theory provided more options for them to create literacy learning activities for the young children. Inevitable this also raised some challenges for them. This section analyses evidence

31青出于蓝而胜于蓝 (qīng chū yú lán ér shèng yú lán)。青 qīng is indigo-blue 蓝 lán is the indigo plant. The colour indigo-blue comes from the indigo plant, but it is better than it. It is a metaphor to say that students exceed teacher.《荀子》(Xun Zi) URL: http://baike.baidu.com/view/1951516.htm?fromId=192467
of some concerns from the FIH Program Australian team members who addressed these challenges.

In the FIH Program the EC educators learnt to use scaffolding so as to interact more with the young children and improve their learning. While this is an important concept in sociocultural theory, scaffolding was not well performed by these Chilean EC educators. The concept of scaffolding related to the concept Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which was not well understood by the Chilean educators in the FIH Program. These are challenging concepts to understand and to apply. The Chilean EC educators needed more knowledge and deeper understandings to make full use of them. Two Australian team members expressed concerned about this issue:

It took a longer time than we expected. I don’t think that the participants have still quite understood these two ideas. One is the choice of strategies and the groupings. … The way that the participants responded at first was quite enthusiastic … but this was at a superficial level. … The staff would stand back talking among themselves or walk around taking photographs. We did talk to them about the use of those photographs to document children’s learning. But they were all taking photographs, and no one was actually talking to the children or playing with them. (AECE 1, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown)

Mediation strategies include scaffolding, co-construction and sustained shared thinking. Scaffolding was the only strategy that participants really heard or learnt about. Of course, this might apply to many Australian early childhood educators too. The participants didn't have any understanding of scaffolding and their role in doing that. … Our challenge was to strengthen that conceptual understanding of scaffolding and Zone Proximal Development. Maybe they heard of them, but they didn’t really understand what they mean. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 35)

We provide scaffolding to support the educators and to strengthen their role in their learning interactions with children. … However, across the FIH Project there were variety levels of understanding of the importance of the way that an educator or adult actually scaffolds the child’s learning. … The idea of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is not fully understood cross the FIH Project participants. … These Chilean educators of tended to scaffold improved dramatically. But I don’t believe we’ve seen a lot of really mature practice in relation to sufficient scaffolding in … the centres at this point. … Many of the Chilean educators do not have the ability to engage children in their learning task, get their interest and … extend their learning. (AECE 3, 2nd, 21st Sep, 2012, p.14, Kingswood)
It takes much care and thought to know about the children’s capabilities to do that scaffolding effectively. The Chilean educators don't always take time to get to know children that well and what they can do. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 36)

Two of the Australian FIH Program team members observed that the Chilean EC educators did not fully understand the concepts of scaffolding and ZPD. From ATM’s reflection, Chilean educators’ deficient understanding of these concepts natured their roles in scaffolding young children’s in literacy learning. Therefore, the Australian FIH Program encouraged the Chilean EC educators to further develop their in-depth knowledge about these two concepts. However, according to Andreotti’s (2011) postcolonial analysis, Australian educators expressed similar first tendency with regard to yellow corn cobs, seeing other varieties as deficient or lacking. This is like other Australian ECE programs (Edwards, 2006, 2007a, 2007b) which test educators to see if they are deficient in the knowledge of sociocultural approach. A more dynamic interaction could be possible between them, and this could contribute to intellectual more negotiable both way changes in the future.

These two concepts are very closely related. Scaffolding “refers to the use of tools or techniques to allow a child to achieve a goal that would otherwise be beyond his or her unassisted efforts” (Neumann et al., 2009, p. 313). ZPD is the zone between what the children can do to what they may achieve under other’ scaffolding (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994). For the EC educators to provide appropriate scaffolding for children’s learning, they had to show the FIH team that they were aware of their children’s current knowledge, and figure out what specific assistant they needed to achieve to next level. This required more than just doing their used to work with children or observing them. The Chilean EC educators need to ask probing questions to facilitate the children’s learning. When Ranciere (2009) explains that children’s learning from what is known to new knowledge, he emphasises the importance of their previous knowledge. He argues that children learn by comparing what they know with what has to be learnt. Thus it is significant for the EC educators to know the children, record and observe what they have learnt, but it takes long time for EC educators to know the children well. These two Australian team members identified this as one of the possible reasons of the EC educators’ poor performance of their role of scaffolding.
The Chilean EC educators’ understanding of FoK provided different understandings and resources for the young children’s literacy learning. This literacy knowledge went beyond the curriculum and textbook to ask the EC educators to rethink their choice of their teaching materials and strategies. An Australian team member considered this as a challenge for the FIH Program:

I’m reading more about different ways researchers are thinking about using funds of knowledge now. There are some difficult issues for these Chilean educators funds of knowledge. I said families have all of these funds of knowledges, but not all of these knowledges are good for educational purposes. There are questions about values and which knowledge to implement. I now realise that there are limitations to my teaching Chilean educators only build the curriculum on family and community funds of knowledge. Is that enough? For the children in Antofagasta such as curriculum is not enough. What I proposed could be limiting. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 38)

The notion of FoK was meant to help the Chilean EC educators to consider the literacy resources in the young children’s community and families. However, it posed the challenge for them to choose what knowledge to use and how to use. As illustrated in Chapter 5, these educators choose what FoK to be engaged into young children’ learning under the influence of globalisation. They now have to balance the curriculum and community FoK in enhancing young children’s literacy learning. The EC educators in this unsafe community in Antofagasta need to decide what FoK to use, and how to apply this in their teaching (Zipin, 2009). What knowledge they choose is vital for these young children’s values. Because identity is about “how learning changes who we are and creates personal histories of becoming in the context of our community” (Wenger, 2002, p. 5). Learning is not just a process of acquiring knowledge, it is also a process that shapes who children are and who they want to be (Dickie, 2011). However the some Australian sociocultural theory programs (Edwards, 2006, 2007a, 2007b) did not notice the dark FoK in children’s families and community, and did not address the issue of choosing appropriate knowledge for children. The community, families and ECCs have different knowledge and may value different knowledge. They provide different knowledge for young children’s learning and identity construction. The FIH Program member had to be aware of the young Chilean children’s multiple identities. An Australian team member pointed out:
These Chilean children have multiple identities. They belong to communities, community with other kids, the early child centre, and their family. That’s a really interesting thing for educators to take account of. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 34)

Young children have connections across their community, the ECCs, families and peers. The concept of “literacy learning as social practice” (Dickie, 2011) helped the Chilean EC educators to include in literacy activities that linked to their community, families and early childhood centres. Literacy as social practice emphasises individuals’ interactions with other people in ... different educative sites ... The settings and relationships reveal the significance of the identities that people construct as they operate in different sites each of which may have its own values. (Dickie, 2011, p. 247)

The concept of “literacy as social practice” holds that young children develop their literacy in different places. However, values and belief in these places may vary. This literacy learning process involves “an accumulation of skills and information” (Wenger, 2002, p. 215), It is also a process that shapes who children are and what children are able to do. It can be an experience of constructing identities (Dickie, 2011). Therefore the FIH team needed to be more aware of the differences of the values, beliefs and literacy practices in these various sites, and how they may influence these Chilean educators and the young children.

6.2 EDUCATORS AND COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

The previous section analysed evidence of the FIH teams’ efforts to change the role of the Chilean EC educators and their teaching. These changes raised some challenges for the FIH team as well. The evidence indicates that from the FIH team members’ observation, critical thinking is not a common concept for the Chilean EC educators. Their participation in the ‘communities of practice’ (Wenger, 2009) was meant to create opportunities to exchange their knowledge and experience with others, and so encourage their critical thinking about their teaching. This section analyses evidence communities of practice (CoPs) in the FIH Program.
6.2.1 CoP in the FIH Program

Communities of practice was a key concept developed by the FIH Program through its five ECCs. Two Australian team members identified examples of CoP in the FIH Program:

The community of practice was happening all over the place. The mentors had a community of practice they were getting together and discussing things. What they were doing was facilitated by the FIH team. The literacy café was a community of practice that was set up for the families. They were together to talk about education that were important to them, exchanging of information. (AECE 2, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p. 23-24)

… The learning community is that the educators and the mentors have formed to work together to work on the FIH concepts, that the mentors working with each groups. The groups at the Centres are working together to embed the FIH concepts into their practice in their centres. There is lots of learning communities keep going all around the place. The leadership round tables is a small learning community of directors and leading teachers working with us. They go off to use what they learnt and share that with other people. The learning community is going on all the time. … I would define the (literacy café) as a learning community maybe. (AECE 4, Kingswood, 2012)

The Australian team members presented different examples of CoP in the FIH Program. Mentors worked with the EC educators. Educators and families worked together. The mentors worked cooperatively on different ECE concepts. The ECC directors and leading teachers worked together to share practices they had learnt from the FIH workshops and other people. In the literacy cafe EC educators and young children’s facilities interacted together. They met regularly to share and exchange their knowledge about young children’ learning. The community members participated in different CoPs learning through their interactions with other members. Here the CoPs were learning communities for knowledge exchange.

6.2.2 CoP and critical thinking

There were different CoPs happening as a result of the FIH Program. An Australian team member pointed out that it was important for the FIH Program that participants think critically in their CoPs:
People come together to we share the issues, concerns and problems. That’s a good place to start. Communities of practices are for people who want to get on with things but sometimes don’t even know how to. Coming together is useful when it critical. … Critical reflection is a key element of communities of practice. Criticality is really important. The participants can resource each other. They can stretch and challenge each other and work out ways of dealing with things and doing things. They can set goals and inspirations. Most of these things happened in the FIH Program. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood)

The members in a CoP have different knowledge, experience and backgrounds helps them to provide critiques of to each other’s teaching and knowledge. These peer critiques encourage participants to rethink their practices, knowledge and beliefs, and may improve their teaching and strengthen their knowledge. Dewar and her colleagues (2013, p. 382) argue that critique may “aid ECEs in making meaning out of the teaching and learning process, and to transform their learning to guide their practice”. The Chilean EC educators were meant to learn and improve their teaching and knowledge through the CoP members’ critical feedback.

CoP is a vehicle for participants critique about their practices, knowledge and beliefs. In the different CoPs in the FIH Program, the mentors were meant to develop their ECE knowledge through their critique of each other’s ideas. The same applied to the EC directors and leading teacher in leadership round tables. They developed the knowledge that they learnt from the Australian EC team members through sharing and interacting with other members in the CoP that the FIH Program had formed. In the literacy cafe, the EC educators and children’s families developed their knowledge of literacy learning through the exchange of their knowledge and experiences. The EC educators’ professional learning about teaching and learning experiences was “designed to support the attainment and application of professional knowledge, skills and dispositions in the practice” (Dewar et al., 2013, p. 385). The FIH Program reported that they developed their knowledge and teaching practices through their professional training. The Chilean EC educators’ participation in different CoPs reportedly developed their critical thinking as part of their professional learning.
6.2.3 The continuity of CoP

There were different community of practices in the FIH Program. Provoking critical thinking was a key element in the participants’ professional learning. Another concern was the continuity of the members’ relationship. Another Australian FIH Program team member explained the importance of continuity in CoP:

But if literacy cafe is a one-off thing … just one session when they get around and talk, I wouldn’t call that learning community. It needs to be on-going. If that group of parents move away I wouldn’t call it learning community. Let us move on one more week to learn about children’s literacy or about more about early childhood education. (AECE 4, Kingswood, 2012)

CoP is a group of people with a shared interest, learning need and goal to work together over time. If the EC educators or the children’s families participate the literacy cafe just once and then quit, their knowledge sharing is not continuous. Therefore, it is difficult to see the knowledge develop within their community. Hence it is important to keep meaningful co-work of their communities over time. Of course knowing why people quit is also important.

6.2.4 CoP versus community of learners

The notion of CoP was implemented in the five early childhood centres in Antofagasta as a result of the FIH Program. The mentors, children’s families and the children themselves contributed to their communities of practice. Two Australian FIH Program team members defined CoP as:

People are engaged and working together. … a community of practice is a deeper level than that. … in communities of practice people are very engaged and they are working towards a shared hope, they have a shared vision … (AECE 1, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p.7)

Groups of individuals who have some sort of common interest or common learning need work together to achieve their goal. (AECE 4, Kingswood, 2012)

A community of practice is not just a group of co-workers working together, but people who share the same concerns and views to support each other, and who can
be critical in their engagement with each other. It is a group of people “who share a
concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they
interact regularly” (Wenger, 2009, p. 1). This group of people have the same
objective and work cooperatively to solve the problem. Cai 蔡东霞 and her
colleagues (2012, p. 135) employed another similar concept “学习共同体”
(“community of learners”) in their study to define the cooperative work between
educators and families:

幼儿园应该重视教师“学习共同体”，让教师与同事 教研人员 家
长能相互支持、帮助、配合与合作，分享经验，分享智慧，取长
补短，不断提高自己的教育教学水平，让教师在群体努力工作与
学习的气氛中认识到从事教育事业的价值和意义。(Cai 蔡东霞 et
al., 2012, p. 135)
The ECCs should pay attention to the educators’ “community of
learners”, where the education staff, their colleagues and parents
support, help, cooperate, share their experience and knowledge, and
make the best of both worlds. This improves their teaching. They may
realise the value and meaning of their educational career in this group-
working and learning atmosphere.

CoP is a broader concept than CoL, which emphasises the practice or problem
solving process of the community members. It does not limit participants in each
community, and happens everywhere (Wenger, 2002). This was a key concept in the
FIH Program. The literacy café involved families and educators and might be
considered as CoL where the educators who share and learn with their co-workers,
the families. In the educators’ CoL they support, cooperate, and share their
knowledge with young children’s families to improve their own teaching. All of
these make there the ECCs in Antofagasta community-centred places. In the FIH
Program, the literacy café worked as a CoL, developing knowledge of both EC
educators and the children’s families.

6.3 CHANGING THE LITERACY LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

In the FIH Program, Australian sociocultural approach brought different knowledge
to Chilean EC educators, which changed their roles and teaching practices. This was
manifested in changes to the literacy environment in the ECCs, which were created
by the EC educators. This section which has three parts presents an analysis of
evidence of the literacy environment and materials in the ECCs. The first part presents a vignette contains two sections. The first section analyses evidence of the changes in the literacy environment in the early childhood centres from 2008 to 2010. The other section analyses evidence of the changes in the literacy materials in these centres during the same period. Both of these vignettes were generated from selected artefacts produced by the FIH Program. In order to enrich this analyse of the changes in the literacy environment in the early childhood centres the key words used by the FIH team to describe the selected artefacts have been identified. Specially all of the words from the photo-elicitation with FIH team were entered into Wordle year by year to generate a series of images or word clouds. The different font sizes in the word clouds indicate the changes the FIH team observed in the literacy elements in the early childhood centres. The following section in which the FIH team members’ explained their experiences provides details of their understanding.

6.3.1 Vignette—Changes in the literacy environment and materials

This section analyses evidence of the development of the literacy environment in the early childhood centres from 2008 to 2010. In March 2008, before the FIH Program, began the diversity of literacy materials in the centres was at low level. There were not many literacy elements evident in the displays and furnishings in the centres. The buildings in the centres are painted in bright colours, and the images in the classrooms had various colours. Words that show the names or functions of objects or images were often used to help children with their literacy learning. The images on display were mostly plants, animals and images that reflect their everyday life and the geographic features of the city. Instruction signboards and children’s names could sometimes be found in the centres. In addition, the centres’ images had a noticeable gender balance. The paintings on the wall usually had both males and females. In these centres, different uniforms were provided for both children and educators. In the classroom, usually three to five children shared one table.

In early 2008, the centres’ literacy environment shows low diversity of literacy resources, which was seen by the FIH team as limiting the children’s opportunities for their literacy learning. The centres used various colours in their literacy environment. The local people’s living environment in the local community was
reflected in the centres (see Figure 6.1). The different signs only presented the
instructions for young children about life skills and also provided opportunities for
their literacy learning. Children’s uniforms may give young children a sense of
belonging to the centres, an acknowledgement of a shared identity and a feeling of
power and confidence. Educators’ different uniforms symbolised that their works
differed from that of the children, the children asked these educators for help and
safety.

However, by October 2008, the literacy environment in the early childhood centres
provided different types of materials on a variety of subjects (see Figure 6.2). Magazines, photographs, pictures, popular animations and materials from everyday

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The centres used various colours in their literacy environment. The local people’s living environment in the local community was reflected in the centres. (see 6.3.1 Vignette)

Figure 6.1: Photonovel 6 literacy learning environment March 2008

However, by October 2008, the literacy environment in the early childhood centres provided different types of materials on a variety of subjects (see Figure 6.2). Magazines, photographs, pictures, popular animations and materials from everyday
life with which the children were familiar were included in displays. Music and art could also be found. There has a significant change with the inclusion of children’s work in the classrooms. Displaying children’s work is a strategy that reports children’s recent progress and achievements to parents, give children confidence and a sense of belonging. The children’s and their family photographs were displayed on walls. The inclusion of children’s and family photographs in classroom displays may give the children a sense of safety and connection with their family. Children were seated sometimes in a circle around the educators, depend on the activities. The FIH Program was beginning to impact on the literacy learning environment. There were various resources and subjects broaden children’s knowledge of different forms of and aspects of literacy. The change of sitting plan also provided children more free space and opportunities to communicate with others.
By the year 2009, the literacy diversity in these learning environments increased further under the influence of the FIH Program. There were more information, knowledge and skills contained in the displays than in 2008. Children’s name tag and photographs were to be found in different places, so they could learn to recognise their names and the place where they keep their belongings. A major change was that educators recorded children’s daily life by camera and used these photographs in their classrooms displays (see Figure 6.3). They recorded and displayed photographs of children’s activities in the centres and excursions outside the centres. The
children’s photographs and work-sample were used thoughtful to create posters, and were organised systematically in combination with their paintings to document the children’s learning. Their work was displayed outside the classroom for all to see. Further, there was less exhibiting individual children’s work, and more group or team work. The various materials used in the display ranged from poster, photographs, paintings, children’s work-samples, daily routines and everyday life to fairy tales, information board, learning board, science, popular animations, attendance lists and staff information. Moreover, long bilingual texts were another feature. Some images and text were used to illustrate the classroom rules (see Figure 6.4). Children could understand what they should or should not do from reading the pictures. In 2009, there were more display featuring children’s everyday life and the local community environment.
The children’s photographs and work-sample were used thoughtful to create posters, and were organised systematically in combination with their paintings to document the children’s learning. (See 6.3.1 Vignette)

Figure 6.3: Photonovel 8 Literacy learning environment (1) 2009
Information panels showed the children’s recent behaviour in the centres (see Figure 6.5). There are panels engaged the families’ interest. Children’s preference for famous animations revealed the influence of global and popular culture. The children’s world was like a version of their future life, the fairy tales and story book available to assist them to prepare for the real word. Being an international language, some simple English was displayed along with the Spanish words in the centres (see Figure 6.6).
Information panels showed the children’s recent behaviour in the centres. There are panels engaged the families’ interest. (See 6.3.1 Vignette)

Figure 6.5: Photonovel 10 Literacy learning environment (3) 2009
Generally with continuing impact from the FIH Program the centres kept the improving of the diversity of literacy practices in the learning environment in 2010. The five centres provided colourful uniforms with images of sea animals for the children’s bedding. As Figure 6.7 shown, various signs, instructions, and toys were used. Information boards reminded everyone that these centres are places families share information and knowledge about the young children’s’ learning (see Figure 6.8).

Figure 6.6: Photonovel 11 Literacy learning environment (4) 2009

... the fairy tales and story book available to assist them to prepare for the real world. Being an international language, some simple English was displayed along with the Spanish words in the centres. (see 6.3.1 Vignette)
Instruction, signboards, … could sometimes be found in the centres … centres provided colourful uniforms… various signs, instructions, and toys were used. (see 6.3.1

Figure 6.7: Photonovel 12 literacy learning environment (1) 2010
This section has analysed evidence of the changes of the literacy materials presented in the selected artefacts of the five Chilean early childhood centres from 2008 to 2010. In 2008, the children’s literacy learning activities were books with text and images, musical instruments and materials from everyday life with which the children were familiar. In 2009, there was an increased variety in materials used to stimulate the children’s literacy learning. There were different types of flash cards, stationery, and various story books as well as books created by the educators or parents, equipment for handcrafts and science, building blocks, toys, dolls and...

Figure 6.8: Photonovel 13 literacy learning environment (2) 2010

Information boards reminded everyone that these centres are places families share information and knowledge about the young children’s learning. (See 6.3.1 Vignette)

Now wherever children look, they can see their own identity. Their identity of themselves within their family and communities has been strengthened. The children are encouraged to tell stories around those photographs (AECE 3, 2011, Kingswood)
computers. Some paintings and handcrafts made by the children were used in their literacy activities, including their play-based learning. In 2010, the centres provided some toys and real plants for children’s science learning. Posters and paintings of sea animals were also used to stimulate the children’s literacy learning. Books and computers were still being used as in 2009.

6.3.2 Literacy environment changes—Wordle images

This section shows the changes of literacy environment through the use of Wordle images. The literacy environment was described by the FIH team members in a series of key words and all of these were entered into Wordle. Then these words turn into a picture of word cloud while showed their frequency by the use of different font sizes according to their frequency. The word most often used in description of the literacy environment is the one in the largest font, the second most often word is the second largest font one. The less frequent words are in smaller font.

The literacy learning environment in this study refers the learning environment which was built in the five pilot ECCs for young children’s literacy learning. Literacy environment in ECCs is

… an environment that natures learning provides the necessary resources and time for investigative play and experimentation. It is one in which children are free and motivated to make choices and to explore for answers without feeling intimidated. (Danko-McGhee, 2009, p. 2)

A literacy learning environment is created to encourage young children’s learning by exploring, including “the development of critical thinking skills” (Danko-McGhee, 2009, p. 2) that and decision making skills. Figure 6.3.2.1 Wordle image for the literacy learning environment features in March 2008 in these five pilot ECCs in different period.

The largest word is the most frequently used word by the literacy environment description on the photographs, which means they were recorded as main literacy elements occurring in the ECCs at that time. Therefore the literacy environment of the Antofagasta ECCs at this time is focused on various colours, sign words and
signboard that telling children the names of different things, plants, animals, arts and children’s daily life (see Figure 6.9). The low density of the words shows the limited diversity of the literacy environment of these centres at that time.

![Figure 6.9 The literacy learning environment in March 2008](http://www.wordle.net/show/wrdl/4934192/08_March_Lit_Environment_01032012)

In Figure 6.10 children’s work has become the second largest word. It indicates the dramatic increase in children’s work in the centres during the initial period of the FIH Program. Similarly, the words, photographs and toys and imitation of real life are larger than they were in the first Wordle picture (Figure 6.3.2.1). This indicates their increase in the literacy environment. Animation, magazines and maths increased too. Colour was still the major focus of the environment.
Figure 6.10 The literacy learning environment in 2008 October

URL:
http://www.wordle.net/show/wrdl/4934204/08_Oct._Lit_Environment_01030212

In the year 2009, photographs and sign-words became the second largest word in this word cloud (see Figure 6.11). Therefore, this suggests that the FIH Program had a significant effect on becoming more significant feature of the literacy environment in the five ECCs. At the same time, children’s work, animals, sign words and arts were becoming the major elements. There were also more children’s name, families, English, information board and astronomy in the ECCs. The density of the words indicates the diversity of the literacy elements in the ECCs.
In 2010, the literacy environment tended to maintain the trend that emerged in 2009. “Colours” is still the largest word followed by animals, photos, sign-words, names, texts, door-board, signboard, instruction and children’s work (see Figure 6.12). These were the key features of the literacy environment in the ECCs in 2010. It would seem as a result of the FIH Program the ECCs had more and different forms of texts. The significant increase in children’s name, photographs and their work in the ECCs provided the children a sense of belonging and achievement. Elements related to children’s daily life became the import features as well.
6.3.3 Literacy environment changes—the FIH team members

The following part analyses evidence of the changes in the literacy environment based on Antofagasta FIH Program’s Australian team members’ experiences in the five ECCs (in Chile). The analysis of the FIH program’s artefacts shows evidence of the changes to the literacy environment in the early childhood centres. In the early childhood centres the diversity of the materials used in display increased and children’s work and photographs.

These early childhood centres had limited physical materials to provide to their children. Their geographic situation between the Atacama Desert and the Pacific Ocean also influenced the choice of materials used in the ECCs. They did not have fancy toys and physical materials like centres in Australia. An FIH Program team member explained:
They don’t have toys like we have toys. Like they don’t have paper, pencils, glue. … They can’t have the water play because there’s no lot of water around. They don’t have luxurious centres. (AECE 2, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p.17)

The early childhood centres did not have the same material base as the Australian ECCs. This was because of limitations of financial resources in their local communities and the desert in which Antofagasta is. Living near the desert reduced their opportunities to play with fresh water. But this was not reason to assume that they did not have literacy resources in the community, families and the early childhood centres. As the analysis in the Chapter 5 shows there were literacy resources, and the close connections developed with the local people strengthened their access to there.

An FIH Program team member critically reflected on the families’ contribution to the display and materials in the early childhood centres. The resources that the families provided reflected the literacy assets and activities in the community and families:

That was an important strategy for finding out about family literacies and valuing those. Bringing them into centres and using them to help design the childrens learning environments. The contents reflected all the different sorts of literacies there in the way people had recorded their lives. (AECE 1, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p.11-12)

The FIH Program use family and community resources to enhance the ECCs’ literacy environment, which provide them insights into the potential FoK in the community. These reflected local people’s everyday lives. The literacy environment in these ECCs needed to catch these young children’s interests to motivate their learning through exploring, because:

… images and objects should be displayed that relate to the interest of young children… environment and the way they are set up by teachers should become invitations for children to construct and explore knowledge (Danko-McGhee, 2009, p. 3)

The literacy materials and environment in the ECCs created under the guidance of the FIH Program showed how the young children’s interests and learning were being encouraged. “Children’s interests are stimulated by the experiences they engage in
with their families, communities, and culture” (Hedges et al., 2011, p. 187). Children’s literacy learning was being built on their families and community FoK, which was being used to further stimulate their literacy learning. The EC educators learnt to engage children’s interests as reflected in their families and community literacy learning by recreating the ECCs’ literacy environment. Their engagement of young children’s interests reinforces young children’s motivation of learning (Hedges et al., 2011). Hence it was necessary for these EC educators to reflect the young children’s families and community literacy learning in the ECCs to catch their interests.

A key change the FIH Program brought to the ECCs was an increase in the use of the children’s and their families’ photographs. These become part of the displays and documents in these five pilot ECCs. An Australia team member argued that this was crucial to the young children’s education:

This is one of the significant changes that I’ve noticed in the early childhood centres. Before the FIH program there weren’t many pictures of children’s and their families. Occasionally there were some. Now wherever children look, they can see their own identity. Their identity of themselves within their family and communities has been strengthened. The children are encouraged to tell stories around those photographs—what does this mean? What it’s about? During my last trip I had an experience where the educators had made a little photographic book for every child. They asked the families to send some photographs and the teachers put them in these books. The children got the books out and brought them to us. … “That’s me. That’s me. Me papa, me tia”. … If you don’t feel you are worth anything and it’s very hard to feel your learning is worthwhile. So I reckon this identity information is a really important part of the FIH Program’s sociocultural approach to literacy. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p.34)

The photographs of the children with their families in centre display and documents provided more literacy learning experiences for the children. With these photographs children had more opportunities to tell the stories about their families, and to interact with others. Meanwhile, these photographs revealed the ways “they related to and distinguish between individuals and groups in their social relations and with other individuals or groups” (Ahn, 2011, p. 415). It is important for children to know who they are and have a sense of belonging. Their photographs showed their relations with their families, their centres and their family members. In the FIH Program the
young children’s photographs with their families encouraged them to tell stories about their families, which was helpful in developing their speaking, story-telling skills. Their literacy knowledge grew with their family relationships. Some of the young children already had a sense of belonging of a family and themselves as a family member by excitedly showing their photographs with their families to Australian FIH team members.

6.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter analysed evidence of Chilean EC educators’ changing in their roles and their teaching practices due to their learning of Australian sociocultural theory. This export of Australian sociocultural theory introduced new knowledge about ECE to them, while ignoring their own theoretical tools and their ability of critique. As a result of this knowledge export via the FIH Program their role extended to bringing community and families’ FoK to children’s learning and connecting families, community and ECCs. Their role change that reflected in their pedagogical changes raised some challenges for them. They had to learn to balance children’s different FoK and curriculum, and recognise its impact on children’s multiple identities. They were also asked to develop deeper understanding of scaffolding to provide better assistance for children. Chilean EC educators’ also learnt through their teaching practices and their participation of different CoP. They developed and learnt from the knowledge exchange with other members in CoP, but only if they provided critical feedback to others and kept the CoP continuously. The influence of Australian sociocultural approach on Chilean EC educators’ knowledge and role changing also manifested in their creation of new literacy environments in the ECCs. The next chapter analyses evidence of changes in the literacy activities and EC educators’ pedagogies in the ECCs based on their learning of Australian sociocultural approaches.
CHAPTER SEVEN LITERACY TEACHING AND LEARNING AS SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

7.0 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter analysed the evidence of the Australian members’ report on Chilean EC educators’ knowledge development, their role changing and its influence on their teaching and the literacy learning environment in the ECCs as a result of their learning of Australian sociocultural approach. This chapter analyses evidence of changes on the literacy activities as the Chilean EC educators became familiar with the notion of “literacy as social practice” (Dickie, 2011, p. 247) because of learning Australian sociocultural approach in the Program. The first section of this chapter analyses the evidence of young children’s learning process, in terms of how they acquire the new knowledge. Then the second section of this chapter focuses on analysing the evidence of the young children’s sociocultural literacy practices. The third section presents an analysis of changes in the EC educators’ literacy pedagogies as evident in the ECCs. Due to the educators’ learning of Australian sociocultural approach, a significant change in their pedagogies was evident in the increase in different forms of play which reflect the children’s daily life. The last section of this chapter analyses an important aspect of their literacy activity, namely scaffolding.

7.1 CHILDREN’S LEARNING PROCESS

To investigate young children’s literacy teaching and learning, this chapter starts by presenting an analysis of the evidence of their learning process. The Australian FIH Program team members’ understanding of literacy learning was based on sociocultural theory, which differed from what they observed among the Chilean ECCs.
7.1.1 Sociocultural perspective on young children’s learning

An Australian team member explained the FIH Program’s operating belief with regard to young children learning through their interactions with their environment and people:

Children learn through their interaction with the environment, through their senses and through their human and physical environment. So I subscribe very much to the sociocultural view and the co-constructed view of learning. Children learn sufficient to increase their knowledge and understanding about the way that the social world work through their engagement with others and through the kind of careful scaffolding, about how to be cautious and non-cautious that in their environment. (AECE 3, Kingswood, 2012)

The Australian FIH Program wanted the young children in the five pilot ECCs in Antofagasta to learn through their social activities through interacting with their surrounding and other people. Families and EC educators are responsible to engage their community and family FoK into children’s learning, such as the different forms of play analysed in section 7.4. Their everyday social activities includes shopping with their families, going to a restaurant with their families, going to the church, and visiting their friends and family members. The FIH Program regarded these everyday social experiences in their community and families as significant in young children’s learning, either as learning experience or some of their further learning in the ECCs.

Examples that explain the young children’s learning through communication, interaction and scaffolding were provided:

I’ve seen children explore a camera, to work out its physical properties. That I’ve seen them experiment or take risks to see how to use it. I’ve seen them achieve mastery of equipment like a camera through interaction with an adult and by asking probing question or drawing attention to a feature of it. The educator does not actually show the children how to use it. ...You can also see that with babies. I saw babies in an ECC nursery in Antofagasta with a small toy go through stages of learning by interacting with physical objects ... They act on the object and increase their capacity to use it in ways of entertain themselves to communicate with others. (AECE 3, Kingswood, 2012)
Children learnt how to use the digital cameras by their own exploration with the EC educators providing necessary scaffolding. They started exploring the physical features of the camera, then tested different functions. The educators observed the children’s exploration and scaffolded them when they became frustrated. Instead of showing them how to use it, the EC educators scaffolded them by asking questions to motivate the children’s thinking and moving from the known to the unknown to the new known. The progressive educators know that teaching “is not about transmitting knowledge, but enabling another to learn” (Pelletier, 2012, p. 615). Those children, whom have often seen others use digital cameras in their everyday life, mastered it quickly, because they already finished the first stage of the scaffolding processed by observing others modelling this practice. Young children learn from interactions with people, and with objects in their surroundings. The challenge for educators is to build on what they already known.

Children learn new knowledge through different ways. Australian team member explain the understanding of children’s learning that the FIH Program was promulgating:

… they learn it in many ways every day. They learn by doing, by seeing, by hearing, they are learning by playing. They are learning by trying to pick things out. They are learning by being told things. They are learning in multiple ways. (AECE 4, Kingswood, 2012)

Children learn from their observing, practice and play. By seeing and hearing, young children observe other people’s practices in their community, and communicate with them; by doing, they testify what they learn through their observation (Ranciere, 2009). Play is an important teaching/learning strategy, because “Play is essentially a form of communication and with the child’s permission adults can enter their fantasy world.” (Frydenberg et al., 2012, p. 17). As part of the FIH Program the Chilean EC educators were expected to participate in and observe the young children’s interactions, and provide appropriate scaffolding to assist children’s learning. Australian team introduced Australian sociocultural approaches to the Chilean EC educators to change what Australian educators saw as instructional teaching. This brought them different knowledge about ECE by exporting Australian understandings of “good teacher” and “effective learning”. However, given the “Euro-American theory [that] is privileged in Australian teacher education”(Singh, 2013, p. 145), Chilean educators’ theoretical tools were not developed, tested or valued in this transnational professional development program. An important
excerption, however, was the Literacy Café. Andreotti (2009, p. 217) argues that “research on, with, for or by indigenous people should be on indigenous people’s terms and be carried out for their benefit”. Therefore, it does seem reasonable to argue that this Australia-Chile Program should include more and deeper Chilean intellectual cooperation, and for this the inadequacies of Australian sociocultural theory would have to be redressed.

### 7.1.2 Teaching in Chilean ECCs

The previous section analysed Australian team members’ sociocultural perspective on children’s learning, which differed from their observation of the Chilean EC educators’ practices. An Australian team member reflected her observation of Chilean educators’ teaching in the ECCs:

> It’s certainly clear in the pilot FIH project in the centres we observed that there is a quite a strong commitment to instructional teaching. By instructional teaching I mean it’s very didactic. I saw children sit in a circle and being taught through rote learning activities or a question and answer routine about properties of the word, colours, names, labels and so on. Some of our photographic records that teacher at the front teaching, teaching children what to know. What I understand is necessary for the effective learning is that teacher is on the side structuring, facilitating, understanding, engaging … (AECE 3, 2nd, Kingswood, 2012)

Chilean EC educators’ literacy teaching was reported as been as ‘instructional teaching’, that is a teacher-centred, knowledge transmission teaching. The Chilean EC educator was reported as standing in front the children to present them the knowledge they had to learn (figure 7.3.2.2). These learning activities were characterised as rote learning, which is seen answering from memory routine questions. These children were reported as having limited opportunities to learn through exploration and communication with others. Didactic instructional teaching differs from the tenets of both sociocultural (Edwards, 2007b) perspective of learning and Ranciere’s (2009) perspective of learning.
7.2 SOCIOCULTURAL LITERACY PRACTICES

The previous section illustrated contested perspective on how young children acquire new knowledge. For young children, literacy learning is very important as it is a determinate element in young children’s future academic achievement (Gettinger & Stoiber, 2007). Chile, Australia and China are concerned about improving the literacy development of young children, particularly those from vulnerable families (Fleer & Raban, 2007). Children’s different social and cultural practices in their community and families can be related to their literacy learning in ECCs. The digital camera experience in the previous section pointed to this possibility. Therefore, this section analyses the evidence of young children’s different literacy practices in their everyday lives.

7.2.1 Sociocultural literacy practices

First, this section analyses evidence of the Australian team members’ understandings and illustrations of young children’s sociocultural literacy practices in the FIH Program. They emphasise young children’s literacy practices in their family and community, and acknowledge the diversity of literacy resources and learning pathways. Literacy learning is not just about conventions of reading and writing words, or learning from textbooks.

Sociocultural literacy practices encouraged by the FIH Program to have children learn literacy through their everyday interactions with the literacy resources in their families and communities. Another Australian team member offered the following definition and examples:

It’s about those experiences in different families and communities. There are many different experiences that children have with literacy in their families and communities. Those experiences might be with books or other forms of print or with images or with spoken language, or they could be involving technologies. Sociocultural perspective on literacy means that we look broadly at the practices with a range of texts and different ways of interacting with those texts. This means valuing different ways that children engage with literacy rather than saying there is one pathway. (AECE 1, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p.3-4)
In the FIH Program the concept of sociocultural literacy practices recognises the different literacy practices engaged in by the young children’s families and community. The different literacy materials and activities in the young children’s families and community (such as books, print materials, images, signs, oral communication and technologies) have to be extended through the ECCs learning resources and pathways (Fleer & Raban, 2007). Their literacy knowledge children learnt through in their everyday life in their community in Antofagasta to be drawn upon and extended by EC educators.

The technologies that are part of children’s daily life also reflect the influence of globalisation, especially popular culture and global consumer culture (see Chapter 5). Therefore it is necessary for EC educator to consider young children’s literacy practices within a local/global framework. An Australian FIH Program team member highlighted young children’s sociocultural literacy practices in the wider communities:

The defining feature of sociocultural approaches to literacy is that they are grounded in children’s realities. They are based on the connections between the learning that the children are experiencing and their local or wider communities that connections are clear and there are ways of children understanding. How these connections are been made is important. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 29-30)

Young children’s sociocultural literacy practices are embedded in the real life of their local/global community. The FIH Program encouraged the Chilean EC educators to use these to build on the relationships between what children need to learn and their experiences in their local/global community. That required educators to recognise the richness of these literacy resources, and to know how to connect these literacy activities in the children’s daily lives to their literacy learning in the ECCs, The FIH Program build this to be a crucial factor in Chilean EC educators choosing local/global literacy resources and activities (see local/global in Chapter 5).

Another Australian team member provided more to support that young children learn through the diverse sociocultural literacy practices in their local/global community. She identified some sociocultural literacy practices in the local/global community

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that are available for the children EC educators to use with young children as part of the FIH Program:

The sociocultural approach … [is] about how the child is related to their family and their community and then the [wide] neighbourhood, where their mother or father works or the community the church they go to … literacy learning happens in that wide community. So the literacy is about how I learn what these signs mean and … how I might learn within my local area. … When I read the signs I learn about what the sign means in a shopping centre when I go there … children are really interested in popular culture and learn these words really quickly. (AECE 2, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p.18-19)

They don't read the “word”, but they read the sign. … in social activities they learn to recognise different reading materials. Their literacy is not just about learning words and numbers. … It’s meaning making like understanding this book … I’m part of the community. … They tell you “ok I understanding the little ‘green man’ means that I can walk” and a little red light says “no, I can’t go” … And things like the stories and hearing the stories and retelling the stories. That’s part of their literacy practices. Multi-literacies are not only reading but understanding what the picture means, what symbol means, what text means or what the music, sound, gesture means or what the computer says, what the popular culture says. (AECE 2, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown)

For young children who are too young to read the word, their sociocultural literacy practices focus on knowing different images, signs and signals (such as traffic lights and logos), recognising different print materials and text (such as books and commercials), hearing and retelling stories, different social activities (such as go to the church, shopping, using computer) in their local/global community (Fleer & Raban, 2007). Through these various sociocultural literacy practices, Chilean EC educators are meant to have more opportunities to develop these children’s literacy knowledge so they may become effective literate. Because “becoming literate involves more than reading and writing …” and also understanding the “culture, values [and] beliefs” in this local/global community in Antofagasta (Compton-Lilly, 2006, p. 60). Children are expected to obtain these by a Chilean EC educator using different sociocultural literacy practices. However, popular culture icons and technology elements from their wider community may contain different values and beliefs (see Chapter 5). These need to be considered by EC educators when they creating literacy activities for young children.
Young children’s literacy learning starts before they can really ‘read’ and ‘write’. An Australian FIH Program team member explained young children’s literacy behaviour:

I’ve chosen this photograph, because it’s a baby reading a hard covered book. It interrupts that idea that children only learn literacy when they go to school. So this baby already knows how to hold a book, and the baby is six months old. He’s holding the book correctly. The baby’s eyes are moving from left to right which, in the language the child is brought up, is what print does. So there are already quite well established literacy behaviours. A lot of remedial reading doesn't take account that. It’s about learning a suitable skill. Literacy does not just really only begin at four or five. That picture invites other discussions about the ways people interact with that baby, not only the book but it’s the rhymes and sounds. All build awareness of sound, rhythms, syllables all coming together. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 36)

This young child in Figure 7.1 is exposed to knowledge required to be a literate. Although he cannot really read the words on the book, he already obtains the reading habits in their community, “Pretend reading is real reading” (Fleer & Raban, 2007, p. 9). This early literacy behaviour provides more opportunities for him to learn other literacy skills, and prepares him for more literate performances in the ECCs. The FIH Program argued that, it is necessary for the Chilean EC educators to start their children’s literacy practices early, within a rich literacy environment.

Figure 7.1: Photonovel 14 – baby reading
Another Australian FIH Program team member advanced the proportion that young children’s sociocultural literacy practices occur through their everyday lives, and their formal schooling:

One key fact we know is that literacy is a social practice that happens right throughout people’s daily lives. So it doesn’t just happen in formal schooling settings. Literacy happens at home, happens in the community, and happens during almost everything you are doing every day. Literacy is all around you and you do it all the time. So it is a very broad concept of literacy. (AECE 4, 14th Sep 2012, Kingswood)

In this vulnerable community in Antofagasta, the FIH Program team found that the FoK of the young children’s families and community was not reflected in their formal schooling in the ECCs. The Australian FIH Team wanted the Chilean EC educators to improve their learning by building on young children’s “out-of-school literacies” (which is included in children’s sociocultural literacy practices), and “make effective connections to school literacy” (Dickie, 2011, p. 248). Consider their examples of young children’s sociocultural literacy practices in their daily lives:

In terms of literacy learning and sociocultural literacy practices it would be about seeing and practicing the literacies that you go about all the sort of things you doing in your daily life including your schooling but also you’re shopping your cooking and all of the ways that we make meaning from the world. Reading symbols, listening to songs, looking at the computer, having images flashing all around all the time and how we take meaning for all the things we singing and hearing and feeling and touching in the world. (AECE 4, 14th Sep 2012, Kingswood)

Young children learn through their observation and participant in their sociocultural literacy practices. This can be analysed from Rogoff’s (1995) three planes framework and Ranciere’s (2009) concept of ‘seeing, saying, and doing’ (see 6.1.2.2 in Chapter 6). To analyse from Rogoff’s (1995) three planes, namely “community, interpersonal and personal plane” (p. 46), the Chilean young children learn through their observation or participant of different sociocultural literacy practices in their local/global community, and interaction with others. To interpreted from Ranciere’ view, a child “observes what is before her, says what she has seen, and verifies what she has said” (Ranciere, 2009, p. 10). They learn their sociocultural literacy through observation/seeing, interactions/saying and practice/doing in their everyday social
activities such as shopping, cooking, listening to music, using computer and seeing the images.

Young children’s literacy learning can be viewed as a “social and cultural practice” (Dickie, 2011, p. 248). Wenger (2002) argues that young children’s literacy learning as ‘social participation’ (p. 4), which refers to young children’s active participation in the practices in their local/global social communities and builds up their multiple connection in these communities. The FIH Program emphasis children’s sociocultural literacy on their social and cultural practices in their local/global community, and they develop their literacy through their participation in these practices. In their learning process they construct their multiple connections in relation to this local/global community in Antofagasta.

To parallel the concept of sociocultural literacy practices with Pennycook’s (2010) concept of ‘language as local practice’ their relationship can be summarised as the Chinese concept of 相得益彰 ³² xiāng dé yì zhāng, which means bringing out the best in each other to complement each other. Pennycook’s (2010) concept considers “language as a practice … an activity … as a material part of social and cultural life” (p. 2). It emphasises people’s social activities and draws attention to the social nature of the language, rather than the linguistic features of language (Nevez, 2010). The educational implications concept of sociocultural literacy practices supplements and highlight young children’s everyday social and cultural practices. However, the latter focuses on the local/global nexus, while the former commits to language and literacy education. This study extends the former – sociocultural literacy practices in relation to young children’s seeing, learning and identity in their local/global community.

7.2.2 Critical literacy learning in the community

In the FIH Program the concept of sociocultural literacy practices (Perez, 2004) and FoK (Gonzalez et al., 1995) were used to extend the Chilean EC educators’ use of the young children’s daily social activities in their literacy learning. When their local practices meet the global force of popular culture, how this might be manifested in

³²相得益彰 (xiāng dé yì zhāng) 相 xiāng means inter, one another, each other. 得 dé means obtain, receive, gain. 益 yì refers to benefits, profit. 彰 zhāng means evident.
their local/global practices and their literacy learning? The FIH Program saw it as important to facilitate the children’s critical literacy learning in their families and this local/global community in Antofagasta. Australian Program team members pointed this out especially with regard to gender roles:

Engaging in critical literacy with children happens in some families, but not necessarily in all families. They talk about gender roles, culture, identity and consumerism as part of family literacy practices. This is a very important part of literacy in early childhood settings. In the FIH Program we looked at how the Chilean EC educators might use children’s interest in popular culture, not just accept it without engaging in some critical thinking. (AECE 1, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p.4)

To question things like, why are all the girls in pink and why are the boys in blue? Are the miners all shown as men where is the gender bias. Do we question that? What else do we question? That is really important for the FIH Program. Learning critical literacy is part of multi-literacies. (AECE 2, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p. 26)

Critical literacy in some young children’s families relates to deconstruction of gender roles, and consumption. The FIH Program make critical literacy margined to sociocultural literacy practices. Here critical literacy refers to develop young children’s critical thinking. The Chilean EC educators were encouraged to have young children engaged in critical thinking as part of their literacy teaching/learning about popular culture. They asked the young children to

“analysis and critique of the relationship among texts, language, power, social groups and social practices, and shows us ways of looking at texts to question and challenge the attitudes, values and beliefs that lie between the surface” (Maclellan, 2008 cited in Brooks & Normore, 2010, p. 62).

Learning from everyday life does not mean accepting everything without question. Young children may learn from their family and community that can question what they have been told about girls and may have different opinions on important social issues such as this. Not only the gender issue, but the ‘dark funds of knowledge’ (e.g. violence, drugs and suicide) (Zipin, 2009) in their community and families could be engaged in their critical literacy.
7.3 CHANGE OF THE LITERACY ACTIVITIES

The concept of sociocultural literacy practices was meant to expand the Chilean EC educators to teach young children’s literacy with engaging the FoK in their community and families. The Australian FIH team would to inspire the Chilean EC educators to change their literacy teaching so as to engage the FoK in the children’s community and families as part of their ECC literacy activities. Therefore this section analyses evidence of the changes in the literacy activities and EC educators’ pedagogies in the ECCs in Antofagasta as a result of the interaction by the Australian FIH team. The first part of this section (7.3.1) is a vignette that summarises the change of literacy activities recorded in the photographs produced by the FIH Program team.

7.3.1 Vignette—literacy activity changes

A significant change in 2008 was that young children in the early childhood centres in Antofagasta experienced role play for their first time with the guidance of their Chilean EC educators. Usually one educator read or told a vivid story to a group of children, and educator supported her by sitting near the children. Sometimes they read story books with the children or played with the children. Occasionally, the children were asked to participate when the educator was modelling or asking questions.

In 2009, the children made handprints and handcraft work with their educators’ guidance. Some children read a story book in front of their peers. Sometimes the children engaged play-based learning with educators, and sometimes with their peers. Their interactions during play were important for the children’s learning. Because when they were playing or interacting with others, they usually choose what interested them, they would actively engage in the learning activities and learn from others. During the play, the children shared their knowledge and skills with other children, helping them to accomplish their play, including through talking. Feeding the young children was also part of the interactions between educators and young children.
In 2010, there were even more of such interactions between children, educators and their peers. Children acted under educators’ instructions and guidance. The children played and worked together with their peers. Some children played by themselves with toys or dolls.

7.3.2 Literacy pedagogical changes

As presented in the vignette above the increase of the diversity of the literacy activities was an evident result of the FIH Program’s interactions. This section analyses the evidence of the Australian team’s reports of the Chilean EC educators’ pedagogical changes. The major changes they reported in the Chilean educators’ pedagogies in the ECCs made more group work, interaction and play. An Australian FIH Program team member pointed out:

Changes grouping and interactions could be seen very clearly in the photographs. They weren’t doing a lot of play before. Now they were using play much more and we were encouraging play with literacy material. … we set up a flea market that was a play experience. (AECE 1, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p.9)

Grouping, play and interacting with young children were not a focus for the Chilean EC educators’ literacy teaching practices prior to the FIH Program. As the knowledge of sociocultural literacy practices and FoK was learnt among the Chilean EC educators by in the FIH Program, they started to have more interactions with children, divide the class into groups and encourage the interactions between the groups, and set up play experiences for children in the ECCs. The flea market play mirrors their shopping practices in their local community (see Figure 7.2). “Studies of literacy as social practice emphasise individuals’ interactions with other people ...” (Dickie, 2011, p. 247). As a result these young children had more chances to communicate and interact with others through the work of the EC educators, especially their increased use of their play-based learning and small group work. These changes emancipated the young children because the EC educators’ began to see them as active participants/learners (Ranciere, 2009).
Young children’s play is categorised into two main types: “interpersonal and object play. Interpersonal play implies participation in social interactions, such as face-to-face routines, social games, and physical play. Object play involves exploration and concentration on a toy, its functions and properties” (Sumaroka & Bornstein, 2009, p. 294). In the FIH Program young children’s market play activity was interpersonal play that involved social interactions with other participants (peers or adults). Their experimented learning with the digital cameras and interactions with toys (see
section 7.1) were object plays. Both kinds of play contribute to young children “psychological growth…; cognitive maturation…; mastery…; communicative…, and cultural… development” (Sumaroka & Bornstein, 2009, p. 294).

Another Australian team member provided some photographs showing the EC educators’ pedagogical changes in the ECCs which has said to be a result of the FIH Program. These photographs show a comparison of the Chilean EC educators’ teaching before and after the FIH Program. She pointed to the increase in group work, interactions and play, and also noted other changes in the Chile EC educators’ teaching:

Initially I saw children sitting in chairs and listening as the teacher presented information to them. The children were passive. … Later when I went to the centres I could already see some differences happening. What I started to see were interactions occurring, engaging in they had set up free play. I started to see evidence of children engaging in literacy practices increased in the early childhood environment. … There was a difference between the children sitting on the chairs and children moving around the group, a group of children interacting and teachers’ scaffolding learning, children participating, making, [and] doing. Children were part of the practices for developing their literacy. This was a real change. (AECE 2, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p. 20-21)

This Australian team observed pedagogical changes in the Chilean EC educators in the FIH Program. The amount of play, small group work and interaction increased. There were changes in the young children’s seating plan and increased use of scaffolding by the educators. Another Australian team member pointed to the FIH Program photographic records of the Chilean EC educators’ teaching before the interaction. She provides more examples to illustrate what she saw as the Chilean EC educators’ practices before the Program:

Even very young children were sitting on very small chairs, I am talking about two year old children sitting on a chair. An animal perhaps a kitten or a frog or some animal was taken around one at a time to each child. There could be 20 or 30 children sitting in a circle. Everybody had a touch of it. Turn taking was communicated as a social skill. Waiting your turn, wait quietly. (AECE 3, 2nd, 2012, Kingswood)

So traditional practice in Chilean has been circle tied with children being recently passive, learning quite effectively. But it is really opportunities of
the Program to provide the educators interesting … children’s active participates in their learning. (AECE 3, conference, 29th June, 2012, Terrigal)

When reviewing her observation, she also noticed differences between the Chile EC educators’ practices and the tenet of a sociocultural approach to teaching:

A teacher used a puppet to retell a story as a performance but the children were passive. What the social constructive approach would do is to encourage the children to be actors and participants in the puppet show. (AECE 3, 2nd, 2012, Kingswood)

The fixed sitting plan symbolised ‘passive learning’. The young children sat in a circle and waited for their turn to touch the animal (see Figure 7.3). On one hand, they learnt the social skill required for patience and turn-taking, which is important in their community. On the other hand, this activity positioned the teacher as the one who “has the knowledge” and the children “learn what the teacher wants them to learn” (AECE 3, 2nd, 2012, Kingswood). In another class, young children watched a Chilean EC educator perform a puppet show. In this case the Chilean EC educator was the leading actor in the class; the owner of the knowledge who delivered it to the passive consumers; the young children were passive viewers of the teachers’ performance. They were receivers of the knowledge who “没有或没有完全参与到教学中来 (watch the educators’ performance, they are not or not completely be engaged in the teaching)” (Hu 胡芳, 2011). The sociocultural approach encourages young children to participate in social interactions and literacy practices (Fleer & Raban, 2007). Ranciere argues that “The spectator also acts, like the pupil or scholar.” (Ranciere, 2009, p. 13). Young children should not be the spectators for the educators’ teaching performance. Literacy teaching is not about transmitting educators’ knowledge to young children, but is meant to enable them to learn (Pelletier, 2012). The Chilean EC educators were encouraged by the FIH Program to have the young children to interact with others and participate in literacy practices. The Australian FIH team initiated changes the seats plan by dividing the children into small groups and scaffolding the learning. This provided the children more opportunities to learn through exploration and interactions with others.
“… sit in a circle and being taught through rote learning activities or a question and answer routine …” (AECE 3, 2nd, Kingswood, 2012)

“A teacher used a puppet to retell a story as a performance but the children were passive.” (AECE 3, 2nd, 2012, Kingswood)

“… children sitting in a circle. Everybody had a touch of it. Turn taking was communicated as a social skill. Waiting your turn … quietly.” (AECE 3, 2nd, 2012, Kingswood)

Figure 7.3: Photonovel 16 Teaching in Chilean ECCs before the FIH Program
7.4 PLAY

The Australian FIH team members observed changes in the Chilean EC educators’ pedagogies of their interventions. There were more group work, interactions, play and scaffolding, as a result of Australian FIH Program team pointing out their importance for children literacy learning and having children actively engaged in literacy activities. This section analyses the evidence of the Australian FIH team members’ views on young children’s play in the five pilot ECCs in Antofagasta. In the ECCs the children engaged in different forms of play based on their social and cultural experiences in their community in Antofagasta. The examples that the FIH team members provided were mining, election, market, local shop and hospital. Most of the evidence were illustrated and supported by reference to corresponding photographs which the interviewees – the Australian team members selected except the hospital play.

7.4.1 Mining play

The mining play (see Figure 7.4) is a good example that shows the Chilean EC educators’ understanding of the concept of FoK (Gonzalez et al., 1995) advocated by the FIH Program, and its manifestation in their literacy activities in the ECCs. An Australian FIH Program member explained how the FoK in their community was used in young children’s sociocultural literacy practices:

In this photograph the children were playing outside with rocks, dirt, sand and a wheel barrow. They dressed in mining helmets and were wearing some other apparatus to do with mining, breathing gear, and so on. This really reflects the ‘funds of knowledge’ that many children in this area have accept to. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 32)
Mining is the key industry of Antofagasta. Not surprisingly it was part of the young children’s play, their literacy environment and literacy activities in the ECCs:

A wall panel was made by the children. It was drawings of different aspects of the miners who were trapped down the ground. That is the 30 miners in Chile who were trapped down in the ground for a couple of months. That disaster had relevance for many of these children. It was on the news all the time. They would have family members or know people who were also miners in the Atacama Desert. The funds of knowledge in this panel was interesting for the depth of knowledge that children were showing. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 32)

Mining is the major industry in the Atacama Desert in where Antofagasta is located. The mining disaster in the south of the country had an impact on the local children’s lives and on their literacy development. Many of the young children’s families were involved in mining related service work. They could see miners on television wearing mining apparatus. They could have some opportunities to hear conversations, news or see print materials about mining. It is their FoK available through the local/global media, which the Chilean EC educators were encouraged to relate to their everyday sociocultural literacy learning. These FoK and literacy practices about mining in Chile and families experiences were used to gather their interest for educational purpose. (Hedges et al., 2011).
The Chilean EC educators recognised and engaged them in their literacy activities in their ECCs. Young children did the mining play, and drew pictures about the mining disaster in Chile. As they engaged with the knowledge from their community and families, they developed “the sense of who they are, they define their own identity” (Ashton, 2005, p. 35). Through these sociocultural literacy practices that a local/global media event, they obtain a sense of belonging to a local/global community (Commonwealth-of-Australia, 2009). The EC educators brought the community knowledge via local/global media to the ECCs and connected it with their literacy learning and identity development.

7.4.2 Election play

Another example of bringing the community FoK to the ECCs was the election play. An FIH Program team member showed a photograph of a local election which was said to reflect the richness of literacy resources available in the local community. She explained how this FoK was used by the Australia FIH team to change the learning activities in the ECCs:

The words that the children used showed quite deep understanding of what was going on in that particular event, that came from the sociocultural approach and funds of knowledge. This … image … was a classroom activity taking place at the time of the mayoral elections. The posters for each of the candidates for the election are community or environmental literacy that the children were surrounded with. These everyday events maximise the learning opportunities for children. Based on real life, it had something which would make children into active citizens. Being aware of these big events, and the impact of these events providing learning to deconstruct. … They become mathematical activities. Every dot represented a vote. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 32-33)

For example, to have children pretend to be some of these people and to design their own flyers for themselves. Developing their visual literacy as if they were going to get people vote for them what would they put on their poster. So there are many possible learning activities. Play activities get children to make speeches, use their imagination and so on. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 33)

The mayoral election event Antofagasta provided various opportunities for the Chile EC educators to provide young children sociocultural literacy practices. As presented in Figure 7.5 in the community there were different print materials (such as posters)
about this event and it was in the mass media (TV, newspaper) as well as people’s conversation. These resources were all available for these young children to access via their community and families. Based on current political affairs in the local community, the Australia FIH team encouraged the EC educators to create various literacy learning activities for children to develop their diverse literacy knowledge. Imitating the real election, the young children did similar activities such as making election flyers, posters, speeches and voting. These literacy activities developed the young children’s multiple literacies in terms of oral literacy, visual literacy and numeracy. This election play reflects the real social event in their community and allows young children to practice and testify their understanding and ideas (Ashton, 2005; Wood & Bennett, 1998). Moreover, they started to understand the election process, their rights as citizens via play-based learning. These sociocultural literacy practices may help them to become active citizens in their future (Commonwealth-of-Australia, 2009).

“… have children pretend to be some of these people and to design their own flyers for themselves. Developing their visual literacy as if they were going to get people vote for them what would they put on their poster.” (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 33)

“The posters for each of the candidates for the election are community or environmental literacy that the children were surrounded with. These everyday events maximise the learning opportunities for children. Based on real life, … make children into active citizens. … They become mathematical activities.” (AECE 3, 2011, Kingswood)

Figure 7.5: Photonovel 18– election poster in community and election play
7.4.3 Other forms of plays

The previous section analysed evidence of the Australian educators’ report of young children’s mining and election play in ECCs in Antofagasta. This section analyses evidence of other play-based literacy learning activities in the ECCs. However the Australian team members were not able to provide artefacts for some forms of play the mentioned during the photo-elicitation.

For instance, an Australian team member was not able to provide an artefact of the children doing the market play she observed in their ECCs. However, she presented a photograph of the children’s real market experience:

… With the market, that was using funds of knowledge. Rather than doing a supermarket that wasn’t part of the children’s everyday experience the educators tried to do a local market. They set up a little market store like that the children experience in their communities; like the market they went to. (AECE 1, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, pp.9-10)

As the Australian team member stated that these Chilean young children were more familiar with their market rather than a supermarket, although they have both in their community. Nevertheless, “literacy development take place in everyday activities” (Fleer & Raban, 2007, p. 8). Therefore, to connect their everyday activities in local market to their literacy learning in ECCs, the Chilean EC educators created market play rather than a supermarket play. In these literacy activities the children could learn to recognise different print materials, numbers, money, products, and logos, as well as communicating and negotiating effectively with others.

Like the market play, the Chilean EC educators set up shop play activities for the young children in the ECCs in Antofagasta. An Australian FIH Program team member showed an artefact of the young children playing at a shop:

These are examples of the children being involved in playing out everyday experiences of going to the local shop. They made their own their pretend money. As part of the learning experiences they make the money, they have to think about numerals and what their real money does look like. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 33)
The Chilean FIH team EC educators created local shop play for these young children, which reflect their local shop literacy experience (see Figure 7.6). The children were asked about their real literacy experience in shop in their community. Once again they may need to think about what the money look like, different logos for different products, colours, numbers and signs.

Figure 7.6: Photonovel 19 – real shop and shop play

In these five pilot Chilean ECCs in Antofagasta, the educators created different settings for children to participate in different plays in response to the FIH Program. An Australian team member mentioned the “children playing in hospitals and taking on those kinds of roles, but actually couldn’t find them” (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood). During photo-elicitation the interviewees sometime mentioned event for which they had no artefacts such as this hospital play. The Chilean educators used their knowledge to set up the hospital play, using what the children had observed or
experienced and transfer it in the hospital in the play. The children developed a
deep knowledge of the hospitals and practiced literacy through this form of play. They learned from imitation about real life, and what they learnt from the play could be used in the real life.

The children engaged in different forms of play in the ECCs in Antofagasta as a result of the FIH program. Doing these different plays reportedly motivated the young children in part because they “cannot fail in play as there are no rights and wrongs” (Wood & Bennett, 1998, p. 19). They reportedly may become more confident and willing to participate in play and learn through their interactions with their peers and adults. At the same time play provides a “zones of proximal development in which children can progress from their actual development level to a higher potential level” (Wood & Bennett, 1998, p. 19). However, this required the Chilean EC educators to observe children’s learning (Wood & Bennett, 1998), and scaffold their to the high levels when necessary. Therefore the next section analyses evidence of another important change in the Chile EC educators’ teaching brought about by key concepts introduced by the FIH Program namely scaffolding and zone of proximal development (ZPD).

7.5 SCAFFOLDING AND ZPD

As the Chilean EC educators changed their literacy activities in the ECCs, they were encouraged by the FIH Program Australian team to observe and interact with the young children, in order to see the opportunities to scaffold their learning to achieve a higher level. Thus, this section analyses what is scaffolding and its closely related concept of ZPD, and how the Australian FIH team members saw them manifested in children’s learning.

7.5.1 Scaffolding

This section analyses evidence of the Australian team’s definition of scaffolding; their views on different ways of scaffolding different children; the steps they see as necessary for scaffolding; and the challenges they see in scaffolding children’s
learning. First, it analyses the evidence of what the team saw as scaffolding young children’s literacy learning.

7.5.1.1 What is scaffolding?

As indicated in the previous section, scaffolding is a necessary teaching strategy to support children in acquiring new knowledge, so they achieve the next level of learning. This applied to educators working to provide the literacy of young children. An Australian team member said scaffolding is foundational for teaching/learning:

Scaffolding is having an understanding of where the children are at and then adding to that by asking children questions, providing resources, encouraging the children to go to the next level, to investigate further or to engage in learning that is more meaningful for them. It’s about supporting and helping children to take that next step. It is not saying, “Ok this is what you need to do.” It is actually supporting the children to discover, to learn, to investigate. It’s providing a framework, a foundation for children to take the next step, to take risks, or to try new think … [by] providing support. That support might be gathering resources … the way you add to what the child said. In order to do scaffolding you have to listen to children, follow their lead, support the child … to take the next step. (AECE 2, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p. 21-22)

Scaffolding requires the Chilean educators to engage in meaningful interactions with children by providing appropriate assistance for them to discover, explore and achieve a higher level of learning. The FIH Program introduced scaffolding to the Chile EC educators encouraging them to ask question of children to inspire their thinking or actions; to provide the learning resources they need; and to encourage the children to try the new things. To scaffold young children’s literacy learning the Chilean EC educators were encouraged to get to know about the children’s situation and their needs, and then support them to take the next step in their learning. The Australian FIH team explained to the children EC educators the need to listen to the young children to find out their needs and what they want to achieve.

Scaffolding can be intellectual or physical support, which is provided by more capable people. An Australian team member explained that the FIH Program understood scaffolding as the:
… process whereby a teacher or educator or adult or another child works with a child to take the learning at a certain level to a higher level of understanding. This meant being able to see when the child is ready to move to next level and being able to provide the necessary support for them to do so. Cognitive or physical support is needed to help the child achieve that next level of learning. The teacher helps move them forward in their learning process. It is like a physical scaffolding building. It is giving them something that they can be support their climb up to the next level. (AECE 4, 14th Sep, 2012, Kingswood)

The FIH Program trained the Chilean educators in scaffolding so they could be more knowledgeable to facilitate children’s learning. They learnt to provide both intellectual support and physical support and not just interaction. “[T]he metaphor of scaffolding but described graduated, strategic steps” (Morcom & MacCallum, 2012, p. 1326) describes the support to children’s learning, which builds new knowledge on their prior knowledge.

7.5.1.2 Three ways to scaffold

The FIH Program taught the Chilean educators that different children need different levels and ways of scaffolding. An Australian team member provided an example of a Chilean educator who scaffolded the literacy learning of a young child:

She scaffolded this child’s understanding of how to write words. That child already knew that a word means something and that marks on the paper represent the meaning. Now this educator took her to the next level of capability which was to understand the letters as a word and as having a meaning. This meant moving her through to the capability to construct the text itself. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 35)

To help the children to learn to write words, the Chilean educators was taught by the FIH team to build upon what the children already know about words. The EC educators’ “decisions and action that build on children’s existing knowledge and skills to enhance their learning.” (Commonwealth-of-Australia, 2009, p. 14). If the children do not know how to write, the Chilean EC educators need to provide good ‘model’ to write for her first (see second photograph in Figure 7.7). Then the children followed the educator’s modelling. If the children know how to write some of the letters, they can write down what they know. The Chilean EC educators
'worked together’ with the children to finish the rest. If the educator knows that the children are capable of writing the whole word, they ‘encouraged’ them to write by themselves. The Chilean EC educators learnt to scaffold children’s learning by playing three different roles, namely “model concepts to children … work together with a child … encourage the child to do or demonstrate the concept on their own” (Fleer & Raban, 2007, p. 14).

7.5.1.3 How to scaffold?

It may take more than a few steps to scaffold children’s learning to accomplish a given task. The Australian team member provides more examples of how they encouraged the Chilean EC educators to scaffold young children’s step by step literacy learning:

… with the camera that teacher was observing up to a certain point and the teacher might mentor by asking a probing question of wonder “what this camera does?” and “Can you work out how to show the picture you just taken?” So that provided scaffolding question to help the child develop mastery of that apparatus. The teacher also provided feedback, “See, yes, you did it.” The feedback said that the child achieved the task. And then the teacher set a more complex challenge for the child “I wonder if you could take through in a row and then see what they look like altogether.” Some of the teacher had a high level of difficulty. (AECE 3, 2nd, 2012, Kingswood)

Step-by-step scaffolding of all children’s learning is necessary. First the Chilean EC educators learn to scaffold young children’s learning by breaking down a large task into smaller ones. Then they asked probing questions so as to help the children solve the small task step by step. In this way, these young children explored the task and move forward in their learning by themselves. When they achieved one small task, the Chilean EC educators learnt to provide positive feedback on their achievement so to encourage their further learning. When they completed the whole task, the Chilean EC educators learnt to provide with a similar new task to test their mastery or present them with a more challenging task. Scaffolding is a “support system, that allows the child to move forward and continue to build new competencies” (Berk & Winsler, 2002, p. 26). Therefore, young children learn their new knowledge through the scaffoldings provided by others.
7.5.1.4 Challenges in scaffolding

This section analyses evidence of the challenges that the Chilean EC educators and children’s families had when they scaffolded young children’s literacy learning which the FIH team had to address. As analysed in Chapter 6 that FIH team observed that the Chilean EC educators’ superficial understanding of this concept challenges their application of the strategy in their teaching. According to an Australian team member, having the Chilean EC educators apply this strategy proved to be a challenge for the FIH Program:

It’s starting to happen increasingly. … Some of the Chilean EC educators are telling us that it’s happening. But some of the examples that are given us in the workshops we are not so sure that they really are scaffolding. It is a skill or strategy that educator need to practice a lot and get better at. It is quite hard to scaffold well because you need to know a lot about children’s learning and a lot about individual children and be able to work out how to move each child forward to give them appropriate assistance, and to withdraw that assistance when they don't need it anymore. They had to be able to repeat what it is, they do and they learn without the scaffold. (AECE 4, 14th Sep, 2012, Kingswood)

The FIH Program noted that it was challenging for the Chilean EC educators to scaffold children’s learning. To apply appropriate scaffolding the Australian team member suggested that this need the Chilean EC educators to get to know the children and their learning very well. Second, they had to get to be sensitive and to notice when the children were able to do by themselves and when they needed assistance. The EC educators had to be cautious about the timing of their support for the children.

This Australian team member indicates that the Chilean EC educators in the FIH Program need longer time to know the young children and how to provide appropriate scaffolding:

It depends on how in tempt they were in getting to know the child. We had to get them to spend time to looking, listening, waiting and knowing how to provide that next level. We got a teacher who was not watching what the child is doing and get parents who necessarily are. The Chilean educators on the whole model had to have more knowledge about children’s learning.
processes. A lot parents needed that learning knowledge as well. (AECE 4, 14\textsuperscript{th} Sep, 2012, Kingswood)

Both the Chilean EC educators and the children’s families had much to learn about scaffolding young children’ literacy learning. They did not know the children well enough for this. Some families had more knowledge about their children’s learning. Some educators at present “assistance” did not facilitate the children’s learning, but interrupted it. Learning to tie up the shoe laces was provided to explain a misunderstanding of scaffolding the adults often had:

Some parents have that knowledge that to help the children move on to the next level. When a child is first time learn how to tie up their shoe laces, a lot of adults will just jump in and say “let me do it for you” or “it will be quicker if I do it”. Others stand back to watch them just that point when they start to get frustrated when they can’t do anymore. Then they show them or loop that bit around there, and say “Now you poke through there”, “Now you pull and tie”. So it is being able to hold back, not do it for them. It is quite tricky. (AECE 4, 14\textsuperscript{th} Sep, 2012, Kingswood)

To provide appropriate scaffolding for young children’s literacy learning, the Chilean EC educator had to learn to be patient and sensitive so as to notice the opportunity to scaffold their children’s. Through the FIH Program, it became easier for the Chilean EC educators to notice the signs of scaffolding, because children participated in particular literacy activities, they asked for help to complete their tasks. However, young children’s sociocultural literacy practices happen in their everyday life in their community and families. Thus families and the Chilean EC educators need to be aware so as to notice children’s scaffolding in their daily lives. Giving children enough time and opportunities to explore and find out by themselves, and then to scaffold them when they are frustrated.

7.5.1.5 Scaffolding and ZPD

The concept of scaffolding is closely related to the idea of Zone Proximal Development (ZPD). An Australian team member explained that the FIH Program defined scaffolding by referring to ZPD:

The scaffolding actions of a knowledgeable expert … were in the space of ZPD that helps the children move through the space to that next level of
confidence. So it can be a conversation or a set of learning experiences or provisional tools. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 35)

In the process of scaffolding the people who provided scaffolding had to be more knowledgeable people who could progress the children’s literacy learning through their ZPD. Children learn through “…the metaphor of scaffolding but described graduated, strategic steps that create ZPDs …” (Morcom & MacCallum, 2012, p. 1326). Scaffolding through meaningful conversation takes the young children from the lower to the high level in their ZPD.

### 7.5.2 Zone Proximal Development (ZPD)

Scaffolding involves more capable people such as the Chilean EC educators or children’s families to support their children’s learning from one level to achieve next step in moving their learning. Therefore, in the FIH the Chilean EC educators need to learn to be capable people who could imagine the zone in which the children could be expected to work by having what they can do and the meaningful support the needed to progress.

In the FIH Program the Chilean EC educators and children’s families need to get to understand ZPD as the space between what the children are currently able to do and what are likely achieve with learning support from knowledgeable others. An Australian team member explained the Australian FIH team member’s understanding of Zone of Proximate Development:

The ZPD is the discovery of the students’ being, “You might be able to drive a car in your local area, but to be able to go to the next level and drive the car in an unfamiliar territory you might need a whole range of resources”. You might need somebody sitting next to you, or a street directory. There is lot of things an adult needs to learn to the next step. ZPD means looking at the difference between what you already know, what you are learning and what you have yet to learn. We wanted the Chilean educators are really look at the space where children have the capacity, where children are learning, and what they need to learn. This is something they really need to know well. They feel very confident about, and something that they need know, and that they are ready to learn yet. They might be able to learn with adult support. That might help them to develop their skills or another child might help them or their parent might help them. (AECE 2, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p. 22)
For the Australian FIH Program ZPD refer to the zone between what the children are presently capable of doing and what they can do with the support of the Chilean EC educators and learning resources or their families. This involves the interactions of “more experienced experts with less experienced learners creates qualitatively different ZPDs for each child as he/she develop towards his/her potential”. (Morcom & MacCallum, 2012, p. 1326). ZPD is the space between what the young children are capable of and what they can achieve with the others (such as educators, families or peers) scaffold their learning.

ZPD is where the scaffolding happens and where young children’s literacy develops. The FIH Program defined ZPD as “a space where a child is already competent or capable, and the next challenge or competence that’s required for knowledge or understanding ...” (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 35). In other words, ZPD

is in which scaffolding happens. It is the zone between what the child can now do and what the child has the potential to be able to do. It is in the zone you can put in scaffolding into action. (AECE 4, 2012, Kingswood)

Young children in the FIH Program are already capable of do something, and that using this knowledge their EC educators or families as more capable people, could scaffold them to achieve more challenging level. The gap between the children’s current knowledge and what they can achieve with others’ support is their ZPD. It is “the gap between a child’s independent and potential levels of functioning, when assisted by a peer and an adult” (Morcom & MacCallum, 2012, p. 1326). An Australian FIH Program member provided a photograph as an example of young children’s ZPD in the ECCs:

This child has actually moved through her experience, she’s explaining very good literacy behaviours she’s acquired. She’s moved through a range of these stages to take on the role of a “literacy teacher”. She’s there showing other people how to use literacy elements. Children are capable, of imitating the world around them. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood)

The girl in the first photograph in Figure 7.7 was playing the role of a ‘literacy teacher’, imitating her Chilean EC educators to show other children how to engage in literacy. She moved through different levels of literacy performance to show others
the use of her different literacy skills. She read the story in the book, and pointing to
the pictures on each page while she was talking. The pictures helped the other
children to understand what she was talking about. She also linked other children’s
knowledge to what she knew. This girl was a more capable literate, and used it to
help the other children move forward so that they could accomplish a new
understanding or knowledge. This instance shows other children’s learning through a
more capable peer’s scaffolding.

“She scaffolded this child’s understanding of how to write words. That child already knew that a word means something and that marks on the paper represent the meaning. Now this educator took her to the next level of capability which was to understand the letters as a word and as having a meaning.” (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood)

“... take on the role of a “literacy teacher”. She’s there showing other people how to use literacy elements.” (AECE 3, 2011, Kingswood)

Figure 7.7: Photonovel 20 scaffolding and ZPD

7.6 CONCLUSION

The data analysed in this chapter indicates that because of the introduction of
Australian sociocultural approach, Chilean EC educators changed their pedagogy and
literacy teaching activities. In this way this Australian knowledge made it possible
for the Chilean educators to develop a different understanding of young children’s
literacy teaching/learning. However, in another way it undervalued intellectual capability and contribution of the Chilean educators and families. In the FIH Program Chilean EC educators started to believe that young children’s literacy learning that occurs as part of their everyday social activities in their local/global community is an important body of knowledge for their future education. The first section of this chapter analysed evidence of young children’s learning process. It shows here the Chilean EC educators’ teaching which fails to meet the Australian team members’ understanding of effective teaching/learning. The second section of this chapter analysed evidence of the FIH team’s reports on young children’s sociocultural literacy practices in their local/global community and their assumptions for the necessity of learning critical literacy. Chilean EC educators’ developed knowledge of sociocultural literacy practices and FoK was used by the FIH Program to motivate them to change their literacy teaching in ECCs. Section 7.3 analysed evidence of the changes that Australian team members regarded as evident in the literacy activities in the ECCs. They engaged two important changes in these literacy activities, namely an increase in both play and scaffolding. The next section analysed different forms of plays used in the ECCs, which reflect children’s FoK in their community and families. The last section (7.4) analysed evidence of the scaffolding and ZPD promoted by the FIH Program. Scaffolding was meant to provide Chilean EC educators, different ways to promote the children’s literacy development. The evidence analysed in this chapter and Chapter 6 indicates reported increases in the families’ participation in their children’s learning because of promoting sociocultural approach in the FIH Program. Therefore, the next chapter analyses the evidence of the engagement of young children’s families in their children’s literacy learning as a result of the FIH Program.
CHAPTER EIGHT CHANGING FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IN YOUNG CHILDREN’S LITERACY LEARNING

8.0 INTRODUCTION

The increasing knowledge of Australian sociocultural approach contributed to the changes of Chile EC educators’ roles in ECE, the literacy environment in ECCs and literacy teaching/learning activities. It also stimulated family engagement in children’s literacy learning. Thus this chapter analyses evidence of changing family engagement in young children’s literacy learning. Families\(^ {33}\) are considered as important participants in their children’s literacy learning (Commonwealth-of-Australia, 2009; Crawford & Zygouris-Coe, 2006). The evidence indicates the families associated with the five early childhood centres (ECCs) in Antofagasta changed their engagement in their children’s learning as a result of spreading sociocultural approach in the FIH Program. They started to be aware of the richness of the literacy resources in their community and families, and recognised the importance of their role in their children’s learning. They established their intellectual relationship with EC educators and the ECCs through their increasing visits to the centres, their improved understanding of the work of the early childhood (EC) educators, by participating in centres’ activities, and by communicating with them via different documents. The Australian sociocultural approach provided Chilean educators and families with a different understanding to ECE. However, it was unable to address the issues of intellectual in/equality between them. The last section of this chapter analyses the evidence of present an in/equality in the intellectual relationship between families and EC educators. The first section of this Chapter which presents a vignette generated from selected FIH Program artefacts about family engagement in the five pilot ECCs in Antofagasta. The vignette captures the changes evident in the photographic record in the FIH Program.

\(^{33}\) Families refer to “all family members -- siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and fictive kin -- who may be friends or neighbors, often contribute in significant ways to children’s education and development.” (Halgunseth & Peterson, 2009, p. 5)
8.1 VIGNETTE—CHANGING FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IN ECCS

This vignette presents evidence of the changes in young children’s family engagement in their literacy learning as a result of the FIH Program. It has been generated based on a selection of artefacts about the family engagement provided by the FIH Program team during the period 2008 to 2010 while working in Antofagasta. This is also an important element in environment rating scales (Sakai et al., 2003) used to assess the quality of the ECCs.

There are no FIH Program photographs showing families’ engagement in the five ECCs in 2008. In the following year 2009, there is only one photograph that shows a low level of their engagement—family members were photographed delivering their children to the ECC (see Figure 8.1).

In 2010, there was a noticeable increase in the number of photographs showing the families’ involvement in children’s learning. Families were photographed bringing their children to the centres and collecting them after work. They greeted the educators, some had short conversations with them, and other had more meaningful conversations about their children’s learning (see Figure 8.2). The walls outside of the classrooms were full of the children’s work; families observed and talked with others about the work. They also read the centres’ Portfolio34 discussed its contented and comment on it when they were at the centres (see Figure 8.4). Sometimes after class the parents played with their children in the centres’ playgrounds (see Figure 8.3). For some special occasions, they went to the centres to watch their children’s performance and recorded these events with their digital cameras (see Figure 8.3).

Figure 8.1 to 8.4 are four photonovels that present families’ engagement in their children’s education in the FIH Program during 2009 and 2010. Figure 8.1 shows families deliver their children to ECC in the year 2009. In Figure 8.2 the gate of the ECC is open and families greet with educators. Figure 8.3 shows families participate in the activities in the ECC and record their children’s performance. Figure 8.4 shows family engagement via the documents.

34 It records children’s literacy activities, which is presented in photographs and captions. It stays in the ECCs and families can read it and comment on it when they visit the centre.
In the following year 2009, there is only one photograph that shows a low level of their engagement family members were photographed delivering their children to the ECC. (see 8.1 Vignette)

Figure 8.1: Photonovel 21 Families and children

But as a result of the intervention by the FIH Program the gate was opened to 8:30 am. Parents came in and … had interactions with the educators. (AECE 3, 2011, Kingswood)

Figure 8.2: Photonovel 22 Families send children and great with educators

Families … bringing their children to the centres and collecting them after work. They greeted the educators, some had … more meaningful conversations about their children’s learning. (See 8.1 Vignette)
… the parents played with their children in the centres’ playgrounds. For some special occasions, they went to the centres to watch their children’s performance and recorded these events with their digital cameras. (8.1)

Figure 8.3: Photonovel 23 Families in ECCs
The artefacts recorded families’ engagement in the centres showing it focusing from none to participating in many different activities. Families increased their visits to ECCs, their face-to-face communications with EC educators, their participation in different activities in the centres and their interactions with educators through different documents. The next section of this chapter analyses the evidence of family members of the increasing awareness of the literacy practices in their everyday life, and their role in facilitating their children’s learning through these practices.

Figure 8.4: Photonovel 24 Families and documents

The walls outside of the classrooms were full of the children’s work; families observed and talked with others about the work. They also read the centres’ Portfolio discussed its contented and comment on it when they were at the centres. (See 8.1)

It’s not something I normally expect to see—a group of dads standing around this Portfolio with photographs of learning the children have been doing and a learning story. … Dads were involved in the children’s learning. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 33-34)
8.2 AWARENESS OF THEIR ‘FOK’ AND THEIR ROLE

This section analyses evidence of Australian FIH team members’ observation of families’ increasing awareness of the literacy resources in their community and families, and their role in their children’s literacy learning. The evidence consists of excerpts from the photo-elicitation – photographic interviews I conducted with the team members. The team members noted that before the FIH Program, children’s families in the centres in Antofagasta did not seem to be aware of the importance of the social activities and literacy environment in their community or what this meant for their children’ literacy learning. They observed that the families did not seem to know what they could do to support their children’s learning. The following evidentiary excerpts reveal the team members’ observations about the rich literacy resources in Antofagasta, along with the families’ apparent lack of awareness of these FoK or their educational value in facilitating their children’s learning this knowledge. This was before the intervention of FIH Program.

The analysis presented in Chapter 5 showed that the community in Antofagasta has rich literacy resources and different sociocultural literacy practices for educating young children. An Australian FIH Program team member selected artefacts that showed these FoK in the community and families. However, she pointed to the families’ lack awareness of the educational value of this knowledge, while suggesting that young children learn their literacy through their daily activities in the community:

There is lots of environmental print in the community. Kids go shopping, they might go to the corner store, they might eat in McDonald’s. They might not buy popcorn, but they would pass the popcorn cart and ask “What is that?” Literacy is very much embedded in those everyday family practices … parents don’t necessarily think about that, they don’t teach their kids literacy when they go shopping. There is lots of literacy happening when we go shopping. (AECE 1, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown)

This Australian team member defined sociocultural literacy practices as involving “what’s in the community, as well as what’s at home” (AECE 1, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown). As notes in Chapter 5, the focus here is on literacy in relation to consumer culture. Such literacy knowledge of consumer culture is … part of the
“social activities involving written language in terms of its function and context, that is, the ways that people use literacy to achieve their goals in a variety of sociocultural contexts” (Perez, 2004, p. 26). The potential sociocultural literacy practices of young children in Antofagasta that could be embedded in their everyday activities including purchasing goods from street vendors and shopping in multinational chain stores. This Australian educator saw opportunities for the children to learn even when they were not eating or shopping in these stores. They might learn from seeing the logos and texts, if by family members pointed out these. They could be exposed to this literacy environment by their community and families. Thus, the FIH Program pointed the EC educators in Antofagasta examples of how their families could be responsible for using the literacy resources in the community and families, and want to have them to participate in these practices.

Another Australian team member noted the existence of other literacy resources in the community and families in Antofagasta. She also noted the families’ lack of awareness of these meant they did not take their children to participate in these sociocultural literacy practices:

One of the mother’s said, I never knew that when I was doing some of these things that I was actually helping my child with her learning. So she was not aware of the educational value of very basic things such reading stories, going to supermarket, pointing out some of the signs. Now she understands that’s part of what a parent can do that helps their children’s learning. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 39)

Kids don't actually that is the big supermarket and are not exposed to these kinds of everyday literacies... the environmental print in everyday literacy. So I went to the supermarket one day and took whole lot of photos of print. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 37)

Before the FIH Program, this Chilean mother did not know that her children could acquire their literacy through their everyday routines. Moreover, she was not aware of her role in exposing them to these literacy practices, or how to use these to assist their learning. The concept of family literacy “encompasses the ways that people learn and use literacy in their home and community” (Crawford & Zygouris-Coe, 2006, p. 261). Family literacy emphasises the educational significance of everyday life and the role of families in young children’s literacy learning. Young children and
their families are engaged in “a range of literacy practices, and literacy is viewed as more than a neutral cognitive skill” (Dail & Payne, 2010, p. 330), While family literacy includes everyday literacy practices such as reading stories, shopping, and dining out, there is no mention in this literature or the FIH Program of families as site of knowledge production.

More examples of literacy practices in the local community were reviewed by an Australian team member these have been, analysed in section 5.2.2 in Chapter 5. The FIH Program advised the EC educators in Antofagasta that families are an important contributor to young children’s literacy learning, and need to be able to recognise the FoK they have in their daily life. As an early literacy program promoting family intellectual engagement the FIH Program considered the “multiple contexts of home and community as well as school and build on the families’ funds of knowledge … recognizing existing family routines ...” (Dail & Payne, 2010, p. 330). The Australian FIH team identified the Chilean children’s family routine sociolinguist activities, and considered connecting families and community to the ECCs in Antofagasta so as to build children’s literacy based on their funds of knowledge (FoK) (Gonzalez et al., 1995).

The supermarket in the local community was seen as a site available for developing the young children’s sociocultural literacy practices. However, the Australia team members observed that these children were not exposed to the literacy practice in such sites by their families. Thus, the FIH Program addressed questions the families’ understanding of literacy; their choice of literacy practices for their children’ learning, and the role they play in children’s learning.

The FIH Program focused on the need of these families for the knowledge to be aware of the rich literacy resources in the community and families. Moreover, the team ascertained that they needed to provide more opportunities for their children to participant in these literacy practices. Specifically, they needed to take their children to experience these literacy resources and activities and support their learning through these literacy experiences. According to an Australian team member, the families increased their awareness of the meaning of their engagement in
children’s learning as a result of the FIH Program. An Australian FIH team member noticed that:

… families now understand how they can support their children, their children’s learning which they couldn’t understand before. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 39)

As the team members reported, at the beginning of the FIH Program, families did not seem to be aware of the role that they could play in their children’s literacy learning. For the Australian team through the FIH Program, families were able to realise that their children’s literacy could be “learned socially and culturally within their family and community, and that the types of literacy experience children encounter differ according to families’ social and cultural practices” (Morgan et al., 2009, p. 168). The families in these communities in Antofagasta learnt to become involved literacy practices as “part of their daily routines [and to assist] … the literacy learning of their children” (Crawford & Zygouris-Coe, 2006, p. 261). They learn to participate in these sociocultural literacy practices. With their increasing awareness, the families may have more interactions with the EC educators and ECCs. Thus the next section analyses the evidence of the procedure of establishing an intellectual relationship between families and EC educators to facilitate their children’s learning in the FIH Program.

8.3 ESTABLISHING AN INTELLECTUAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAMILIES AND EDUCATORS

The increase in families’ awareness of the literacy resources in their community and families saw them provide more opportunities for their children use these literacy resources for literacy learning. This made of family intellectual engagement in their children’s literacy learning was encouraged as part of their everyday lives outside the ECCs. However, other ways of engaging family and community FoK in their children’s learning occurred in the five pilot ECCs in Antofagasta as a result of the FIH Program intervention. First, Chilean EC educators learnt to involve the young children’s family and community FoK in their literacy environment and activities in their ECCs (see Chapter 6 and 7). Second, they shared their knowledge and literacy activities through their communication with young children’s families. The FIH
Program asked the EC educators and the children’s families to work cooperatively, so as to provide them opportunities to establish their intellectual partnerships. Therefore, this section analyses evidence of the Australian FIH Program team members’ observations about their efforts to establish this intellectual relationships between families and EC educators. However, this intellectual relationship was not easy to create, because of the negative attitudes each party held towards each other prior to the FIH Program. Evidence of this issue is analysed in the next section (8.3.1).

8.3.1 Negative attitudes between families and EC educators

As the Australian team members reported there was no intellectual relationship before the families and EC educators prior to the start of the FIH Program in 2008. This section analyses evidence of the negative feelings between the families and EC educators in Antofagasta (in Chile).

8.3.1.1 Families’ negative feeling to ECCs

Safety is a concern families have for their children, and this impacts families’ attitude towards the ECCs and educators, and their relationship. The Australian FIH Program team members appreciated the families’ concerns about safety of their young children while at the centres:

At the same time, there are families really struggling, you cannot get away from the fact that there are things there that are not safe for children. That’s not an entirely safe environment. (AECE 2, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p.17)

This is a dangerous neighbourhood, there are sometimes violent events. To keep the children safe [in the centres], there are big fences. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood)

Like Calama (see Chapter 5) this community is not a safe place for children. Safety is one of the reasons that the ECCs all have high fences and locked gates. On one hand, the highly secured centres protect the children but the fences also said to parents that they were not welcome. The team members knew this was not helpful for engaging the families in the activities in ECCs and establish intellectual
relationship with educators. The safety impacted on the families’ attitudes to ECCs and educators in Antofagasta. In Zipin’s (2009) study in Australia, one of his interviewee said the school becomes “a place where they [students] don’t have to deal with their lifeworld, so they’ve got like a safety zone when they come to school …” (p. 322). In his study, school is where students feel safe.

However, according to another Australian FIH Program team member’s (AECE 3) observation, the young children’s families had very limited knowledge about the ECCs in Antofagasta, so they did not feel comfortable about sending their children to their centres before the intervention of the Program. As she reported, the young children’s families changed their attitudes to the ECCs when they knew more about the learning activities in the centres:

Families talked about how they didn’t know or understand what was going on in their children’s centre, some families didn’t really feel comfortable [in the centres]. They send their kids there but they didn’t entirely feel comfortable. Then seeing all of these activities they now understand what their children are learning. They understand the role of the early childhood centre. They feel much more comfortable about their children going there. One parent said she felt really proud. She realised they did deserve to have such a beautiful thing for their children. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood)

The families changed their attitude to the ECCs as the FIH Program made it possible for them to know more about their activities as a result of their communications with EC educators and their visits to the ECCs. This helped to establish their intellectual relationship with the EC educators. Because of the negative feelings toward the ECCs, some parents felt a sense of disquiet about sending their children to the centres. An Australian team member reported, “There wasn’t a relationship [before the FIH Program] …” (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 40). However, the FIH Program increased the families’ knowledge about the activities in the ECCs, especially through encouraging observations of their children’s work in the centres (see Chapter 6) when they visited the centre, and in their communications with the EC educators (see section 8.3.2, 8.3.3, and 8.3.4).
8.3.1.2 EC educators’ negative assumptions about the families

Before the FIH Program, the young children’s families did not know about the activities of the centres and had negative feelings and assumptions towards ECCs. Therefore, it was challenging for them to establish an intellectual partnership with Chilean EC educators in Antofagasta. At the same time, these Chilean EC educators hold largely negative assumptions about the families as well. An Australian FIH Program team member noticed this when taking with FIH Program participants:

Before the Program started, there were negative feelings about the families that came through the views of the EC educators. That they thought the families won’t be interested in their children’s learning ... (AECE 4, Kingswood, 2012)

Before the FIH Program, the EC educators did not know about the children’s literacy activities with their families, and or the families’ passion for their children’s education. They assumed the families’ had little or no interest in their children’s learning. Their negative attitude towards these children’ families, made intellectual engagement even more challenging. The FIH Program intervened to resolve these misunderstanding and strengthen the intellectual relationship between the families and educators.

To establish an intellectual partnership with young children’s families, the Chilean EC educators recognise that “families are children’s first and most influential teachers.” (Commonwealth-of-Australia, 2009, p. 12). This meant seemingly know the children’s “home life [because] ... there is much to be gained from working with families to help children meet academic goals ...” (Crawford & Zygouris-Coe, 2006, p. 263). By developing these beliefs in the Chilean EC educators the FIH Program encouraged them to welcome “families into the school and helping them to be involved with the educational process” (Crawford & Zygouris-Coe, 2006, p. 263).

8.3.2 Visiting ECCs

Given the negative feelings the children’s families and Chilean EC educators had to each other, the FIH Program intervened to explain the possibilities for the families to
visit the ECCs. This section analyses evidence of the families’ increasing visits to ECCs and the benefits of doing so. An Australian team member reported that before the FIH Program intervened, in some centres the families could not enter the centre when they dropped their children off. They only went into the centres when there was trouble:

When we were arrived families were not used to participating in early childhood centres. … The families were used to wait the children outside the centre gate. One family asserted in an interview with us, “We only went into the centre when it was trouble”. (AECE 3, conference, 29th June, 2012, Terrigal)

In one of these five centres, parents stood outside the centre gate which was locked until 9 am. The educators came and unlocked the gate, the children came in and the parents still stood outside the gate. But as a result of the intervention by the FIH Program the gate was opened to 8:30 am. Parents came in and brought their children to the classroom door. They had interactions with the educators. … Most parents are left a little after 9 when the gate was locked again. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood)

Prior to the FIH Program, the children’s families were not used to entering the centres let alone participating in centre activities. Because of the families’ limited knowledge about the ECCs, they had negative feelings towards them, and were not comfortable being in the centres. The locked gates of the ECCs in Antofagasta did not send families an inviting message. These two factors interrupted the opportunity families had for knowing more about their children’s education and participating in the literacy activities in the ECCs.

However, as a result of the FIH Program, the centres changed their schedule to be more welcoming to the children’s families. The gate is now opened 30 minutes prior the class, and closed few minutes after. This gave the families time to go into the centre to observe the literacy environment and communicate with the EC educators. The FIH Program encouraged the Chilean EC educators to take the responsibility for creating “a welcoming environment where all children and families are respected and actively encouraged to collaborate … to ensure that learning experiences are meaningful” (Commonwealth-of-Australia, 2009, p. 12).
The families’ increasing visits to the ECCs provided them opportunities to express their right to and high expectations for their children’s education. This was not happening before the FIH Program. An Australian team member explained how these changes occurred over time:

Parents said they didn’t have very high expectations for their children’s learning. But now they’ve learnt more about what happens there [in the centres]. They now hope for more for their children. They have high and right expectations for their children. Many families comment on the dependence of their children. That’s a result of going to the centres (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood).

When these families visit the ECCs, they have opportunities to observe their children’s work and learning activities. The EC educators changed their literacy learning environment and started to display the young children’s work. Both are seen to be the result of the FIH Program (see section 6.3 in Chapter 6). Thus, with the families’ increasing visit the ECCs, they know more about their children’s learning activities and the work of the centres, and have higher expectations for their children’s learning. These higher expectation from the children’s families might be expected to “enhance children’s resilience, achievement, motivation and self-belief” (Saffigna, Church, & Tayler, 2011, p. 5). Likewise they can be expected to “progress well when … their parents and educators hold high expectations for their achievement in learning.” (Commonwealth-of-Australia, 2009, p. 12). Therefore, it is important for families to come in to these ECCs in Antofagasta to know more about the activities and their children’s educational progress. Their higher expectations are expected to translate into higher academic achievement.

8.3.3 More knowledge, more intellectual engagement

With the increasing visit to the ECCs in the Antofagasta, the young children’s families learnt more about the centres, thus their interest in coming to the centres and participating their children’s learning grew. Therefore, this section analyses evidence of families increasing engagement in their children’s learning as they learnt more and interacted more with the EC educators.
Australian team member reported on their observations of the families growing knowledge of ECE, and awareness of their engagement and interactions with Chilean EC educators:

Through the interactions between the educators and the families, the families are building and developing their awareness of [the educational value of] what they do every day, [and] what is available every day [that] can strengthen the children’s literacy. So they [the families] start to see themselves as important participants, they have agency, “I really can make a difference to my child learns”. You don’t need an expensive computer to do that. It can happen every day. That’s really meaningful for children. (AECE 2, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p. 19)

… the families … understand their children’s learning more, … the families are more interested in coming and spending time in the centres, because they understand more about what’s going on in the centres … (AECE 4, Kingswood, 2012)

As a result of the FIH Program, families came to know more about their children’s learning in the ECCs due to their increasing visits. They demonstrated their interests in children’s education by spending more time at the centres and participating their children’s learning, and this provided them with more opportunities to interact with the EC educators. Through these interactions, families learnt about the importance of their daily life for their children’s literacy learning. A key message of the FIH Program was that young children’s “families and the activities that occur there can be recognized and understood in terms of the richness and complexity they add to children’s educational experience” (Mctavish, 2007, p. 476). Young children’s everyday activities with their families and community in Antofagasta seemed as providing rich intellectual resources for their literacy learning. Building on this knowledge, the FIH team gave recognition to the families and the importance of their daily activities in their children’s literacy learning. This increasing knowledge and awareness was fundamental to changing the intellectual relationship between them and the EC educators.

Both the children’s families and the Chilean EC educators benefited from families’ increasing visit to ECCs and their increasing interactions. The Australian team members reported their observations of the changing of the knowledge and intellectual relationship created through these interactions:
That’s one of the benefits of the sociocultural approach is because families began to understand what their children are learning. … There is a two-way benefit here. That is more inviting for families to start to participate in their children’s learning to understand it, to think about how they might play a role in their children’s learning. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 33-34)

… the project is supporting the links between the educators and the parents and they do that in whole range of ways of supporting. Strengthen is this collaboration between parents and educators, so they both benefit from that. The educators get a better understanding of what happens at home for the children by sharing that knowledge, the child learning and their literacy, which is good for the children. It’s also good for families, because they started to understand the contribution and how important that is. So this relationship between families and educators and the centre is really important. (AECE 2, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p. 18)

Both the families and EC educators benefited from their increasing interactions, as they shared their knowledge about the activities the children have at home and in the ECCs respectively. Through the intervention of the FIH Program they both realised that “learning is located in the children’s realities” (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood). The educators and families came to better understand that young children “learn and use literacy in their home and community lives” (Crawford & Zygouris-Coe, 2006, p. 261). With this knowledge, they together recognised the importance of their everyday life and families’ contribution in children’s literacy learning. Then the EC educators provided a more inviting environment for families to come to ECCs to have deeper and more meaningful engagements to build their relationship to support young children’s literacy learning. This changing intellectual relationship was significant, leading them to “value each other’s knowledge of each child; value each other’s contributions to and roles in each child’s life … communicate freely and respectfully with each other…” (Commonwealth-of-Australia, 2009, p. 12). The FIH Program works to strengthen the link between the families and EC educators.

The knowledge the young children’s families and EC educators exchanged in different ways via the FIH Program was observed by an Australian team member:

The gathering of information from families and sharing the information backwards and forwards was happening a lot. So it was happening through informal dialogue. It was happening through meetings. It was happening
through reading material. It’s a whole range of different ways that they were exchanging funds of knowledge. And the educators developed their understanding of what the family were interest were, what they knew about, what was important to them, and having a better understanding of what the literacy practices is. (AECE 2, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p. 23)

The exchange of knowledge between the families and EC educators occurred in different forms, including informal conversation, meetings, and documents. Thus, the educators gained a better understanding of the families’ knowledge, as well as ‘literacy as social practices’ (Dickie, 2011), and the families’ role in these literacy practices. The next section analyses the evidence of families’ participation in different activities in the ECCs in Antofagasta.

8.3.4 Participating activities in ECCs

The increasing visits by the young children’s families to the ECCs and their growing frequency of their interactions with the EC educators were important for enhancing the knowledge and awareness of all involved in the FIH Program. However, the Australian team were aware that this was limited to an exchange of information rather than a strong two-way intellectual relationship. Therefore, this section analyses evidence of the deeper and more meaningful family engagement that the FIH Program structured in the ECCs so as to enhance these basic interactions.

8.3.4.1 Fathers’ engagement

Fathers are often considered as not investing the amount of time with their children’s literacy learning as are mothers. For instance, Morgan, Nutbrown and Hannon (2009) found that studies influenced by feminist theories assert that “fathers tend to avoid such responsibilities” (p. 168). When an Australian FIH Program team member presented a photograph (see Figure 8.4) of a group of fathers in an ECC in Antofagasta, she said:

… parents might come in a bit more often. … it was just an exchange. Dads were hanging around as if it was a comfortable place for them. It was not just somewhere they walk in, do their business and walk out. That was a quite a significant change across the pilot centres. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 40)
It’s not something I normally expect to see—a group of dads standing around this Portfolio with photographs of learning the children have been doing and a learning story. … Dads were involved in the children’s learning. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 33-34)

It appears that the fathers’ increasing visits and interactions were important for them and the EC educators who came to understand them better. However, this was just a matter of information exchange between them. But there was evidence of fathers’ more meaningful engagement in the ECCs. As Figure 8.4 shows in the section 8.1 of this Chapter, a group of fathers were looking at a Portfolio which recorded their children’s literacy learning with photographs and stories. They had conversations with each other and also wrote their comments in the Portfolio. Thus, through this activity they came to know more about their children’s learning, saw their achievements, communicated with other children’s families and Chilean EC educators, and demonstrated their own commitment to their children’s education.

Although because of economic factors fathers spend “less time than mothers in early literacy practices … [the] changes in the traditional family structures have generated new roles for [them]” (Saracho, 2007, pp. 272, 273). The FIH Program brought to the fore the prospects of at least some fathers no longer being “only a ‘breadwinner’, but also carer and educator” (Morgan et al., 2009, p. 168) who are responsible for, and interested in their children’s learning. This is educationally important, because father’s engagement in young children’s literacy learning has a “significant impact on their children’s literacy development and school achievement …” (Saracho, 2007, p. 275). For instance, for 2 years old young children, their “fathers' language input … makes a unique contribution to children's later expressive language skills” (Pancsofar & Vernon-Feagans, 2006, p. 582). Moreover, one study in Potter’s (2012) review found that the fathers from disadvantaged backgrounds engaged in “their children’s education and learning, children were more likely to escape from poverty later on”. These studies suggest that there is a positive relationship between fathers’ engagement and their children’s literacy learning their subsequent academic outcomes and even their escape from disadvantaged social economic conditions. The FIH Program placed these issues on the agenda for the EC educators through stimulating an increase in fathers’ engagement in their children’ literacy learning.
The next section analyses evidence of families’ participation in Literacy Cafe in ECCs in Antofagasta.

8.3.4.2 Families participate in the Literacy Cafe

Another important change in the family engagement stimulated by the FIH Program was their participation in a Literacy cafe created by an EC educator in the ECCs in Antofagasta. An Australian team member reflected on her experience of this change in the intellectual relationship:

One of the mothers who went to the Literacy Café said, “I was so shocked that the teacher had asked me to have a cup of coffee with her. We are not used to the teachers wanting to talk to us”. So the literacy cafe changed this relationship. Some parents said they only go the centre when there was trouble, there was some problem teachers wanted to talk to them about. So the parents were in a defensive position. Now they have relationships with centres that are supportive and constructive. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 39)

Literacy Cafe was an important initiative in the intellectual relationship between the young children’s families and the EC educators. Through this so-called community of practice (CoP) (Wenger, 2002) the young children’s families and EC educators had coffee together to communicate and exchange their knowledge about working cooperatively to improve the children’s learning. This collaborative work, knowledge exchange and communication reflects two key factors of family engagement that Halgunseth and Peterson (2009) indentified in their study. These two factors are “Consistent, two-way communication is facilitated through multiple forms. [and] families and early childhood education programs collaborate and exchange knowledge” (Halgunseth & Peterson, 2009, p. 3). Through this intellectual relationship the young children’s families and EC educators shared their knowledge through Literacy Cafe and other forms of engagement. The Literacy Cafe gave expression to the FIH team’s aim of designing “effective forms of … communications about school programs and their children’s progress” (Halgunseth & Peterson, 2009, p. 5). Some families participated in the lesson preparation in ECCs as well, evidence which is analysed in the next section.
8.3.4.3 Families prepare a lesson

As a significant change in the relationship between families and EC educators, Literacy Cafe provided opportunities for families to share their knowledge with EC educators. Another form of family intellectual engagement in stimulated the FIH Program was having families participate in lesson preparation in the ECCs. An Australian team member reported her observation of this teaching/learning experience:

A mother and her child prepared a learning experience for the class in a centre including a PowerPoint presentation they had put together. There we have a family member as active participant not only in their own child’s learning but in other people’s children as well in the class. … That event was in the same centre where when we first went there the gate was locked and the parent stayed outside the gate, and the educator or the director of the centre unlock the gate, the children came in with the centre. That’s a big shift from these taken for grounded every day practices to one where the parents are invited in to have a cup of coffee with the educator with a small group’s Literacy Cafe. The experience just described the mother preparing a lesson a PowerPoint presentation in that activity to deliver to their class … (AECE 3, 2012, 21st Sep, Kingswood)

This teaching/learning experience happens in the ECC where the gate had previously locked before the FIH Program and now it opens 30 minutes prior the class (see section 8.3.2). From standing in front of the gate to being invited to having coffee with EC educators (Literacy Cafe), and participating in a class lesson was an important change to relationship between the families and EC educators. The mother worked together with her child to prepare the lesson, which presented together in the class. Thus she not only engaged in her own child’s learning, but also contributed the learning of other children. She actually took a role in the class of bringing the family FoK to all children’s learning (Gonzalez et al., 1995) to the class. The next section analyses the evidence of families’ engagement in arranging the literacy learning environment in the ECCs in Antofagasta.

8.3.4.4 Families arrange the literacy learning environment in the ECCs

There are different forms of families’ educational engagement. This section analyses evidence of the participation of children’s families in creating the literacy
environment in the ECCs. An Australian team member observed families’ participating in literacy environment in the centres:

That’s done by families, so that reflects the local environment. … the mirror was painted on the walls in one of the playrooms, that was done by the families. … Some of the things reflect the local community … We encouraged them to have more things that reflect the local environment. The Literacy Keys\(^{35}\) says play with familiar literacy resources; that means one’s from local environment not what somebody in a book says you should do. (AECE 1, 2011, 21\(^{st}\) Sep, Bankstown, p.11)

By engaging the families in creating the literacy environment in the ECCs, they could bring their FoK into the centres. Therefore, the young children had more opportunities to play with materials with which they are familiar as a basis for learning new knowledge. “The literacy experiences in which children are engaged … in the home and community are less well embedded into curriculum frameworks” (Marsh, 2003, p. 370). Young children “come to school with ‘funds-of-knowledge’ which include social and cultural resources from their home settings” (Dickie, 2011, p. 248). The job of the EC educators was to use his existing knowledge as a resource for children to learn new knowledge. Therefore, to have their families to create the literacy environment in the ECCs provide the opportunity to engaging their FoK in their community and families. The next section analyses evidence of another form of families’ engagement in their children’s learning – their engagement via photographic documents.

8.3.5 Family engagement via photographic documents

The children’s families were engaged in their children’s learning in various ways through the FIH Program. They built their intellectual relationship with the EC educators through their interactions with them and participation in different activities to support their children’s learning. This section analyses evidence of another form of family/centre engagement, namely through the documents which recorded

\(^{35}\) Literacy keys is a pedagogical device used in the FIH Program. It is designed as a key ring (so the educators can carry it all the time) with 5 small cards, and each card has an important concept about literacy learning. The concepts are: 1) Literacy as a social practice; 2) Educators play a critical role in children’s literacy learning; 3) Play with familiar literacy resources encourages children to take on roles as literacy users; 4) Children learn literacy in their families and communities; 5) Literacy learning involves key concepts & processes.
children’s learning in the FIH Program. Australian team members reported on their observations of the documents that started to flow as a result of the intervention by the FIH Program:

… the Program has been a much greater level of communication between the children, between the centres and the families. So the centres understand the more of what the educators are trying to do. But it is more importantly that the educators understand what the families want and value and believe and can do. So that connection has been made through the documentations of the children’s learning. The use of photographs to explain and inviting the families to the centres, they are now much more comfortable to do. As you can see more statistics that they are spending more time in the centres and much more engaged in the children’s learning. (AECE 4, conference, 29th June, 2012, Terrigal)

The documentation might be an example of a means of a gathering of funds of knowledge. There are lots of ways of gathering information from families and share that information. Educators can use that information in their learning experiences to develop children’s learning. … So this was around they recording that and documenting that, so you looking at the literacy practices. (AECE 2, 2011, 21st Sep, Bankstown, p. 23)

The FIH team made efforts to strengthen the intellectual connections among the families, community, ECCs and EC educators to support children’s literacy learning. Because the “values, and literacy practices may be different in the various sites” (Dickie, 2011, pp. 247-248), an important intellectual connection was made as photographic documentations to record young children’s literacy learning in different settings. One reason this was necessary, was because, the “literacy experiences in which children are engaged from birth in the home and community are less well embedded into curriculum frameworks” (Marsh, 2003, p. 370). By sharing these documents the Chilean EC educators learnt more the literacy practices that the children have in their community and families, and helped make the centre a more inviting environment for the families. Creating their intellectual relationship between the children’s families and EC educators meant asking them to work cooperatively to “explore the learning potential in every day events, routines and play”, and giving the young children have “daily opportunities to learn from active participation and engagement in these experiences” (Commonwealth-of-Australia, 2009, p. 12) in their families, communities and ECCs.
The documents recorded young children’s literacy learning as well as their family’s educational engagement. An Australian team member regarded these photographic documents as a platform for the families and early childhood educators to share their different knowledge and children’s different literacy practices:

The Chilean EC educators use technology to capitalize on the learning moments, creating digital stories in the environments to show families and working very strongly in the community. So new strategies of communication increase respect for families and willing them to engage with them in meaningful ways. In the institution collaboration of involving these communities of practice, and producing portfolios to communicate … (AECE 3, conference, 29th June, 2012, Terrigal)

The portfolio stays in the centre, but there are other similar things in the travelling book which goes to the children’s families. The families are asked to write something in the books such as a comment and perhaps a description of a learning activity that they do at home. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 34)

The Chilean EC educators and children’s families were encouraged by the FIH team to produce these photographic documents to record the children’s learning. The Travelling books, Portfolio, digital stories provided a place for the families and EC educators to share and exchange their knowledge about the children’s learning. Crawford and Zygouris-Coce (2006) used photographs in their family literacy program as well. In their educational study of family engagement in children’s literacy learning, photographs

…taken of class activities can provide parents with better insights about classroom activities. Meanwhile photos from home can provide teachers and fellow students with a glimpse of the routines, activities, and relationships that are important to classmates outside of the school environments. (Crawford & Zygouris-Coe, 2006, p. 266).

Photographs were categorized and used “in the development of bulletin boards, displays, or class created books” (Crawford & Zygouris-Coe, 2006, p. 266) in their study. As presented in Figure 8.5, in the FIH Program young children’s literacy teaching/learning activities are recorded in their photographic documents like ‘Travelling book’, ‘Portfolio’ and ‘digital stories’. The children’s families and EC educators share their knowledge and children’s literacy learning activities in different
settings through these documentations. The Travelling book recorded the children’s literacy learning activities with photographs and texts, and the travelled around the families and early childhood centres. The Portfolio was similar but it stayed in the ECCs, so the families could read them when they visited the Centres (see section 8.3.4.1). Families were encouraged to write their comments in both of these documents. Photographs were not only used in these documents, but also in the literacy environment in the ECCs. There is large number of photographs recoding children’s learning in the literacy environment in the ECCs.

![Diagram](image)

**Figure 8.5 Family engagement via photographic documents**

8.4 IN/EQUALITY BETWEEN EDUCATORS AND FAMILIES

Although the Australian FIH Program team members observed increasing knowledge of, and interactions between the families and EC educators, and the establishment of an intellectual relationship. This was not an easy task for people who did not presuppose they were in an equal position. One Australian FIH team member reported on her concerns about these challenges:

We’ve seen and spoken to the parents … [who] talked very strongly the differences make for them, and to feel more part of it, to feel more trusting. Trusting is one of the issue in the equality. … Certainly we can say in our early days in our Program there was not much acknowledgement of diversity. That has increased over the time we’ve been involved. (AECE 3, 2012, 21st Sep, Kingswood)
I was talking about power and decision making. As I said the idea with parents don't come in the centre or don't have much to do with it. They trust the educators. That’s a very big power balance and decision making. Through literacy cafe through whole range of strategies, they see the travelling books, they portfolio and writing journals, parents get new opportunities to know what’s happening. Therefore they are more actively informed and contribute by writing comments on the back, writing their stories to express their wishes aspirations and expectations for children’s learning. (AECE 3, 2012, 21st Sep, Kingswood)

The FIH Program said it as fundamental for “families and early childhood educators … trust each other; [and] engage in shared decision-making” (Commonwealth-of-Australia, 2009, p. 12) in a strong intellectual relationship. However, it had to work against “assumptions that low-SES families or families living in low-income neighborhoods engage in few literacy activities” (McTavish, 2007, p. 477). The Chilean EC educators had this assumption. As indicated in the evidence analysed in section 8.3.1.2, they assumed that the families had less interest in their children’s learning, and disregarded the passion and contribution of the families. The educators’ negative attitudes towards the families were interrupted by the FIH Program working to establish their mutual trust. This impacted on families’ participation in educational decision making. Families’ “participation in decision making related to their children’s education” (Halgunseth & Peterson, 2009, p. 3). Families’ participation in children’s educational decision making is an important factor of their intellectual relationship with educators (Halgunseth & Peterson, 2009). Halgunseth and Peterson (2009) clarify that families’ participation in educational decision making involves “parents in school decisions, developing parent leaders and representatives” (p. 5). In the FIH Program, families’ expression of their expectations, participation in Literacy Cafe, contributions to the documents and literacy environment provided them the opportunity to take part in educational decision making about their children’s learning. Further research is necessary to generate direct evidence of what decisions were made by families or the EC educators.

The issues of trust and family participation in educational decision making influenced the EC educators’ attitudes towards, and understanding of the children’s families. Before the FIH Program, the EC educators considered themselves as experts and the children’s families were no intellectual contribution to make to their
children’s education. One Australian team member noticed this assumption of intellectual inequality and the changed brought about as a result of the FIH Program:

It’s taken the educators a while. … the complex idea that parents can be partners and active participants who contribute to their children’s learning in the early childhood centre has been a difficult and complex idea for the educators to take on board. The practice has been for the educators to be responsible for the children’s learning and the parents don't have much in the role play. One of the key ideas in the project is how to use the families’ interests, concerns and knowledge about their children and their communities as foundations and resources for children’s learning. Shift that power in balance. …What we see now is a shift in the educators’ approach, strategies and dispositions to actually welcome the parents contribution to their children’s learning. Therefore, they are more equal but not completely equal but more democratic power relationship. What we also see there is the families—parents they are beginning to see themselves in a more powerful way in relation to the children’s learning. (AECE 3, 2012, 21st Sep, Kingswood)

They certainly have different experiences, that’s part of the richness. Families look to educators from some of expertise: What do you know about children’s behaviour? Can you give me any advice how to manage this particular kind of things? So they are looking for expertise, families expect this. The educators said they didn’t have the time. The biggest change in the program in relation to educators is a new respect for families. The concern for children’s welfare sometimes overrode the educators’ capacity to appreciate the challenges in families’ lives and to see them through respectful ends. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 41)

There was a strong belief in the community in Antofagasta that “Teacher is expert, parent as non-expert and non-contributor…” (AECE 3, 2012, 21st Sep, Kingswood). This belief undervalues the families’ FoK (Gonzalez et al., 1995) and their intellectual contributions, and places the families and EC educators in an unequal position. In the FIH Program, an Australian team member observed it was challenging for the EC educators to accept children’s families as their intellectual partners, contributors and active participants in their children’s learning. Ranciere (2009) argues that “Intellectual emancipation is the verification of the equality of intelligence. This does not signify the equal value of all manifestations of intelligence, but the self-equality of intelligence in all its manifestations” (p. 10). Thus, the young children’s families have the equal right of using their intelligence in educating their children as EC educators. The “shared power of the equality of intelligence links individuals, makes them exchange their intellectual adventures…”
(Ranciere, 2009, p. 17). Therefore, to verify the presupposition of intellectual equality between the families and educators, it was necessary for the FIH Program team to have EC educators to recognise the rich literacy resources in the children’s families and community. This required them to reconsider the work of families in education.

The FIH Program advanced the case for a “… family literacy program occurs as part of a two-way dialogue instead of a one-way monologue…” (Crawford & Zygouris-Coe, 2006, p. 263). This meant EC educators need to learn to keep Children’s families “informed of school policies, classroom expectations, and opportunities for enhanced learning [as well as children’s literacy activities in ECCs]. It also means that parent input will be solicited and welcomed in a variety of ways” (Crawford & Zygouris-Coe, 2006, p. 263). Therefore, in the ECCs in Antofagasta where families’ contributions were not valued at the beginning of the FIH Program, it was necessary to highlight the importance of families’ contribution to strengthen the intellectual relationship.

Although EC educators had received professional education of in ECE, they did not have expertise for working with these particular each child. They do not have enough time to invest with every child. Each child’s family spend more time with them than EC educators, and they know them better than these educators. The FIH Program worked to mobilise the residual expertise of these families to work with their own children. Hughes and MacNaughton (2002) argue that EC educators should work with families to “explore and understand the limits to their professional expertise and the effects of that expertise on their relationship…” (p. 19). EC educators come to recognise their expertise and the need to obtain the support of families’ knowledge in children’s’ education. The EC educators learnt to have “one teacher eye and one mother eye, instead of teachers with 2 teacher eyes” (Fleer & Robbins, 2006, p. 62). This metaphor points out the advantages of engaging families’ educational perspectives in children’s learning. The Australian team reported on the changes in the Chilean EC educators’ strategy, changing their unequal intellectual relationship to be more democratic.
As the children’s families acquired more knowledge and became more powerful in their intellectual relationship, there was a greater possibility for their逆袭 (nìxí) 36 or counterattack (see its meaning in next paragraph). That as they become more expert, they may challenge the EC educators. The Australian FIH Program team member reported:

I’ve seen partnerships. But I haven’t seen challenges to the educators. I haven’t been aware of them. They may will be happening, and that is evitable, or people may have more knowledge they have more power. They may want to question things and access that power. So where the communities of practice idea come in if you bring family and parents and educators together with the common concern for children’s wellbeing and for children’s learning. Then there are problems and issues to be deal with and to be solved. There probably are challenges but I haven’t been aware of them pointing out particularly in FIH. (AECE 3, 2011, 18th Nov., Kingswood, p. 41)

The children’s families were considered as making relevant educational expertise non-expert before the intervention by the FIH Program. Although their relationship is still not completely equal, the FIH Program stimulated opportunities for the families to acquire more knowledge. Because they know their own children better than educators, when they learn more knowledge about ECE and their children’s literacy activities in ECCs, they can contribute their own children’s education. Then, educators may learn some knowledge from them.

The changing of family engagement in their children’s learning in the FIH Program is summarised by a Chinese internet slang – 屌丝逆袭 (diǎo sī nì xí) (see Chapter 3). Originally it means that the lower SES or powerless or no higher degree people (not good-looking maybe) who succeed in their career or love life (have a girlfriend/boyfriend/wife/husband who is totally ‘out of his/her league’). In this study, it refers to process that disadvantaged families, whose knowledge and intelligence was undervalued before the FIH Program, are becoming more intellectually equal with the educators who were regarded as experts before. Here 屌丝 (diǎo sī) refers to children’s families in Antofagasta, who have limited income and are considered as non-expert and powerless in their relationship with EC educators in the FIH Program.

36 Nì xí (逆袭, counterattack) is a word comes from Japanese. It is often used in Japanese fighting cartoon, which means an abnormal attaché that small amount of army defeat a large army with better equipments.
逆袭 (ni xì) here refers to their succeed participation in their children’s education, and their possibility of achieving what an expertise—an EC educator may not achieve. This concept recognize the intelligence and capability of the less powered people – disadvantaged families, and enhances their engagement is children’s education, which is reported as beneficial for their children’s development (Baxter & Hand, 2013; Beltrán, 2012; Crawford & Zygouris-Coe, 2006; Dail & Payne, 2010; Douglass, 2011; Fleer & Robbins, 2006; Halgunseth & Peterson, 2009; McTavish, 2007; Morgan et al., 2009). However, this屌丝逆袭 (diǎo sī ni xì) process takes long time, and asks for the families’ constant efforts on their children’s education.

8.5 CONCLUSION

The data analyses in this Chapter suggests that there were no photographs nor did any of the Australian team members’ observe family engagement in their children’s literacy learning at the very beginning of the FIH Program. Figure 8.6 shows the changing of family engagement in their children’s learning in the FIH Program based on the analysis of the photographs and Australian team’s observations. As presented in Figure 8.6, the children’s families had negative feelings towards the ECCs, and the EC educators had negative attitudes to the families as well. Through the intellectual interactions stimulated by the Australian knowledge of sociocultural approach in the FIH Program, they started to learn about children’s different literacy practices in their families and community, and families, came to better understand children’s literacy activities in ECCs. Both the Chilean families and educators learnt about this Australian sociocultural approach, and understood that the rich FoK in children’s families and community, and the role that families can play in their children’s education. Their increased intellectual interactions and growing knowledge encouraged them to build their awareness of family engagement and change their negative attitude towards each other. Their interactions stimulated by the FIH Program took in three forms, namely families visiting the ECCs, their participation in the activities of the ECCs, and the photographic documents. These interactions and meaningful engagements enhanced their intellectual relationship. Their increasing interactions reveal their increasing knowledge and awareness of Australian sociocultural theory, and their strengthening relationship (see Figure 8.6). This
process of changing family engagement and interrupting their unequal intellectual relationship with EC educators is summarised as 屌丝逆袭 (diǎo sī nì xì) (see previous section and Chapter 3). This means the disadvantaged families might lay claim to being intellectually equal with Chilean EC educators. This could benefit their intellectual relationship with the educators and their children’s education.

![Diagram: Changing the family engagement in the FIH Program](image)

**Figure 8.6 Changing the family engagement in the FIH Program**
CHAPTER 9 CONCLUSION

9.0 INTRODUCTION

Sociocultural theory has become increasingly important in early childhood education (ECE), especially in early literacy learning. It provides opportunities for young children in disadvantaged communities to use the knowledge from their communities and families in their formal education which is often excluded from the curriculum. With the development of ever advancing technologies of transport and communication, globalisation influences places, people, societies, cultures, economies and lifestyles in different ways. The social and cultural context in local communities is significant in young children’s literacy learning; communities which are increasingly responsive to as much as expressive of globalisation. Therefore it is worthwhile to consider sociocultural approaches to early literacy learning in terms of local/global forces. This study has drawn on the concept of glocalisation (Almas & Lawrence, 2003) and ideas from Ranciere (2009, 2010) to test a theoretic-pedagogical framework for providing critical insights into sociocultural approaches to literacy learning enacted through a transnational professional intervention program specially the FIH Program. Its aim was to provide equal opportunities for disadvantaged children’s learning by engaging their families and communities knowledge in the education provided by five ECCs in disadvantaged community in Antofagasta. In reviewing the Chapters of this thesis in the next section, I have summarized some key research capabilities I have developed. This foregrounds the idea of research training as both a means of providing a small but nevertheless significant original contribution to knowledge, as well as producing a beginning educational researcher.

9.1 Summary of previous chapters

Before elaborating the capabilities I developed through this study as a researcher, this section summarises Chapter Two, Three and Four to provide an overview of the key concepts in the reviewed literature, restate the theoretical framework and reconfirm the method and methodology in this study.
Chapter Two reported summarises the literature reviewed in this study. Firstly, it explains some key concepts in sociocultural theory and points out the problems of studies about sociocultural theory in ECE in Australia. Australian studies about sociocultural theory in ECE is Euro-American centred and tend to test other teachers’ knowledge about sociocultural theory rather than draw on the theoretical tools of these teachers. The second section in this Chapter involves the literacy resources in the community, which presents the literacy resources that may be available for young children’s learning. This is fundamental for the data analysis in Chapter Five. Educators’ knowledge relates to their role in children’s learning. Therefore Chapter Six explores the changes of educators’ role and literacy environment because of learning Australian sociocultural theory. Educators’ role is reflected in children’s literacy teaching/learning, this Chapter reported sociocultural literacy learning activities. This is important for analysis in Chapter Seven to investigate Chilean educators’ changes in learning activities as a result of the input of sociocultural theory. The last section in Chapter Two reviewed different programs of family engagement in children’s learning. This helps to discuss the development of intellectual relationships between families and educators in Chapter Eight.

Chapter Three provides alternative theoretical resources to analyse data, which provides different understanding to sociocultural approach to children’s literacy learning in a transnational professional development program. Sociocultural theory points out the significance of literacy resources in children’s environment, while prevalence of globalisation requires reconsideration of the literacy resources for children. Some studies have the stereotype of globalisation as westernisation or Americanisation where Western or North American knowledge and theoretical tools are exported to non-Western people. Although local force tends to be weaker comparing to the global force, the concept of language as local practice reveals the dynamic interactions between local and global. The concept of glocalisation captures this dialectical relation. Ranciere’s (2009) concept intellectual in/equality further explore the in/equality between local and global as well as the intellectual in/equality between Chilean educators and families. Ranciere’s (2009) other concepts which are more pedagogically focused, such as ignorant schoolmaster, knowing and not knowing and emancipated spectator provide different understanding to children’s
literacy teaching/learning. This contributes to reconsideration of sociocultural approaches to children’s literacy learning as well.

Chapter Four explains research design, ethic issues, data collection approaches and data analysis approaches. This research has four different sources of data, namely artefacts produced in the FIH Program, vignettes generated based on the selected artefacts, photographic interview and academic conference documents produced by FIH team members. Artefacts were categorised to present the changes in the FIH Program because of the input of Australian-made sociocultural theory. Vignettes summarised these images into passages. Interviews and conference documents provided additional information to enrich the stories behind the selected visual images. These data were integrated into a series of photonovels, which present the evidence in an interesting, direct and dynamic way. The next section explicate the key findings of this research study.

9.2 KEY FINDINGS

This thesis has developed a different understanding of sociocultural approach to early literacy learning in terms of the local/global nexus principally through a photographic case study. The meaning of sociocultural literacy learning has been developed a better understanding of the local/global nexus, mediated and integrated by the FIH Program. Chapter Two noted the importance for ECE of sociocultural theory for young children in disadvantaged communities. Chapter Three analysed the influence of globalisation in people’s social and cultural activities in different localities. These social and cultural activities play important role in young children’s literacy learning. However, there is little, if any literature analysing the influence of globalisation via a transnational professional development Program on sociocultural approach to early literacy learning.

In terms of influence of globalisation in disadvantaged communities, there is an inevitable debate about the un/equal relationship between local and global. In this study the focus on intellectual in/equality provided a new way of looking at literacy teaching/learning, in this context. Ranciere’s (2009) concepts about intellectual in/equality addressed the un/equal relations between disadvantage communities and
globalisation, and also the unequal intellectual relationship between families and educators in the FIH Program. Family engagement is studied by many researchers (Baxter & Hand, 2013; Beltrán, 2012; Crawford & Zygouris-Coe, 2006; Dail & Payne, 2010; Douglass, 2011; Fleer & Robbins, 2006; Halgunseth & Peterson, 2009; McTavish, 2007; Mohr, Zygmunt, & Clark, 2012; Morgan et al., 2009), but no using Ranciere’s (2009) concepts of intellectual in/equality. The data analysed in this thesis indicates that although EC educators were ignorant of the children’s FoK (Gonzalez et al., 1995) in their families and community, they could engage family and community knowledge in their the literacy learning environment and activities. Ranciere’s (2009) concepts about the learning process – ‘seeing, saying and doing’ and ‘knowing and not knowing’ also provide new understandings of a sociocultural learning. Of course, I understand that my interpretation of these concepts and data provide one possible explanation, and is reported in this thesis.

This study drew on these concepts (see Figure 9.1) to provide a different insight into sociocultural approach to early literacy learning. The concept of local/global knowledge flows gave new insights into the work of the FIH Program in a disadvantaged community in Antofagasta in making available ideas for children’s literacy learning. Because disadvantaged communities are often regarded as weak in the force of the forces of globalisation, this requires families and educators to consider what FoK to use in children’s literacy learning. It might be that by working with the concept of equality of intelligence the FIH Program could keep Chilean EC educators help them to draw on new sources of the theoretical knowledge in early literacy learning. EC educators who engaged children’s family and community FoK into their literacy learning environment and activities may be referred to Ranciere’s (2009) ignorant schoolmaster, who taught students to learn a language without necessary transmitting knowledge of the language or linguistics. There concepts bring to the intellectual relationship between families and educators. ‘Seeing, saying and doing’, and ‘knowing and not knowing’ do seem to provide a more explicit way and of analysing and facilitating young children’s literacy learning than Rogoff’s (1995) three planes.
Chapter 5 addressed the question of how does the ‘glocalization’ of knowledge manifest itself in young children’s literacy learning in disadvantaged communities in Antofagasta. The key finding from this study is as follows:

The glocalisation of knowledge flows via popular culture and technology is available for children’s literacy learning, as well as creating the reverse flow of knowledge from Antofagasta to Sydney, specially in the case of the Literacy Cafe.

The evidence analysed in this study came from or was presented by the Australian FIH team members, and indicated the presence of local/global literacy resources in Antofagasta. They mentioned a Barbie shop, McDonald’s and video games, and the team game digital camera in their community and families that the children had opportunities to capture images of the knowledge in their daily lives and the centre. The photographs showed different cartoon icons present in the children’s everyday live, images like Disney cartoons, Sponge Bob and Naruto, mobile phones and digital video cameras that their families were using. The FIH Australian team
members reported their observations of the child exploring the digital cameras, and the potential of using other element of popular culture and digital equipments for children’s learning. Photographs were used to record children’s different literacy activities. However, there was no evidence elaborating how they used other popular culture and other technology in children’s literacy learning.

Children’s play activities – mining, election, market, local shop and hospital revealed FoK in their local community. In terms of shopping habits, there the team reported on the presence of a supermarket in their community but it was not included as a resource in children’s literacy learning. The Chilean EC educators chose community markets and local shops as the focus for their literacy teaching/learning activities. This showed the EC educators’ selection of what they wanted the children to learn through engaging local knowledge.

Chapter 6 addressed the question of how does educators’ learning of Australian sociocultural approach influences their roles and the literacy learning environment they created for children. The key finding is this regard from this study is as follows:

Chilean early childhood educators’ increasing knowledge about Australian sociocultural approaches to literacy learning supported the changes of their roles of working with families to support children’s literacy learning, and changes the learning environment they created in the ECCs.

The Chilean EC educators were reported acquiring more Australian knowledge of sociocultural approach in the FIH Program, and learnt to improve young children’s literacy learning through engaging literacy practices in their community and families. This provides them with different knowledge about ECE, but did not engage in theoretical tools of Chilean EC educators, which underestimates their intellectual contribution. They started to bring children’s FoK in to the ECCs, and took children to their local community to experience and observe. Interpreting the evidence thought the concept of ‘seeing, saying and doing’ (Ranciere, 2009), this provided children the opportunity to be in their first stage of learning – seeing/observing. The EC educators changed the literacy learning environment in the ECCs because of their
increasing understanding of sociocultural approach to early literacy learning. They engaged children’s families in children’s literacy learning through their photographic documentations.

Reportedly, sociocultural theory helped the EC educators to support young children’s literacy learning. However, it was brought challenges to the EC educators. To engage the FoK in children’s families and their global/local community required the EC educators to consider what knowledge they wanted their children to access to learn. Because the learning is a process of constructing children’s multiple identities, what they are exposed to shapes who they are. The Chilean EC educators in the FIH Program were made the effort to scaffold their children’s learning within their ZPDs, however they were reported that they needed a much deeper understandings for these two concepts. The concepts of ‘seeing, saying and doing’ and ‘knowing and not knowing’ may help the Australian educators better understand the different learning stages and process, so as to better scaffoldings for young children’ learning. There was a dramatic increase in children’s photographs and photographs of their work in the literacy learning environments in the five pilot ECCs. The increasing number of photographs made it possible to display their work, to show their achievement, and report their learning outcomes.

Chapter 7 addressed the question of how do educators’ understandings of sociocultural theory inform their uses of play and scaffolding to promote children’s literacy learning. The key finding from this study is as follows:

The early childhood educators’ increasing understanding of sociocultural theory helped them to create more scaffolded play to engage children’s funds of knowledge in their literacy learning.

Through the work (and according to the accounts) of the Australian FIH team, the Chilean EC educators’ increased their understanding of Australian sociocultural approach to literacy learning. This knowledge may help them to rethink their work as educators and critically reflect on their own teaching. The Chilean EC educators were reportedly trained by Australian sociocultural approach which emphasizes teachers-centred practices. This different knowledge changes their pedagogy for
literacy teaching/learning activities. However this Australian-Chile professional development Program did not include Chilean educators’ theoretical tools, which made the FIH Program tend to be the “export” of Australian values of “effective teaching/learning”.

As the evidence analysed in this study shows the EC educators changed the young children’s seating plan and created more group work and play for them. The increased group work and play provided opportunities for the educators to observe what the children were doing (their base line level) and to scaffold children’s learning to a higher level of performance. Young children’s play provided the educators the opportunities to see how they learn through exploring and creating, and to see how the children joined their play to their everyday lives experience in community. The educators had to learn how to make this a focus for their literacy teaching/learning activities. To interpret this through the concept of ‘seeing, saying and doing’ (Ranciere, 2009), play made the young children to go through these three stages of learning. They see (observe) their social and cultural activities in their everyday life, then in play they say (interact) with others about their observation, and their key do (practice) to testify what they have observed and learnt from interactions. In play, young children became active learners and emancipated spectators instead of just watching the educators’ teaching.

EC educators, families and more capable peers scaffolded the children’s learning. However, scaffolding asked these EC educators to invest time is getting to know the children and their families very well to better understand what educational support they need and what challenges they have. The EC educators’ apparently lacked this at the start of the FIH Program. Scaffoldings could be meaningful feedback to encourage children, or modelling or co-working with children. The concept of ‘seeing, saying and doing’ may help the educators to diagnose what stage the child is and provide appropriate support.
Chapter 8 addressed the question of how to change family engagement in young children’s literacy learning

Both EC educators and children’s families started to realise the importance of families’ intellectual engagement in young children’s literacy learning through working to establish an intellectual relationship.

The evidence analysed in this study showed that there was an increase in family engagement in young children’s literacy learning during the course of FIH Program. The photographic evidence generated by the Australian team showed no family engagement at the beginning the FIH Program in 2008. However, there may have been some forms of family engagement that the cameras of the Australian team did not capture.

The Chilean EC educators and families were reported by the Australian team as having negative attitudes towards each other, and a low awareness of the importance of family engagement. Sociocultural theory helped the EC educators to notice the potential intellectual contribution of families to their children’s learning. This increased knowledge and awareness encouraged the educators to make the ECCs a more welcoming educational environment for families, and gave the families more opportunities to interact with EC educators. Their interactions included families visiting ECCs, participating activities in ECCs, and interacting through photographic documentation of the centres’ literacy activities. These interactions are necessary for the EC educators to build up an intellectual relationship with the families and to understand why it was still challenging for EC educators to consider families as intellectual partners and important educational participants in their children’s literacy learning, they start to make changes. Interpreted through the lens of equality of intelligence (Ranciere, 2009). The families’ knowledge and capabilities cannot be fixed in place or by their jobs and limited income.

The thesis addressed the question of what a photographic case study can reveal about the value of sociocultural approaches to young children’s literacy learning in a professional development program within a global/local context? The key finding from this study is as follows:
Sociocultural approaches to literacy learning can support early childhood educators and families in engaging global/local knowledge flows in their children’s literacy learning, where an intellectual relationship is established through changing the literacy learning environment and activities, but it fails to address the intellectual in/equality issues in a transnational program.

Australian FIH Program team members introduced a sociocultural approach to early literacy to the Chilean EC educators in the five pilot ECCs in Antofagasta in Chile. These ECCs were located in disadvantaged communities and were free for the local families. To improve young children’s literacy learning, the Chilean EC educators were encouraged to engage the FoK (Gonzalez et al., 1995) in children’s families and community. This required them to change the literacy learning environment and activities in the ECCs. These changes helped them to establish what I have argued is an intellectual relationship with the children’s families.

The evidence analysed in the study showed elements of the popular culture and technology present in young children’s everyday lives indicate the influence of glocalisation. However, there was no evidence showing that how the FIH team worked with the Chilean EC educator to balance the local/global FoK through early literacy teaching/learning in these communities. Even so, the EC educators engaged the FoK from the families and communities in children’s literacy learning. Although the educators are not experts in children’s FoK, they taught this knowledge, were ignorant schoolmasters in Ranciere’s (2009) sense by using it in the centres’ learning environment and their literacy activities. Although the Chilean EC educators were not aware of what this concept meant in practice, they started to apply it in their work. The evidence from Australian team member reported that some of the Chilean EC educators tried to facilitate of the young children’s literacy learning. However, it was still a challenging concept for them to understand and practice.

9.3 LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

As with all research, there are several limitations to this study. First, there is much more interview data that could have been collected and analysed, especially from the
Chilean educators in the FIH Program. However, because of work and family schedule arrangements, I was not able to meet them when they visited Australia. With limited time and funding, I could not afford the long time trip to Chile to collect data. Second, I have studied an educational program within Australian-Chile, but I did not have a chance to visit the research site in Antofagasta. In terms of having a closer insight into the local communities these future studies is necessary. Although this study was about the Australian FIH team’s concepts these two limitations mean the evidence in this research is one-sided. Third, the photographs in this study were taken in an ad hoc, which made it challenging to analyse the specific changes in each ECC in the FIH Program. There is uneven number of photographs in each category. Forth, it is challenging for photographs to capture the entire story. The interviewees – members of the Australian team – noted that scaffolding is not easy to present through photographs.

The limitations of this study leave more opportunities for future research. A supplementing study could have of both the Chilean and Australian team planning an intervention based on ideas and concepts form both sides of the Pacific Ocean. There is much in large and increasing archive of evidence being produced from the new ECCs now involved in the FIH Program that needs to be considered. There is a plan of revising the four evidentiary chapters and create a series of refereed journal articles.

9.4 IMPLICATIONS

The implication of sociocultural theory to ESL and L2 learning

While this study focused on early literacy learning, the theories and concepts are not limited in ECE I can see that this research is also applicable to ESL and L2 teaching/learning in terms of pedagogies, learning environment and activities. In other words, literacy is not limited to English or Spanish.

English language education in China emphasises students’ learning grammar and studying examinations. While many students have high scores in the examinations and memorise the grammatical principles, they cannot ‘use’ this language in practice.
This poses serious challenges for them when they go to work or study aboard. Sociocultural theory provides an understanding of language learning in context rather than simple learning linguistics. It point to the importance of students’ cultural and historical knowledge in language learning.

*Implication of photographic documents in self-reflection*

By doing this photographic case study and observing the EC educators using photographic documents inspired my thinking of using photographic documents for educators’ self-reflection. Using photographs to record the teaching/learning activities helps the educators to reflect on their activities as well as the children’s response to their teaching. In doing so educators can critically reflect on what is effective to actively engage children in learning, and what strategies they need to improve.

*Implication of intellectual in/equality in educational programs*

This study points out the issues of intellectual in/equality in Australian teacher professional development program. Non-Western theoretical tools are undervalued and transnational programs tend to use Western theoretical resources. This may undervalue the contribution of Non-Western theoretical tools as well as Non-Western people’s capability of theorising. This reminds educators and researchers to rethink the programs they designed in the future. A transnational program is no just to include people from different nations, but also their conceptual ideas and knowledge.

*Learning to do educational research in Australia*

The intellectual labour involved in doing this doctoral study taught me how to do vigorous educational research in Australia. I was trained step-by-step to do it. I learnt to prepare a research proposal for my Confirmation of Candidature (CoC). Through writing and rewriting all these Chapters I have learnt how to produce a thesis. – a scholarly argument. I connected my own prior knowledge of doing research and my Chinese theoretic-linguistic knowledge with this research and self-education process. This helped me to recognise myself as a beginning bilingual teacher/researcher. I
also learnt to do oral presentations in academic forums by participating different workshops, seminars and conferences. The next section is my reflection of doing this research project reported in this study.

9.5 REFLECTION

Doing a doctoral study is a process of conducting a research project and also a process of learning – of self-formation. In this section I reflect on what I have learnt – what I have become as result of this study when took me from being a teacher and to becoming a beginning researcher. Figure 9.2 presents some of the key skillsI have developed in becoming a beginning research through doing this study. In this study I used different sources of data and different strategies to analyse the data. The use of photographs, Wordle, photonovel and the design of diagrams for this study developed my multiliteracies. Organising the relationships among the concept in the diagrams, designing this research doing photo-elicitation interviewees, and completing the report writing (and rewriting) developed my research skills for doing rigorous empirical educational inquiry and theoretic-pedagogical data analysis. These taught me the skills required for becoming and being a beginning researcher.

Figure 9.2 Learning to be a beginning researcher
The process of reviewing the literature can be summarized in two Chinese metaphors which are often used in Chinese language teaching and learning in China. The first metaphor is 熟读唐诗 300 首, 不会作诗也会吟 (shu du tang shi 300 shou, bu hui zuo shi ye hui yin), Literally, this metaphor states, if you read the 300 classical poems written in Tang Dynasty, you probably can read poems even if you cannot write poems by yourself. Here I use this metaphor to refer to the journey that I have taken, By searching, reading and writing about the articles produced by different researchers, I reviewed the large amount of literature that helped me to complete this study, and add to their knowledge in a small and modest way. The second metaphor is a chengyu (consisting of four characters) 反反复复 (fan fan fu fu) which means again and again. Here it refers to process of data analysis and thesis writing, which was a 反反复复 (fan fan fu fu) process that involved organising and reorganising, writing and rewriting: research is an interactive process of moving focusing and gaining deeper insights through new cycles of apparent repetition.

Through reviewing studies by Ranciere (2009), and works on glocalisation, sociocultural theory and literacy learning I obtained more knowledge of these concepts (Figure 9.3). I developed a deeper understanding of sociocultural theory, literacy teaching/learning, in/equality relationships in education, and respect for children’s diversity and the need for family engagement. This helped me to develop my knowledge of in/equality, and what this means for literacy teaching and for being an educator.

37 “Shu” means familiar, skilled and proficient. “Du” is the verb read. Here “tang” refers to Tang Dynasty. “Shi” is the poem. Using “tang shi” in this phrase is because Tang Dynasty had many famous and talented poets who have written many beautiful and influential poems, and in the Chinese literature history Tang Dynasty is famous for this. “Shou” is a quantifier for counting poems and songs. “Bu” means no. “Hui” means can and able to do something, so “bu hui” together means cannot. “Zuo” is a verb, usually means write or compose a poem or song. “Ye” is a conjunction means even though in this phrase. “Yin” is a formal and literacy expression of “du” read.
Figure 9.3: Learning to be an educator
REFERENCE


Feer, M. (2003a). Early childhood education as an evolving 'community of practice' or as live 'social reproduction' researching the 'taken-for-granted'. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood, 4*(1), 64-78.


APPENDIX 1
Interview questions (2011)

Demographic details

i. How would you like to introduce yourself
ii. What is your educational background?
iii. How long have you worked as an early childhood educator?
iv. What has been or is your involvement in the FIH Program?

Substantive issues: artefacts

1. What is your understanding of sociocultural literacy activities?
2. Can you show me some artefacts from the FIH Program and tell me what the artefacts reveal about sociocultural literacy practices?

Probes (explanations, examples, definitions):

a. Can you explain more about your understanding of sociocultural literacy practices in the FIH Program? How does the sociocultural approach effect children’s literacy learning?
b. Can you explain your understanding of funds of knowledge? How was this shown in the FIH Program? How does it affect children’s literacy learning?
c. Can you explain your understanding of communities of practice? How was this evident in the FIH Program? How does it affect children’s literacy learning?
d. Can you explain your understanding of scaffolding? How was this shown in the FIH Program? How does it affect children’s literacy learning?
e. Can you explain your understanding of ZPD? How was this shown in the FIH Program? How does it affect children’s literacy learning?
Substantive issues: vignettes

3. I have composed a series of vignettes based on these artefacts. Could you please read these, and comment of my account? (Two sets of vignettes will be presented, separately, for discussions.)

Probes:

a. How does my vignette relate to your experience of sociocultural literacy practices in the FIH Program?
b. How does my vignette relate to your experience of funds of knowledge in the FIH Program?
c. How does my vignette relate to your experience of communities of practices in the FIH Program?
d. How does my vignette relate to your experience of scaffolding in the FIH Program?
e. How does my vignette relate to your experience of ZPD in the FIH Program?
Interview questions (2012)

Substantive issues

Probes (explanations, examples, definitions):

1. Knowledge, knowing, ignorance (explanations, examples, definitions):

   a) What is your view of the Antofagasta young children’s/educators’ learning process?
      How does your view on this relate to the view or your experience in the FIH program?
   b) What in your view are the Antofagasta educators’ understandings of young children’s (literacy) learning process?
   c) How did you see their understanding of Antofagasta young children’s learning process affect their role in young children’s education? (Their pedagogies? And children’s families’ role?)
   d) How did the FIH Program do to change children’s/educators’ learning? (Explain what were they? What were the outcomes?)
      Any deliberate or explicit goal and/or strategies?
   e) What does this say about the FIH Program’s view of ECE/children’s literacy learning process?

2. Equality/inequality (explanations, examples, definitions):

   f) Did you notice any inequalities/equalities between the Antofagasta educators and the children’s families or the teachers and the techniques?
   g) Can you explain your understanding of inequality/equality in this context?
   h) How did these equalities/inequalities affect the Antofagasta educators’/techniques views of the role of Antofagasta families in children’s education?
   i) Did the FIH Program have a deliberate explicit goal or strategies for changing this? (explain? What were the outcomes?)
   j) What does this say about the FIH Program’s view of equality/inequality? (please define)
3. Sense and sensibility (explanations, examples, definitions):

a) Now that you have been to Antofagasta a number of times have you found any things about ECE – the educators, children, or families - which now make more sense to you than they did previously? What has brought about this change? Why do they now make sense to you? What is sense?

b) In what sense the changes of the relationships between educators and parents or educators and children or parents and children makes of? or their work in education?

c) How has the sense of ECE held by the educators in Antofagasta changed? Any example?

d) How is the FIH Program making more sense to the Antofagasta educators and children’s families? Any example?

4. Critique, criticality (explanations, examples, definitions):

a) What critiques were expressed by the participants in Antofagasta? Any form of critique did they employ? What are the main foci of the participants critiques? If it is not common/usual, what do you mean by critique?

b) What modes of critique did you employ in the FIH Program? What are the main foci of your critiques?

c) How did the educators in Antofagasta understand critique? How did they employ critiques to improve the children’s education? Did they teach critical literacy? (Their pedagogies? And children’s families’ role?)

b) What did the FIH Program do to connecting critique with educational change Any deliberate explicit goal or strategy? (explain? What were the outcomes?)

e) What does this say about the FIH Program’s view of making educational change through being critical? (please define)
### TABLE 4.3: KEY WORDS OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (2011)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>How this relate to sociocultural theory or FIH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic background</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education background</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role/position in the FIH Program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions</td>
<td>Interviewee’s definition</td>
<td>Understanding/ explanation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-cultural literacy practices?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FoK</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CoP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scaffolding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZPD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centres</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educators</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 4.4: KEY WORDS OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Explain</th>
<th>Example/experience in the FIH</th>
<th>Chile educators’ view?</th>
<th>Influence on children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge/knowing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding of children’s learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educators’ role</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families’ role</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality of intelligence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inequality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redistribution of sensibility</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criticality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX 3

Interview invitation

Dear __________________,

I am Linan Yao whom Associate Professor Christine Woodrow has mentioned in the previous email. I am a Master of Education (Honours) student from Centre for Educational Research of UWS. My student number is 16615771. Professor Michael Singh is my principle supervisor, and Associate Professor Christine Woodrow is my associate supervisor. My research project focuses on the sociocultural literacy practices, and I am using the FIH Program as the specific case in this research. I am analysing the photos produced in the FIH Program and the UWS team leaders’ view of sociocultural literacy practices. Therefore you are the key member in the Project. In order to collect data for my thesis, I hope that you can accept my invitation for an interview about your participation in the FIH Program. The interview will be around 30 minutes at your convenient time. All the results will be used for research only and your real name will not be showed in the thesis. I will give transcripts back to you to check in the end. Meanwhile, a set of digital stories produced based on the interviews and selected photos in the FIH Program will be given to you as an appreciation of your participant.

Attached is the participant information sheet. My email address is 16615771@student.uws.edu.au. Please do not hesitate to contact me for further information about the research progress.

Sincerely

Linan Yao
APPENDIX 4

Participant Information Sheet (General)

An information sheet, which is tailored in format and language appropriate for the category of participant - adult, child, young adult, should be developed.

Note: If not all of the text in the row is visible, please click your cursor anywhere on the page to expand the row. To view guidance on what is required in each section, hover your cursor over the bold text. Further instructions are on the last page of this form.

Project Title: Professional learning for sociocultural literacy practices: Australian early childhood educators’ artefacts and accounts

Who is carrying out the study?

MS. Linan Yao

You are invited to participate in a study conducted by Centre for Educational Research, University of Western Sydney. The research will form basis of the Doctoral degree at the University of Western Sydney under the supervision of Professor Michael Singh and A/Professor Christine Woodrow.

What is the study about?

This study will investigate the characteristics of sociocultural literacy practices produced through professional development via a capability building project undertaken between Australia and Chile. Specifically, it will explore the sociocultural literacy practices demonstrated in this particular early childhood professional learning intervention program by analysing the Australian early childhood educators’ artefacts and accounts on sociocultural literacy practices. The result will be disseminated by my Doctoral thesis and future publications (such as conference papers, book chapters and journal articles) that produced by this study. A series of digital stories produced based on the artefacts and interviews will be stored in a CD as an attachment of the master thesis. Therefore, information collected for, used in, or generated by this project may be used for the master thesis and future publications that generated by this study.

What does the study involve?

It involves part of the documents in the FIH Program, the FIH Program team leaders’ presentations about the FIH Program, selecting artefacts in the FIH Program, interviews about the participants’ experience of sociocultural literacy practices in the FIH Program, critique commons on the vignettes produced by the researchers based on the artefacts in the Program, academic conference presentation of the FIH Program.

How much time will the study take?

Anticipated Start Date: 30/05/2011
Anticipated Finish Date: 31/03/2013

**Will the study benefit me?**
Yes. Participants may develop a deeper understanding of literacy practices, sociocultural theory and early childhood education. Meanwhile, a set of digital stories produced from this study will be given to you in appreciation for your participation in this study.

**Will the study involve any discomfort for me?**
There is no risk of harm or discomfort to all participants.

**How is this study being paid for?**
This study is not sponsored.

**Will anyone else know the results? How will the results be disseminated?**
All aspects of the study, including results, will be confidential and only researcher herself and her supervisor will have access to information of participants.

**Can I withdraw from the study?**
Participation is entirely voluntary: you are not obliged to be involved and - if you do participate - you can withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without any consequences.

**Can I tell other people about the study?**
Yes, you can tell other people about the study by providing them with the chief investigator’s contact details. They can contact the chief investigator to discuss their participation in the research project and obtain an information sheet.

**What if I require further information?**
If you would like to learn more about the research at any stage, please feel free to contact Ms. Linan Yao. Her contact details are: lyao@student.uws.edu.au.

**What if I have a complaint?**
This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. The Approval number is H9192.

If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Office of Research Services on Tel 02-4736 0933 Fax 02-4736 0913 or email humanethics@uws.edu.au.

Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

If you agree to participate in this study, you may be asked to sign the Participant Consent Form.
## Participant Consent Form

This is a project specific consent form. It restricts the use of the data collected to the named project by the named investigator.

**Note:** If not all of the text in the row is visible, please click your cursor anywhere on the page to expand the row. To view guidance on what is required in each section, hover your cursor over the bold text.

**Project Title:**

Professional learning for socio-cultural literacy practices

Australian early childhood educators’ artefacts and accounts

I, ____________, consent to participate in the research project titled:

I acknowledge that:

I have read the participant information sheet and have been given the opportunity to discuss the information and my involvement in the project with the researcher/s.

The procedures required for the project and the time involved have been explained to me, and any questions I have about the project have been answered to my satisfaction.

I consent to participate in this research in presenting the FIIH Program, selecting the artefacts of the FIIH Program, face to face interviews about the socio-cultural literacy practices in the FIIH Program.

I understand that my involvement is confidential and that the information gained during the study may be published, but no information about me will be used in any way that reveals my identity.

I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time, without affecting my relationship with the researcher/s now or in the future.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signed:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Return Address:**

Room K3.30, Building K
Kingswood Campus, University of Western Sydney
NSW 2747
1 August 2011

Professor Michael Singh,
Centre for Educational Research

Dear Michael and Linan,

I wish to formally advise you that the Human Research Ethics Committee has approved your research proposal H9192 “Professional learning for socio-cultural literacy practices: Australian early childhood educators’ artefacts and accounts”, until 31 December 2011 with the provision of a progress report annually and a final report on completion.

Please quote the project number and title as indicated above on all correspondence related to this project.

This protocol covers the following researchers:
Michael Singh, Christine Woodrow, Linan Yao.

Yours sincerely

[Signature]

Dr Anne Abraham
Chair, UWS Human Research Ethics Committee
Dear Linan

I am pleased to advise that your requested application to upgrade your ethics approval consistent with the upgrade from Masters (Honours) to PhD has been approved.

I have revised your ethics approval expiration date to 30 June 2013.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at humanethics@uws.edu.au

Regards
Jillian

Jillian Shute
Human Ethics Officer
University of Western Sydney
Office of Research Services
Building K, Kingswood Campus, K.1.45
Locked Bag 1797, Penrith 2751 NSW Australia
Phone: 02 4736 0229 - Internal: 2229 - Fax: 02 4736 0905
Email: humanethics@uws.edu.au
APPENDIX 7

This table is produced based on the trial Wordle images during the analytical process. It is not the final version of the result of Wordle analysis. However, it helped me to analyse the changing of the literacy learning environment in ECCs.

**TABLE 4.5: LITERACY ELEMENTS IN ECCS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year and elements</th>
<th>March 2008</th>
<th>October 2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Few</td>
<td>Most</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colours</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animals</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetation</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruits</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Astronomy</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairy tale</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cartoon</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toys</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painting</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child work</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photos</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child’s life</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tables</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real life</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notice</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is the result of trial version of Wordle images during photographic analysis.
APPENDIX 8

The procedure of producing a Wordle image

First step is the captions of key words for the selected artefacts. Then import these key words into the WORDLE webpage to produce a word cloud of these key words. The next step is to find out the font changes of these keywords over time which shows the changes of the literacy environment in the five centres. After this, a table will be generated based on the findings of the changes of the key words on WORDLE pictures, which are the changes of elements in the literacy environment in the centres from 2008 to 2010.

Procedure

1. Use Google translation to translate some Spanish on the artefacts.
2. Make a chronological table to show the development of the literacy environment.
3. It is impossible to count how many artefacts for each element or how many times these elements appear on the artefacts. Because I cannot ensure the photographers took photos of everything in the centres. Some photos are repeated, some features and elements may be included in the photos. The artefacts collections for me look like a randomly shooting to record the FIH Program. They were not taken for particular purposes or reasons, so actually they are very general and not specific. Therefore counting really not suitable for analysing or describing these artefacts.
4. I wrote a caption for each selected artefact within one or two sentences, which describe all the elements appeared on the artefacts. Then I used “Wordle” to show the frequency of the elements in each year. This frequency picture of the elements will help me to construct the table and describe the general features of each year’s literacy environment in the centres.
5. Systematic criteria of selecting artefacts? More details!
6. Maybe more artefacts in the digital story, but less and more specific artefacts in the description?
7. Revise the WORDLE pictures: after writing the description for each WORDLE picture, I found that the artefacts must be described in a series of the features I have found in them and the key words for these features must be exactly the same including whether they are capitalized or plural. Because of the spelling problems of some key words, theses captions need to be revised carefully especially in spelling checking. Then turn these captions into WORDLE picture again.

**Key words used to describe the photographs**

These words are copied into the Wordle system.

In March 2008 (17 photographs):

1. arts, animals, plants, sign-words, uniform, daily-life, children’s-work, achievement-table, text and circle-sitting
2. uniform, toys, animation and table-sitting
3. instruction, signboard, geography, animals, plants, daily-life
4. colours, language, numbers and plants
5. colours, calendar, numbers, text
6. colours, instruction signboard, sign-words, digital, names and books, cabinets
7. colours, door-board, sign-words, plants, science, gender, names and daily-life
8. colours, arts, sign-words, calendar, daily-life, fruits and vegetables
9. names, door-board, sign-words, animals and plants
10. colours, gender, animals, daily-life, sign-words, cabinets, books, instruction, signboard, animation, plants
11. colours, gender, daily-life, sign-words, cabinets, books, instruction signboard, toys, digital
12. safety, colours, gender, text and signboard
13. colours, arts and sign-words
14. names, sports, colours, animals, plants, no-uniform and table-sitting
15. colours, arts, geography, animals, plants, gender and daily-life
16. colours, daily-life
17. play-house, colours, arts, animals
The WORDLE URL of 2008 March:
http://www.wordle.net/show/wrdl/4934192/08_March_Lit_Environment_01032012
To delete: http://www.wordle.net/delete?index=4934192&d=CPYE
Linan’s WORDLE public gallery URL:
http://www.wordle.net/gallery?usernames=Linan
http://www.wordle.net/gallery?usernames=Linan

Explain:

sign-words: these words beside or on the object as their names or a phrase that describes the activity in the.
Daily-life: the decoration that reflects children’s daily-life or the life of their local community that children are or should be familiar with will be expressed as “daily-life”.

Note:
This word cloud picture contains about 20 key words that describe in 18 artefacts, which are the environment of the early childhood centres in March 2008 before the professional learning workshops. The low density of the words indicates the low diversity of the literacy environment in 2008 March. The largest word “colours” shows the centres used various colours in their decoration. The second largest words are “sign-words”, “daily-life”, “plants” and “animals”. Hence, in these centres sign words, of plants and animals are often used in the centres, and also reflect their daily-life. The next level font words are “signboard”, “instruction”, “names” and “gender”. In these centres

In October 2008 (11 photographs),

1. uniform, colours, calendar and learning-board, animation, chairs, circle-sitting, music
2. colours, vegetations, animals, landforms, sign-words, toys, digital, books, calendar, children’s-work
3. colours, children’s-work, photos, daily-life, animals, toys
4. colours, animals, plants, sign-words, signboard and children’s-work
5. colours, poster, children’s-work, family, photos, names.
6. colours, sign-words, plants, animals, maths, imitation of real-life, cabinets and toys.
7. colours tables, sign-words, colours of plants, animals, maths, cabinets, toys, sports, language, school bags with animation and sitting around tables.
8. colours children’s-work magazines, captions, imitation of real-life, plants, building.
9. colours children’s-work, magazines, photos, and bilingual.
10. colours children’s-work, animals, plants sign-words.
11. colours children’s-work signboard, slogan, magazines, arts.

URL:
http://www.wordle.net/show/wrdl/4934204/08_Oct_Lit_Environment_01030212
To delete: http://www.wordle.net/delete?index=4934204&d=GYXD

Note:
In October 2008, the important change is the dense of the words on this picture. This means more features appear during this period. The largest word is still “colours”, and “colours” is the third level of the font, so colour is still the most important feature in the literacy environment. The second level of the larger words is “children’s”. The third level words are “sign-words”, “plants”, “animals”, “children’s-work” and “includes”. That means sign texts of different items, of plants and animals are often used in the decoration of the centres. More importantly they start to use some children’s work to decorate. The forth level of the outstanding words are “tables”, “life”, “toys”, “cabinets”, “posters”, “photos” and “magazines”. These words show that the centres begin to decorate more on the tables. Meanwhile, they begin to use toys, posters, photos, decoration which imitates the real life and from magazines to enrich their literacy environment. There are more new features in the fifth level words which are “animation”, “maths”, “scrawl” and “sitting”.

In 2009 (45 photographs):

1. colours, photos, names.
2. children’s-work, sign-words, animals, colours, books and magazines.
3. colours, duty-table, sign-words, photos, animals
4. colours animals names and photos.
5. colours names and photos.
6. colours learning-board, sign-words, animals, buildings, plants, pool, instruction-texts, and children’s daily-life instruction.
7. children’s-work, colours sign-words, names.
8. colours sign-words, daily-life and family building, toys, digital, cabinets.
9. colours sign-words, calendar.
10. language colours plants.
11. family photos captions
12. colours, photos, plant. door-board
13. colours sign-words, children’s-work, geographic learning-board, music, English
14. music English colours
15. colours door-board, sign-words, instruction-texts animals, plants astronomy.
16. children’s-work of colours animals.
17. children’s-stable-goods.
18. colours names.
19. calendar, colours animals, astronomy, fairy tales
20. children’s-stable-goods, animation
21. photos, text.
22. colours animals, vegetation.
23. information
24. colours information vegetation, fruits and food.
25. information notice,
26. information colours
27. children’s-work of colours astronomy learning-board photos of daily-life.
28. photos of children’s daily-life. daily-life
29. imitation of real family life. Colours arts of people and simulation tools.
30. children’s-work, colours arts geographic landform. children’s photos
31. colours arts which is the imitation of real teaching. animals. names.
32. children’s photos daily-life.
33. children’s-work—colours arts animals. photos of children’s daily-life.
34. information board and photos.
35. information panel includes colours of fruits, vegetations, food, animals and people, children’s names and photos.
36. colours arts and sign-words, colours tables with open sitting plan.
37. classroom-rules illustrated in colours sign-words.
38. colours sign-words and arts.
39. photos and captions.
40. children’s photos of daily-life and colours arts.
41. door-board and children’s-work—scrawl with their names.
42. children’s-work—scrawl.
43. colours animation and English
44. colours animation and English
45. colours sign-words, classroom-rules, colours books.

URL: http://www.wordle.net/show/wrdl/4934229/09_Lit_Environ_01032012

Note:
In the year 2009, the WORDLE picture shows the dramatic changes of the dense of the words and font of the words. Therefore, there are more features and elements occur in 2009 and some features become important in 2009 compared with 2008. The largest words are “colours” and “photos”. Hence, in 2009 photos, and colours are often used in decorating the literacy environment. The second level words are “sign-words”, “children’s” and “people”. Thus sign texts for various items and of people are often used in the literacy environment. Among the third level words “children’s-work” and “animals” show that children’s work and of animals are often used in literacy environment. The forth level words include “arts”, “children’s-stable-goods”, “everyday”, “life”, “family”, “English”, “names” and “information”. Therefore, children’s stable goods, arts, children’s names, English, information board and daily-life stuff are used to enrich their literacy environment. The fifth level words are “astronomy”, “texts”, “instruction”, “plants” and “animation”.

In 2010 (29 photographs),

1. colours animals door-board.
2. children’s-work of learning-board colours animals, texts, sign-words, names.
3. show-board colours photos, names, logo, sign-words and texts. instruction signboard. show-board colours animals.
4. colours door-board with animals.
5. colours arts of animals, plants and numbers.
6. rules and values board.
7. uniform colours animals.
8. sports instruction signboard and colours, names and photos uniform colours toys.
9. colours daily-life.
10. colours astronomy.
11. children’s-work colours sign-words, plants.
12. and instruction sheets with animals.
13. sandy play ground.
14. fairy tale, colours of plants, digital (TV) and circle sitting plan.
15. colour and sports.
16. children’s school bags of different animation and English words and signboard.
17. highly secured fence and colours arts.
18. door-board and colours fruits and vegetables.
19. colours information panel with sign-words, photos, captions and of plants and fairy tale.
20. children’s-work of colours arts and their names.
22. uniform colours imitation of real-life.
23. Attendance-table with colours sign-words, photos and names.
24. colours information panel with text, photos of daily-life animals. door-board and instruction signboard.
25. colours show-board with texts and colours photos of their daily-life.
26. colours show-board with texts.
27. children’s-work—family colours photos. toys and digital.
28. colours learning board includes animals from magazines and captions.

URL: http://www.wordle.net/show/wrdl/4934245/10_Lit_Environment_01032012

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Note:
In the year 2010, the largest word is “colours”, so it is the most important feature in the five centres’ literacy environment. The second level words are photos and animals, thus colours, animals and photos are also significant features in their decoration.
APPENDIX 9

Digital stories produced through the photographic analysis (CD attached).
APPENDIX 10

RESEARCH CAPABILITIES DEVELOPED THROUGH THIS PROJECT

Chapters One recounted the process of creating this thesis and foreshadowed the contribution to knowledge to be made through this study. That chapter presented a step-by-step account of the learning process I undertook as a beginning researcher to design the initial research proposal. It showed my developing capabilities for defining and refining research questions framed by the research focus; establishing a theoretical framework for the conceptual analysis of primary evidence; building an analytical review of the literature; and explaining the research method. These gave me the insights into why and how to conduct this research. Importantly, I learnt how to formulate a thesis statement from the structured data analysis I had undertaken in the four evidentiary chapters. In this chapter I stated the argument of this study, which is:

A disadvantaged community has rich literacy resources both locally and globally, this asks the early childhood educators to change their roles as educators to connect children’s family and community knowledge into their literacy learning through changing literacy environment and literacy teaching/learning activities, and establishing their intellectual relationship with children’s families.

Chapters Two provided a review of the recent literature and it was structured according to the focus of my research questions: sociocultural approach to early literacy learning, literacy resources in a disadvantaged community, educators’ role in ECE, literacy learning environment and activities, and family engagement in early literacy learning. Through the analytical review of this literature I learnt to identify as much as construct a gap in research-based knowledge in early literacy studies. I explored what had been studied in this field and established where I could through my research make a small but nevertheless significant contribution to knowledge in this field. I learnt to organise extensive body of literature by categorising it into different themes according to my research focus. This was very challenging work in study for two reasons. First, the focus shifted the framing of the research questions from time to time as a result of the data I collected and analysed. Second, my
bilingual capability gave me the capacity and opportunity to access to literature in Chinese, which required the development of my translation skills. Through reviewing these previous studies for this study I developed my skills of searching topic-related articles in different data bases on internet in both English and Chinese, and making use of library resources. Here it should be noted that through reviewing these previous studies, I developed my skills of using Endnote to make appropriate citations and references in the appropriate APA style not only to avoid plagiarism but to engage other scholars in an informed intellectual construction in relation to my research.

Chapter Three provided the theoretical framework which was used in the four evidentiary Chapters to bring novel concepts that took to the analysis of the data to answer the research questions that posed in Chapter One. I explored the concepts of globalisation, localisation and glocalisation through different scholar’s works (Almas, 2003; Almas & Lawrence, 2003; Falk, 1999; Franzway, 2005; Grieshaber & Ryan, 2005; Grieshaber & Yelland, 2005; Hallebone et al., 2003; Kincheloe, 2011; O'Riodram & Church, 2001; Singh, 2005; Singh et al., 2005; Voisey & O'Riodram, 2001). I identified the local influences of globalisation as a way to think through the nexus between the local and the global. I also identified concepts from Ranciere’s (1992, 2007, 2009, 2010) works which is used for a similar purpose. I learnt how to create a concept map to signal the relationships between the concepts drawn from local/global and Rancier’s concepts about intellectual in/equality, and to think through their relationships with concepts relates sociocultural theory.

Chapter Four presented the principles guiding the educational research, and explained why I choose case study as my research strategy. The research design, and project reported in this thesis, procedures of data collection and analysis were explained in this Chapter. I collected large amount of photographic data for selection and analysis in this thesis. During the process of doing the research reported in this thesis, I revised and refined the initial research design according the availability of data and my testing of the analytical tools. This Chapter helped me to develop my skills of doing photographic case study and research knowledge which I expect to use in my future research.
Chapters Five to Eight are the evidentiary Chapters of this thesis, and presented the analysis of the primary evidence. Chapter Five explored the influence of globalisation on young children’s literacy learning in a disadvantaged community. An analysis of the photographs, interviews and a conference presentation and the construction of a vignette – was used to explore the local/global funds of knowledge (FoK) in Antofagasta where the disadvantaged community involved in the FIH Program as situated. As a result of discussions about using the vignette in this Chapter, I considered dividing it into a short text to fit each of the subheadings in this Chapter. However, this vignette provided a picture of what Antofagasta looks like through the description of selected photographs. Therefore, instead of having vignette separated under each subheading it was presented at the beginning of that Chapter.

Chapter Six analysed photographs, and interview excerpts, and presented a vignette which revealed the changes of early childhood (EC) educators’ roles in the ECE and their influence on the literacy learning environment that they created in these centres. A significant challenge for me in constructing this chapter was how to organise and present the photographs of literacy learning environment in the ECCs. There is a very large photographic archive, they were taken in ad hoc manner. I tried analytical tools like Nvivo, but cannot solve these problem. Through this I learnt an important lesson namely, that it is not the tool used to conduct and produce the data analysis that is important, but the strategy and ideas the researcher who makes meaning of the data. It is the latter that drives the former. Thus, I decided on new criteria to select the photographs which meant using Wordle images to present overall changes over time of the feature of literacy learning environment in the ECCs.

Chapter Seven analysed photographs, interview and conference excerpts, and also presented a vignette of the literacy teaching/learning activities in the FIH Program. This evidentiary analysis helped me to present a better understanding literacy teaching/learning activities as social practices. A key challenge in this Chapter was provided by the overlaps in the photographic data. Some of the photographs captured both the literacy learning environment and literacy learning activities, so I needed to further clarify the criteria I was using for selecting and categorising them. Initially, the Chilean EC educators had different understandings of ECE and literacy learning
from those while the Australian FIH Program team was advocating. Their teaching was more teacher-centred and instructional. Instead of having a negative attitude towards this, the Australian FIH Program team members took a dialectic view of this intellectual educator. This taught me that being cautious about making judgements, which is important for an educator/researcher.

Chapter Eight investigated family engagement in their children’s literacy learning; Once again I analyse photographs, the interviews and conference excerpts, and a vignette. The concepts and relationships between these concepts were organised and reorganised many times as I analysed and reanalysed the data I collected. This developed my skill of linking the evidence to the research question and theoretical tools of analysis. In the rest of the Chapter 9 I state my key findings, the limitations, implication, recommendations and reflections of this study.