

Emotions of expatriate children and families transitioning into Malaysia: A cultural historical perspective

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Abstract

Much of the literature on Third Culture Kids (TCKs) is focussed on negative emotions that children and adults experience during an international transition. Few studies were found that draw on a cultural historical reading of emotions during an international transition. This paper seeks to fill the gap by presenting a study of a young child and her family transitioning into Malaysia as expatriates and looks at the individual and collective emotions present at home and school during the transition. Findings positioned from the child's perspective show heightened emotions gradually reducing over time with the support of the mother and teacher (Vygotsky, 1987). Further findings reveal that the absence of everyday routines adds to the range of heightened emotions felt by the individual child and collectively in the family and attending school is one of the first stable routines that the child undertakes. It is argued that a cultural-historical reading of this situation offers a different perspective and beginning theorization on the emotional development of children transitioning internationally.

Keywords : Emotion, perezhivanie, routines, international transitions

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Introduction

The globalisation of world trade offers increased opportunities for families to transition internationally and provides reasons for families with children to move countries and experience new and different cultures. Advances in international transport coupled with the rise of international companies' offer new possibilities and many families take the opportunity to broaden their horizons. A sociological term, introduced in the 1960's, is Third Culture Kids (TCKs) who are expatriate children transitioning internationally with their families and spend a substantial part of their "developmental years outside the parent's culture" (Pollock and Van Reken, 2009, p.13). Much of the literature discusses negative emotions that these children and families experience (Moore & Barker, 2012) such as questions of belonging, culture shock, marginality, confusion with identity and grief.

The majority of literature is centred on teenagers and retrospective studies however, young children (three to eight years old) are participants in this research, which is an empirical study of the emotions that a young TCK experiences using a cultural historical reading of development. Moore & Barker (2012) acknowledge there are few empirical studies in the area of TCKs and "a more complete picture and theoretical framework have yet to emerge" (p. 556). Vygotsky (1987) set the goal of developing a theoretical perspective that provides a unified analysis of behaviour and consciousness while recognizing the impact of the individual's uniqueness, culture and the socio-historical nature of the human mind. Vygotsky (1994) recognised the importance of the reciprocal relations between the child and the environment and how the emotional experience (*perezhivanie*) determines what kind of influence the situation or the environment will have on the developing child. In this paper, the child's perspective (Hedegaard and Flear, 2008) and *perezhivanie* are explored along with Vygotsky's concepts of stable and crisis periods of development.

Perezhivanie and the child's perspective offer a new way for TCK research to be positioned as with a cultural historical reading, the emotions experienced are viewed as dynamic and part of the child's whole process of development. The concepts of *perezhivanie* and the child's perspective are a move away from isolating one form of emotion such as shock, marginality or grief after the event (Gilbert, 2008). Instead, a range of emotions experienced in context over a period of time both individually and collectively are researched to better understand the

dynamic process of development that the child is moving through.

The paper begins with an overview of the literature that draws upon historical and international studies of TCKs and then focuses on studies in the Asia Pacific region. Following this, literature from a cultural historical perspective on emotions and transitions is reviewed. There is a brief description of the theoretical positioning regarding Vygotsky's view of age periods, *perezhivanie* and the child's perspective, followed by a description of the study design, findings and discussion regarding the child's emotional experience in relation to home and school and the importance of routines across settings. Some implications for early childhood education are provided.

Historical Literature

Useem conducted the initial research on TCKs through field observations regarding expatriate communities, international schools and children living outside their country of birth (Useem, Donoghue & Useem, 1963; Useem & Downie, 1976). Many authors have extended this research (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009; Moore & Barker, 2012). Useem, et al's (1963) work situates the current study historically and is a strong initial starting point to further advance the field.

There is a large body of literature in the area of TCKs covering different groups who transition internationally such as military, missionaries, expatriates, immigrants, children of mixed cultural marriages, repatriating families, families who move country for educational purposes and refugees. However, the focus of the following review is on emotions and transitions generally and then specifically in relation to expatriates transitioning internationally into the Asia Pacific region.

Emotion and international transitions

To move a family from their everyday lives in one country and set up in another results in many challenges, everything is new and different, not only for the child but the whole family. Negative emotions during an international transition are a recurrent theme in TCK literature. There are contrasting opinions regarding the types of emotion experienced during an

international move, some studies cite literature from biculturalism and multiculturalism that suggest there are positive emotional experiences and some people can comfortably live in more than one culture without emotional dissonance (Moore & Barker, 2012). However, the majority of studies highlight negative emotions with respect to questions of belonging, culture shock, marginality, identity and grief (Gilbert, 2008; Fail, Thompson & Walker, 2004). A majority of reviewed studies were quantitative and related to teenagers (Strobino & Salvaterra, 2000) or adults termed adult third culture kids (ATCKs). This group consists of adults who have grown up in an international environment and participated in retrospective studies (Bhatia & Ram, 2010). There were no studies found using qualitative empirical research from the child's perspective in their everyday situation in the home and school that researched the emotions that a young child and their family move through during an international transition. This leads to reviewing research of emotions and international transitions in the Asia Pacific region.

Emotions and Asia Pacific transitions

The Japanese government has recognised that returning expatriates and their children have difficulties assimilating to the Japanese society on repatriation. Kano Podolsky, (2004) reports that Japanese children experience issues on re-entry to the highly centralized Japanese schools and are often placed in an age grade below their peers. Kano Podolsky (2004) states “they were characterised in media reports and even by their own parents as ‘educational orphans’ in need of “rescue” to reduce their foreignness and successfully reintegrate them into Japanese society” (p. 6). As Japanese society has modernized (Nakatsubo, Akita, Enosawa & Nagata, 2010) perception of these children has changed to a more positive view. However, there was no mention of emotion or why the children were in need of ‘rescue’ during repatriation.

Another area of research is on the growing phenomenon of families (usually mothers and children) moving out of South Korea for the purposes of education. Studies found that Korean families living in Singapore rated the importance of the child learning English and the need for the family to move the child away from the stressful exam-oriented South Korean education system as the main reasons for separating the family and moving counties (Kim, 2010). Further findings indicated that some fathers’ maintained positive, supportive roles in

parenting and were supportive of their children obtaining an education in a foreign country (Lee & Koo, 2006). There is literature that contradicts this view, reporting that separation from the father results in poor bonding between father and child, with wives and husbands leading separate lifestyles often leading to divorce (Choi, 2006). There were no explicit links to emotions experienced or emotional development of the young children in relation to transition in these studies and findings were a result of parental interviews.

The reviewed literature situates the current study in a niche as the child's perspective on international transitions is sought in relation to the process of developing emotions through changing environments. This is a different perspective offered than those in the above review, as it studies children and families moving as expatriates into the Asia Pacific region using cultural historical theory.

Empirical research from a cultural historical perspective – emotions and transitions

There are studies using cultural historical theory on people that live in a country other than that of their birth (Hedegaard & Chaiklin, 2005). These studies are not focused on young children or developing emotions during transitions. Much of the cultural historical literature reviewed is structured around researchers in their own country, studying within the confines of societal institutions, so called; global-local childhood studies (Fleer, Hedegaard and Tudge, 2009). These studies research how globalisation affects individuals and communities. Other cultural historical researchers move to different countries to study the local population (Lave & Wenger, 1991). There are studies that research collective and individual emotions in regard to the work place (Roth, 2007) and studies from Denmark that focus on the process of children transitioning into a new school (Winther-Lindqvist, 2012). Corsaro & Molinari (2000) introduce the importance of routines relating to transitions from kindergarten to first grade. These studies do not have the same focus on young children's emotions or the same type of transition as the current research and the majority are not centred in the Asia Pacific region.

There are a variety of empirical studies that use cultural historical theory and are situated from the child's perspective, which are relevant to this study (Hedegaard, Aronsson, Hojholt and Ulvik, 2012). These studies give new insights into the concept of transition and provide potentially new directions for a cultural-historical study of collective and individual emotions

as families' transition internationally. Hojholt (2012) uses the child's perspective, which is seen as an "analytical concept in relation to anchoring personal meanings in social practice" (p. 200). Hojholt highlights the significance of the peer group and other stakeholders (parents, pedagogues and psychologists) in a child's learning community, which appropriates with the major thread of the wholeness approach in the current study. However, no studies were located that used the child's perspective on emotion and international transitions. Much of the literature is focused on negative emotions during transitions, the reason for the transition or is not situated in the Asia Pacific region. Therefore, a cultural-historical reading of this research conducted in Malaysia offers a different perspective regarding the process of emotional development of children and transitioning internationally.

The developing child

Vygotsky's (1987) theory provides a holistic system of concepts which considers development from biological, spontaneous types of action to higher conscious thinking through social and cultural mediation. This is a move away from traditional developmental research that discusses the child's emotions as separate from other areas of development by "examining the child socially, emotionally, cognitively and physically as discretely conceptualised areas of development" (Fleer and Hammer, 2013. p. 127). By using a cultural historical reading of development, the areas historically separated are intricately woven together and need to be viewed as a whole, which a cultural historical understanding of the child's perspective advocates.

Vygotsky (1998) argues that a child moves through psychological age periods as they develop. These periods are not aligned with chronological age but have structures relating to the child's social and cultural environment. Within this environment the child takes their individual personality coupled with past experiences and changes the environment and in turn the child's relation and interaction with the environment changes the child, in this way the child contributes to their own development (Vygotsky, 1994). The relational process between the child and the environment changes, this results in qualitative changes or development of the child (Vygotsky, 1994). The child passes through stable periods (Vygotsky, 1998) where development is continuous but not evident unless the child is compared at the beginning and

the end of this period. These stable periods of development are interrupted by crisis periods “which are turning points in the child’s development that sometimes take the form of a severe crisis” (Vygotsky, 1998, p. 191).

These crises can be seen as conflict set in the relation between the child and the social setting. The child is provided with new challenges in this setting but is not equipped psychologically to solve the new tasks. It is the connection between the child’s emotional experiences [perezhivanie] and changing environment from the child’s perspective while moving through their everyday life during an international transition that is of particular interest to this research. These are two important concepts which provide a new way to advance the field of TCK research: the child’s perspective and the child’s emotional experience [perezhivanie].

Perezhivanie as the unit of analysis

Perezhivanie as the unit of analysis provides a holistic approach that has its focus on the internal unity of the child’s developing consciousness and the affective relation with the social and material conditions situated within the child’s environment (Vygotsky, 1994). *Perezhivanie* can be viewed as an individual and a collective concept that needs to be further understood in the area of the child’s developing emotional consciousness (Vygotsky, 1994). Emotional experiencing is interwoven with the child’s perspective. Hojholt (2012) suggests that researchers need “knowledge developed in an analytical intention of identifying meanings, engagements and personal reasons from situated studies of social practices” (p.200). Using the child’s perspective is a move away from the generalised child, as the way individual children make meaning and explore their world while they experience their collective environment is viewed as important when researching development (Hedegaard, et.al. 2012). Therefore significant contributors to the child’s social situation inform the child’s perspective and include the perspective of adults and peers to obtain a picture of what the child is emotionally experiencing individually and with others. By using the child’s perspective in combination with *perezhivanie*, a new way to analyse and understand a child’s process of development during an international transition is offered. The use of *perezhivanie* as the unit of analysis has been explained in the section below.

Study design

The main interest of this study is the emotion experienced by children and families during an international transition into Malaysia. The child's perspective holds particular interest and how the child experiences emotion during their everyday lives while in transition is a key concept. The mothers and teachers form part of the child's perspective as they help the researcher to comprehend the child's understanding of personal meaning in social practice. Therefore, the research has been framed to investigate the following questions:

How does everyday life in institutions (home, school and after school) effect a child's development during an international transition into Malaysia?

How do adults create the conditions for a child to move through the process of development?

How is the child emotionally experiencing the international transition?

The research sites

The larger study took place across various sites in the city of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia including three international schools, participants' homes, gardens, play grounds, markets, sports fields, shopping centres, birthday parties and swimming pools.

Participants

The larger study included principals of three international schools, focus children's teachers (seven in total), focus children's families (five) and siblings (thirteen). The seven focus children's age ranged between 3.9 years and 7.9 years (mean age at the beginning of the study was 5.4 years). The study ran over a six month period with families and focus participants each filmed for six hours at home and six hours at school in line with ethics permission. The data drawn for this article is from parent (Parent 1, 3 and 4) and teacher (Teacher 1c and 4a) interviews and one child's video data (Catt Family 1) in the family home and at school. See Table 1 for a summary of families and teachers related to this paper.

Participant Summary

Table 1. *Participants in the research*

The King family were in the process of moving out of Malaysia and repatriating to Australia and therefore not included in this paper.

Family	Country of Origin	Countries resided in	Children Focus children (<i>bold</i>)	Time in Malaysia	School Attended	Teacher's country of origin
			<i>Oli 7.9</i>			Teacher 1a British
Williams Parent 1	Australia	Australia Saudi Arabia Malaysia	<i>Mish 7.9</i>	3 weeks	American	Teacher 1b American
			<i>Catt 5.6</i>			Teacher 1c American
Schmidt Parent 2	Holland	Holland Italy Turkey Malaysia	<i>Tris 5.2</i> Emmy 2.3	3 months	British	Teacher 2a British
Jones Parent 3	England	England Indonesia America Malaysia	<i>Isa 7.3</i> Ben 2.11	9 months	British	Teacher 3a British
Smith Parent 4	New Zealand England	Singapore New Zealand Malaysia	<i>Zeb 3.9</i> Nene 1.2	4 months	British	Teacher 4a British
#King Parent 5	Australian	Australia Malaysia	<i>Bill 5.3</i> Alie 8.7 Hetti 7.1 Steph 3.2	8 months	Australian International School	Teacher 5a Australian

Procedure - Video observations

A total of 42 sessions (six two hour sessions for seven focus participants) were videoed at the three schools and five homes including before and after school activities by the author and a research assistant. The researcher followed each of the focus children in classroom, school, home settings and activities within the larger community with a hand held video camera and recorded a total of 75 hours.

Video interviews

The principals of the schools and the teachers of the focus participants were interviewed in the school setting were video recorded and transcribed verbatim. Mothers of the focus children were interviewed in the home setting. Fathers were invited but were either traveling or unavailable due to work commitments. In total, 15 hours of interview data were obtained. The total data obtained were 90 hours of digital video recordings, field notes and

photographic images.

Perezhivanie as the unit of Analysis

Fleer (2008) supports the use of digital video recordings combined with field notes and photographic images as these offer a dynamic system for the researcher to return and review the relational dynamics and patterns of the focus participant's situation. Using digital video technology enabled the researcher to look closely at perezhivanie and from the child's perspective, which are the concept driving the study.

A three stage analysis approach was adopted (Hedegaard and Fleer, 2008) with each stage building on the previous one. The initial analysis, termed *common sense analysis*, the researcher produced research protocols, which recorded general analysis with respect to personal understanding of the observed interaction patterns in the video data and interviews. At this stage, individual patterns of behaviour and social interaction in relation to the participants emotional experiencing were documented. Using perezhivanie as the unit of analysis, the focus included variables such as individual and small group interaction within the child's home, school and during activities, the personalities involved and the child's relations with others.

The next stage was *situated practice* interpretation, which linked multiple data sets across various research sites for interpretation of the practices researched and relating to focus participants. Horizontal and vertical data analyses (Miles and Huberman, 1994) were undertaken to check for common themes and individual differences in the data sets. Analysis focused on the emotional nature of the relations across different settings and the effects these had on the social environment and each child's developing awareness. Individual and collective emotional experiencing were analysed, taking into account non-verbal cues such as movements which inferred a child was experiencing emotion, body positioning, proximity to others, physical contact, verbal cues such as emotive verbal utterances, emotive words, voice intonations, inclusive/exclusive language, direction of gaze and reciprocal relations between the child and the material environment (how the child reacted to different objects or belongings in the environment). Video clips exemplifying these variables were generated and then in the final stage *thematic interpretation*, the video clips were reanalysed in relation to

the central research aims and concepts from the research questions (Hedegaard & Fler, 2008). It was during analysis at the thematic level that further patterns, generalisations and relations to theoretical concepts were sought and refined (Hedegaard and Fler, 2008). Vignettes were written from the video clips, which make explicit the researchers, the child's and immediate participants' perspectives.

Building the child's perspective: routines and the process of emotional development

The initial finding reported is positioned from the child's perspective and shows a range of heightened emotions experienced by the child gradually reducing over time with support from the mother and teacher (Vygotsky, 1987). This may be viewed as the process of development. The second finding is the heightened emotions experienced individually and collectively through the absence of routines and attending school for the children in this study was the first routine activity undertaken in the process of the international transition. The following data sets highlight a child's perspective as she moves through the process of development over time.

The Context of the Data Sets

In data sets DS1 and DS2 the child's perspective from family 1 (See Table 1) is presented at week three and week eleven, the parent and teacher interviews are presented. The adults discuss Catt's initial transition to school when the family were living in temporary accommodation (Week three). This is followed by a vignette of Catt at school (Week three). Data is then presented from week eleven as Catt is welcomed home from school as the family are settling into their new home on the day the shipment arrived. Parent and teacher interviews are included. It is argued that Catt begins to move through a process of development over the three month data gathering period.

Catt's Mother stated:

She (Catt) was very shy in the classroom, couldn't make friends easily, very aggressive towards teachers and change. You know having new rules and things like that in the classroom. I think

she ...needed to know the routine and it took her a while to learn the routine and then she started asking stuff to the teachers so she knew what was going to happen next. I was stressed so I didn't really give her what she needed and going to school from the hotel was hard for her, it was all no friends, new things going on and stuff like that...it was really hard and really emotional you know...tantrums, kicking, screaming the works at home and at school (Interview with Parent 1)

Catt's teacher's comments aligned with the mothers. Catt's emotions were heightened and she needed to know the routines in the classroom:

When she first arrived I had assessments ...so I wasn't free to interact with the kids I had to sit and say don't interrupt me and call them when it was time to complete their assessment.... Catt had a very aggressive beginning, hitting and kicking at me and some of the children. Then she [Catt] did go through a long time asking me more questions in a day than I think any child ever asked me. Just lots of questions to be sure what was going on in the classroom you know.. What is this for? What is that for? What are we doing next? What are they doing? What do you want me to do? (Teacher 1c, interview).

Video vignette of Catt three weeks into the new school:

Catt is sitting at a table under an umbrella with another girl. The other girl is concentrating on her drawing. Catt looked at the girl's picture and then placed her hand near her mouth and looked into the distance for around five seconds. Catt reached for a crayon and said "I'm doing this for my Mummy and Daddy". Another child joined the table. The two children drew for a minute and moved away from the table. Catt was left by herself, folded the picture placing it in her shirt pocket she continued to touch her pocket intermittently after she moved from the table.

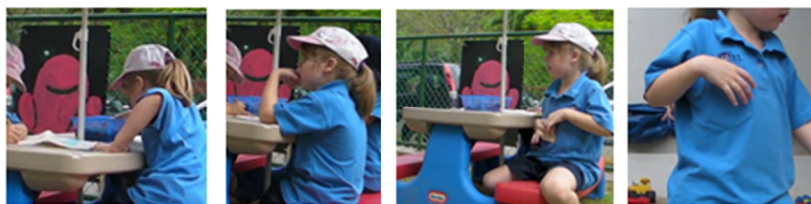


Figure. 1 Catt drawing with another girl, reaches for a crayon, sits observing others for 5 seconds and is left alone at the table, folds her drawing and continues to touch her pocket as she moves to other activities.

The common themes in both interviews with Catt's mother and teacher were Catt's physical aggression directed towards the teacher and other children in the class, the frequency and type of questions that Catt asked regarding routines and neither adult being available to support Catt. From the mother's perspective, Catt was unsettled because she had no friends and did not know the routines in the classroom and she asked many questions to find out what was going to happen. From the teacher's perspective, she was not available for Catt due to assessments and she commented on the number of questions Catt asked, many were to do with routines of the day. Catt's heightened emotional display accompanied by physical aggression toward others shows part of her personal characteristics and individual emotional experiencing of the situation as a result of factors in the changing environment (Vygotsky, 1994). From Catt's video vignette we see a different perspective, there was minimal emotion shown, Catt seemed to observe others but was not directly involved. Catt drew a picture for her Mother and Father, although she was sitting with another girl, neither girl initiated conversation. Catt was left alone at the table she folded her picture and placed it in her pocket, she kept touching her pocket where the picture was positioned. Catt's non-verbal cues and actions inferred that she was interested in what others were doing and she was also thinking about her Mother and Father.

Drawing these three perspectives together, we see an overall perspective of the child moving through the process of a heightened emotional state. There was a range of emotions evident from physical aggression towards others to minimal emotion being shown explicitly. Catt's outbursts occurred, during an uncertain time where few aspects of her life were stable or predictable. Catt seemed to be on the periphery of social groups, she spent time observing others, listening to conversations but not participating. Other children did not approach her or invite her to play.

The process of development – a crisis period

Vygotsky (1994) suggests that the child changes the environment and the environment changes the child. In DS1 we see a relational aspect between the child and the environment. From the evidence presented in the mother and teachers interviews it is argued that we see Catt passing through a "crisis" in relation to her environment (Vygotsky, 1998) by being

physically aggressive across settings. We may infer that Catt did not have the conscious thought or understanding to express why she was aggressive but it may be as a direct result towards the changing environment and the mother not being available to support her emotionally. The teacher although physically in the same room was not able to emotionally support Catt either, due to assessments. In the reviewed TCKs studies the physical aggression may have been highlighted as a negative part of the transition, however with a cultural historical reading of the situation, we see that Catt maybe moving through the process of development. In Catt's situation, it is argued that a "critical period" is evident (Vygotsky, 1998) where development can take on a qualitatively different structure for the individual child. However, development occurs over time and usually with the help of an adult or more capable peer (Vygotsky, 1987). More evidence is presented from week eleven in DS2.

The mother, teacher and child's perspectives

In DS2 Catt's mother commented (Week 11):

She's better now, now we have things in place, like the star chart, the play dates, the routines, me telling her what's going to happen, the teacher doing the same. That all helped her and she knows what is going on from day to day, she hasn't hit or kicked anyone for a while now, not even her brother or sister (Parent 1 interview).

Catt's teacher agreed and stated (Week 11):

I think now there are lots of good days, she comes in the morning she's smiling, she does her morning routine, signing her name and packing her bag and gets to her card and goes straight to choose something. We still have the star chart she probably doesn't need it but we keep it going anyway. She has her little friends and play dates (Teacher 1c interview).

In the following vignette of Catt at week 11, the family had moved into their home. Catt's mother explained that the normal afternoon routine began with the mother meeting Catt as she alighted from the bus at the end of the driveway and they walked together into the house discussing Catt's school day. On this afternoon there were two changes in Catt's routine, the

shipment of belongings had arrived and the mother had invited the researchers to attend (both events unexpected according to Catt).

Catt alighted from the bus and started screaming as she saw her bicycle for the first time in eleven weeks. Catt walked behind the bus and then immediately ran half way up the driveway repeating the same loud verbal utterance “OOOWWWW”.

Catt sat down in the middle of the driveway, took her left shoe off and threw it towards the car and repeated with the right shoe. The mother yelled “CATT!” and invited Catt to move inside quickly while walking to pick up Catt’s shoes.

Standing up, Catt said: “You didn’t tell me” with a loud, angry type of voice, hands on hips. Mum responded: “I told you the researchers were coming”

Catt moved onto her hands and knees placing hands forward and sliding knees along the ground. Catt then sat on her bottom, took her right sock off, lifted her head, chin high with a frown and threw the sock towards Mum, “No you didn’t”, she smiled, repeated the action with her left sock. Catt stood quickly and stared running to the car, turned and came towards the mother and researcher (Video data Catt, 2011).



Figure. 2 Mum picking up Catt’s shoes. Defiance inferred through tilted head, verbal utterance. Mischievousness inferred through smile and positioning of arm, voice intonation. Mum picking up socks and Catt running behind the car.

Taking the child’s perspective, Catt generated her own activities, yelling, moving behind the bus, taking her shoes off and throwing them at the car, closely followed by taking her socks off and throwing them towards her mother and voicing her displeasure that she had not been told the researchers were going to be in attendance. Catt expended physical energy through running, sliding on her knees and throwing her shoes and socks. From the mother’s perspective, there was no concern with the child’s reactions of yelling and throwing shoes and socks, the mother calmly picked up the items and carried them towards the door. The mother allowed the child leeway to perform in her own way and react in her own individual manner.

With *perezhivanie* as the unit of analysis we see the range of the child's emotional experiences being played out due to changes in her material environment, (the shipment of belongings arriving) and her social environment (the researcher being unexpectedly present). Within the 20 seconds of this video clip, Catt displays shock, anger, defiance, mischievousness and happiness. This is inferred from the movements Catt made which were sharp, quick and accompanied by changing facial expressions (scowl, smile), voice intonation and verbal utterances (yelling to speaking softly and laughing) as she threw her socks. Not only do we see the range of emotions but we see the relation between the child and the material and social environment as dynamic (Vygotsky, 1994). The daily routine changed unexpectedly for the child, which in turn changed her relation with the environment and the way she emotionally experienced the situation.

Moving through the process of development – a stable period

It is argued that we may be observing the process of development occurring between DS1 and DS2. In DS2 Catt did not use physical aggression towards the researchers or the mother and was able to verbalise her displeasure that she was not notified the researcher was going to be being present. Both the teacher and the mother commented that Catt had not shown signs of physical aggression towards others for some time. The mother and the teacher reported on the successful home school collaboration to support Catt emotionally by using a joint star chart, helping her with friends and speaking to her about the routines of the day. Catt may be moving through the process of development over the eleven week period, having moved from a crisis period in temporary accommodation and entering a new school and moving into a more stable period, where development progresses slowly (Vygotsky, 1998) as she becomes consciously aware of her emotions. This may be evident in DS2 where a change in routine did not result in physical aggression from Catt towards others although physicality was displayed towards objects and Catt verbalised her displeasure, where initially in DS1 Catt was physically aggressive towards others and did not verbalise her displeasure.

Absent routines and collective emotions

DS1 and DS2 have highlighted the importance of routines for Catt, the mother and the

teacher. Data from other participants also highlights the importance of routines, all of the mother's, teachers and children in the study placed a high value on routines. Establishing and following routines was an important part of everyday life for the families in transition. Corsaro & Molinari (2000) defines routines as "collectively produced activities that are recurrent and predictable" (p. 19). For some families with young children the majority of their daily routine revolves around meals, sleep, play, school and social contact in known environments with known people. Life is predictable. It is not until a routine is lost or absent that the importance of routines in everyday family life becomes evident. Routines "provide children with security and shared understanding of belonging to a social group" (Corsaro & Molinari, 2000, p. 19). In data set DS3 interviews with two mothers and two teachers highlight the collective emotions involved during the initial transition when the families were residing in temporary accommodation and have minimal routines in place and the importance placed on routines in the school setting:

It was kind of weird sending her to school from that hotel, we didn't have a routine and it took a while to work the timing out. You get up, get dressed and go down in the lift, she was sitting there in her school uniform, we had to eat breakfast with fifty other people and then go upstairs to get ready then go downstairs to start the journey to school but we would forget something, then we'd get stuck in traffic. We were really stressed out, it was really stressful everyone was short tempered and teary. But now its ok, we're in our house and things are good (Parent 3 interview).

Parent 4 offers a similar statement:

We were in temporary accommodation and Zeb didn't have his normal routines and things, where school was concerned it was fine and maybe the unsuccessful days were more when he got back home – there was no one to play with. Initially he got to watch a lot more television because I just found it all quite stressful so it's just easier to put the telly on, which he quite liked, which probably didn't help his tantrums because the more telly he has, the worse his behaviour becomes. This is kind of like a vicious circle....living in a house with routines in place there are not many tantrums or much naughtiness, nowhere near the number we had to start off with in temporary accommodation (Parent 4 interview).

Zeb's teacher stressed the importance of children being familiar with routines:

We go through an induction period where we have small groups of children and we show them the routine and we also asked other children to help. We're focused more on emotional development you know, we make sure that they're happy and that they have someone to play with and everyone's being kind to them (Teacher 4a interview).

Catt's teacher agreed and stated:

It's really important that kids know the routines and it's really important they have the same school stuff as everybody else (Teacher 1c interview).

There are three common themes in DS3; the importance placed on routines by the teachers and parents and the initial absence of routines resulting in individual and collective stress and how settling into everyday routines (such as going to school) and moving into permanent accommodation helped ease the heightened emotions of all involved. Teacher's acknowledged the importance of children being introduced to and knowing the routines to support the children with the initial transition into the classroom. It seems that routines experienced in everyday life have a collective meaning to the family and unique meaning to the individual family members across the home and school. We see from the data that an absence of routines adds to the emotions felt at home and at school. Roth (2007) argues, "Emotions are not only individual but also collective...through social mediation, individuals come to know about emotions but we also shape and are shaped by the collective emotional state of the moment" (2007, p. 46). When routines are initiated and known, they may aid a relatively ordered and predictable social existence and there is less stress evident. Corsaro & Molinari (2000) argue that it is through routines that "social actors can interpret, produce, display and extend a wide range of socio-cultural knowledge" (2000, p. 18-19). This has implications for the parent teacher and child to aid the transition process.

Implications for practice at home and school

As adults, we make assumptions and complete our own agendas without necessarily

thinking about the perspective of the child or the child's emotional needs. Both adults in DS1 commented that they were not initially available for the child however through her agency Catt found a way of making the adults take notice and eventually fulfil her needs. Corsaro & Molinari (2000) talk of priming events, which are practical ways to help children talk, think about and experience a transition. Priming events are worthwhile inclusions into general conversations before the child starts school, talking to children about what to expect at school and how to approach other children to enter into play. This could be continued in the classroom and extended by sending a timetable home on the first day and introducing routines daily. An important implication for teachers and parents is working in collaboration together, with the child and being available, with open discussion on strategies to help the child move through the processes of an international transition at home and at school. Beginning this collaboration and conversation as early as possible is important.

Conclusion

Moving countries is an extreme activity for families with young children in terms of emotional experiences and the absence of routines. From one child's perspective we saw a range of heightened emotions gradually reducing over time with the support of the mother and teacher, possibly resulting in the process of development (Vygotsky, 1987). Using the child's perspective offers a new way of researching young children who transition internationally, as there are no studies reviewed from the TCK literature that researched the whole child in context, across the home and school setting over time as the child was emotionally experiencing the transition. Drawing on the child's perspective included obtaining the parent and teacher's perspective, combined with the child's video vignettes, which provided a way of understanding an individual child's meaning making in a new culture and changing social world. A unique opportunity to explore the child's world was presented (Hedegaard, et. al, 2012), resulting in a new way to study the process of development as it occurs during an international transition.

Vygotsky's (1994) theory is helping to change the way we understand and interpret children's emotions because the theory moves away from the generalised child which

historically separates cognition, affect and social alignment of development (Fleer & Hammer, 2013). Vygotsky's concepts are interrelated and viewed as a whole which adds to a new perspective when researching development. *Perezhivanie* and the child's perspective move from isolating one form of emotion such as shock, marginality or grief after the event (Gilbert, 2008; Bhatia & Ram, 2010) and offer a way of viewing a range of emotions experienced in conjunction with the child's understanding of the situation. This needs to be observed in context over a period of time both individually and collectively to better understand the dynamic process of development that the child is moving through.

A recurring theme in the data is the absence of everyday routines adding to the initial heightened emotions felt by the individual child and collectively in the family. The new school was one of the first stable routines that the children in this study participated in. Using *perezhivanie* as an analytical unit enabled this individual and collective phenomenon to emerge. This is an important departure from historical TCK research as the emotions isolated in the reviewed literature were experienced and reported from the individuals only or a generalized group (Gilbert, 2008; Strobino, & Salvaterra, 2000) or from the parents talking about the child's experience (Choi, 2006) and are not related to the family and children experiencing the transition both individually and collectively.

New ways of interpreting, understanding and working with this population of children and their families at home and in educational settings is important because of the range of emotions that these families experience. There is a high likelihood that children moving through an international transition will experience the process of development explicitly. Studying and understanding the process of development that these children and families move through may provide more effective early childhood education and is therefore worthy of further study.

A special thanks to the reviewers of this article also, Professor Marilyn Fleer and the Cultural-Historical Research Community for their help in the preparation of this manuscript.

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