

Photovoice:

The photovoice section of this study is here to give a visual representation of what transpired during the construction play and research sessions at each school. Different schools with diverse criteria were visited in the Gauteng and Mpumalanga provinces. The criteria of the schools ranked from private alone standing schools in the city, public schools joined with a primary school, public school in the inner city separate from the primary school, a public school in a rural area separate from the primary school and private alone standing schools on the outer region of the city.

For the first part of the observation session that took place at each school, the young children were given the freedom of exploring and constructing on their own. All the different materials ranging from wooden blocks to open-ended materials were laid out in separate groups. The children were then given the freedom to play and construct with any of the materials. Roughly 15 to 20 minutes were spent on this section of the data sampling. As soon as it became apparent that the children's concentration started drifting the second activity was introduced.

During the second part of the construction play observation, I focused on Polva's problem-solving techniques. Here a problem was introduced to the children. The problem was open-ended and child-centred. The problem that I gave them, was that we received a lot of rain these last few weeks and that the toy dog now has a problem. The children then had to state their opinion on what they think the problem was and how they could come up with a solution. Their solution to the problem needed to be constructed out of the materials provided. This could be seen as a team of individual activities. Roughly 10 to 15 minutes were spent on this activity and as soon as the majority of the children lost interest the observation session was stopped, and the children headed back to class or had a nice break.

The following diagram indicates the criteria for the different types of schools that were visited during the data sampling section of this study.

<u>School:</u>	<u>Criteria:</u>	<u>Province:</u>
School 1	Private alone standing school in the city	Gauteng
School 2	Public school separate from primary school in the city	Gauteng
School 3	Public school joined with a primary school in the outer city	Gauteng
School 4	Public school separate from primary school in the inner city	Gauteng
School 5	Public school separate from primary school in a rural area	Mpumalanga
School 6	Private alone standing school out of the city	Mpumalanga

School 1:

Photo analysis:

- Construction play took place indoors in the classroom.
- The participants consisted of four children.
- Two boys and two girls.



Photograph 1.1 Wooden blocks



Photograph 1.2 Stacking wooden blocks

Two children are busy building and matching the blocks together. The children are laying the blocks out and repeating the pattern.

Three children are constructing together, they have moved on from building horizontally to building vertically. They are forming different towers out of all the wooden blocks.



Photograph 1.3 Vertical building

Two boys are building vertical constructions. The wooden structures are more complex.



Photograph 1.4 Balancing structure

One of the children balanced different blocks on top of each other. This was achieved through trial and error. There is symmetry to this construction, and it seems more elaborate.



Photograph 1.5 Box play

The children are discovering the open-ended material, this seems to be a new concept for them.



Photograph 1.6 Combining elements

The children have discovered the open-ended material and started combining

	and building with both wooden blocks and other elements.
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Photograph 1.7 Balancing and bridging

<p>Here the vertical play has extended to a balancing act. The children have started combining different materials to see how high they can build up the structure. There are also traces of symmetry and more detail went into this construction. Balancing wooden cylinders on water bottles is not an easy task, thus this construction took a lot of planning.</p>
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School 2:

Photo analysis:

- Construction play took place indoors in the classroom.
- The participants consisted out of five children.
- Two boys and three girls.



Photograph 2.1 Discovering blocks

Two girls making the transition from horizontal play to vertical play. The girls have used semi-circular shapes as the base of their constructions.



Photograph 2.2 Stacking wooden blocks

Two children are working through trial and error to see how they can extend this construction vertically. You can see the start of an enclosure forming.



Photograph 2.3 Enclosure building

The children have crossed over to the enclosure building. These enclosures have taken the shape of what looks like a city. They are also balancing oddly shaped blocks on top of each other.



Photograph 2.4 Different fascination

One boy had no interest in the construction materials, he only wanted to play with the toy animals. His play was also individual.



Photograph 2.5 Vertical enclosures

One girl tried to build a vertical enclosure for the toy animals. This new vertical

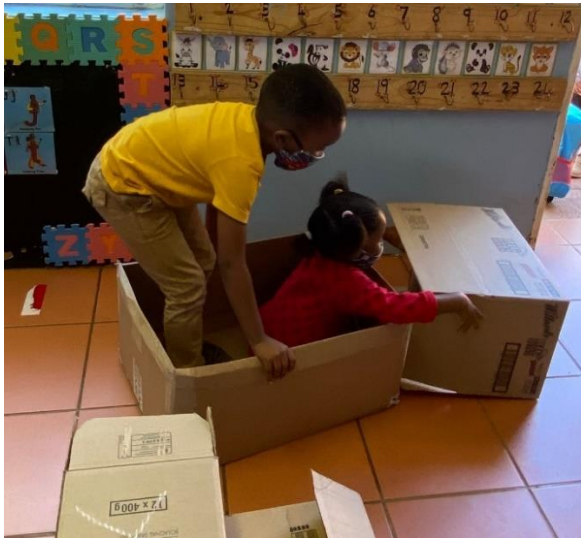


Photograph 2.6 Dramatic play

One boy started a primitive construction and extended it into building a whole city.

enclosure was balancing around a horizontal enclosure she had first build. She is repeating her pattern over and over to form her enclosure.

This construction consists out of most of the blocks that were laid out. He also balanced some of the blocks on top of each other. His construction is starting to symbolise real life structures.



Photograph 2.7 Box play as an open-ended activity

This group of children had little interest in the open-ended materials provided. Near the end, they started playing with the boxes provided. They did not construct with the boxes, they only crawled into them.

School 3:

Photo analysis:

- Construction play took place indoors in the classroom.
- The number of participants consisted out of six children.
- Two boys and four girls.



Photograph 3.1 LEGO building

Two children are engaged in parallel play. They are constructing next to each other, but both of them are busy with their own LEGO construction.



Photograph 3.2 Wooden block play

A small group of children are engaged in group construction play. They are building or starting to build enclosures and joining the block construction with toy animals.



Photograph 3.3 Vertical enclosure

A small group of children are engaged in group construction play. The children are mainly building with wooden blocks and adding some LEGO blocks and toy animals. One boy merely seems to be an observer.



Photograph 3.4 Box play

The children did not find the boxes and other open-ended materials extremely fascinating. They favoured the wooden blocks and toy animals. Here we see two girls investigating the boxes. One girl started putting smaller boxes into the bigger boxes.



Photograph 3.5 Wooden enclosures



Photograph 3.6 Small group play

Two children decided to play together. They wanted to build a house (enclosure) for some of the toy animals. The material they decided to use was the wooden blocks. Here the building becomes a necessary part to complete the dramatic play.

It seemed very clear that most of the children were divided up into smaller groups. The groups mainly consisted out of two children. In this photograph, it is clear that the children are not crossing the gender line. Here they preferred to play with the same gender. Two boys played individually but parallel to the other children.



Photograph 3.7 Individual open-ended play

The open-ended materials were not a favourite for the children. Here you can see one girl is engaged in individual play with the open-ended materials and some toy animals. They combined the cardboard shames with the toy animals. It seems like she is making beds or perhaps mall boats for these animals and placing them in to see if they fit.

School 4:

Photo analysis:

- Construction play took place outside under a covered area.
- The number of participants consisted out of eight children.
- Seven boys and one girl.



Photograph 4.1 Playing with toys



Photograph 4.2 Block sorting and stacking

Out of all the material that was placed out for the young children to play with, this group of children preferred to play with the toy animals. The children found these toys very fascinating.

There was a group of four children that straight away wanted to play with the wooden blocks. Although it was a group of four children, they mainly engaged in individual parallel play. Taking the blocks that they wanted to play with and playing next to each other. These children are mainly sorting through the blocks.



Photograph 4.3 Vertical, upside-down construction

This was a very interesting construction. The young boy used a round cylinder as the base of his construction. He then placed two smaller rectangular blocks on top of the cylinder and topped the construction off by placing larger rectangular blocks on top of the smaller rectangular blocks. A pattern is being repeated for the tower to form.



Photograph 4.4 Towering blocks

Here is an example of one boy building a tower with different shaped blocks. He uses semi-circles and hollowed out rectangular blocks to construct this tower. The tower seems to be balancing quite well considering the unconventional approach this boy took.



Photograph 4.5 Towering blocks

In this photograph, a boy is busy towering blocks on top of each other. The blocks that he is using are cylinder and square shapes. Next to the tower bridging is occurring. The boy is making use of two large semi-circles to form the bridge.

Photograph 4.6 Parallel play

Parallel play is a big occurrence under this age group. Here you can see the children are playing next to each other, but not together. All of these children are engaged in wooden block play. The main occurrence here is towering with different shapes.



Photograph 4.7 Box play

The open-ended material and boxes were not a popular option for the children. Only two boys showed some interest in these materials. They wanted to build a car out of the boxes.

School 5:

Photo analysis:

- Construction play took place outside the play area.
- The number of participants consisted out of five children.
- Three boys and two girls.



Photograph 5.1 Investigating the material Photograph



5.2 LEGO construction

Once the materials were laid out and all the instructions were given the children seemed to hover around the LEGO table, looking and deciding what they wanted to play with. It took them a while to decide on what they wanted to build.

In this photograph, you can see three children engaging in LEGO construction play. The children seemed to prefer the big LEGO blocks. They are exposed to 6 bricks and their reference frame is playing and building with LEGO.



Photograph 5.3 Piling blocks

Some of the children decided they wanted to play with the wooden blocks. Their construction is very primitive. The children started by moving all the wooden blocks. They then formed the base of an enclosure and then started piling blocks not building with blocks.



Photograph 5.4 Enclosure forming

In this photograph, you can see two girls are busy planning the base of their enclosure. They are using large rectangular blocks to form a large enclosure. It seems like one girl is taking the lead in this building experience. It also looks like some sorting has taken place.



Photograph 5.5 Enclosure forming and piling

Here the building process only consists of the enclosure shape. The rest of the blocks were only piled on. Thus, there was not a lot of building taking place only the foundation and then piling. No apparent pattern or symmetry occurs in this construction.

Photograph 5.6 Piling LEGO blocks

It seems that the children also liked to pile the LEGO blocks. In this photograph, you can see that the larger rectangular LEGO block is being piled on top of the toy animals. Instead of building houses the children are piling blocks and pretending they are houses.



Photograph 5.7 Individual play

One boy had no interest in playing with or alongside the other children. He only wanted to play with the toy animals and not construct or build anything using the materials that were laid out.

School 6:

Photo analysis:

- Construction play took place outdoors under a covered area.
- The number of participants consisted out of ten children.
- Three boys and seven girls.



Photograph 6.1 Patterns begin to appear

In this photograph, you can see three children engaging in parallel play. You can see different enclosures forming and towers being build-out of different shapes.



Photograph 6.2 Symmetry begins to appear

This structure is more complex. The child made use of big and small rectangular shaped bocks as well as small semi-circular blocks. The tower structure seems to be balancing on one or two big rectangular blocks. There is symmetry in this construction and more detail.



Photograph 6.3 Toy animals

It became very prominent that the children liked playing with the toy animals. Here you can see a group of four girls playing together. The children are sitting in a circle and engaging in fantasy play.



Photograph 6.4 Enclosure building

In this photograph, you can see a large enclosure being built. The wall of the enclosure also seems higher. There is a double layer of blocks. The child is combining his construction play with fantasy play. You can see him place the toy animals in the enclosure.



Photograph 6.5 Open-ended play



Photograph 6.6 Box play

It became very clear that open-ended materials were not a popular option for the children. But here in this photograph, you can see one girl putting back all the lids onto the plastic bottles.

This photograph is evidence of a young girl testing her construction. She is placing the toy dog into one of the boxes to see if her construction works.



Photograph 6.7 Testing constructions

One of the children build a tower using large and small rectangular blocks and also small ramp blocks. The tower seems to be tilting more to one side. The child decided to test his construction by placing a small toy animal on it and seeing if the structure still holds.

This figure gives a representation of the different stages of construction play that took place at each school.

<u>School:</u>	<u>Stage:</u>	<u>Explanation:</u>
School 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage 2 • Stage 4 • Stage 5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stacking of blocks vertically, laying them down, lining blocks up with the horizon and repeating a pattern. • Bridging begins to occur. • Patters begin to appear, there is more symmetry, and the constructions are more elaborate.
School 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage 2 • Stage 3 • Stage 5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stacking of blocks vertically, laying them down, lining blocks up with the horizon and repeating a pattern. • Enclosures appeared in the constructions. • Patters begin to appear, there is more symmetry, and the

		<p>constructions are more elaborate.</p>
School 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage 1 • Stage 2 • Stage 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carrying, moving, touching and piling is taking place. • Stacking of blocks vertically, laying them down, lining blocks up with the horizon and repeating a pattern. • Enclosures appeared in the constructions.
School 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage 1 • Stage 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carrying, moving, touching and piling is taking place. • Stacking of blocks vertically, laying them down, lining blocks up with the horizon and repeating a pattern.
School 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage 1 • Stage 2 • Stage 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carrying, moving, touching and piling is taking place. • Stacking of blocks vertically, laying

		<p>them down, lining blocks up with the horizon and repeating a pattern.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enclosures appeared in the constructions.
School 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage 2 • Stage 3 • Stage 4 • Stage 5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stacking of blocks vertically, laying them down, lining blocks up with the horizon and repeating a pattern. • Enclosures appeared in the constructions. • Bridging begins to occur. • Patterns begin to appear, there is more symmetry, and the constructions are more elaborate.