



## Gender play - Play gender

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Gender can be understood as a play we all participate in. It emerges out of mutual bodily positions in interaction rituals and thereby constructed metaphorical meanings of symbolic objects. We will try to trace this performative entanglement on basis of interview excerpts from the Men's career trajectories. We may find a way to transfer scientific knowledge from theory and empirical research into an affective experience. Performative methods will be introduced and tried out together.

### Presenters:

Markus Andrä, FH Dresden, Germany

Di Wang, Durham University, School of Education, United Kingdom

## **Markus Andrä**

### **Performance Ethnography**

„We can think of performance (1) as a work of imagination, as an object of study; (2) as a pragmatics of inquiry (both as model and method), as an optic and operation of research; (3) as a tactics of intervention, an alternative space of struggle. Speaking from my home department at Northwestern, we often refer to the three A's of performance study: artistry, analysis, activism. Or to change the alliteration, a commitment to the three C's of performance studies: creativity, critique, citizenship (civic struggles for social justice)“ (Conquergood, 2002, S. 152, cited in Winter, 2008, S. 118).

- US- American sociologist
- Founder of Performance Ethnography

***Dwight Conquergood (1949-2004):***

#### ***Basic Assumptions:***

- The distanced and independent scientific observer is rejected as a colonial fiction and an expression of power relations.
- Instead, research should be realigned along four dimensions:
  - 1) Return of the body: A culture is not only understood cognitively, but always also physically (or corporeal).
  - 2) Borders and border spaces: Borders are inscribed in postmodern subjects, but they have also become permeable and changeable. Proceeding from this, culture and identity are not secured ontologically, but viewed contingently, contested, constructed and relationally.
  - 3) The rise of performance: The research focuses on the dynamics of direct interaction between people and on the corporeal experience situated and experienced in time, place and history. The researchers should take part in these dynamics, turning away from the world as a text and towards the world as a performance.
  - 4) Rhetorical reflexivity: An ethnographic view and description of the world in the sense of "reality" is not possible; instead, forms of reality are produced in ethnographic texts. This leads to a politicization of ethnography.

(see Conquergood, 1991, p. 180ff.; Winter, 2008, p. 118ff.)

Later, the US-American sociologist Norman K. Denzin took up Conquergood's reasoning and developed it further:

- The data of an interpretive-oriented ethnography becomes the material for performative action.
- The viewers leave the logic of voyeurism and become interpreters.
- The transcripts of interviews become performance texts, poems or a play.
- In this way we can understand how people create history in social contexts and how concrete situations can be changed through acts of resistance or redefinitions.

(see Winter, 2008, p. 124)

***References:***

Conquergood, D. (1991). Rethinking Ethnography. *COMMUNICATION MONOGRAPHS* 58, 179-194.

Winter, R. (2008). Die Politik der Aufführung. Interpretative Ethnographie und kritische Pädagogik im 21. Jahrhundert. In J. Fromme & W. Sesink (Hrsg.), *Pädagogische Medientheorie* (S. 115-128). Wiesbaden: VS Verlag.

# Gender as Performance: an Exploratory Case Study with Young Children

(working title)

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01

# Research Motivation and Background

## Research Motivation and Background

“It is our responsibility to kindly remind the boys (to wash the plates together).”

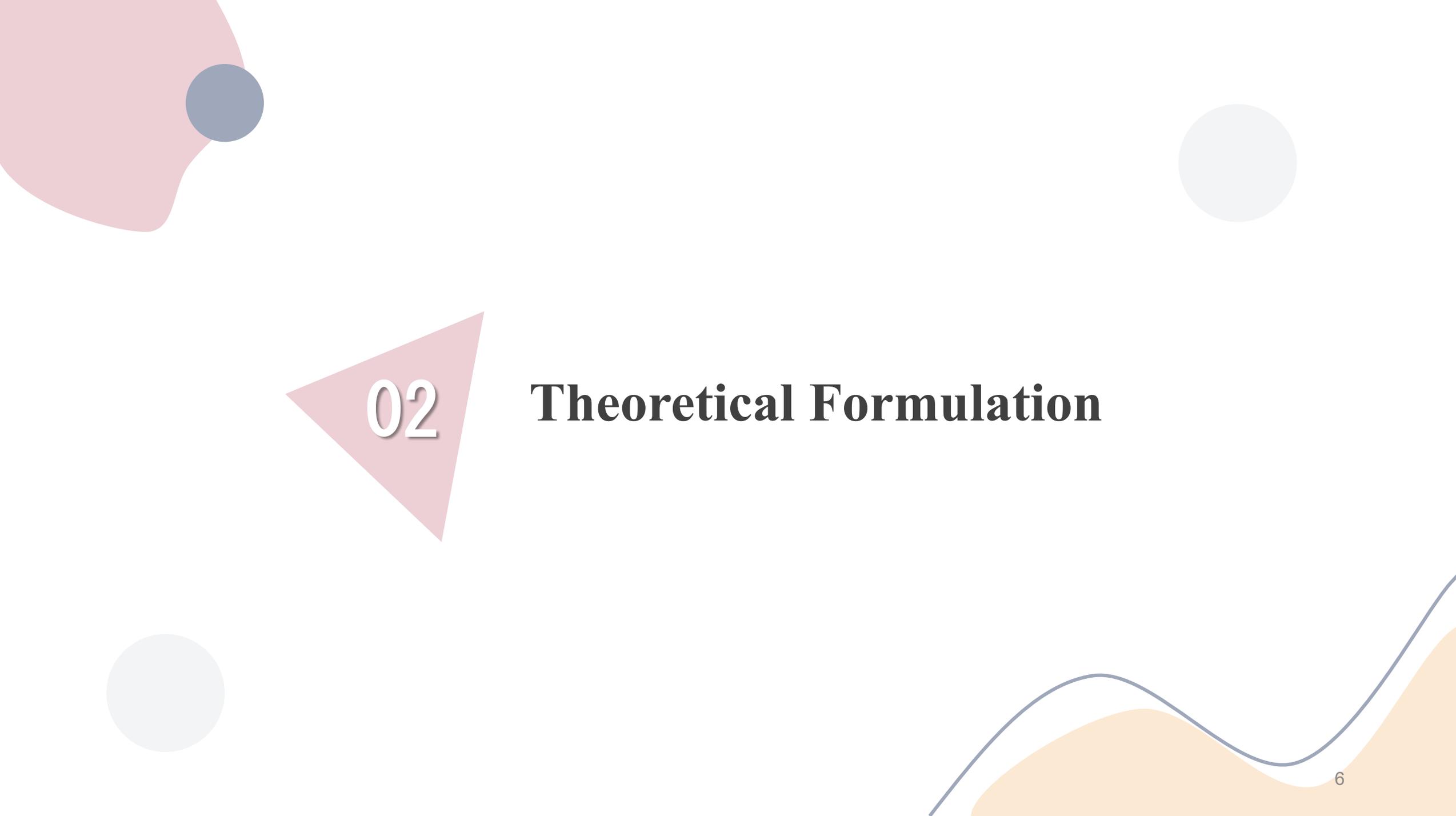
“Usually, girls do not buy this chocolate.”





## Research Motivation and Background

- Perceptions about gender are formed at an early age (e.g. Corbett, 2009).
- Drama can be used to facilitate various aspects of children's development (e.g. Winston & Tandy, 2009)



02

# Theoretical Formulation



# Theoretical Formulation

Gender  
subjectivity  
& gender  
performativity

(e.g. Butler, 2008; Foucault, 2000)



The power of  
drama in  
education

(e.g. Fleming, 2011; Neelands, 2010; Winston & Tandy, 2009)



Child-  
centredness  
& child  
agency

(e.g. Dewey, 1922)



To be  
developed.....

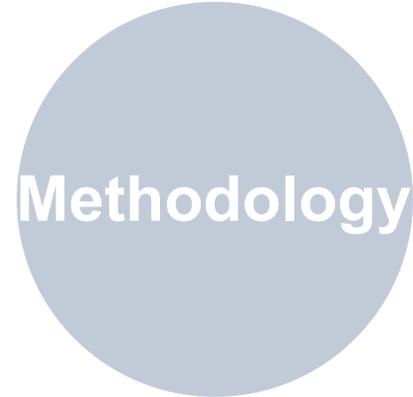


03

# Methodology



# Methodology



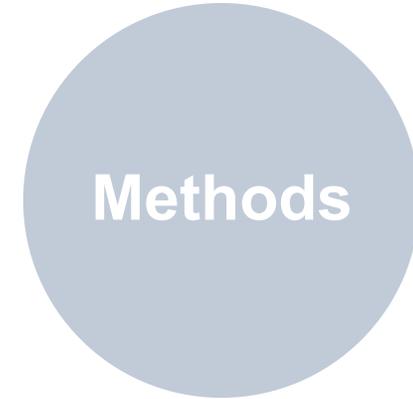
- Case study

(currently early years settings in England; children aged from 3 to 5 years old)



- Drama workshops

(each 15-20 minutes long; focus on *gender roles*)



For Data Collection:

- Reflective practitioner (including observations, reflections-in-action and reflections-on-action)
- Children's drawings
- Interviews

For Analysis:

- Thematic analysis



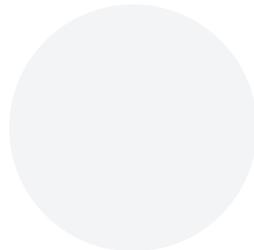
04

# Field Work



Adaptations based on picture books and fairytales

*From the Stars in the Sky to the Fish in the Sea*





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Dewey, J. (1922) *The School and the Child*. London, Glasgow and Bombay: Blackie & Son Limited.

Fleming, M. (2011) *Starting Drama Teaching*. New York: Routledge.

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Thom, K. C., Li, W. Y., & Kai, Y. C. (2021) *From the stars in the sky to the fish in the sea*. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press.

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THANK YOU!

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