Disrupting Colonial Time:

Decolonial Temporalities and Practices of Care in Early Childhood Education

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ABSTRACT

This article explores how Faroese Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) both inherits and disrupts colonial temporalities embedded in global education policy. Using decolonial theory and Barad's idea of spacetimemattering (Barad, 2007), the article examines how landscape, weather, and cultural rhythms shape pedagogical practices that foster temporalties of resistance. Through ethnographic vignettes, the article highlights practices like spontaneity, hesitation, and dwelling as cracks in colonial time that unsettle developmentalist logics. Rather than seeking universal outcomes, Faroese ECEC enacts situated, relationally emergent approaches to time, knowledge, and care. These moments challenge standardized educational frameworks and give rise to a distinctly Faroese pedagogy—situated, responsive, and rooted in the daily experiences of children and educators.

KEY WORDS

COLONIAL TIME, TEMPORALITIES OF RESISTANCE, EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE, FAROESE PEDAGOGY, RIGSFÆLLESSKABET, SPACETIMEMATTERING, CRACKS / FISSURE-PRACTICE

INTRODUCTION

Greenland, the Faroe Islands, and Denmark together form the Rigsfællesskab—an arrangement that binds these distinct nations, with their divergent languages, cultures, climates, and identities, into a shared political framework (Harhoff, 1993). While presented as a community, the Rigsfællesskab reflects a colonial history that continues to shape the relationships between its members (Thisted et al.,, 2021). This arrangement grants home rule to both the Faroe Islands and Greenland, enabling them to exercise authority over several areas, including education. Despite this autonomy, the influence of Danish educational frameworks remains pervasive, and the Faroese development of ECEC has been shaped by Danish norms and practices: The Faroe Islands did not establish their own pedagogical education until 1988 (Kjølbrø, 2009), and until 1989, Faroese daycare institutions remained under Danish supervision (Jiménez, 2023). This means that the Faroe Islands inherited a sector already shaped by Danish administrative logics. Moreover, a considerable number of Faroese pedagogues are trained in Denmark, and many Faroese parents and children have their first experience with institutional childcare while living in Denmark during periods of higher education, taking these experiences back with them, where they continue to inform expectations, practices, and understandings of the good life in daycare (Jiménez, 2023).

At the same time, there is currently no existing research on Faroese daycare institutions or the pedagogical practices that can be found within them. Nor is there any research on Faroese childhoods. Knowledge about children's lives in daycare, their experiences in rural villages (*bygdir*), and the transition from village life to institutional care exists primarily in the form of orally transmitted stories—a shared reservoir of lived experience and collective memory. My work (Jiménez, 2023) shows that the emergence and institutionalization of daycare in the Faroe Islands has necessarily drawn on Danish pedagogical and administrative models. Importantly, these models are not culturally neutral frameworks; rather, they are deeply embedded in Danish cultural imaginaries and historical understandings of childhood and institutional life (Gulløv, 2019), and they exert a form of definitional power, through seemingly universal ideas within education policy—such as quality, care, and development. What is treated here as colonial is therefore not solely a national relation to Denmark, but also a broader epistemic logic—rooted in neoliberal governance forms such as evidence-based practice and economic rationalities, and, as de-colonial studies suggest, part of coloniality: the enduring presence of colonial power and knowledge structures that continue to shape institutions, norms, and self-understandings long after formal colonization has ended (Mignolo 2007; Quijano 2019;). In the Faroese context, where there is little independent research on childhood or pedagogy, such knowledge regimes encounter minimal resistance, allowing dominant frameworks to settle and shape practice largely uncontested.

These Danish influences do not remain static. They are continuously mediated and reinterpreted by local contexts, shaped by distinct material-discursive conditions, such as nature, culture, and geopolitics (Staunæs, 2014; Staunæs et al., 2018). The aim of this article is not only to illuminate these forms of dominance. It also seeks to show how Faroese ECEC gives rise to distinct pedagogical practices. Through empirical attention to how global logics are inhabited, resisted, or reconfigured, the article seeks to materialize a specifically Faroese way of doing daycare. The tensions between global frameworks and local reconfigurations call for an approach that is both situated and responsive. This article offers a critique from within—a perspective situated within the system's tensions and entanglements, rather than outside them. It rests on the recognition that knowledge is not neutral: what counts as valid or authoritative is shaped by historical, political, and geopolitical conditions. Rather than propose a return to local essence, the analysis attends to how knowledge and practice emerge through hybrid (Bhabha, 2004) and shifting relations.

Seen through this lens, the Faroese ECEC sector becomes a site of tension—between *inherited* policy frameworks and emerging practices that interrupt or resist their logics. A Faroese pedagogy, then, is not a predefined model but an emergent and situated practice. It becomes visible precisely in its difference (Bhabha, 2004) from Danish/colonial temporalities. Where colonial time emphasizes efficiency, measurement, and future-oriented development, in contrast, a Faroese pedagogy foregrounds open-endedness, responsiveness, and rhythms shaped by weather, landscape, and communal life. In this way, a Faroese pedagogy challenges colonial time by loosening linear schedules and making space for spontaneity, hesitation, and dwelling. A Faroese pedagogy is thus the central analytical object of the article. It is developed through ethnographic fieldwork and grounded in the material-discursive conditions of everyday institutional life. It's materialized through its capacity to disrupt colonial time and unsettle the dominant temporalities embedded in global education policy frameworks.

TOWARDS METHODOLOGIES OF RESISTANCE – AN ANALYTICAL STRATEGY

How can we gain knowledge of phenomena for which no (scientific) vocabulary yet exists? More precisely, how can researchers engage with and discern these phenomena when the available language—understood as material-discursive artifacts like theories, logics, or policies—is not yet adequate to grasp them? A common approach in science has been to build on existing knowledge when exploring the new (Kuhn, 2015). As researchers, we stand on each other's shoulders, reducing the need to start from scratch. But this reliance also naturalizes existing frameworks, shaping what can be known. From a decolonial perspective, such naturalized knowledge is a trap. It limits the frames through which we investigate and the possibilities of what can emerge. How can I provide a faithful description of life in Faroese daycare institutions? Faithful, here, does not imply that Faroese ECEC has an essence waiting to be revealed. Rather, it calls for a study that produces potent knowledge (Haraway, 2018)—knowledge that reaches beyond positionality to account for sociocultural categories, situated histories, and material-discursive entanglements. This means allowing a broader inclusion of materiality, while attending to how meaning is produced between nature and culture (cf. Højgaard in Haraway, 2018, p.13).

Within this framing, I draw on the notion of cracks (Walsh, 2018)—small fissures in dominant logics that open spaces for alternative ways of being and knowing. Cracks are not grand ruptures. They are situated, material-discursive events that suggest resistance and transformation. Importantly, cracks are both analytical and methodological in orientation, supporting the broader strategy suggested above. Cracks help us notice how other temporalities and practices emerge in everyday life. To ground this strategy, I conducted ethnographic fieldwork for several years across multiple Faroese sites. These engagements, which included participant observation and interviews, were not only data collection. They were also material-discursive encounters, where knowledge was co-produced in specific situations. In this sense, ethnography became both a methodological tool and a way of staying with the material-discursive entanglements of Faroese ECEC, directly responding to the need for new methodologies mentioned earlier.

Method	Scope	Data types
Field immersion	6 months (2017–2021). Conversations with kindergarten leaders, teachers, friends and family; visits to kindergartens across the country; meetings and conferences.	Headnotes, embodied sensations
Participant observation	6 weeks in 3 kindergartens (2019)	Field diary
Visual methods	Created and collected during fieldwork (2019–2022)	≈300 pictures, drawings, short films, maps, paintings
Document analysis	Ongoing engagement with policy and public texts (2017–2022)	Danish and Faroese laws, social technologies, OECD reports, books, newspaper articles, etc.
Interviews	12 interviews: 2 focus groups + individual interviews (2017–2021)	Audio recordings and transcripts with teachers, administrators, and union representatives

To describe Faroese ECEC faithfully, then, is a kind of scientific advancement—a crack of hope that shows ECEC can take many forms and invites us to choose how to do it. New ways of being and doing emerge through these cracks—in-between spaces that expand our perspectives. But where are they? Nowhere specifically, yet possibly everywhere. Cracks arise through particular vantage points: they are situated, material-discursive events that open up spaces of possibility and suggest alternative strategies for living, knowing, and acting. My aim is to develop a fissure-practice (Walsh, 2018) within the context of Rigsfællesskabet, aiming to materialize different ways of practicing ECEC that offer potential for change and a good life for both children and pedagogues. Demonstrating the world's pluralism (Reiter, 2018) is an end in itself—and one that enacts resistance.

THE OPERATIONALIZATION OF A FISSURE-PRAXIS

This fissure-praxis—the analytical approach that generates both colonial time and temporalities of resistance—is an evolving process of meaning-making, achieved through diffractive readings and agential cuts (Barad, 2007), which reshape relations between knower and known, as well as between (de)colonized and (de)colonizer. Grounded in empirical material from a multisited ethnography (Marcus, 1995), this praxis serves as the cohesive force that binds these fragments, guiding both analytical direction and methodological navigation. Rather than seeking intention behind action, the approach follows how pedagogy emerges through encounters with global policies, bodies, landscapes, routines, and atmospheres. It is in these often-unplanned entanglements that other temporalities become possible.

I operationalize my fissure-praxis by examining the relationship of difference (Bhabha, 2004) between colonial time and temporalities of resistance. On one side, I construct the phenomenon of colonial time through diffractive readings of education policy —a notion of time with universalizing tendencies that adheres to particular definitions of quality and the good life in ECEC. On the other hand, I focus on the temporalities of resistance that emerge through my ethnographic fieldwork, which arise from material-discursive situated relations at 62°00'N 06°47'W—in other words, from the unique space-time-matterings (Barad, 2007) within Faroese ECEC. Both aspects are interwoven with the complex realities of daily life in daycare settings. The core and driving force of my analysis lies in the agential cut between the temporality constructed by global ECEC policies and the emergent, situated temporalities within the Faroese context. Yet, it also entails recognizing and exploring their relationality and interconnectedness: colonial time is embedded within the historical foundations

of ECEC, while temporalities of resistance surface as sporadic disruptions—moments that, although they do not erase colonial time, hold the potential to transform it. Education-policy-driven temporality thus becomes a colonial construct against which Faroese ECEC is *measured*, ultimately giving rise to de-colonizing temporalities.

SENSITIVITY AS BOTH METHOD AND SYSTEMATICITY

One of the most transformative insights I've gained from Haraway (2018) and Barad (2007) is the deconstruction of traditional objectivity. This "god-trick" assumes a detached observer, separate from field and matter. My approach rejects this, treating research as a material engagement that requires sensitivity: the researcher becomes an interpretive apparatus, attuned to the field. This embodied sensitivity, informed by multimodal (Dille & Plotnikof, 2020) and dialogic methods (Phillips, 2008), enables dynamic interpretations shaped through intra-action. Interpretation becomes distributed—not imposed—emerging through the field itself. Faroese pedagogues were thus not mere participants but co-creators of knowledge. This approach follows how pedagogy takes shape through the meeting of bodies, landscapes, routines, and atmospheres. It is in these encounters—often unplanned—that other temporalities become possible. The research process becomes open-ended (Barad, 2007) and shaped by diverse agencies beyond full control. Inclusion and exclusion remain fluid, guided by the field and its material-discursive complexity.

POSITIONING

I subscribe to a view of the world, society, and human beings as infinitely complex and hybrid (Bhabha, 2004). Positioning of both author and text is thus contingent and, in some ways, an undesirable necessity. I am keenly aware that pedagogical work is deeply gendered and racialized. Educators are often reduced to instruments of care, subject to poor working conditions, and afforded little societal value. In this sense, this article is clearly positioned as a critique of neoliberal regimes. These regimes have contributed to what many call a global care crisis. Early childhood educators around the world often report feeling "exhausted, undervalued, and leaving" (United Workers Union, 2021)—a sentiment I recognize from years in the profession. The article explores ways of being in practice that resist reducing children to becomings and educators to tools. Another aspect of my positioning comes from the decision not to address gender and religion directly. During my PhD, I was often encouraged to do so, both inside and outside academia. Arguments included statements like: "The Faroese are deeply religious, and therefore inherently misogynistic and homophobic." I have resisted this framing. I find it reductive and problematic. Too often, such narratives function not as genuine inquiry but as boundary-making discourses. These discourses position "them" in Denmark as inherently more progressive, secular, and emancipated. This contrast risks reproducing colonial logics and renders the *periphery* legible only through presumed backwardness, rather than on its own terms of complexity and possibility.

COLONIAL TIME IN ECEC

Simone de Beauvoir and Frantz Fanon both assert that oppression profoundly shapes and limits an individual's embodied experience of time (Stendera, 2023). Building on this, I argue that conceptions of time are not merely neutral or abstract frameworks but actively reconfigure experiences of oppression, resistance, and freedom. Specifically, the phenomenon of colonial time constrains and disciplines both children's and pedagogues' bodies, subjecting them—and ultimately the entire field of ECEC—to an ongoing cycle of performance and productivity. This cycle prioritizes standardized measures of development, leaving little room for engaging with the nuanced complexities of lived experiences. Time, as Hjelt et al. (2023) emphasize, is central to education as a whole and to ECEC in particular, shaping not only

the rhythms of daily practices but also the underlying values and power structures that govern them.

ENTRAPPING BODIES, SILENCING TIME: COLONIAL DEVELOPMENTALISM IN ECEC

When we turn to ECEC, the governance of time becomes strikingly visible. Far from being neutral, temporal regimes in daycare reflect colonial and developmentalist legacies. Time, often produced as absolute and linear, has come to function as a resource to be optimized—a logic rooted in industrialization and Scientific Management (Vaaben & Plotnikof, 2019). In ECEC, this legacy is evident. Time structures not only daily routines but also expectations of progress, learning, and outcomes. Opening hours from 7 AM to 5 PM reflect more than just practical arrangements—they mirror the rhythms of the labor market and embed daycare within broader systems of economic productivity. Within this framing, time is transformed into an apparatus of investment: something to be filled with measurable development, structured activity, and future value.

This investment logic is perhaps most clearly articulated in the work of economist James Heckman, whose Heckman Curve illustrates the economic return on investments in early childhood. Here, time is not just linear—it becomes financialized, and childhood is framed as an opportunity to secure future societal gains. The logic of developmentalism thus casts children not as persons in the present but as deferred citizens—sites of potential to be cultivated through structured intervention.

This logic permeates both policy and pedagogy, cementing colonial developmentalism as a governing force in ECEC. In Denmark, prevention discourses have long shaped the ECEC field (Nielsen, 2013), and intentions to counteract "negative social inheritance" remain central. According to §1.3 of the Danish Daycare Act (Dagtilbudsloven, 2022), daycare institutions are tasked with "preventing exclusion and negative social inheritance." These political intentions are materialized through learning plans and pedagogical standards—what Brinkkjær (2013) describes as "state-guaranteed pedagogy"—which are explicitly aimed at optimizing outcomes, particularly for children from so-called 'deficit homes'. In this framing, children (and by extension their families) are positioned as needing intervention. They become objects of knowledge, rather than holders of knowledge. Positioned through a deficit lens, they are assessed, categorized, and redirected according to standardized indicators of development and success. As Pérez and Saavedra (2017) and Rancière (2004) suggest, this relationship stabilizes a hierarchy: the knower and the known, the evaluator and the evaluated. It reaffirms not only epistemic asymmetry but also temporal control—the child must be brought into line with a normative timeline, a universalized "good life" that assumes sameness in development despite material and cultural differences. Paradoxically, this entrapment may reinforce the very inequalities it seeks to dissolve (Kirkeby & Munck, 2021). Children are molded to fit developmental standards that do not align with their lived realities. Their time and potential are governed by expectations formed elsewhere.

Pedagogues are also governed by colonial time. They carry society's hope for the future, tasked with shaping the next generation of children. As the profession becomes increasingly bound by documentation, assessment, and quality control (Ahrenkiel, 2018; Plum, 2014; Togsverd, 2015), pedagogues are asked to function as extensions of policy rather than context-sensitive professionals. The result is a dual form of instrumentalization: children as future investments and pedagogues as policy implementers. This dynamic reflects a broader neoliberal logic that fuses productivity with care, efficiency with intimacy. Pedagogues are expected to care *well*, but within the structures of accountability and performance. Yet how can meaningful care flourish in systems that do not care for the caregiver? This contradiction reveals a hidden crisis: a care system that undermines itself by marginalizing those expected to sustain it.

THE (UN)MATERIALITY OF COLONIAL TIME: UNIVERSALISM AND EPISTEMICIDE

Colonial time operates as an abstract, universalized framework that imposes a linear, standardized vision of childhood development—often detached from the material realities of children's lives. It prescribes temporal expectations (e.g., when milestones should be reached) based on a singular vision of the "good life" (Roberts-Holmes & Moss, 2021). These abstractions overlook the specific material-discursive conditions—natural rhythms, cultural practices, social contexts—that shape diverse childhoods. By enforcing universal temporalities, colonial time marginalizes and erases locally embedded ways of knowing, leading to what Santos (2014) refers to as epistemicide: the systematic destruction of local knowledge systems. This un-materiality manifests in policies, curricula, and frameworks that treat time as a neutral backdrop rather than a co-constitutive force. Developmental benchmarks often assume children should reach milestones (like language or social behavior) at the same age, regardless of environmental or cultural context. Such standards flatten diverse experiences, denying how children's development intra-acts with material conditions—such as rural or urban life, socio-economic status, or even weather. Colonial time reduces this complexity to a homogenized timeline aligned with capitalist and industrial logics of productivity and standardization. It also actively suppresses alternative temporalities—those rooted in nature, community, or cyclical time (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018). These relational temporalities challenge linear progress but are erased by the singular narrative of colonial time, which dictates how time should be experienced and managed. This temporal imperialism detaches time from the material world even as it shapes it.

The consequences are tangible and extend from these conceptual frameworks into policy. For instance, the Ghetto Law in Denmark (Folketinget, 2018) mandates early intervention programs in marginalized areas, assuming that standardized timelines can rectify "deficits." As a result, children become objects of intervention, while their lived realities and agencies are overlooked. Thus, the supposed un-materiality of colonial time has very material effects: it legitimizes policy, shapes pedagogy, and reinforces cultural hegemony by dictating how time should be lived.

TEMPORALITIES OF RESISTANCE

In this section, I will unfold the temporalities of resistance. First, I consider how Faroese daycare practices have been historically intertwined with Danish daycare traditions. Next, I describe what I see as an intrinsic part of Faroese daycare culture: the Faroese social organization through the bygder (small rural communities), as well as the influence of nature and weather. Then, I elaborate on how non-knowledge should be understood as a disruption of the colonial order, unsettling colonial conceptions of time. Ultimately, I demonstrate how these disruptions materialize through spontaneity, hesitation, and dwelling.

In the 1960s and 70s, Faroese pedagogues trained in Denmark returned home carrying new perspectives (Jiménez, 2023). There, they encountered Danish pedagogical practices and seminar culture (the pedagogue education places at that time), inspired by reform pedagogy and progressivism (Korsgaard et al., 2017). When they returned, their familiar landscapes and customs were viewed through a blend of Danish educational ideals and Faroese heritage. As pedagogues in a limited number of daycares, they began the process of translation—understood as the situated adaptation and transformation of educational ideas across contexts (Staunæs et al., 2014). In doing so, they contributed to the transformation of the field that shapes a Faroese pedagogy today, which does not develop in isolation but is deeply entangled with the material-discursive landscape of 62°00'N 06°47'W. This landscape is not merely a backdrop but a rich, interwoven tapestry where nature, culture, and time are mutually constitutive—entangled, agential, and continuously reconfiguring the world. Drawing on Barad's concept of spacetimemattering, I analyze

how the intra-action of local material-discursive conditions and reform pedagogical ideals *from* Denmark—distilled into the concept of selvforvaltning (Korsgaard, et al., 2017), or autonomy in learning and self-directed activity—fosters the emergence of temporalities of resistance.

MATERIAL-DISCURSIVE CONDITIONS FOR RESISTANCE IN THE FAROESE BYGD

During World War II, British soldiers stationed in the Faroe Islands coined the term *The Land of Maybe* (Norgate, 1943) to describe the islands, reflecting their perception of a culture where plans and expectations seemed fluid, shaped by the surrounding environment. Although the term originated as a reflection of uncertainty, the Faroese have since embraced it as part of their identity, symbolizing authenticity and resilience in globalized times (Gaini, 2011). This label captures the interplay of natural forces—unpredictable weather, rugged geography, and isolation—that continue to influence Faroese life. Harsh storms, perilous roads, and limited infrastructure have historically imposed barriers to travel, forcing communities to adapt and hybridize nature with infrastructure, shaping Faroese culture and practices, including those in daycare.

The Faroese bygd (settlement) exemplifies this entanglement of nature, culture, and pedagogy. Each bygd is geographically defined by cultivated lands (bø) and uncultivated lands (haga) (Joensen, 1987), with boundaries internalized by adults through communal ties and land ownership (Vestergaard, 1978). For children, boundaries were less about ownership and more about the material limits of exploration. Oral histories and scattered texts describe the bygd as a playground where children navigated streams, mountains, fields, and fjords, engaging in self-directed activity shaped by their environment (Joensen in Kjølbro, 2008). Experiences shifted with seasons and weather: long dark winters, thick fog, and turbulent seas imposed limits, while endless summer nights and calm winds expanded opportunities for play. Such conditions fostered a culture where freedom and adaptability were central to childhood, and the unruly geography became a co-creator of experiences. In this sense, self-directed activity becomes an expression of spacetimemattering, where time, space, materiality, and discourse intertwine to shape lived experiences.

Building on Altamirano-Jiménez's (2021) concept of body-land— emphasizing the inseparability of bodies and the landscapes they inhabit—this entanglement can be seen as an embodied negotiation between individuals and the land. Faroese childhoods exemplify this relationality: children's agency and movement are directly influenced by the land's material features—cliffs, streams, fog, and endless skies. In turn, their play inscribes meaning onto the landscape, weaving human narratives into the natural world. This dynamic is constitutive of a Faroese pedagogy, where unpredictability is intrinsic to cultural life. The apparent disorganization of Faroese life is thus not disorder but a continual negotiation with nature, developing identities and practices capable of resisting homogenizing global pressures. These intra-actions create a fluid relationship between children, environment, and community, fostering a pedagogy rooted in autonomy and self-directedness, where children's agency is deeply entangled with their surroundings. In this way, the concept of body-land frames Faroese ECEC as an intricate entanglement of human and non-human forces, offering a radical alternative to linear, goal-driven models of education.

MOMENTS OF NON-KNOWLEDGE: THE ROLE OF COLONIAL TIME-DISRUPTORS IN A FAROESE PEDAGOGY

I use non-knowledge to describe moments when the pedagogue is unsure, caught in a singularity (Hylgaard, 2023) that resists generalization, or simply operating outside predictable patterns. In these moments, both the pedagogue and the child are engaged in a shared process of discovery, in resonance with

their environment. Thus, the pedagogue does not anticipate what will happen next; rather, she is open to the external influences that may emerge through intra-actions with children and the environment. These moments disrupt linear routines, resisting the mechanistic view of education as a series of predefined steps toward development goals. In this sense, they also disrupt the ordering logics through which knowledge becomes legible, predictable, and governable in the order dictated by colonial time. Non-knowledge interrupts this order, allowing for other forms of attention and responsiveness to emerge. Rather than imposing rigid structures, a Faroese pedagogy embraces the apparent dis-organization. Thus, these practices emerge not from a deliberate strategy, but from an attunement to the possibilities opened up by the landscape, weather, and shared rhythms. This fluidity fosters a pedagogy rooted in adaptation, spontaneity, and relationality, creating temporalities of resistance that align with the rhythms of the islands themselves. In this way, unpredictability is not a limitation but a rich resource, cultivating a pedagogy that thrives in the interplay between nature and human agency.

Spontaneity, hesitation, and dwelling create alternative rhythms, freeing pedagogues from rigid schedules and allowing for creative exploration beyond standardized curricula. The main argument is that time disruptions, while apparently chaotic, enable new temporalities that support joint discovery. Faroese daycare practices contrast sharply with Danish systems, where spontaneity is framed within structured pedagogical goals (Dagtilbudsloven, 2022). For Faroese pedagogues, spontaneity is intrinsic to daily life, not an add-on to planned activities. As one pedagogue said when asked about time: "I want more time to do nothing." This 'nothing' expresses a wish for the freedom to follow the child's lead and move naturally through the day, without being bound by external expectations. It suggests a view of time not as a tool for predefined goals, but as an open, relational field in which the unknown and unexpected can emerge.

SPONTANEITY – THE FUTURE IS UN-CERTAIN

> "The outdoor environment calls the children and pedagogues into action. The weather is unusually good, with a stunning view of the fjord, yet there are no structured plans in place. The pedagogue had initially considered making ice cubes outside with a small group of children, but the day took an unexpected turn. A new henhouse, recently assembled by some parents lured with beer, has replaced the old one. The old henhouse, still sitting in the chicken yard—about 1.2 by 4 meters—is in need of removal. Initially, the assistant offers to do it alone, but eventually, the pedagogue decides to involve five boys aged 4–7 in the task. The boys fetch tools from the workshop—hammers, crowbars, and large pliers for nails—after being told what to look for. They begin dismantling the henhouse, managing the task almost entirely on their own. The pedagogue intervenes sparingly, only when absolutely necessary or in response to specific requests. She frequently asks open-ended questions, such as, 'What do you think we should do next?' rather than giving direct instructions. Over the course of more than an hour, the boys remain fully engaged, breaking down the henhouse into smaller pieces and loading the fragments into a wheelbarrow. Not a single child leaves the task. The pedagogue later remarks, 'It's good to be allowed to work.' Meanwhile, five other children play indoors, and two alternate between inside and outside. Children choose their activities freely, embodying the idea that well-being is something we do" (Author's field diary, 2019).

This vignette shows how spontaneity, as a temporal practice, disrupts colonial time—understood here as the linear, efficiency-driven logic of global ECEC policy. The dismantling of the henhouse was unplanned, emerging from the contingencies of the day—weather, materials, and mutual attunement. It functioned as a temporal fissure: a moment where dominant timelines were loosened, allowing for improvisation and situated agency. The pedagogue's minimal inter-

vention supported the children's autonomy, affirming them as knowing participants rather than passive recipients of knowledge. Their sustained engagement and mutual coordination exemplify a relational temporality that welcomes uncertainty instead of managing it. A similar temporal crack appears during the institution's weekly Friday singalong:

> "After half an hour of structured singing—where children and adults sit in a circle and take turns choosing songs—most of the children drift out of the room. A few pedagogues follow, but several remain. Then, quietly, they decide to keep singing. 'What should we sing?' one asks. They agree on a song and begin to sing, smiling as if stealing a moment for themselves. Eventually, some children wander back in, drawn by the sound. Another song is chosen. And sung." (Author's field diary, 2019).

This scene may seem minor, but it offers a clear example of a momentary break in institutional rhythm where new social configurations become possible—not as resistance in the sense of refusal, but as a gentle re-routing of time, away from productivity and toward presence. This elasticity of time, seen in a Faroese pedagogy, reveals forms of care that are not reduced to meeting external goals, a form of care that is not instrumentalized. The pedagogues' lingering song is not part of a plan, a curriculum, or a child-centered strategy. It is for them, too. In this way, they momentarily step outside the logic of performance and optimization, instead inhabiting a shared temporality of pleasure and presence. Rather than being reduced to agents of future outcomes, the adults appear as participants in a relational and atmospheric pedagogical field. Thus, spontaneity is not a chaotic interruption but a culturally embedded everyday crack in colonial time**.** It transforms the uncertainty of the future into a possibility for relational growth and improvisation. These cracks allow something else to be felt, known, and done. They are pedagogical events that make room for a Faroese way of doing ECEC, not by rejecting structure entirely, but by allowing it to loosen, bend, and respond.

HESITANCY - TIME STOPS (AND MAYBE REVERSES)

> "After lunch, the children are allowed into the gym. In one corner, two older boys from the after-school program have gathered a large collection of colorful foam building blocks. It's hard to see exactly how they are playing with them—it seems more like storage. The boys are occupied elsewhere, leaving the blocks untouched. The preschoolers are building a fort and take a few blocks that seem unused. The older boys, irritated, want all the blocks, the bikes, and other toys scattered about, probably from when they were alone in the gym. The tension escalates as they start to confront the younger children. The atmosphere is charged. The young pedagogue seems uneasy, his discomfort palpable. My presence seems to add pressure. He cautiously approaches the boys, trying to mediate the conflict, yet the situation intensifies. Here, hesitation appears: instead of pushing for a quick resolution, taking charge, or asserting control—especially in the presence of an outsider—he retreats inward, questioning and proceeding with caution. Twenty minutes later, a different pedagogue arrives and reframes the conflict as an issue of sharing. She helps the children come up with a way to divide the blocks, giving the older boys a narrative that helps them reframe their behavior as something more than mere disruption. Thus, time and intervention intertwine. Time does not simply move forward; it takes detours and even rewinds. Sharp judgments and evaluations keep time—and the children—fixed in place, limiting the opportunity for transformation. Clear lines create boundaries, often keeping both adults and children confined to predefined roles" (Author's field diary, 2019).

In this vignette, hesitation interrupts colonial time. Here, that means the linear, efficiency-oriented temporality that underpins modern educational governance, where conflict requires swift resolution and roles are predefined. The young pedagogue's pause deviates from this script. Rather than intervening

immediately, he withholds action and creates a temporal fissure—a break that allows ambiguity and alternative relationalities to surface. Delay is not failure here. Hesitation here echoes Haraway's (2016) staying with the trouble—a refusal of resolution, a dwelling in complexity. More than just a delay, it is a practice of resistance. It lets time bend, loop, and create space for others to act. The pedagogue's pause signals not passivity, but attentiveness to the situation's unfolding. He resists imposing coherence where care is required. In doing so, he performs a pedagogical gesture that suspends colonial time, allowing something different to emerge. When the second pedagogue enters, she does not erase the pause but builds on it—re-narrating the conflict in ways that shift the dynamics. Her intervention is not merely solution-oriented, but transformational, made possible by the earlier temporal pause. Hesitation becomes a form of time-work—a decolonial gesture that resists premature closure, loosens hierarchies, and reopens roles. It enacts a Faroese pedagogy that values presence over control, and relation over resolution.

DWELLING – TIME IS REDIRECTED AND PROLONGED

Dwelling is about staying with, lingering in the thick present. It means being in a moment that does not ask to be solved or accelerated. In Faroese daycare institutions, I often observed how time was stretched rather than segmented—how children and adults dwelled together without haste, transition cues, or direction toward the next activity. Dwelling thus becomes an embodied and materialized resistance to colonial time: the linear, future-oriented logic embedded in global ECEC governance, where time is optimized and progress measured in outcomes. One such moment emerged during lunch:

> "There is food now. 'The cold buffet' is set up along the windowsills. The children are seated at three tables and take turns getting their food with a little help. They wait patiently, enjoying the conversation around them. Dwelling… some children take longer to decide what to eat, chatting with the adults. We eat for quite a while, over half an hour. When they're finished, they clear their plates into the dishwasher and quietly drift off to other rooms or into the hallway, starting their own games. There's no conflict between the children who are still eating and those who have finished and gone to play. Two children remain behind, talking about their food and playing 'crocodile' with dried fish. They linger over their meal, playing, talking, eating, completely absorbed in their activity. Meanwhile, the other children spread out across the room, playing. The adults converse together. There's a calm and relaxed atmosphere. It feels as though there is space for 'all activities,' for both children and adults. After half an hour, one child announces, 'I'm done, I'm going to play.' The other follows five minutes later" (Author's field diary, 2019).

This vignette does not describe a break in the day—it *is* the day. What stands out is the tempo: the slow unfolding of time that is not dictated by a schedule. Children transition smoothly between eating, playing, and talking without needing instruction. There is no boundary between what counts as learning and what does not. This looseness creates pedagogical spaciousness, where rhythms coexist. Their lingering, their talk and play with food, the unhurried transitions—none of this serves a policy-defined purpose, yet it is full of relational meaning and epistemic agency. The children are developing temporal knowledge: sensing the pace the moment requires, stretching time, and letting go. Dwelling performs what I call a crack in institutional time. Through it, something undefined can take place. It emerges as a refusal of epistemic reduction. This is a refusal to equate learning and time with measurability. Dwelling allows space for slowness, spontaneity, and being-with, and time does not accumulate toward assessment—it expands relationally. These practices bend time outward, holding open the possibility that care, learning, and presence can be enough, and are a quiet insistence that other pedagogical worlds already exist. I observed such dwelling not only during

meals but also in disorganized parts of the day. In one daycare, a large sofa in the hallway became a quiet space—especially on stormy days when outdoor play was impossible:

> "One child sits on the sofa in the hallway with a doll for a long time. They investigate the doll, play with it, and make sounds. Other children rush past, but this child remains absorbed in their play. Eventually, the child leaves the sofa and runs into the large gym, where a new game begins, without any adult involvement" (Author's field diary, 2019).

These moments, often away from adult oversight, allow children to explore and dwell in a slower rhythm—making time, rather than being made by it.

IN/CONCLUSION: TEMPORALITIES OF HOPE IN A FAROESE PEDAGOGY

The practices of hesitation, spontaneity, and dwelling reveal how Faroese ECEC reclaims time from the linear demands of colonial and developmentalist frameworks. These pedagogical acts do not follow a predefined plan—they arise in attunement with landscape, weather, and the relational textures of daily life. In these disruptions, time ceases to be a neutral measure of progress and becomes a generative force for shared inquiry and situated knowing. Rather than opposing structure altogether, these temporalities stretch and loosen it—making space for difference, slowness, and the unexpected. A Faroese pedagogy, as shown here, challenges the epistemic hierarchy of standardized developmental norms and foregrounds children and pedagogues as co-constructors of time, care, and knowledge. These are not simply moments of resistance, but affirmations of a pedagogical mode that draws strength from its entanglement with place, bodies, weather, and rhythm. Drawing on my previous work, I propose the term *at reika* (Jiménez, 2023) to name this mode—a Faroese pedagogy that unfolds through distributed agency, relational temporalities, and an openness to the unknown. In Faroese, reika means to wander without a destination, to drift or roam in attunement with one's surroundings. It is especially associated with children moving through the bygd—curious, unscheduled, and absorbed in their environment. In this sense, Reika becomes more than a metaphor. It names a culturally embedded way of being and moving that informs everyday pedagogy, and materializes a decolonial pedagogy: locally rooted, temporally expansive, and epistemically plural. It is not a grand alternative to the system, but a practice already alive within it— an everyday, decolonial hope.

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