**North West schoolTree Planting Day**

**Field notes 7/3/2023**

**Name: Educationalist**

**Background/Context:** So, it was the big day in our research diaries. We were going to do tree planting with children in the school ground. We have been working very hard co-planning for the day with children and with our project partner (Tree planting organisation). We had a session on “co-designing the woodland” with children during which we asked children to help us choose trees we will plant in the school, also help us understand why these trees are important to them (children). During the day, we took children outside on a guided tour and [forester] explained different species of trees and parts of trees to the children. Children asked some interesting questions about the age of different trees. At the end of the day, we had children’s responses about different species of trees and reasons for having those trees in the school. We compile a list of trees and showed it to the children. [forester] agreed and we confirmed that we will be back on the 7th march with trees species that children have selected for tree planting.

What a day to look forward. On the evening of 6th March around 2:15Pm, we had an email from the school about tree planting day which the school thinks should be cancelled. What a bad luck (I thought). Geographer and philosopher were on their way to (North] as they planned to travel a day before the 7th. I talked to the school if we all team can come in just to talk to children if we are not doing tree planting. The school agreed to that. After an hour or so, the school called us back and said, “Tree planting can go ahead”. What a joy.

Being a researcher, I realised the afternoon which supposed to be fine going and relaxed due to all planning we have been doing for tomorrow, has turned into a roller coaster. At a time, I was surprised as well as panicked. I experienced great level of uncertainty about what we will we do tomorrow and how? I thought about research team and their time and resources we have used to plan for the day. Because of all this happening, when we came to know we will do tree planting, Ethnographer was so excited, and I felt I am blank completely due to what happened in the past two hours. Anyways, great things to come forward and here we go all set for tree planting.

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| **Description:** | **Interpretation** | **Analysis** |
| On the day, I left home a bit early in the morning as I was hoping to buy pencils for children to record their observations. I caught a train at 7:37am from [place names]. With a slight delay, I reached to the [school]at 8:10. I walked to the school, and it was 8:30 am. I signed in and asked about notebooks which children will use during the activity. These were delivered to the school a week before. We met with all team members and discussed the plan with the class teacher. We started with [class 1] as planned before, but we had to work with [class 2]first and then [class 3].. Once the team discussed the changed timetable, we went to the classroom to take children out to the school field and colleagues from [Tree planting organisation] and went outside to set up things for children.  We went in the class where Ethnographer and Philosopher started introductions. Children know our names already which was exciting. We also showed voice recorders, tablets and notebooks and asked children to choose how would they like to record their observations/conversations during tree planting. After this introduction, the children and we were ready to go to the school field.    Children were explained about different tree species that they can use for tree planting. Different species were grouped in separate buckets with names of tree and picture of a grown up of tree for children to see and to pick from. Children were planting a hedgerow at the front of the school. It was noisy because of the traffic on the road. Children were paired and each pair was planting trees together.  We have requests for notebooks, pens, pencils, tablets, and voices recorders from children. some of the children in this group did not like to be recorded so children were pairing up with someone else from the group to do joint filming, video, and audio recording. We have some children drawing trees and writing about themselves, their friends, and trees. We had two grounds for tree planting for this group.  In the second ground, children were exciting to work with worms. There were loads of worms. Worms started wiggling and running on the ground.  Children were gentle to worms. They touched those worms, put them gently on their hands or back in the soil. We have a group of children making some lovely art with worms and leaves.  Some of worms were safely put back in their homes by the children.  Once time was over, we took children back in the classroom and as it was the break time for them. We have loads of request from children to have their own tree books in which they are keen to write about trees, worms, caterpillars, and all other interesting discoveries they will make whilst being outdoor in the school or in their homes.  At 10:45 am, we had a second group of children to work with (second class). We repeated the same process as we started session with introducing ourselves to the children and talking about research and ethics.  We took children outside, but we were asked by [tree foresters] to wait for 20 minutes. Children started playing with one another. Some of them were still taking time in getting ready to work in the muddy ground. After 20 minutes, the children were explained how to plant a tree and they were shown the places marked with white cross, where they can plant trees. It was very cold in the wide field. In this group, children were planting trees at a distance as they were planting a woodland. Children started planting trees and struggled with mud as it was sticky and very hard to break down into pieces to cover tree roots.  We gave them some questions to interview each other during tree planting, which they did amazingly. We have a few requests for video recordings which children can show to their parents to prove that they can plant a tree. We recorded those for children. Most of them were happy to be audio and video recorded by their peers/partners.  Once the group was done, we went indoor for lunch. We felt a bit tired, but we had some lovely conversations around project and grand parenting as Artist and ethnographer are grandparents of two new-born. Philsopher shared a book on hope and fairy tales which seemed to be helpful for another school.  In the afternoon at 13:00 pm, we had similar introductory session with the children, and we took them outside at 13:15 for tree planting. This group was planting a hedgerow and some trees at distance in a L shape.  Once they finished tree planting, their curiosity was around recording themselves and their peers through different means we have introduced to them. We have children coming to us and asking about tablets for film making, for voice recorders and for notebooks. Children asked for pens and pencils.  We had a pair of girls writing a lovely poem about the trees that they have planted.  In this group, we noticed children as keen researchers and observers, very keen to draw trees, write about trees, interviewing their peers about trees and making videos of trees planting or reporting on what’s going on.  Once we had all three groups of children done with the tree planting. We went to the classroom to thank teachers and children for their time and we left for homes at 3:00pm | We did a kind of dialogic session to recall who we are? What we will do and why we are doing that.  At first all children were curious to plant trees. Curiosity around holding their own spade, picking a tree, digging a hole, and planting the tree as explained by the [tree organisation]mcolleagues. We gave children tablets and notebooks to record their observations at the beginning. These mostly came back to us, or some children put them aside on the ground and were busy in tree planting. Currently, it was us mainly taking photos making films of what children are doing.  Once pairs have planted one or two trees, their interests moved from tree planting to recording on what is going on.  I called this place “worm Colony” invaded by children at first. Worms probably will be up to hiding in a safe place.  Children looked at the movements that worms were making whilst being on their hands. Children talked about different colours of worms, worms in different size, worms as family (i.e., daddy worms, mummy worms and baby worms). After a while, worms looked like they calmed down and are settling well soon in their colony in the presence of children probably because of the attention and gentleness that children showed to them.  Worms going back in the soil with a special duty to perform which involves getting nutrients from the ground and providing it to the trees through its roots. Some enjoyed sunshine and human warmth whilst being on children’s hands. Some of them probably were scarred and running away from children’s screaming like humans sometimes do.  It was break time and children were expecting to be outdoor in the break. But now, they had to eat their snacks indoor and having talks from us. Does not seem nice? Children were though promised that they will be given extra time during lunch break. We felt sorry for that too. This sadness was soon gone as we started explaining stuff. Children looked excited to work with trees, tablets, and voice recorders.  Children in this group were keen to work with tablets and voice recorders to record their activities.  Children in this group were relatively less engaged with notebooks as most of them were keen to work with voice recorders and tablets. We had some lovely interviews from the children about trees, their experiences of planting trees and how did they find this tree planting activity.  We felt we goanna get the same kind of things from the group and were kind of losing energy level to keenly note what is going on. We noticed at first children were more interested in planting trees, We kept tablets, notebooks, and recorders aside and were generally talking and noticing children’s movements, actions and paying attention to their conversations. We had more time for this session so we discussed as a team that we can offer children to try out laser scanning of trees if they are bored and simply do not want to do tree planting any more. However, we noticed the opposite, some of children took their heavy jackets off and were interested in planting more and more trees. There was a high demand of pen in their favourite colour. Some refusals to work with pink, orange, or blue pens. Purple proved to be a favourite by many.  We planned not to distract children and we did not go for laser scanning stuff. | Children doing and learning (Ingold)  Common work framework, materiality, and relationality, worms as agential.  Connectedness, relationality, ecology  We will provide these to the school. (Order being processed)  This explains the affordances during a research encounter related to place, people, and time when this encounter is happening  Skilling (Ingold) crafting research in their own ways which we did not expect or fixed before (Ingold)  Co-producing knowledge with children, letting go our plans |