

## Unstructured Learning: Development of Free Form Construction in Waldorf and Normative Preschools

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**Abstract :** In this research, we sought to focus on constructive play and examine its components in the context of two different educational approaches: Waldorf and normative schools. When they are free to choose, construction is one of the forms of play most favored by children. Its short-term and long-term cognitive contributions are apparent in various areas of development. The lack of empirical studies about play in Waldorf schools, which addresses the possibility of this incidental learning inspired the need to enrich the body of existing knowledge. 90 children (4-6 yrs.old) four preschools ( two normative, two Waldorf) participated in a small homogeneous city. Naturalistic observations documented the time frame, physical space, and construction materials related to the freeform building; processes of construction among focal representative children and its products. The study's main finding with respect to the construction output points to a connection between educational approach and level of construction sophistication. Higher levels of sophistication were found at the Waldorf preschools than at the mainstream preschools. This finding emerged due to the differences in the level of sophistication among the older children in the two types of preschools, while practically no differences emerged among the younger children. Discussion of the research findings considered the differences between the play environments in terms of time, physical space, and construction materials. The construction processes were characterized according to the design model stages. The construction output was characterized according to the sophistication scale dimensions and the connections between approach, age and gender, and sophistication level.

**Keywords :** constructive play, preschool, design process model, complexity

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