THE NATURE OF TEACHER-CHILD INTERACTIONS IN EMOTION DISCOURSE

BY

DAWN V. THOMAS

DISSERTATION

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Doctoral Committee:

Professor Michaelene M. Ostrosky, Chair
Professor Sarah McCarthey
Professor Janet Gaffney
Assistant Professor Tweety Felner
Assistant Professor Gregory Cheatham, Arizona State University
Abstract

Emotions find their meanings within human relationships that permit emotions to be experienced, expressed, and explored. Social and emotional competence, marked by an understanding, expression, and control of emotion, is one of the hallmarks of emotional discourse—demonstrated in the very nature of interactive communication as individuals relate to one another. The literature pertinent to preschoolers’ emotional expression and emotion-word use in natural environments, group settings, and in the context of discourse, is limited in scope. Although research related to teacher-child relationships is prolific, specific research examining the nature of their interactions, most particularly related to emotion during discourse, is scarce. The current study was designed to address these gaps through an investigation of the following research questions: (a) How do preschool children express their emotions during interactions with their teacher?; (b) What are the communication patterns within teacher-child interactions in Head Start classrooms during emotion discourse?; and (c) What are the Head Start staff’s (teachers and administrators) perspectives of the role emotion discourse plays in the classroom?

The study demonstrated that bookreading elicited more emotion words than did breakfast. The emotion words used most frequently included happy, mad, sad, angry, and grumpy. Findings also included a description of strategies teachers used to extend conversations with children about emotions.
For Holly and Katelyn, who daily show me that emotions are precious and the expression of those emotions is priceless.
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Chapter 1

Rationale for the Study

“Young children cannot be viewed as isolated entities, but as social beings within a web of relationships” (Denham et al., 2001, p. 291). Emotions gain meaning within human relationships, the interactions between people that permit emotions to be experienced, expressed, explored, and evaluated. Ostrosky, Gaffney, and Thomas (2006) describe an authentic adult-child relationship as one that includes “warmth, respect, support, responsiveness, and attention to the individual strengths and needs of each other” (p. 186). This kind of reciprocal relationship helps build a strong foundation from which to sustain optimal emotional development, including emotional and self-regulation, emotional competence, and healthy emotional expressiveness.

Children need physically and emotionally secure environments to facilitate their maturing sense of self (see Bruner, 1986; 2002), including self-knowledge, self-control and self-esteem. Children require supportive contexts that encourage mutual respect for others and empathy toward others’ experiences and emotional responses (Hyson & Lee, 1996; Hyson & Molinaro, 2001; Ostrosky et al., 2006; Pianta, 1999; Pianta & Walsh, 1996). In addition, it is essential for children to have around them individuals who love, accept, and support them (Bowlby, 1969; Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The creation of authentic relationships between teachers and children, which in turn provide modeling for the development of positive relationships between children and their peers is of utmost importance in giving young children physical and emotional environments from which to experience, express, and explore their burgeoning emotions.
Emde (1998) defined emotional literacy as “the ability to construct a narrative organization for emotion-laden experience . . . wherein the child can represent past experience and future expectations in a coherent way and can portray it in language and share it with another” (p. 1241). Considered “a prerequisite skill to emotional regulation and successful interpersonal interactions and problem solving,” emotional literacy is thought by many to be one of the more important skills young children can be taught (Joseph & Strain, 2003, p. 2). Misunderstandings leading to conflict or other challenging behavior may arise from a limited knowledge of emotional vocabulary (Denham, 1986; Joseph & Strain; Webster-Stratton, 1999). Although some research exists on children’s use of internal-state words (words denoting individual’s communication of feelings, cognition, volition, and affect), especially as they are linked to emotional development, the literature on the use of emotion words and phrases is limited (Thomas & Ostrosky, 2008). Even more sparse are studies examining preschoolers’ use of emotion words in the context of discourse (i.e., conversation). Research related to teacher-child relationships is prolific; however, specific research examining the nature of their interactions, most particularly related to emotion during discourse, is scarce.

Given limited research in this area, the current study focused on the nature of teacher-child interactions around emotion discourse. Research questions included: (a) How do preschool children express their emotions during interactions with their teacher?; (b) What are the communication patterns within teacher-child interactions in Head Start classrooms during emotion discourse?; and (c) What are the Head Start staff’s perspectives of the role emotion discourse plays in the classroom?
Defining Emotional Development

An ongoing struggle exists with the definition and function of emotion, the role of a child in understanding emotion and his expression of that emotion, as well as the interrelatedness and interaction of these concepts. Terminology in the research literature has shifted over the past three decades, resulting in ambiguity around terms such as emotional literacy, feeling words, emotion words, and emotion discourse. The term emotional literacy has evolved over the years, and has been defined as the ability to monitor feelings in a variety of ways (Bocchino, 1999), read and interpret the affective cues of interactive partners (Bowlby, 1969), and label one’s own emotions and feelings (Denham, 1986; Joseph & Strain, 2003; Lemerise & Arsenio, 2000). Much of the early research did not refer to the discrimination of emotion, or feeling words, as emotional literacy, but rather internal-state language. Although the majority of the early literature used the phrase feeling word(s) to denote the vocabulary and verbal expressions of feelings and emotions, the phrase emotion word(s) is used throughout this dissertation in keeping with current terminology associated with emotional literacy in young children.

The term discourse is a word that carries with it value-added meaning. Florio-Ruane describes discourse as being social and linguistic—a way of “behaving and making sense which includes language code, use of written words, social norms and values, and practice within shared activity systems (2004, p. 47). Gee (2006) emphasizes the distinction between discourse (“little d”) and Discourse (“big D”), explaining that discourse is language-in-use, while Discourse integrates language with socially situated identities and activities. Pianta and Walsh (1996) define discourse as reflecting shared understandings, being bounded, as it were, by culture, history, ideas and words:
A discourse is affected by the ideas supported by it and the availability of words to express those ideas. It can be viewed as what we say and think about something as well as how we say and think it. Further, a discourse is always bounded by what we do not say and what we do not think—perhaps because we are unable, perhaps because we dare not. It is the accessible and the acceptable bounded by the inaccessible and the unacceptable. (p.30-31)

For the purposes of the current study, discourse referred to the broader, encompassing perspective of conversation as an interaction between individuals in their sociocultural contexts (van Dijk, 1997). Emotional discourse includes the expression, purpose, valence, and context of emotion in the form and function of conversation (i.e., interaction). Emotional competence, marked by an applicable understanding, expression, and control of emotion, is one of the hallmarks of emotional discourse—demonstrated in the very nature of interactive communication between individuals.

**Environments, relationships, and emotions.** Optimal early childhood care and education reflects an ever-present affinity for the maintenance of genuine, responsive, nurturing, and positive environments for children. Such environments offer children opportunities for exploration, prospects for progressive independence, expectations for sensitive caregiving (i.e., teaching) from adults in the environment, and occasions for responsive emotional expression. Emotions are individually based, growing out of experience, environment, and example. The links between emotions and individuality are important, helping children feel understood, liked, and connected to other people.

Relationships with adults in the home as well as in the early care and education setting “form the infrastructure of development that supports nearly all of what a child is asked to do” (Pianta, 1999, p. 17). It is in the context of these relationships that young children form internal representational models of what to expect of themselves and others, how to respond and be responded to, how to read and interpret verbal and behavioral cues, and
how to build lasting and trusting relationships with others (see Bowlby, 1969). From the beginning, adults form the very foundation from which infants and young children build their sense of self. These earliest interactions cultivate relationships that “form and shape” the development of a child (Pianta, 1999, p. 17). Societal and cultural expectations are transferred from parent to caregiver and teacher in the childcare center or classroom, putting the onus of responsibility on the adult. Equally important to optimal environments and relationships is the need for effective social and emotional curricula to help young children learn to regulate and manage their emotions.

Children in poverty. Environments and relationships are important for the development of all children. They play a particularly large role for those living in poverty or low-income neighborhoods, as evidenced by the literature delineating the effect of poverty and attributed life stressors. Though not exhaustive, the following factors inherently impact children from low-income families, resulting in unequal opportunities for cognitively beneficial experiences and material and emotional resources (Bradley & Corwyn, 2002). Researchers have consistently demonstrated that children from low-income families or those living in poverty are at risk for early developmental social and emotional problems, (Duncan & Brooks-Gunn, 1997; McLoyd, 1990; Miera, 2002), language and vocabulary challenges (Hart & Risley, 1995), poor academic achievement, due, perhaps, to a disconnect between the school and home (Hall, Nagy, & Linn, 1984; Hall, Nagy, & Nottenburg, 1981; McLoyd; Bradley & Corwyn), and unmet physical and mental health problems (National Center for Children in Poverty [NCCP], November 2006).
**Importance of language.** In laying out a framework from which to view language, conversation, and socialization, Miller, Potts, Fung, Hoogstra, and Mintz (1990) discuss two assumptions about what they term “ordinary talk.” First, they contend that conversation is a “pervasive, orderly, and culturally organized feature of social life in every culture” (p. 294). Second, they contend that socialization is mediated by language (see Vygotsky, 1978). Given the importance of language (particularly spoken language) and the interaction between individuals during conversation, it behooves researchers to better understand the contextual influences surrounding discourse, particularly as it relates to children and their social and emotional development. Vygotskian emphases on language-mediated social practices permit a perspective that blends the development of cognition and emotion with the creation of self or identity (see Bruner, 1986; 2002; Miller et al; Miller, Mintz, Hogstra, Fung, & Potts, 1992).

Research studies examining emotion expressiveness and emotion-word use are important in that they can help establish a comparative base with diverse participants (e.g., low income, ethnically diverse, gender differences), by providing a descriptive corpus of emotion words that are spoken by those diverse populations (Thomas & Ostrosky, 2009). Research studies that expand the examination of words and phrases in the context of conversation are important. Given that discourse is enclosed in, not only what individuals say, but what they do not say, and that discourse is spoken language embedded within socially-situated practices and communities (including culture, values, norms, expectations), it is imperative that researchers examine emotion words and phrases contextually—including the surrounding words, ideas (spoken and unspoken), responses by the interactive partner, as well as the more abstract and indirect contextual
influences on the interaction itself (see Bourdieu, 1977; Graue & Walsh, 1998; Lave & Wenger, 1990; Pianta & Walsh, 1996).

**Theoretical Framework**

A theoretical framework that ultimately permitted a comprehensive and cohesive foundation from which to construct an inclusive picture of the child and the contextual environments enfolding him guided this research. According to Pianta and Walsh, “Good theory allows us to see contemporary reality through contemporary lenses rather than through the lenses used yesterday” (1996, p. 3). The overarching theoretical framework for this study was a sociocultural perspective (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Vygotsky, 1978; 1986), integrating the theory of dialogism, or discourse. (Bakhtin, 1986; Wertsch, 1991).

The writings and tenets of Vygotsky (1986) emphasize the location of all human activity in a particular historical and cultural context. Learning, to Vygotsky, was mediated by the tools—signs and symbols of our time and society—enabling students to develop not only in their potential as individuals, but also as contributors to the further development and growth of “the human culture” (Moll, 1990, p. 1). Vygotsky stressed that knowledge is socially embedded within the context of events in the environment and, most particularly, social interactions. It is in the context of social interaction that communication takes place, impacting both individual and collective knowledge, and potentially creating change.

**Discourse theory.** Bakhtin’s (1986) theory of dialogism extends Vygotsky’s (1986) contention of a sociocultural influence on development by proposing that speech is shaped through ongoing social interactions with others’ utterances (see also Wertsch,
Bakhtin distinguishes between “voices” that directly and indirectly influence and impact the speech and language of individuals. Individuals are influenced by and assimilate into their own speech and language voices of “authoritative discourse” and “internally persuasive discourse.” The first, authoritative discourse, finds its premise in the assumption that there are utterances that appear to be fixed, in that they do not change meaning as they come into contact with other voices, such as religious texts (e.g., Biblical scripture, Torah, Koran), political (e.g., Constitution), or moral texts. Also considered to be authoritative discourse is the word of a parent, teacher, or other influential individual. Internally persuasive discourse refers to utterances that appear to be a combination of original thoughts and words and those of others, from people to cultural phenomena such as movies or books—with meanings changing or evolving over circumstances and/or time.

Bakhtin proposed examining written and spoken language as a whole utterance, focusing on language within situated action rather than on “analytic abstractions” common to some linguists (Wertsch, 1991, p. 50). While acknowledging the necessity of analyzing linguistic form and function apart from and abstract to “the concrete life of the word,” Bakhtin understood the struggle in valuing what he called the “fixed meanings” of language and the flexible meanings created “by the flux of everyday life” (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 181). Bakhtin’s perspective resulted in an approach called translinguistics\(^1\)—the “study of those aspects in the life of the word, not yet shaped into separate and specific disciplines, that exceed . . . the boundaries of linguistics” (Bakhtin, p. 181). Though

\(^1\) Bakhtin originally used the term metalinguistics, however, with the numerous meanings currently attached to the term metalinguistics, Clark and Holquist (1984) and, later, Wertsch (1991) chose to use the term translinguistics to describe Bakhtin’s approach to analysis. This researcher has chosen to remain consistent with the more current term of translinguistics as a foundation for this study.
similar to contemporary visions of discourse, Bakhtin used the categories of *voice* and *dialogism* as a foundation for translinguistics.

The theory of dialogism is as grounded in social, historical, and relational perspectives as sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978; 1986), thus providing support for the theoretical framework from which to better examine the emotional expressions and emotion-words used by preschoolers during interactions with their teachers and caregivers. Bakhtin stressed that voices exist in a social milieu, stating “there is no such thing as a voice that exists in total isolation from other voices” (as cited in Wertsch, 1991, p. 51).

**Sociocultural theories.** Sociocultural theory (see also activity theory, Vygotsky, 1978, 1986) permits one to see the development of the child as embedded in the sociocultural and historical experiences of adults and children, with social interaction being central to that development (Edwards, 2003). Concepts from other theories such as situated learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991) enrich the sociocultural perspective, as well as enhance the analytic content of discourse.

Discourse “takes place in a context,” revealing thoughts, narrative accounts, and mental representations (Edwards, 1993, p. 220). Discourse is, by nature, interactive, formed by dyadic (in one of its simplest forms) conversation. “Contexts are constituted by what people are doing, as well as when and where they are doing it. That is, people in interaction serve as environments for each other” (Mehan, 1980, p. 136). Rogoff emphasized that “all cognitive development is relative to the context in which it occurs and is actualized by children’s participation in the context itself” (as cited in Edwards, p. 256). This participation is defined as “being active participants in the practices of social
communities and constructing identities in relation to these communities” (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 5). Theories reflecting the sociocultural perspective provide a more comprehensive view of the transactional relationship between the child, the individuals with whom he interacts, the contextual environments (both physical and emotional), and the way in which the child expresses his emotions (see Samaroff, 1989).

In a literature review emphasizing the challenges inherent in relationships between children, parents, and peers, von Salisch (2001) described how essential parents are for their children’s emotional development because they serve as attachment figures, as well as cognitive and emotional experts who provide instruction to their children on the use of emotion words and labels, emotion expressions, and emotional regulation strategies. “The combination of felt security in a relationship with an adult and freedom to explore the world in a competent manner is a hallmark of the parent-child relationship; it appears to also operate within the teacher-child relationship” (Pianta & Walsh, 1996, p. 161).

Areas of Emotion Research

Thomas and Ostrosky (2008) assert that research examining children’s understanding of emotion has focused on five different areas—two of which include children’s sympathetic and empathic responses to others’ emotional states (Bretherton, Fritz, Zahn-Waxler, & Ridgeway, 1986; Harris & Saarni, 1989) and the recognition and expression of emotion (Harris & Saarni). A third area of research examines the development of theory of mind in young children (see Wellman, 1990). Concerned with the psychological processes that underlie everyday social activities, theory of mind components (e.g., affective perspective-taking, beliefs, desires), help children predict
another’s actions, as well as make sense of their own emotions and emotional expressions (Harris & Saarni; Wellman). A fourth area of research is the study of emotion from a social context, suggesting that children “can have little understanding of emotion that is not socially transmitted” (Harris & Saarni, p. 8). Gordon (1989) proposes that children are inducted into an “emotional culture” that serves to define and organize not only the norms and values of emotion, but the vocabulary used to express emotion (p. 323).

Similarly, Dunsmore and Halberstadt (1997) argue that there are cultural scripts about events and emotions that provide the context for what it means to be a person, and that those scripts provide a framework for emotional development, particularly in terms of emotional expressiveness. “Emotional expressiveness is itself complex, and the family structure as a distinct entity is also complex, as of course is the child who is influenced by and influencing many aspects of family dynamics” (p. 63).

Lastly, research incorporates a functional approach to emotion, emphasizing the function emotion plays in communication and interaction (Witherington, Campos, & Hertenstein, 2004). Each of these five research perspectives, though seemingly dissimilar in their foci, contributes to the growing body of literature centered on the emotional development of young children (Thomas & Ostrosky, 2008).

Emotions are helpful as individuals adapt to circumstances around them. “Emotions can best be identified by seeing the adaptive function that a particular behavior or set of behaviors appears to serve as the person deals with his or her relation to the world” (Witherington et al., p. 430). Both positive and negative emotions help people overcome problems, engage with others and events, and structure perceptions and thoughts. In fact, Sroufe and Waters (1977) contend that a child’s secure attachment
cannot be achieved without the sharing of emotions with his primary attachment figure, as well as receiving emotional security from that adult. Though emotion can be difficult to define, assuming a functionalist approach to emotion sets a frame of reference with which to view the development of emotional expression, emotional regulation, and emotional competence in young children. This approach also helps to further conceptualize the adaptive function emotions play as children negotiate the intricacies of social interaction.

**Teacher-Child Relationship**

The adult-child relationship plays a major role in the development of competencies for children throughout their education (Birch & Ladd, 1996; Pianta, 1999; Pianta & Walsh, 1996). According to Pianta, “child competence is often embedded in and a property of relationships with adults” (p. 17). It is in the context of these early relationships that the foundation for learning is formed, including “the capacity for intimacy, self-esteem, impulse control and self-regulation, creativity, empathy, language acquisition, and the development of problem-solving skills” (Ostrosky et al., 2006, p. 183).

Interactions are embedded within the context of relationships. “Relationships are ever-present yet transparent carriers for communication that influence and are influenced by each interaction” (Ostrosky et al., 2006, p. 184). Bowlby (1969) contends that the mother–child relationship “establishes for the child a set of internal guides for interacting with adults that are carried forward into subsequent relationships and affect behavior in those relationships” (as cited in Pianta, 1999, p. 68). These internal representational
models, formed as a result of early parent and caregiving interactions, affect how the child perceives teachers and other caregivers, thus, transactionally influencing both the behavior of the child, but also the perception and behavior of the teacher and other caregivers toward the child (see Lynch & Cicchetti, 1992; Motti, 1986; Pianta, 1992). The relationship between a child and his peers are just as important, growing out of and being influenced by the interactions between the child and adults around him.

The research literature has consistently documented the influence of the teacher-child relationship on social and emotional competence (Ashiabi, 2000; Howes, Matheson, & Hamilton, 1994; Howes & Smith, 1995; Hyson & Lee, 1996; Hyson & Molinaro, 2001), school-related outcomes (Birch & Ladd, 1996; Howes, et al.; Pianta; Pianta & Walsh, 1996), as well as their academic and social trajectories (Birch & Ladd, 1996; 1997; 1998; Ladd, 2003; Ladd, Buhs, & Troop, 2002; Lynch & Cicchetti, 1992; Pianta, 1992). Strong relationships that begin in infancy and continue through childhood are crucial to development. According to Ostrosky et al. (2006), “robust and sustained relationships with caring adults are key to facilitating the learning of young children” (p. 184). Nowhere are these relationships more essential than in promoting optimal social and emotional development.

Thompson (1994; 2006) emphasizes the essential nature of positive and healthy adult-child relationships to regulate optimal emotional development. Further, Thompson underscores the importance of conversation in contributing to a child’s early understanding of not only emotion, but also the world of the child.

Researchers have continued to document the importance of young children knowing and using their emotional vocabulary to facilitate optimal emotional
development, whether it be for the prevention of or lessening of externalizing behavior and conflict (Ashiabi, 2000; Denham, 1986; Webster-Stratton, 1999) or ensuring that children understand the connection between emotion, cognition, and language during social interactions (Pianta, 1999). Researchers further stress the role that linguistic labels of emotions play in child development, as they help provide clarification of emotional experiences and, thus, “greater voluntary control over affective experience and behavior” (Malatesta & Haviland, 1985; p.113).

The early relationships between young children and adults, including caregivers and teachers, form the foundation on which later relationships are built. Therefore, it is essential to carefully examine these relationships for elements that provide the optimal social and emotional development for children, such as responsive and authentic interactions. A growing body of research is required that not only considers the crucial impact of emotional literacy (see Emde, 1998) in children but also looks at those factors that play a critical role in the growth of children’s emotional literacy. Teachers, according to Pianta (1999), play a fundamental part in the development of children’s social and emotional competence, and, as emphasized by Thompson (1994; 2006), contribute to children’s understanding of emotions through their conversations.

Given that conversations between teachers and young children, particularly around emotions and emotional events and situations, occur daily in classrooms, it is important that these interactions are studied to further understand and clarify the nature of emotion discourse, the way in which emotions are being discussed, and any communications patterns inherent in the conversations. Discourse is a powerful medium, highlighting both the verbal and nonverbal behaviors of children and teachers as they
interact together in the natural environment of the preschool classroom. This study was undertaken to provide a description of discourse between teachers and preschoolers in Head Start that revolved around discussions of emotions and ensuing emotional events.
Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

A search of the research literature was conducted in three distinct and separate parts. The first part of the search took place in the fall, 2005 as preparation for an initial research project. The second part was conducted a year later in preparation for the current study. A third, and final, search of the research was conducted in the summer, 2009, to ensure that the most recent literature was included in this study. The first stage of the literature search began with a thorough computer search of the UIUC (and other Illinois universities) Library Online Catalogs, World Cat, Education Full Text, PsychInfo/Ovid, EBSCO and Academic Premier Search databases to ensure that it included the education, child development, and psychology literature. Descriptors included: internal-state language, emotional literacy, emotion words, social-emotional, and each of the three terms paired with preschool children and/or young children. A hand search of the reference lists from each article was conducted.

An additional search was conducted on government documents and technical reports separately, resulting in one relevant report that was acquired at the UIUC government documents library. The resulting literature predominantly comes from psychology journals that routinely publish studies related to developmental psychology, including, for example, the studies of mental states and emotions. Very few studies were found in the education literature.

The final part of the literature search was a careful hand search of the last 12 years of five reputable journals that routinely publish qualitative research, particularly related to discourse analysis. The following journals were examined for relevant research:
Use of Emotion Words

Over the past 30 years, researchers have made a concerted effort to identify and document the vocabulary of children of various ages. According to Hart and Risley (1995), vocabulary is the “stock of words (or signs) available to a person or a language community” (p. 6). Vocabulary comprises all the words a person knows expressively and receptively. A considerable amount of research on young children’s early vocabulary development has been conducted in university laboratory environments with samples consisting of primarily European American and middle- to upper-class families.

In the 1970s, two longitudinal studies (Hall et al., 1981; Hart & Risley, 1995) examined a diverse population of young children, with findings similar to those found in
previous studies (Deutsch, 1965; Jones & Wepman, 1966; Templin, 1957). While the studies did not focus solely on emotion words, they resulted in several extensive corpora of vocabulary used by preschoolers, including emotion words and expressions. In a longitudinal study conducted from 1974-1981, Hall et al. (1984) examined 39 preschoolers (representing socioeconomic (SES) and ethnic diversity) for differences in vocabulary knowledge and factors that influenced both the development and the measurement of that knowledge, resulting in a corpus of thousands of spoken words. Hall et al. found that a substantial language difference existed between children from higher and lower SES backgrounds.

More than a decade later, Hart and Risley (1995) observed 42 families of diverse backgrounds (e.g., family structure, occupation, and ethnicity) in their homes to explore variables that influence children’s language and vocabulary trajectories. To ascertain the impact of SES on vocabulary growth, families were divided into 4 groups—upper SES, middle SES, lower SES, and welfare. Like those of Hall et al. (1984) Hart and Risley’s findings sharply discriminated between families along economic lines, most particularly those families on welfare. Both studies accentuated the differences between families, concluding that, of all the variables that might impact the vocabulary of a young child, SES appears to have the greatest effect. However, neither study focused on vocabulary related to emotions, nor provided much detail on emotion-word use.

In a 1993 study, Denham, von Salisch, Olthof, Kochanoff, & Caverly assert that emotional and social competence is interdependent, integrating social interactions and emotional transactions. Researchers, such as Halberstadt, Denham, and Dunsmore (2001) and Pianta (1999), also emphasize the interrelatedness between affective social
competence, emotional regulation, and healthy emotional expression, stressing the importance of understanding and labeling one’s emotions as a prerequisite to emotional competence, as well as the crucial role the adult plays in this development. The empirical literature, though limited in scope and sample, provides a foundation from which to design further research on recognizing and producing emotion words and phrases to express and describe emotional states.

**Research examining emotion-word use.** Thomas and Ostrosky (2008) reviewed the literature related directly to the use of emotion words by preschool children. They contend that much of this research can be categorized into 4 areas: (1) emotion-word use, including identification of emotion words; (2) determination of valence of emotion words; (3) comparison of use between individuals and groups, including gender, relationships, income, and ethnicity; and (4) contextual influences on emotion-word use.

**Identifying emotion words.** Over a decade of emotion-word research concentrated on the frequency and diversity of emotion-word use by young children ranging from 12 months to 36 months, including identifying which vocabulary words and phrases may be delineated as emotion words. Bretherton, McNew, and Beeghly-Smith (1981) interviewed 32 mothers, asking them to identify internal-state and emotion words their children produced, the age they first used each word, and the context in which it was used. The researchers included emotion state labels and emotion behavior labels in the interview and analysis. They assessed children’s recognition and labeling of emotions using the Emotion Label Recognition Test (Bretherton et al.), and found that comprehension of emotion labels was only slightly ahead of production. Emotion words most frequently used by 20-month olds included kiss, love, dirty, yuck, and cry.
Integrating internal-state vocabulary from previous research, Bretherton et al. then developed a corpus of 57 internal-state words (i.e., perceptual, physiological, positive emotional, negative emotional, volition and ability, cognition, and moral judgment) used by children up to 36 months. This corpus is still widely used today to assess vocabulary development.

Bretherton and Beeghly (1982) then analyzed the correlation between maternal report of internal-state-language use (including emotion-word use) and direct observation. Their findings indicated that, although the correlation was high, the number of internal-state and emotion words produced by children (under 3 years) during direct observation was significantly smaller than mothers reported.

In a study looking at emotion words most likely to be used by young children, Ridgeway, Waters, and Kuczaj (1985) examined a sample of 270 European American, middle-class preschool children (3-5 years) from a suburban area. Parents were asked to complete a checklist of 125 emotion-descriptive adjectives, noting those words their children used and appeared to understand in context. Ridgeway et al. found a statistically significant positive correlation between mean age of acquisition and frequency of emotion-word use.

Dunn, Munn, & Bretherton (1987) expanded the emotion-word research by examining the frequency and function of emotion words, the changes in function over time, and the influence and contribution of mothers and siblings to emotion-word use. This investigation consisted of two separate studies, each involving middle-class families. Study 1 included 43 mothers, target children at 18 and 24 months, and older siblings; Study 2 included a much smaller sample of 16 mothers, target children at 25 and 32
months, and younger siblings. Conducting an hour-long observation in each home at two different ages for each target child, Dunn et al. audiotaped and transcribed the observations to study instances of explicit emotion words, conversational turns for each speaker, and frequency scores of emotion-word utterances by each partner. Both studies resulted in similar findings—significant increases in the number of emotion-word utterances from the first observation point to the second (e.g., from 18 to 24 months). The most common themes of emotion words were related to sleep/fatigue, pleasure/pain, hot/cold, and distress. In Study 1 some differences were found between boys and girls related to the frequency of references to feeling states.

Valence of emotion words. In a 2002 study, Lagattuta and Wellman examined differences in early parent-child conversations about negative versus positive emotions in a sample of 11 participants (6 preschool children and 5 adults) from diverse family backgrounds (including SES, ethnicity). They reported consistent patterns related to valence in emotion talk “despite differences in participants’ age, gender, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and language fluency. . .” (p. 575). The researchers found that children and parents talked about past emotions, the causes of emotions, and emotion states at higher rates during conversations about negative emotions than during conversations about positive emotions, and included a larger negative emotion vocabulary, which remained consistent throughout the preschool years.

These data included a large volume of language samples (more than 50 hours of talk per person), which permitted analyses of hundreds of emotion utterances for each participant, and produced findings consistent with previous emotion-word research. In general, research examining emotional valence indicates that children are more likely to:
(a) talk about emotions during conflict (Dunn, Brown, & Beardsall, 1991), (b) talk about causes of displeasure or anger more than causes of pleasure (Dunn et al., 1987), and (c) talk with their parents about past negative events or experiences than about positive events (Kuebli & Fivush, 1992; Miller & Sperry, 1987).

**Comparison of use of emotion words.** Emotion-word researchers have examined differences in emotion-word use by gender and ethnicity, reporting mixed findings (Thomas & Ostrosky, 2008). Studies such as Dunn, Brown, Slomkowski, Tesla, & Youngblade (1991) and Feeny, Eder, and Rescorla (1996) found few gender differences while measuring frequency and diversity of emotion-word use and conversations about emotional states respectively. Kyratsis (2001) and Zeman, Penza, Shipman, and Young (1997), on the other hand, found differences in gender patterns, similar to previous work by Lakoff (1975). Cervantes (2002), in examining the function of emotion talk in 48 Mexican immigrant and Mexican American families, focused on their use of emotion words and explanations during a videotaped storytelling task. Examining patterns related to mothers’ intracultural group and their preschool children’s gender, Cervantes found that Mexican immigrant mothers used more explanations than emotion labels. Mexican American mothers used a combination of the two. No patterns were found related to gender in mothers’ emotion talk, although girls in the Mexican American group discussed emotions and feelings more frequently than the boys.

These studies accentuate the need to take into consideration research design and questions, the sample of participants studied, and/or the purpose (e.g., comparison vs. descriptive) of the study when looking for clear differences between groups of people (whether gender, SES class, or ethnicity). Recognizing that people, purposes, and
variables are influenced by differing contexts is important as researchers attempt to quantify differences between males and females, be those adults or children. Given that, the following studies examined differences in gender and ethnicity, finding some disparity. Not surprisingly, all researchers caution that the findings may not be generalizable beyond the studied sample.

Zeman et al. (1997) examined the impact of social context on emotion regulation, specifically the way in which preschool children of differing gender use display rules in expressing emotion and managing negative emotions with mothers, fathers, and peers. The researchers investigated preschoolers’ self-reported expressive regulation using a structured interview format, and examined whether preschoolers considered interpersonal factors, such as the audience (i.e., mother, father, peer), when expressing emotion (e.g., asking for help) and whether this varied as a function of child gender. Also examined were children’s expectations regarding a partner’s response to their display of emotion.

Zeman et al. (1997) found that gender differences existed in children’s emotion regulatory decisions, especially as they related to mothers and fathers. The researchers also reported that girls expected to and received more assistance than boys when expressing negative emotions. These findings were consistent with other research, which demonstrated that: (a) girls report expressing negative emotions to their parents more than boys; (b) parents discuss emotions less with boys than girls and expose boys to a narrower range of emotions than girls; and (c) girls are more likely to directly seek help from others (see Belle, Burr, & Cooney, 1987; Fuchs & Thelen, 1988; Kuebli & Fivush, 1992). Zeman et al. suggested that these gender differences in emotional expression
“arise from a socialization history in which the verbal and behavioral modes of expression have been reinforced differently for boys and girls” (p. 58).

Zeman et al. (1997) further noted that as early as age four, preschoolers “demonstrate that they are aware of the need to dissemble emotions and that they understand, at some level, that emotional expressions function quite differently depending on the social context” (p. 60). Findings from this study bring to light the importance of understanding the social and historical contexts and processes that are implicit in young children’s development, particularly related to emotional expression and gender.

Although examined in more detail in a subsequent section, Feeny et al. (1996) and Kyratsis (2001) investigated gender patterns within preschoolers’ narratives about emotion, finding that girls talked more about emotion than boys. Kyratsis reported more significant findings concerning patterns in emotion talk between boys and girls, similar to previous research that documented effusive language use for girls and rough and aggressive language for boys (Gunthner, 1997; Lakoff, 1975). Feeny et al. reported minimal gender differences, other than in the context of prompted speech (i.e., adults asked girls more frequently about emotions). These studies should not be compared as Kyratsis observed peer groups of preschoolers, while Feeny et al. observed adult-child dyads in a prompted conversation.

In a comparison study examining cross-cultural patterns of emotion talk and the influence of class and ethnicity on dimensions of mothers’ and children’s talk about emotions, Eisenberg (1999) examined 80 mother-preschool child dyads (consisting of Mexican American and European American families of working-class and middle-class
backgrounds). Eisenberg found that, similar to previous research, mothers in both groups talked more about emotions and used a greater diversity of emotion words than did their children. The dyads discussed the child’s emotions more than the emotions of the mother or other individuals, with mothers stressing positive emotions to a greater extent than their children. Eisenberg’s findings related to gender patterns were consistent with earlier research (see Dunn et al., 1987), with females talking more frequently about emotion than males. There were few gender differences in the actual content of emotion talk, thus the results were consistent with the findings of Dunn et al. (1987), but inconsistent with Fivush (1993). The Fivush study differed from the Eisenberg study methodologically, with Eisenberg examining spontaneous references to emotion and Fivush examining narrations about past emotions with mothers and children.

Eisenberg’s findings in the 1999 study also were varied from the findings of Pellegrini, Perlmutter, Galda, and Brody (1990) and an earlier study by Eisenberg (1996), who found little relationship between class, ethnicity, and emotion talk. Eisenberg has asserted that not only does class impact emotion talk (e.g., working-class dyads discussed causality during conflict more frequently than middle-class dyads), but also ethnicity is related to differences in emotion talk (e.g., European Americans talked more about the children’s emotions and less about the mothers’ and others’ emotions than Mexican Americans).

**Contextual influences in emotion-word use.** The work of Miller and associates for over 25 years has focused on the context surrounding the development of language, emotional expression, and family narratives related to emotion (Thomas & Ostrosky, 2008). In a seminal study, Miller (1982) examined emotion words and expression in the
context of the home, the culture of the neighborhood, and the economic and social community of South Baltimore. Paving the way for a more comprehensive view of language development, “Miller found that direct instruction facilitated the learning of and expression of language within the confines of embedded contexts (i.e., young children at play, mealtime, bedtime), the mother’s situation, including history and background, and the cultural and economic environment of the local community” (Thomas & Ostrosky, p. 18).

A follow-up examination focused on the use of emotion words and behavior in the context of fear, anger, and aggression (Miller & Sperry, 1987). Their findings documented aggressive phrases spoken by the mothers and children, further emphasizing the impact of the environment and the function these phrases appeared to serve—anything from teaching coping mechanisms to expressing fear and anger.

Similarly, Burger and Miller (1999) compared European American working-class families and middle-class families of preschool children from two different suburbs in the Midwest. While this study documented the predominance of negative emotional expression across both communities and ages, it further accentuated the differences between working-class and middle-class families. Thomas and Ostrosky (2008) state that “one of the most salient findings from this study was the discrepancy between the middle-class and working-class communities regarding the proportion of overall emotion talk that included attribution, verbs, and profanity” (p. 20).

**Discussion.** Thomas and Ostrosky (2008; 2009) assert that much of the research investigating emotion states, understanding, and expression is limited in terms of the sample, methodology, and setting—stemming from a reliance on: (a) homogenous
samples (predominantly European American, white, middle- to upper-class families); (b) laboratory settings (as opposed to a more natural environment, such as classrooms or playgrounds); (c) disproportionate number of direct observations in home environments with mothers and siblings rather than peers and other adults; and (d) maternal report. Other limitations are related to the predominance of emotion-word recognition studies rather than emotion-word production, as well as the confusion around terminology and operational definitions used by researchers as they investigate emotion words and phrases (Thomas & Ostrosky).

And, perhaps, a less-discussed limitation is found in the preference for examining what Kagan (2007) calls the single-state emotions rather than focusing on “blended emotions,” which serve to make up much of what humans feel and express (p. 8). Kagan asserts single-state emotions as those that are typically understood to mean what they denote, such as angry or happy. Blended emotions, he explains, are those that are more difficult to understand and describe, and may consist of more than one feeling. For example, frustration is an emotion that may merge fear and anger. Kagan emphasizes, however, that emotions are never completely single-state feelings, in that most are an intermingling of several emotions.

**Classroom Communication Patterns by Teachers**

One of the most ubiquitous communication patterns found in classroom discourse consists of a three-part exchange structure—*initiation-response-follow-up* (IRF). Long considered the traditional, or normal, pattern (Cazden, 1988), the IRF pattern is one that seems to occur the most frequently during classroom instruction. This pattern used by
much teachers in schools across America is one about which much has been examined and written. No studies were found that focused on this pattern during emotion discourse; and, in fact, very few studies were found that focused on preschool teachers. In order to provide a context for the current study and subsequent discussion, several studies pertinent to the IRF instructional pattern and teacher-student classroom interactions are reviewed.

Much of the research on teacher-student classroom discourse has been conducted with teachers and students in middle- and high school. Nystrand and Gamoran (1990) discussed teacher-student discourse in the classroom as it related to student engagement. These researchers spoke with teachers about what ideal class sessions would look like; teachers described them as being student-directed and interactive. Nystrand and Gamoran used the instructional discourse model known as recitation as a basis from which to compare teacher instructional or communication patterns of higher quality discourse. Recitation consists of a teacher question followed by a student’s answer, and closed by an evaluative comment or response by the teacher—strikingly similar to the IRF pattern (Cazden, 1988). The researchers described this type of communication pattern as being without any teacher probing or expansion of student responses, and termed it normal classroom discourse. Nystrand and Gamoran (1990) further described this classroom interaction pattern with the teacher gauging her responses or questions by what has previously been said. This, they termed, high-quality classroom discourse. In high-quality classroom discourse, the teacher plays “a key socializing role, modeling the kinds of questions and issues that are germane. . .” asking “authentic questions” that are open-ended and relevant to the ongoing classroom conversation (p. 11). Cazden (1988) calls
this *uptake*, which is the process of a teacher taking previous student answers and incorporating them into her follow-up responses. Uptake, also known as expansion, is an important means of truly engaging students in a deeper conversation about the topic at hand.

Wells (1993) analyzed teacher-student discourse with a focus on Grades 3 and 4. Although looking particularly at the use of the IRF classroom pattern in terms of activity and discourse theories, and the integration of education-based genre into the discussion, Wells defended the traditional IRF pattern as one with some merit—as long as it is used by teachers as a “shared learning-and-teaching activity type” rather than simply a teacher-directed and teacher-oriented classroom perspective (pp. 33-34).

One of the rare studies examining teacher communication patterns with toddlers and preschoolers was conducted by Girolametto, Weitzmann, van Lieshout, and Duff (2000). These researchers looked at teacher directiveness during teacher-child interactions within child care centers. Twenty early childhood teachers in a metropolitan area of Canada participated in this study that looked at two group time activities, book reading and a play dough activity. By analyzing transcriptions of the interactions, Girolametto et al. found that teacher directiveness was more a function of the interaction itself than the children’s ages. They also found that bookreading elicited higher levels of teacher-directed behavior, including behavior control, response control (yes/no questions), and topic control. Girolametto et al. also reported findings similar to O’Brien and Bi (1995), indicating that the child-directed activities in which teachers used less directive behavior (i.e., play dough) yielded more complex speech and more conversation overall from both children and teachers.
Adult-Preschool Child Discourse

Cazden (2001) asserts that several features found in classrooms (and group care situations) make communication so important—the language of curriculum, the language of control, and the language of personal identity. First, “speech unites the cognitive and the social” (Barnes, as cited in Cazden, p. 2). Spoken language is the means by which knowledge is imparted by teachers and learning demonstrated by children. Second, classroom discourse establishes and maintains social relationships. Third, spoken language is the expression of personal identities and attitudes in these settings. Cazden asserts that all three are functions of language—propositional (i.e., cognitive), social, and expressive. Gee (2006) echoes this idea when he contends that there are two closely related functions to language: to support “social activities and social identities and to support human affiliation within cultures, social groups, and institutions” (p. 1).

Furthermore, Gee (2004) argues that:

*How* people say things helps constitute *what* they are doing. In turn, *what* they are saying helps constitute *who* they are being at a given time and place within a given set of social practices (i.e., their socially situated identities). Finally, *who* they are being at a given time and place within a given set of social practices produces and reproduces, moment by moment, our social, political, cultural, and institutional worlds. (p. 48)

Given that discourse paints a picture of the interaction between partners that includes spoken and unspoken language, cultural influences, and social impacts, educational research (particularly related to the study of emotions and emotional development in young children) lags far behind fields such as anthropology, sociology, and psychology in terms of analysis of conversation and discourse. The past decade has produced only a handful of studies that addressed discourse related to preschool children.
or their caregivers, with even fewer studies examining preschool children’s emotion discourse.

**Research examining discourse.** A search of the literature related to discourse between caregivers and preschool children revealed very few studies. Many more studies examined interactions between mothers and their children, but few focused on adults in early childhood settings. Ten research studies directly examining discourse related to preschool children (including narratives) were found; these are reviewed in the following pages.

While each research study was different in terms of purpose, sample, and analysis, all were similar in the scope of the objectives—to examine the spoken language of preschoolers and/or the adults who interacted with them. The nine reviewed studies are differentiated in the following ways: (a) child narrative (Cain, Eaton, Baker-War, & Yen, 2005; Feeny et al., 1996; Miller et al., 1992); (b) interactive elements of discourse between children and adults or children and peers (Burger & Miller, 1999; Kyratzis, 2001; Laible & Song, 2006; Marcos & Rabain-Jamin, 2005); (c) discourse styles of African American family child care providers and the children in their care (Bromer, 2001); and (d) comparison of two discourse structures on the repertoire of preschool children—lists and narratives (Kuntay, 2004). Although the studies by Bromer and Kuntay contribute to the discourse literature, neither directly examines the interactive discourse between adults and children, thus, they are not reviewed in detail. The studies examining children’s narratives and discourse without a focus on emotions (Cain et al; Marcos & Rabain-Jamin; Miller et al.) will first be considered briefly. Those studies
directly examining emotion discourse will then be reviewed.

**Narratives.** It is important to distinguish between discourse and narratives in terms of conversational interaction. Discourse (with a “d” per Gee, 2006) is defined as a conversation between at least two individuals in which the discourse of both interactive partners is analyzed. Narration is about relating personal experiences, usually from the recent or distant past, in which narrators reveal something about themselves. The importance of relating such experiences is undeniable, assisting young children in their social emotional development (Emde, 1998), serving as an organizational means of interacting (Burger & Miller, 1999; Miller et al., 1992), and helping young children to achieve “constructed social identities” (Bruner, 1986; 2002; Kuntay, 2004; Miller et al.). Miller et al. differentiates between narration and *co-narration*, stating that co-narration of a child’s personal experience is an episode of conversation involving at least one interactive partner. The partner may initiate the conversation or story, but the child is actively involved.

In a study examining how young children portrayed themselves in relation to others through naturally-occurring stories, Miller et al. (1992) studied the co-narrations of 24 preschoolers through observations in the home as they interacted with family members. Part of a larger study, this dataset included 12 preschoolers under age three and 12 five-year olds. Miller et al. coded the co-narrations using several different sets of codes: interpersonal versus noninterpersonal stories, references to other people, modes of self-other relation (including self as sharing an activity with another, self set apart from another, self like another), and self-other comparisons. Analyses examining relationships
between the modes of self-other relations and references to other persons were conducted.

Miller et al. (1992) found that the overall percentage of interpersonal stories was higher among the older preschool children, but that this form of communication (personal storytelling as co-narration) emerged as a form of talk about self and other persons. Miller et al. suggested that this “form of talk is an important means by which young children, together with family members, experience and re-experience self in relation to other” (p. 61). Further, Miller et al. emphasized the embeddedness of personal conversations (between partners) and co-narrations (personal storytelling) within other, broader personal interactions, stressing the importance of viewing social emotional development as occurring in the context of these “repeated interactions of original experiences, memory and encoding of experiences, and exchanges of messages about experiences” (p. 61). For both groups of preschoolers (3 and 5 year olds) the “other” related to in reference to self (the child) included family members, such as parents, siblings, and grandparents. As the child matured, the “other” became, quite predictably, more peer-related.

Cain et al. (2005) examined two strategies involving high and low levels of elaboration designed to prompt and encourage children to continue their narratives in two reporting (i.e., narrating) conditions (draw-and-tell and tell-only). The study compared not only the levels of elaborations used by the adults and the reporting conditions, but also ethnicity. The sample consisted of 25 European American and 31 African American children from low-income families with a mean age of 4.76 years of age (n of girls = 29; n of boys = 27). The Hollingshead Four Factor Index of Social Status and the Federal
Registry’s Poverty Income Guidelines were used to determine socioeconomic status (SES) for each family. Ethnicity was based on parental self-report.

Children were randomly assigned to two groups. One group received high levels of elaboration, while the other received low levels of elaboration by the adults. Each group of children was given one of the two conditions (draw-and-tell and tell-only) in which to generate their narratives. Each child participated in a volcano activity and was asked to generate a narrative about the topic a few days later. In comparing the two groups of children, Cain et al. (2005) found no significant differences between the European American and African American children in terms of the numbers of propositions (independent clauses including a subject and a verb). African American children did, however, score slightly below the group mean (European American plus African American children) on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Revised ([PPVT-R] Dunn & Dunn, 1981, as cited in Cain et al, 2005). Cain et al. also reported a significant correlation between months of age and narrative length, with older preschoolers providing longer narratives than younger children.

The researchers discussed the limitations of the study, citing the brevity of children’s narratives, the sole topic allowed in the study (regardless of child interest), and the short interaction time between interviewers and children. These limitations have implications for the conclusions drawn from this study on several levels: (a) the comfort level of preschoolers in interacting with a stranger, (b) the child’s interest (or lack of interest) in the activity, and (c) the time lag between the volcano activity and the interview (3-9 days).
Discourse. In an examination of how adults contribute to establishing a shared expression of beliefs through assertive speech acts with young children, Marcos and Rabain-Jamin (2005) observed 16 mother-child dyads (5 boys and 11 girls) ages 21 to 25 months interacting over a picture book. Participants were recruited through child care centers and were largely from middle-class families. The resulting conversations were transcribed and coded for speech turns and assertives. Assertive was defined as a social act with the expressed purpose to get the interactive partner to share a belief about “the state of the world” (p. 145). Marcos and Rabain-Jamin contend that an assertive speech act is more than just a reference (defined as a form of social interaction managing joint attention), stating that the aim is to achieve a shared belief about a particular position or situation. The researchers found a connection between communicative intentions, particularly in getting another person to share a belief, and children’s linguistic development. Mothers contributed to the elaboration of assertives at both the functional and structural levels of speech.

Research examining emotion discourse. As important as the previously mentioned studies are in helping to set the context of research analyzing conversations between young children and adults, only four studies (see Appendix A, Table A1) examined conversations during emotional events or emotion talk, which has been defined as references to emotional states. These studies are similar in that all four examined discourse between children and peers (Kyratzis, 2001) or children and adults (Burger & Miller, 1999; Feeny et al., 1996; Laible & Song, 2006). Each study is reviewed in the following pages, with a brief discussion of limitations.
Miller (1982), Miller and Sperry (1987), and Burger and Miller (1999), focused on contextual influences on young children’s language development. They examined the ways in which young children expressed their emotions and the function of that language in natural environments (i.e., family, neighborhood, community). The researchers believed that the way young children and their families used phrases to express their emotional experiences helped them cope with their environment, thus demonstrating contextual influences on the emotion words.

Using 96 hours of existing home observation data from previous research (see Wiley, Rose, Burger, & Miller, 1998), Burger and Miller (1999) compared six families (mainly mother-child dyads) of preschool children (2.6 to 3 years of age) from two different communities, one with predominantly European American working class families and a second with a largely middle class make-up. They explored the content and characteristics of children’s talk about the past in the form of 400 naturally-occurring co-narrations (see Miller et al., 1992), particularly about emotions, during video and audiotaped interactions between the children and family members.

Burger and Miller (1999) reported their findings from broad categories to more specific categories, beginning with the frequency of co-narrations and moving to the more particular use of emotion words and phrases found within these co-narrations. They found that the working-class families produced more than twice as many co-narrations as the middle-class families. Despite the differences in the frequency of co-narrations, very little difference was found in the average length of utterance per co-narration. Burger and Miller coded the content of the co-narrations specifically looking at valence and tone (i.e., positive negative, odd, other, and ambiguous). Their findings were dissimilar to
those of Miller and Sperry (1988) in that a positive valence predominated five of the six dyads in each community. Earlier, Miller and Sperry found that over 50% of the co-narrations of children of the same age group were negative. Looking specifically at emotion talk, Burger and Miller reported that the working-class dyads used negatively-valenced emotion words and phrases much more frequently (78% negative versus 28% positive) than the middle-class dyads (52% versus 48%). This finding included the more frequent use of negative verbs and attributions, such as “I smashed him more!” (p. 154).

Laible and Song (2006) examined connections among affect, emotional discourse, and social emotional development in a study focusing on 51 mother-child dyads. Mothers ranged in age from 27 to 47 years, with 78% having some college education; children were between three and five years of age. Laible and Song conducted a one-hour videotaped laboratory session with each dyad, using two different tasks (storybook reading and reminiscing). In addition, children completed measures of emotional understanding (affective perspective-taking task, see Denham, 1986) and representations of relationships (MacArthur Story-Stem Battery, see Oppenheim, Nir, Warren, & Emde, 1997), and mothers completed a report of aggressive behavior (Child Behavior Scale, see Ladd & Profilet, 1996).

All references to emotion were coded, including typical emotion words such as happy, mad, and sad, as well as words connoting emotional states (e.g., screaming, laughing). The affective exchanges between mothers and children were coded to measure mothers’ emotional engagement (e.g., warmth, positive affect, interest, rejection, hostility), children’s emotional involvement (e.g., warmth, positive affect, cooperation, anger, hostility), and the emotional quality of the discourse (e.g., sense of togetherness,
shared meaning, mutuality of communication). Conversations between dyadic partners also were coded for amount of maternal elaboration during the two tasks. Laible and Song (2006) found that maternal elaboration during the storybook reading task was correlated with the dyads’ discussion of negative affect during the reminiscing task; the more frequently that mothers and children discussed negative emotions during the reminiscing task, the less likely children were to be rated by their mothers as aggressive. The researchers also found that when positive affect was high during storybook reading, children were more likely to represent relationships prosocially.

Laible and Song (2006) discussed the limitations of their study in the context of cultural differences and causal relationships. First, the homogeneity of their sample limited the generalizability to other groups, particularly other ethnic and cultural groups. Second, as it is impossible to determine the direction of the effects (e.g., dyadic shared positivity and child prosocial relationship representation), the researchers suggested cautious application.

Feeny et al. (1996) analyzed age and gender patterns in the content of preschoolers’ narratives, paying particular attention to emotional states during conversations with an adult. The researchers audiotaped and transcribed four conversations between three- and four-year olds and their mothers (in 36% of the conversations teachers were used due to mothers’ work schedules) at the end of the school day. The study examined the emotion words used by the children during their narratives about their school day, as well as adult prompting of the children’s feelings during the conversations. Data were collected at four different points of time during the
school year in a small room in the school building. The children were prompted with the question, “Tell me about your day” with additional prompts as needed.

The children’s narratives contained a mean of 12.18 references to emotional states, with a range of 4 to 22 references. Feeny et al. (1996) only included emotion words that denoted emotions, excluding words and phrases that connoted emotions (e.g., distress, enjoyment, insult, or ridicule). Emotion state references were divided into 12 categories, including affiliation, happiness, aggression, fear, and competition. Overall, children spoke most frequently about their desire or need for friendship (affiliation) and least frequently about competition, with older preschoolers talking more about emotional states in general than younger preschoolers during spontaneous conversations between the children and adults. Gender differences were found only in the context of prompted speech, with girls making more references to emotions than boys. Adult talk about emotion states revealed no significant gender differences, in contrast to previous research that reported mothers talking to their daughters about emotion states more than to their sons (see Dunn et al., 1987). No gender differences were found in spontaneous speech either.

Limitations to this study included a homogenous sample and the fact that the setting was completely child-centered and focused on socialization (not necessarily typical of child care centers and preschools). While the resulting gender patterns and interactions may be similar to data from other early childhood centers, without further examination generalizations to other settings should not be assumed.

Kyratzis (2001) examined emotion talk in a mixed-age preschool classroom of 16 children (8 boys, 8 girls), particularly focusing on the evolution of friendship-group
specific norms of that talk, and gender and emotional socialization. She observed three-and four-year old children several times/week during free play, taking fieldnotes on friendship groupings, and videotaping the groups at several points during the school year. Employing a longitudinal design, Kyratzis expanded on previous emotion research by examining contextual influences over time in preschool peer groups.

Kyratzis (2001) defined emotion talk as explicit references to emotional states, including contextualization cues (see Gumperz, 1982). In broadening the definition of emotion talk, Kyratzis analyzed words and phrases including the exaggerated use of adjectives to demonstrate an emotive stance, verbal references to physical acts of aggression (e.g., “kick him in the butt,” insults, put-downs), as well as other cues such as loud utterances (p. 362). Similar to Miller (1982), Miller and Sperry (1987), and Burger and Miller (1999), Kyratzis found children’s emotion talk to include much more than explicit emotion labels (e.g., “I’m happy), including references to acts of physical aggression, hyperbolic use of adjectives, and gestures. The findings of this study have implications related to language and emotional socialization. Kyratzis suggests a peer-based model, asserting children play an active role in the emotion socialization process, as evidenced by the use of these contextualized cues, rather than an adult-based model—children modeling observed adult behavior during interactions.

Gender stereotypes were found to be fairly consistent in relation to emotion words and phrases used, as the children “socialized one another towards gender-stereotype-consistent forms of emotion talk” (p. 388). Girls tended toward emotive/effusive language, while boys tended to use rough, aggressive language. Kyratzis stressed the importance of designing social and educational policies, as well as early educational
environments, that support less gender-typed activities, thereby crossing gender boundaries.

**Discussion.** A continuing limitation of the emotion research has been the homogeneity of participants. The four studies examining emotion discourse with either child narratives or interactive conversation included only European American children. Three studies (Feeny et al., 1996; Kyratzis, 2001; Laible & Song, 2006) looked at the discourse of middle- to upper-class children of educated parents (particularly mothers), with only one (Burger & Miller, 1999) comparing middle-class with working-class families. Three of the four studies analyzed the discourse of mother-child dyads, while one (Kyratzis) examined preschoolers in a mixed-age classroom setting.

Another documented limitation of the emotion research is the preponderance of research examining mothers—either as part of mother-child dyads or in the role of maternal reporter. Reliance on maternal report and interview formats (see Bretherton & Beeghly, 1982; Bretherton et al., 1981) has presented a skewed perspective of children and their development, oftentimes ignoring other caregivers in the process. Researchers have examined families from working-class backgrounds and have looked closely at emotion-word use and emotional expression, particularly as a function of contextual influences such as the physical environment (Burger & Miller, 1999; Miller, 1982; Miller & Sperry, 1988; Miller et al., 1992). These studies, however, have not focused specifically on families from low-income backgrounds. Clearly, gaps exist and additional research on emotion-word use and emotional expression is needed, particularly in the context of teacher-child interactions. Research conducted with preschool children from low-income families will further the knowledge base related to emotional competence,
expression, and interactive discourse. Given the increased focus on pre-kindergarten education for children from high-risk environments and the continued emphasis on teacher-child interaction, it is important to study the transactional relationship between young children, the individuals with whom they interact, the physical and social emotional environments, and the way in which young children express their emotions.

Conclusion

Looking through the lens of sociocultural and contextual influences permits preschoolers’ emotional expressions to be examined as taking place on multiple levels—the intrapersonal (i.e., the individual child), interpersonal (interactions between and among social partners), and community/institutional or contextual (Edwards, 2003). The magnitude of examining discourse in the context of the early childhood classrooms or group care situations cannot be understated. According to Florio-Ruene and Morrell (2004), “education . . . is an area in which oral discourse is of central importance in part because words saturate the learning environment, much learning involves learning new discourses, much learning occurs in the medium of conversation, and language is a means of creating and sustaining social systems” (p. 50). Consequently, it is crucial to concede that young children may not, as Kagan (2007) asserts, have the vocabulary necessary to express the “repertoire of [emotional] state experienced” (p. 31). Understanding young children’s emotions enables parents, teachers, caregivers, and peers to value, empathize, and identify with children. Recognizing and acknowledging the impact of the adult-child relationship provides a base from which to build stronger supports for children, their families, and their early care and learning environments. Research on the nature of the
teacher-child conversations about emotions or emotional events can extend this literature by providing examples of interactions that occur during preschool classroom routines.
Chapter 3

Methods

This study focused on the nature of teacher-child interactions around emotion discourse. Research questions addressing the topics of child and teacher emotion-word use, characteristics of conversations that deal with emotion, and the perspectives of Head Start teachers and administrators regarding emotion discourse in the preschool classroom formed the framework from which data were gathered and analyzed.

Participants

Participants in the current study included four teachers (co-teachers from two classrooms), a Site Director, and the majority of preschool children enrolled in the two Head Start classrooms in the midwest. All child participants met the criteria and income status as delineated in the Head Start Act, were within the age range of 36- to 60-months, and spoke English as their primary language. Two children with special needs, who were identified by the teachers during the post-interview as having speech and language delays, participated as all other criteria were met and their parents gave consent for them to participate in the study. Informed parental consent was obtained for each child before commencement of the study. All 16 children in Classroom 1 had parental consent to participate in the study; 14 of the 16 children in Classroom 2 had signed consent forms. The two children without signed consent forms were not videotaped and no data were collected or analyzed involving these children. Therefore, 30 children (94%) from across both classrooms participated in the study.
The Head Start Director in the Champaign County Head Start program nominated potential teacher participants based on the following criteria: (a) they had at least 1 year of experience teaching in a Head Start classroom; (b) they used English as their primary language in their classroom; (c) they had experience using a social-emotional curriculum in their classroom; (d) they acted as the lead teacher during either the morning or the afternoon class; (e) they had a history of positive interactions with children in their classroom; and (f) they were willing to restructure their daily schedule to accommodate research activities, if necessary. The teachers nominated by the director met with one of the researchers to learn more about the study. Informed teacher consent was obtained in writing following the explanation of the procedures of the study, as well as incentives for participation (see Appendix B). A member of the administrative team, the Site Director, also participated in the study and was interviewed during the course of data collection. Informed administrative consent was obtained before the administrative interview was conducted (see Appendix C).

Recruitment. The researchers for the current study had already conducted two studies on social emotional issues in this Head Start program, and the director had expressed interest in participating in additional research, particularly examining teacher-child interactions around emotion. The researchers met with the director of the Head Start program, the Site Director, and the Child Development Manager before commencing the study to discuss the criteria for teacher nominations. Nominated teachers then met with one of the researchers to discuss the procedures of the study and the incentives for participating, as well as videotaping and audiotaping procedures. Questions relevant to
the use of such equipment in the classroom environment were discussed during the teacher meeting.

An informational packet was sent home to all parents who had children in the two targeted classrooms. The packet contained an information sheet describing the research and the benefits of the study, along with a consent form to be signed by the parents and returned to the classroom teacher within a week (see Appendix D). Teachers were asked to include a brief cover letter in the packets encouraging parents to sign and return consent forms in order for their children to participate in the study. Before the packets went out to parents, the Site Director had a Spanish translator review the written materials, and translate them into Spanish for two sets of parents who spoke limited English. The researcher picked up the signed consent forms from participating teachers after a week’s time. All parents returned signed consent forms in Classroom 1 within the one week period. In Classroom 2, the researchers sent a second identical packet home with the children who had not returned the packet the first time. Four children did not have signed consent forms after the second recruitment packet was returned. Two weeks into the study, two children returned signed consent forms, and those children were then included in taping and subsequent data analysis. The last two children returned unsigned documents that read “no videotape.” All efforts were made to ensure that they were not video or audiotaped.

At the conclusion of the study, each participating teacher received $50 for their own personal use. Additionally, two children's books about emotions were purchased for each classroom.
Participant demographics. Sixteen children participated in the study in Classroom 1. These children were between the ages of 3 years, 4 months and 5 years, 1 month (at the beginning of data collection) for an average age of 4 years, 3 months. In Classroom 1, 10 participants were females and 6 were males. The class was diverse, with 69% ($n=11$) being African American, 19% ($n=3$) being European American, and 12% ($n=2$) being from an Hispanic or mixed background (per teacher report). Eighty-eight percent ($n=14$) of parents returned completed parent survey forms in Classroom 1. Parents who completed the form indicated their age range as between 20-25 years ($n=3$), 26-29 years ($n=4$), 30-35 years ($n=5$), and 36-45 years ($n=2$). Thirteen of the parents indicated they were the mother. Of the 14 completed parent surveys, 12 parents (75%) reported having either college coursework completed or an associates or other degree. One parent indicated her education as being high school/GED level and one other indicated her education as being less than high school.

Classroom 2 was made up of 16 participating children, with a majority of males ($n=10$) and fewer females ($n=6$). Average age of the children was 4 years, 7 months (ages ranged from 3 years, 1 month to 5 years, 1 month) at the start of data collection. Fifty percent ($n=8$) of participating children in Classroom 2 were African American, 37% ($n=6$) were Hispanic or mixed background, and 13% ($n=2$) were European American. These demographics were derived from teacher report. Of the 13 (81%) returned parent survey forms, 10 parents indicated that they had completed either college coursework or a degree. Two parents reported having less than a high school education, with 1 parent reporting that she had completed high school/GED. Twelve of the 13 returned forms were completed by mothers.
In total, six teachers participated in the study (three from each classroom). Each classroom was staffed with a Type 04 Certified teacher (Illinois Early Childhood), another lead teacher with some college coursework but no certification, as well as one teacher assistant. The four lead teachers were all European American. The teacher assistant in Classroom 1 was African American; the assistant in Classroom 2 was Hispanic. The ages of the teachers (including assistants) ranged from mid-twenties to 50 years of age. All classroom staff had worked in Head Start and early childhood for at least 1 year.

Data Collection

This research study involved four types of data collection: (a) observing teacher-child conversations that focused on emotions, and writing field notes; (b) video and audio recording these conversations during two different activities (bookreading and breakfast); (c) conducting two interviews with teachers (one at the beginning of the study and one at the end) and one interview with the site director; and (d) collecting parent-completed checklists about their children's social emotional development. Pseudonyms were assigned to each child and family as they return signed consent forms. These pseudonyms were used throughout the study.

Teacher-child observations. The researcher spent 4 weeks in each classroom, videotaping breakfast and morning bookreading at least twice a week. It was decided after consultation with the teachers that the researcher would bring the video equipment to the classroom for the first time on the day data collection began, allowing no time beforehand for the children to get accustomed to having the video recorder and researcher
present during in the classroom activities. The teachers felt that the children had enough
visitors with cameras throughout the year that the children would not find it unusual.
Although it was anticipated that some children may not want to be videotaped on a
certain day, that was never the case. The children were more than willing to be taped. For
the children who did not have parental consent to be videotaped, the researcher
positioned the equipment so it faced another child or group of children. No child was ever
coerced into participating (e.g., being taped or observed) during any part of the study.
During the course of data collection, two female participants (with signed consent) in
Classroom 1 moved from the area. Their data were collected and analyzed for the weeks
they participated.

Two different activities were observed and videotaped in the targeted classrooms:
breakfast and morning bookreading. Mealtime in Head Start programs incorporates
family-style seating and service with four to five children and one teacher (or adult
volunteer) at each table. Breakfast was chosen to be observed due to the sparse number
of studies that have examined emotion discourse in such a naturally-occurring early
childhood routine. The second activity, bookreading, was chosen as a vehicle for emotion
discourse because several previous research studies examining emotion talk and narrative
used storytelling and books with some amount of success—children reacting to or
discussing their feelings about the book or story at some point (c.f., Cervantes, 2002;
Miller et al., 1992). Bookreading also was a naturally-occurring activity that occurred
regularly within the context of the classroom.

In consultation with the Site Director and teachers, it was decided that the optimal
time to observe the children would be first thing in the morning, during the breakfast time
activities, and then subsequent bookreading. The structure of breakfast and bookreading would allow for conversations about emotions to occur, either in the context of reading or discussing a book or through experiencing emotions during conflicts or excitement at mealtime.

Classroom 1 had breakfast scheduled at 8:40 to approximately 9:00 a.m., with a small-group bookreading activity immediately following for approximately 10-15 minutes. After each child brushed his teeth following breakfast, he was expected to pick a book and join a small group of children (no more than 4-5) with a teacher to look at the chosen books. Both activities were videotaped on the same morning each observation day, with a final product being 8 videotaped breakfast and bookreading times. The two classroom activities were observed twice a week for 4 weeks between the last week of October and the last week of November, with the last observation occurring the week of Thanksgiving. Breakfast lasted approximately 20 minutes, with bookreading typically lasting less than 15 minutes. The total amount of time in Classroom 1 for observation and recording was 112 minutes for breakfast and 60 minutes for bookreading, resulting in a total classroom observation time of 172 minutes (2 hours, 52 minutes) across the entire four weeks.

Classroom 2 was observed and data were gathered on two other days of the week for the four weeks, during the same time period of October and November. The last observation also was conducted during the week of Thanksgiving. The schedule for this classroom consisted of a welcome and bookreading large-group time, with breakfast immediately following. Bookreading began at approximately 8:45 a.m. with breakfast beginning at 9:05 a.m.. The researcher observed and videotaped both activities, resulting
in 60 minutes of bookreading and 88 minutes of breakfast. The total observational time in Classroom 2 was 148 minutes—approximately 2.5 hours—for both activities. Due to equipment failure, data for two days of bookreading were not able to be transcribed. Similarly, data from one breakfast observation could not be transcribed. Although these activities were recorded by separate camcorders, the videotapes were not of a good enough quality to be digitized and transcribed. Therefore, videotaped data for Classroom 2 included 7 breakfast and 6 bookreading times, while Classroom 1 had a total of 8 breakfast and bookreading times.

The video equipment used in the study consisted of a camcorder held by the researcher approximately 5 feet from the activity itself. No microphones were used on the tables for breakfast time due to the preference of the teachers in both classrooms—mainly the risk of drink and food spillage on the equipment. No microphones were needed or used during bookreading as the researcher was able to position herself close to the activity. The teacher and researcher negotiated the grouping of children for the bookreading and mealtime activities, such that only children with signed consents were recorded.

**Breakfast.** The teachers in Classroom 1 organized the grouping of children at breakfast with the group at any particular table changing frequently. The researcher was able to observe more children with flexibility in this classroom, requesting that the groupings be changed should additional data be needed on a particular child. The teachers in Classroom 2 retained the same grouping for much of the year, wanting the children to build relationships based on table companions. Although the teachers were willing to shift children when requested by the researcher, it was not done with as much flexibility
as in Classroom 1. In order to facilitate optimal observation of four to five children at the breakfast table, the researcher placed each participating child’s name on a roster and used the roster to make sure that all of the children were observed at least once. See Appendix E (Table E1, E2, E3, E4) for participant roster for each classroom. Each child (with the exception of those in Classroom 2 without signed consent) was observed during both activities throughout the data collection period, however, the researcher did not record the actual length of time each child was observed and videotaped. It was also important for the researcher to gather discourse data on the teachers in each classroom. Therefore, a record was kept of the number of bookreading and breakfast times, as well as the actual interaction time observed, for each of the four teachers. It was not, however, possible, due to teacher schedules and other constraints (e.g., teacher illness and pregnancy) to gather equitable data on each adult. Due to illness, one of the teachers was absent for more than a week; a substitute teacher was observed during breakfast those days (after giving informed consent).

**Bookreading.** The teachers in Classroom 1 and Classroom 2 both had scheduled bookreading during the morning, either immediately before or after breakfast. The researcher asked that she be allowed to observe and videotape the morning bookreading activities. Bookreading in Classroom 1 was held in small groups, often serving as a transition from breakfast to group time. Teachers would rotate responsibility for cleaning up breakfast and reading to the children in groups of four or five. While one teacher supervised the volunteer cleaning up the tables and children brushing their teeth following the meal, the other teacher would ask the children who were finished with breakfast and toothbrushing to choose one book from the bookcase and come and sit
around her. In this room bookreading consisted of the teacher facilitating bookreading, sometimes using several different books—most often following the interest and direction of the children themselves. The researcher determined the small group she would observe by the teacher who was facilitating the bookreading and the particular children in the group at the beginning of bookreading.

Bookreading in Classroom 2 was held as the first large group time (approximately 8:45) in the morning after arrival and before breakfast. Bookreading was conducted by one teacher, with the second teacher often not arriving in the classroom until 9:00, right before breakfast. Children sat on their specifically-named shapes in a semi-circle around the teacher, who sat in a rocking chair or stood to read a book she had previously chosen. The researcher mainly videorecorded the teacher since two children did not have permission to be videotaped.

**Interviews.** Each teacher participated in one interview before commencement of the study and one interview at the conclusion of the study (see interview protocol in Appendix F). Each interview was audiotaped and was approximately 40 minutes in length. Interviews were held at a time and place that was convenient for the teachers. At the request of the teachers, the interviews were conducted in teaching teams, with the teacher assistant from each classroom included. All four lead teachers wanted the first interview scheduled in the classroom during afternoon naptime. The first interview was held immediately before observations began. Within 2 weeks, each teacher was given a transcript of the interview to read and approve; all were approved by the participants. The second interview was held approximately 5 months after the last observation, due to the holidays, staff development days, and time constraints of the teachers. This second
interview was held in a teacher’s lounge away from the children and classroom. The researcher had chosen one videotaped interaction segment (5 to 7 minutes in length) from bookreading to show each team of teachers and get their feedback about the segment. A bookreading segment from each classroom was chosen due to the volume of emotion words and phrases that emerged during those interactions. The researcher showed the videotape from the teachers’ respective classroom, asked them to respond to the segment, and then followed up with questions related to not only that segment, but also the broader classroom social emotional environment. Interviews were transcribed and again approved by the teachers, with individual teachers getting a copy of the transcript to read.

One interview was conducted with the Site Director in order to triangulate information gathered from teachers' pre-interviews and classroom observations (see Appendix G). This interview was conducted by the researcher; it occurred mid-way through data collection and was audiotaped. The interview lasted approximately 40 minutes and took place in the Site Director’s office. Unfortunately, the tape recorder did not record the entire interview to a degree that it could be transcribed word for word. The researcher relied on notes taken during the interview, as well as the taped interview to reconstruct the Site Directors’ responses to the interview. The Site Director was informed about the equipment failure and was given the reconstructed narrative to read and approve. She edited the transcript, which the researcher then compared to her fieldnotes. The Site Director was given the final narrative to read and approve.

**Parent Participation.** A brief parental survey consisting of nine questions was used to gather information about each child’s age, parent’s age and education, as well as parent-child interactions during daily routines and conversations about emotions (see
Appendix H). This survey was completed at the onset of the study by 28 parents (93%), immediately after the signed consent packet was returned.

Parents of participating children were asked to complete the *Ages and Stages Questionnaire-Social Emotional-SE* (ASQ-SE) (Squires, Bricker, & Twombly, 2002) that was appropriate for the age of their child at the beginning of the study. The ASQ-SE was chosen as it has been investigated with over 3,000 children from 6 to 60 months, with reliability at 94% and validity between 75% and 85% (http://www.brookespublishing.com/store/books/squires-asqse/index.htm). A commercially-available tool with an emphasis on the social emotional behavior of young children (screening areas such as self-regulation, communication, affect, and interaction with others), it is designed to assess children at 6, 12, 18, 24, 30, 36, 48, and 60 months. The ASQ-SE takes approximately 20 minutes to complete. The ASQ-SE was completed by 22 parents (73%) across both classrooms at some point during the month-long data collection period. For the two sets of parents with limited English skills, a Spanish version of the ASQ-SE was used. In the event of a parent not completing the ASQ-SE by the end of December (approximately 30 days after the observations were completed) teachers were asked to complete the ASQ-SE form for those children. Teachers from Classroom 1 only needed to complete an ASQ-SE for two children. For any child who had moved from the area at any point during the recruitment and observation period, and whose parents had not completed the ASQ-SE, the teachers did not complete the ASQ-SE, citing program policy. The number of children affected by that policy was four. Teachers in Classroom 2 only completed a few questionnaires, leaving six children without a completed ASQ-SE. Although none of the children in Classroom 2 moved during data collection, and the
teachers were given additional time (more than the 30 original days after data collection), by the end of the school year (and the final interview), there were still six children without an ASQ-SE. Thus, the return rate of completed ASQ-SE questionnaires (by parents or teachers) was only 67%.

**Pilot Testing**

The researchers conducted a pilot test using each of the research protocols (i.e., interview questions, parent form, and ASQ-SE) before commencement of the study. Additionally, as part of pilot testing, videotaped observations of breakfast and morning bookreading were conducted in a Head Start classroom that was not a part of the study. One classroom teacher in this room participated in an interview to pilot the pre-interview protocol. The administrative interview protocol also was piloted with the Child Development Manager at the program level. Finally, the researchers, in coordination with the Head Start teacher of the pilot classroom, randomly selected three parents from the pilot classroom to complete the ASQ-SE questionnaire. The researchers decided that the interview protocols and the ASQ-SE questionnaire were adequate to elicit the needed information based on pilot data gathered from teachers, administrators, and parents respectively. Based on the pilot testing, it was decided during videotaping the researcher needed to carefully note the placement of the children around the table and on the floor, and to take field notes in case of equipment failure. Additionally, the researchers felt that using a hand-held camcorder would be adequate to optimally videotape both activities.
Data Analyses

Data analysis consisted of a mixed methods approach, using quantitative and qualitative methodology, conducted on multiple levels. The researcher first conducted a content analysis of emotion words and phrases that occurred during the bookreading and breakfast interactions; and, secondly, examined transcripts of emotion segments and reviewed the pertinent portions of videotaped sessions for emerging themes, patterns of communication found in the discourse and interviews (e.g., conversational turn-taking, communication patterns)—taking into account supporting theoretical perspectives (Gee, 2006; Phillips & Hardy, 2002). Multiple data sources (e.g., interviews, questionnaires, observation transcripts), and methods were used to triangulate the data and increase the credibility and validity of the results.

In order to answer the first research question—the way in which preschool children expressed their emotions with their teacher—a conventional content analysis of written text of the actual transcripts was conducted involving the identification and coding of emotion words and phrases, as they occurred in the text (Wood & Kroger, 2000). A priori categories were used to further delineate and describe identified emotion talk. The types of emotion words described by Thomas and Ostrosky (2009) include: (1) fear, anger, and aggression (Miller, 1982; Miller & Sperry, 1987); (2) caring and social concern (Howe, 1991); (3) sensation and physiological state (Dunn et al., 1987); (4) sound effects (Cervantes, 2002); and (5) emotional reaction (Thomas & Ostrosky, 2009). See Appendix I for operational definitions of the types of emotion words. Each data source and method of analysis is described in the following sections.
Video- and audiotaped classroom discourse. All video and audio portions of the bookreading and breakfast activities were transcribed into a script format with speakers identified by name and arranged as though for a play (Cazden, 2001; Gee, 2006). According to Cazden, the “disfluencies [of children’s speech] are themselves informative,” and were, therefore, included as closely as possible by the transcriber (p. 106). Videotapes of bookreading for both classrooms and breakfast for one classroom were transcribed by the researcher with an accuracy check conducted by a master’s level graduate student. The remaining classroom breakfast was transcribed by the researcher and checked by an independent reader unfamiliar with the study. Inaccuracies found in the transcripts were corrected by the researcher to ensure the most accurate rendering of the speakers’ utterances.

Using the script format as a basis, each transcript was then formatted into idea units (Gee, 2006). Gee described idea units as a “small spurt out of which speech is composed usually. . .[of] one salient piece of new information in it that serves as the focus of the intonation contour on the spurt” (p. 124). Often there is a pause or break in tempo after the spurt. Following a number of readings of each “script” and viewing of the particular video clip, the researcher divided each narrative into idea units with each unit made up of one main thought. Each idea unit was then numbered beginning with the first speaker and ending with the last speaker, forming lines of speech rather than stanzas of speech (see Cazden, 2001; Gee, 2006).

The idea units were analyzed and coded by type of emotion words and phrases used (c.f., Thomas & Ostrosky, 2009), valence (c.f., Burger & Miller, 1999; Miller & Sperry, 1988), speaker (teacher or child), gender, classroom, and activity. The first step
in data analysis included a frequency count of emotion words and phrases used by the preschoolers and the teachers. If the researcher was unsure of use, she viewed the specific video clip for context. The emotion words and phrases were totaled to determine the frequency and percentage of emotion words used by children and by teachers. These raw data were then analyzed across classroom, activity, gender, and types of emotional expression.

Interobserver agreement was conducted with a master’s level student. Following a discussion on the definitions of the five types of emotion words, a list of 153 (1/3 of total number) randomly chosen emotion words and phrases used during bookreading and breakfast (for both classrooms) were given to the graduate student with instructions to look at the list of words, read the transcripts if necessary for context, and categorize them into one of the five types of emotion words. Agreement was calculated by comparing the researcher’s and the student’s completed word list categorization (reliability = 87%).

To answer the second research question concerning interaction patterns between teachers and preschool children during emotion discourse in bookreading and breakfast, as well as to discover teacher perspectives on the role of emotion discourse in the preschool classroom (research question #3), the researcher examined transcripts of emotion segments and the accompanying videotaped portions for emerging themes, patterns of communication found in the discourse, and teacher interviews (Gee, 2006; Phillips & Hardy, 2002). Although a content analysis had been conducted on the transcripts (i.e., idea units), the researcher had not closely examined the emotion segments other than to identify and highlight the particular part of the conversation that included emotion words. For the purposes of the current study, the researcher identified
only those conversations (regardless of brevity or length) that consisted of a dialogue (i.e., discourse) between the teacher and at least one child concerning emotions and feelings, or a conversation about an emotional event that was occurring or had occurred. By definition, these conversations may be blended, with an emotional event eliciting a more conversational discussion about the child’s emotions during the event. As such, bookreading elicited approximately 13 minutes of emotion segments for Classroom 1 (22% of total bookreading time) and approximately 14 minutes for Classroom 2 (23% of total bookreading time). Breakfast elicited approximately 3 minutes of emotion segments for Classroom 1 (2% of total breakfast time) and 7 minutes for Classroom 2 (8% of total breakfast time) (see Table 5).

Table 1

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<th>Length of Discourse</th>
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Using both the script and idea unit formats of the transcripts, emotion discourse segments were identified. The researcher read each transcript multiple times, with the intent of choosing segments of the conversation dedicated to either a discussion of emotions between a teacher and child/children or an actual emotional event documented in the video clips and transcript. The researcher did not find emotion discourse segments in every transcript for both activities, although the emotion segments selected for further analysis were representative of bookreading and breakfast. These segments were then
reformatted using a modified version of conversational analysis (see Jefferson, 1989; ten Have, 1999), in which conversational turns and participants are noted and coded, as well as overlapping speech and sounds effects (e.g., intake of breath, syllables not found in dictionary) of speakers included. Jefferson’s symbols for these transcriptions were used (see Appendix J for transcription symbols).

First, a cursory examination of these selected emotion discourse segments was conducted, encompassing what Psathas (1990) described as an overview with no predetermined agenda or perception of the researcher. This initial analysis resulted in common patterns applicable to bookreading (primarily) and breakfast. Following that cursory examination, the researcher reviewed the pertinent portions of the videotape of the emotion segments. Using the transcripts to more closely follow the verbal behaviors and behavioral cues of teachers and children, the researcher looked for patterns—particularly by the teachers—as they interacted with the children either during breakfast or during bookreading. In conducting these analyses of teacher behavior and communication, the researcher looked to the literature on classroom discourse and conversational analysis for guidance, particularly examination of teacher-student patterns of communication, namely the traditional *initiation-response-evaluation/feedback* (IRE/F) pattern of classroom discourse (see Cazden, 1988; Mehan, 1979; Wells, 1993). Although these researchers did not examine emotion discourse, their focus on classroom interaction patterns provided a starting point for this analysis. For each communication pattern found, the researcher examined each of the emotion segments to look for similarities and dissimilarities among the interactions pertaining to a particular pattern. The researcher also examined the transcripts and video clips for recurring strategies or
methods that teachers used that extended conversations about emotions. The emotion discourse segments were so rare for breakfast (2% and 8%) that the researcher focused on examining these emotion segments for communication patterns similar to those found in bookreading.

As there were a sufficient number of emotion discourse segments during bookreading for analysis, reliability checks were conducted for communication patterns and methods teachers used to initiate or extend conversations about emotions in each classroom. A reliability check for classroom occurrence of teacher patterns was done since bookreading was conducted in such different ways in each classroom (small group in Classroom 1 and large group in Classroom 2). First, the researcher provided a graduate student with a list (and definitions), identified by the researcher, of 21 methods or patterns used by teachers. This student also was provided with an entire set of emotion discourse transcripts from each classroom for context. The student was asked to read the emotion segments and sort the 21 items by where they occurred—Classroom 1, Classroom 2, or both. Interobserver agreement was calculated by comparing the researcher’s list for classroom occurrence against that compiled by the student. Reliability was found to be 90% for classroom occurrence of the methods and patterns. The list of 21 teacher patterns was then further defined and combined to reduce the list to 13 separate techniques and patterns used in either one or both of the classrooms.

The researcher conducted two interviews with each teacher (in teams)—at the beginning and end of the study. Also, one interview with the Site Director was conducted mid-way through data collection. All interviews were audiotaped and transcribed following conventions described by Jefferson (1989). The two teachers in each classroom
were interviewed together (per their preferences and constraints of their classroom schedule). Each classroom aide participated in the pre-interview; however, only the two lead teachers completed the post-interviews due to absences of both classroom assistants.

In order to establish and better understand the context in which the teachers talked with the children, planned their interactions, and ran their Head Start classrooms, the researcher examined the transcripts of the teachers’ interviews. Linguistic elements (i.e., verbal behaviors) were integrated with behavioral cues (i.e., body language) to form a Discourse model—that which “people hold, often unconsciously, and use to make sense of the world and their experiences in it” (Gee, 2006, p. 61). According to Gee, Discourse models are oversimplified frameworks or storylines that help one better understand the complexities of real life. Each interview offered perspectives of Head Start staff about the role emotion discourse held. Additionally, these data offered multiple views regarding the interactions between teachers and children, teachers and administrators, and the classrooms within the Head Start site and program.

**Family demographic survey.** A demographic form was completed by parents at the beginning of the study providing their child’s name and age (in years/months), as well as answering several questions related to conversations they have with their child concerning emotions and feelings. The *Ages and Stages Questionnaire-SE* also was completed by parents mid-way through data collection to provide developmental information on the social emotional strengths and needs of each student. These data were used to triangulate information gathered from observations in the classroom.
Preschool Children’s Emotion Words and Phrases

Findings from the current study are presented by research question. The first research question focused on how preschool children express their emotions during interactions with their teacher in two different routine classroom activities. Teachers and preschool children in both classrooms were observed using 486 emotion words and phrases during bookreading and 264 emotion words and phrases during breakfast, for a total of 750 emotion words and phrases across over 310 minutes of data.

Emotion words and phrases were coded into 5 a priori types: (1) fear, anger, and aggression (Miller, 1982; Miller & Sperry, 1987); (2) caring and social concern (Howe, 1991); (3) sensation and physiological state (Dunn et al., 1987); (4) sound effects (Cervantes, 2002); and (5) emotional reaction (Thomas & Ostrosky, 2009). Overall, the emotion words and phrases used by both teachers and preschoolers included all 5 types, with children and teachers primarily using words related to caring and social concern (49% or 365/750 emotion words). See Figure 1 for the frequency and percents of emotion words across both activities and classrooms.

Figure 1

Frequency and Percents of Emotion Words Across Both Activities and Classrooms
Emotion words across bookreading and breakfast. Overall, bookreading elicited more frequent use of emotion words and phrases than breakfast by teachers and children. Both teachers and children used all five types of emotion words, although those related to caring and social concern were used most frequently. Of the 750 emotion words and phrases recorded during data collection, 96 different words and phrases (not repeated) were heard. The five most frequently used emotion words (when considering both teachers and children) across both activities were happy (n = 66; 32%), angry (n = 53; 25%), mad (n = 31; 15%), sad (n = 29; 14%), and grumpy (n = 29; 14%).

While the current study concentrated on teacher communication and behavior primarily, child behavior was examined and also will be discussed. During bookreading teachers in both classrooms used a variety of emotion words, with the most frequently used words being happy, angry, grumpy, sad, laughing, mad, and feeling safe. Less emotion words were used during breakfast by teachers, with the most frequently used phrases being good job in Classroom 1 and nice in Classroom 2. The most frequently used emotion words at breakfast were primarily related to caring and social concern (e.g., “thank you”), but did include emotion reaction words, such as wow, and those related to physiological sensation, such as yum.

Compared to their teachers children used more diverse emotion words during bookreading and breakfast. They used more emotion words related to caring and social concern during bookreading, such as happy, sad, and hurt, as well as angry (i.e., fear/anger/aggression). During breakfast, children used sound effects (e.g., “mmm-hmmm,” “eeewww,” “grrr”) and words such as yuck (which were categorized as physiological sensation or emotion reaction—dependent upon the usage of the word.
The following sections are organized to include a closer examination of the findings for the first research question. Data from bookreading in each of the two classrooms is presented first followed by data from breakfast in each classroom. Findings related to teacher and child behavior are reported.

**Bookreading Classroom 1.** Bookreading in Classroom 1 was held in small groups with one teacher and several children. Immediately after breakfast, the children would choose books to look at with other children and a teacher. Eight bookreading sessions for Classroom 1 were observed and transcribed, resulting in a classroom total of 318 emotion words and phrases used during the 4-week data collection period (see Appendix K). Teachers and children in Classroom 1 used more emotion words and phrases during bookreading than teachers and children in Classroom 2. Teachers in Classroom 1 used 49% (n = 155) of the emotion words and phrases in bookreading, while children in this classroom used slightly more emotion words and phrases (51%; n = 163). Overall, both teachers and children in Classroom 1 used almost twice as many negative emotion words (65%) as positive emotion words and phrases (35%) throughout bookreading sessions.

Eight sessions of bookreading in Classroom 1 were observed for a classroom total of 60 minutes (mean = 7.5 minutes, range of 5 to 13 minutes). Each videotaped session was transcribed and formatted into idea units (based on a single thought), with frequencies and percentages of emotion words calculated per session. Approximately 13% of all idea units from Classroom 1 bookreading contained emotion words and phrases.

Both teachers and children used a variable amount of emotion words and phrases during each session of bookreading. The two lead teachers used emotion words and
phrases more frequently than children during Sessions 2 and 3 ($n = 49$ and 44, respectively). Yet, during Session 1 children used 22 emotion words compared to only 7 used by teachers. Likewise, children used 36 emotion words during Session 7, compared to the teacher total of 9 for that session. The certified teacher, Leanne, was observed on 3 different occasions (Sessions 1, 3, 4) reading with small groups of children. During those times, Leanne used a total of 53 emotion words, of which 48 were negative—91% of the emotion words and phrases she used. Sherry, the second teacher, was observed on 5 different bookreading occasions (Sessions 2, 5, 6, 7, 8). She used 102 emotion words and phrases, of which 52% ($n = 53$) were negative and 48% positive. It was during bookreading with Sherry that the highest percentage of emotion words and phrases (27%) per total idea units were used by both children and the teacher. During Session 2, 81 emotion words were documented, with 49 being spoken by the teacher and 32 by the children.

Four children stood out as frequently using emotion words and phrases during bookreading in Classroom 1. During this targeted activity, Aaliyah used 20% ($n = 32$) of all of the emotion words and phrases spoken by the children. She was followed closely by Brad with 30 words (18%), Elle with 25 (15%), and Brianna, with 21 emotion words (13%). All four were among the oldest children in the mixed-age group class. Remaining children were observed using less than 4 emotion words apiece. See Table 6 (Appendix L, Table L1) for individual frequencies during bookreading in Classroom 1.

Classroom 1 teachers and children used all 5 types of emotion words during bookreading, although 51% ($n = 163$) of their emotion words and phrases were related to caring and social concern (see Appendix M, Figure M1). Seventeen percent ($n = 55$) of
their words were emotional reactions, with 14% \( (n = 44) \) related to fear, anger, and aggression. Smaller percentages of emotion words were categorized as sound effects \( (n = 33; 11\%) \) and physiological sensations \( (n = 23; 7\%) \).

**Bookreading Classroom 2.** Bookreading in Classroom 2 was conducted in one large group, with one teacher, Maureen, reading selected books. June, the other lead teacher in this classroom, did not participate in bookreading due to scheduling within the program. Six sessions of bookreading in Classroom 2, totaling 60 minutes (mean = 12 minutes; range = 3 to 19 minutes), were observed and transcribed for analysis. Maureen and 14 children used 168 emotion words and phrases during these sessions. Teachers and children in Classroom 2 used just over half as many emotion words \( (n = 168) \) as did the participants in Classroom 1 \( (n = 318) \). In Classroom 2 approximately 7% of idea units contained emotion words and phrases spoken by teachers and children.

Across the 6 sessions, the teacher used 75% \( (n = 123) \) of the emotion words compared to 25% used by the children \( (n = 45) \) during bookreading. Although data were collected for six sessions in Classroom 2, Session 1 elicited 64% of the total number of emotion words and phrases observed. Session 1 included 78 emotion words by Maureen and 26 words by children. Only 7 children (50%) in the class used the 26 words heard during this session. The other seven children were either unidentified (off camera) or spoke in unison (only 2 emotion words were said by one unidentified child or a group speaking in unison). Seventy-three percent of the 168 emotion words heard in Classroom 2 were negative while only 27% were positive. Across all emotion words used by Maureen, over two-thirds \( (n = 89) \) were negative; children used twice as many negative.
emotion words as positive (31 negative and 14 positive). See Appendix K for total number of emotion words per session during bookreading in Classroom 2.

Although 14 children from Classroom 2 participated in the study, only nine children used emotion words during bookreading, with the exception of 2 words used by unidentified children who spoke in unison (see Appendix L, Table L2 for individual frequencies). Three boys (Adam, Carl, and Jarrett) used emotion words most frequently in Classroom 2 during bookreading, however the individual frequencies were much lower than what was observed in Classroom 1 during bookreading.

Forty-six percent (n = 77) of the emotion words and phrases used by teachers and children in Classroom 2 were related to fear, anger, and aggression. Ironically, participants also used 75 emotion words (45%) related to caring and social concern. Very small percentages of the other three types of emotion words were used by participants in Classroom 2 (refer to Appendix M, Figure M1).

**Summary of bookreading.** Classrooms 1 and 2 both conducted bookreading in the morning, in which teachers and children shared books, some of which were about emotions and some were not. Teachers were not asked to read specific types of books during the observations. Although bookreading was conducted differently in each classroom, this typical pre-kindergarten activity yielded a large percentage of emotion words and phrases by children and teachers. And, although children used emotion words quite frequently, teachers overwhelmingly used a larger percentage of emotion words during bookreading. Of the total number of emotion words used across both classrooms during bookreading (n = 486), 49% were related to caring and social concern. Smaller
percentages of the other 4 types of emotion words ranged from 5% (physiological sensation) to 25% (fear/anger/aggression) (see Figure M1).

**Breakfast Classroom 1.** Eight breakfast sessions in Classroom 1 were observed, resulting in a classroom total of 168 emotion words and phrases used across 137 minutes of observation. This was only half as many emotion words as were observed during bookreading for Classroom 1 (even though approximately twice as much time was observed and recorded for breakfast). In fact, only 5% of the total idea units contained emotion words and phrases spoken by teachers and children. The number of emotion words and phrases observed during breakfast in this classroom ranged from 5 words in Session 1 to 43 words in Session 8. Seventy-four percent \((n = 125)\) of the words were positive, with just 26% \((n = 43)\) being negative.

Overall, the teachers and teaching assistants in Classroom 1 used slightly more emotion words and phrases than children during breakfast (55%; \(n = 92\)). The majority of teachers’ and children’s emotion words were positive, (83% and 68%, respectively). See Appendix O for frequencies of emotion words used per session during breakfast in Classroom 1. Leanne, the certified teacher, was observed interacting at breakfast during 3 sessions. Sherry was observed for two full breakfast sessions and part of a third session. Jan, the teaching assistant, was observed for two sessions, and a substitute, Miss Jones, was observed once. The teachers’ use of emotion words and phrases gradually increased as data collection progressed, from using under 10 words in each of the first 4 sessions to using 23 emotion words during the last session.

Although each session was different, the amount of emotion words used by the teachers and children fluctuated. For example, Leanne was observed using only 2
emotion words during Session 1, yet was observed using 23 emotion words during Session 8. Similarly, Sherry was observed using 6 emotion words in one session and 21 in another. As a group, the children, likewise, were observed using only 2 emotion words in Session 2, while using 20 during Session 8.

Three little girls used emotion words and phrases more frequently than their classmates during breakfast in Classroom 1 (see Table L1). Brianna used 22 emotion words and phrases, which was 13% of all emotion words used and 29% of children’s emotion words and phrases. Aaliyah and Mimi followed (12 and 11 words, respectively), representing 15% of children’s emotion words and phrases occurring during breakfast.

Most of the other children used a range of 1 to 6 emotion words during mealtime in Classroom 1, with two children using no emotion words during breakfast time.

Breakfast in Classroom 1 was conducted family style, with conversations between adults and children encouraged. The conversations were positive in nature, with almost 50% of all emotion words and phrases used by both teachers and children being related to caring and social concern. Twenty percent \( (n = 34) \) of all emotion words used during breakfast were sound effects (e.g., “mmm-hmmm,” “blech”), with 19% \( (n =32) \) being related to physiological sensation (e.g., “that’s yucky”). Figure O1 (Appendix O) shows the breakdown of types of emotion words that occurred during breakfast in Classroom 1.

Breakfast Classroom 2. Seven breakfast sessions in Classroom 2 were transcribed, resulting in 88 minutes of data. Participants in Classroom 2 used only 96 emotion words during breakfast (see Appendix N, Table N2). Four percent of idea units across all breakfast sessions in this classroom contained emotion phrases. Children used 57% of all emotion phrases during breakfast in Classroom 2, while teachers used 40% of
emotion-based phrases. Of the total emotion words used, 44% were positive and 56% were negative. Teachers used more positive emotion words and phrases during breakfast (68% of their emotion words) compared to the children, whose emotion words and phrases were predominantly negative (73%).

In Classroom 2 two lead teachers and one teaching assistant were observed during breakfast. Maureen was observed twice and Mary observed once, while June was observed 4 times at breakfast. None of the three teachers ever used more than 10 emotion phrases during any single breakfast session. In fact, the most frequent use of emotion words by a Classroom 2 teacher was documented during Session 1, when Maureen used 9 words. In Session 6, no emotion words were spoken by the teacher (June). Teachers in Classroom 2 used one-third as many emotion words during breakfast ($n = 40$) compared to bookreading ($n = 123$).

The children in Classroom 2 did not use as many emotion words and phrases during breakfast ($n = 56$) when compared to the children in Classroom 1 ($n = 77$). Yet, the children in Classroom 2 used slightly more emotion words and phrases during breakfast when compared to observations conducted during bookreading ($n = 45$). Similar to the teachers, children used more emotion words during Session 1 breakfast ($n = 15$) and no emotion words in Session 6. Jarrett used twice as many emotion words and phrases during breakfast as any other child with an individual total of 14. Adam and Lemar each used a total of 7 emotion words. Eight of the 14 children used one or less emotion words during 7 breakfast sessions (see Table L2 for individual frequencies).

Similar to participants in Classroom 1 breakfast, teachers and children in Classroom 2 relied mostly on emotion phrases related to caring and social concern ($n =$)
Emotion words and phrases related to caring and social concern ranged from “thank you,” “I’m sorry,” to “that isn’t nice.” Emotion words related to fear, anger, and aggression, physiological sensations, and emotion reaction were 8%, 6%, and 9% of the total emotion words during breakfast, respectively (see Figure O1).

**Summary of breakfast.** Teachers and children in both classrooms used less emotion words and phrases during breakfast than during bookreading. Although more time was observed in breakfast than in bookreading in both classrooms, fewer emotion words were heard. Teachers and children in Classrooms 1 and 2 used emotion words related to caring and social concern most frequently ($n = 127; 48\%$), followed by sound effects ($n = 62; 24\%$) and physiological sensation ($n = 38; 14\%$) (see Figure O1).

**Patterns Found in Teacher-Child Emotion Discourse in Bookreading**

The second research question focused on communication patterns found within teacher-child interactions in Head Start classrooms during emotion discourse. To answer this question, the researcher closely examined the smaller segments of interactions that specifically described emotional events or more obviously detailed a discussion about emotions between a teacher and one or more children. These data were identified by the researcher as conversations that occurred between a teacher and one or more children during bookreading and breakfast that focused on either a child’s emotional state or a specific emotional event. Bookreading in Classrooms 1 and 2 was approximately 60 minutes (in each); emotion discourse segments comprised almost a fourth of that time (13 minutes; 22% for Classroom 1 and 14 minutes; 23% for Classroom 2). Classroom 1
breakfast was observed for 112 minutes, but only elicited approximately 3 minutes of emotion discourse (2%). Classroom 2 breakfast elicited 7 minutes of emotion discourse (8%) out of 88 minutes.

Data from the emotion discourse segments from bookreading (27 minutes across both classrooms) revealed three patterns in teacher-child emotion discourse during bookreading. First, teachers made repeated references to emotion indicators, which signaled a connection between emotions and cues in the environment. Second, teachers and children engaged in an emotion discourse process resembling the initiation-response-follow-up (IRF) “traditional” instructional pattern. Third, teachers used 11 emotion discourse methods to initiate and/or extend conversations about emotions. Each of these patterns is discussed separately (see Appendix R).

**Emotion indicators.** The teachers in both classrooms repeatedly made references to two different emotion indicators during interactions with their students.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher References Connecting Emotions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reference to Emotion Labels*</td>
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<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>excited, good, happy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bad, serious, frustrated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sad, cansado</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lonely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>angry, mad, upset</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Select emotion labels from bookreading sessions
First, the teachers made reference to emotion labels, referring to the word itself as a cue separate from the concept of emotion. This occurred within the context of a question (e.g., “Why do you think she’s sad?”), a statement (e.g., “She’s happy”), or simply as a one-word referent (e.g., “proud, say the word, proud”). For example, a teacher from Classroom 1 stressed the importance of teaching children to use emotion labels when she said, “Well, we teach them their words—what words you would use.”

The second type of emotion indicator teachers used was their reference to the connection between facial and behavioral cues and emotions. Leanne and Sherry often referred to the text or pictures in the books they read, using language such as, “He looks so lonely,” “Look at her face though,” and “He’s got a big smile on his face.” During the final interview, Maureen shared that she wished she would have done more to involve the children in one bookreading session by asking them “Can everybody. . . show me a mad face? Or relating it to that character and having them show me that face” (Interview, May 7, 2009). June added to Maureen’s point by agreeing that in the future she would have them use “more play with faces” (Interview, May 7, 2009). Similarly, Sherry noted that many times, “We tell them to look at their faces [in the books]. . . and look at your face. What does their face look like? We do a lot of that” (Interview, October 16, 2008). Teachers in both classrooms used text from the book to make connections between emotions and facial cues. The following excerpt demonstrates this strategy (italics show text directly from book).

01: Maureen: Look, on this swing she is happy. On this swing, is she happy?
02: Lemar: ((off camera)) No, angry.
03: Maureen: She does look angry. Let’s read the words and see.
04: Maureen: It says, *When somebody makes fun of me I get angry.*
05: Maureen: Look at this person. This person is covering his mouth.
06: Maureen: What do you think he’s doing?
07: Carl: ((laughing))
08: Maureen: He’s laughing at her. Does she like it when she’s being laughed at?
09: Children: ((in unison as a group)) No!
10: Maureen: No, how does that make her feel?
11: Children: ((in unison as a group)) Angry!

Teachers made reference to connections between emotions and behavioral cues, which would include nonverbal “body language” or vocal manipulations (e.g., screaming, speaking in a baby voice). Although not done as consistently as references to facial cues or emotion labels, and seemingly very similar to facial cues, teachers across both classrooms actively linked behavior and emotions. During the final interview, when describing what she would have done more of, June asserted she would ask the children, “What would your body feel like and look like?” when discussing emotions and feelings (Interview, May 7, 2009). An example of this connection is when a child would hug another individual, or, as in the example below, when a teacher touches a child on the face.

The following excerpt from bookreading contains elements from each of these references. In Lines 2 and 3 the teacher emphasizes the emotion label “sad” (by pointing to the word), the connection between facial cues and emotions (Lines 8 and 12), and the link between behavioral cues and emotions (Line 10).

01: Sherry: You think she’s ↑sad?
02: Sherry: Wonder why she’s ↓sad? ((pointing to a word))
03: Sherry: Now that word is ↓sa:d down there
04: Maci: Because she has a tear
05: Sherry: Because she has a ↑tear (.)
06: Sherry: Tsk (. That’s very good
07: Sherry: Now here she’s ha:ppy
08: Sherry: ((to Mimi)) °I can see her teeth Mimi° See her teeth?
09: Sherry: She’s ha:ppy=
10: Sherry: ((touching Mimi under the chin))
11: Sherry: =Show me happy
12: Sherry: =Show me a happy face (.)

During bookreading another teacher also made frequent references to emotion indicators, as shown in the following excerpt. She made repeated connections between emotions and indicators with phrases, such as “see happy,” “look angry,” and “they look like they are caring.” She also drew the children’s attention to behavioral cues that were important when interpreting emotions (see Lines 2 and 12 in the excerpt below).

01: Maureen: Do you see happy over here?
02: Maureen: Ooh I see that they’re hugging
03: Maureen: >They- feel< happy
04: Jarrett: [HAPPY]
05: Maureen: What else do you think they might feel?
06: Jarrett: Happy and
07: Carl: ANGRY
Teacher-child emotion discourse. Teacher-child interactions during emotion discourse formed the foundation of this study. As patterns of teacher-child communication emerged, the teacher emerged as a primary conversational partner, particularly during bookreading. Overall, one communication, or interactional, pattern was revealed by the data—the traditional teacher-child IRF pattern (see Cazden 1988; Mehan, 1979; Wells, 1993). In this pattern, the teacher initiates conversation, with the expectation of a response from the child, followed by an evaluative or feedback statement by the teacher. Figure P1 (Appendix P) illustrates a conversation from bookreading.

This interactional pattern was found in each transcript, with some variations to the pattern. The teacher utilized the IRF pattern in the following bookreading session (italics show text directly from book).

01: Maureen: Did you hear that†
02: Children: ((as a group)) YES
03: Maureen: *She took deep breaths* just like when we do a star or balloon.
04: Carl: ((off camera)) *WE JUST DID THAT FOR HER*
05: Jarrett: [We did]

09: Maureen: [We did] that for her=did it work?

10: Children: ((as a group)) YES

11: Maureen: Pay attention=find out-

12: Maureen: After awhile I feel better and I can have a good time again

13: Maureen: When you’re really mad about something is that a fun feeling?

14: Children: ((as a group)) No

What became evident after multiple reviews of the video clips and accompanying transcripts was that emotion discourse during bookreading (and occasionally breakfast) seemed to follow a similar progression. A more distinct interactional pattern was found in many of the emotion segments. Although the basic pattern was that of initiation-response-follow-up (IRF), when it occurred during conversations concerning emotions and feelings, this distinct pattern was more reflective and expansive of the IRF pattern. Subsequently, this pattern will be termed the emotion discourse process, as it consists of 4 separate stages (see Appendix Q, Figure Q1).

Stage 1 of the emotion discourse process included a statement made by either the teacher or child about emotions or feelings, frequently accompanied by behavioral cues (e.g., shrugging, laughing). Teachers from both classrooms encouraged children to express their emotions in appropriate ways, acknowledging, however, that “sometimes they use their hands.” Regardless of who initiated the emotion talk, Stage 2 consisted primarily of a teacher asking questions (i.e., clarifying question, extending question), and often repeating the original statement or reiterating the emotion expressed (referred to as uptake by Cazden, 1988). During Stage 2, teachers periodically used the book as a prop...
(e.g., pictures) or used behavioral cues to support understanding. Occasionally a child assumed the role of the teacher in this process. Questions (Stage 2) were observed to be something that the teachers considered very important, and during interviews the teachers reported that they wished they had asked more questions during interactions with the children. For example, when asked what she would have changed about any of her interactions with the children, Maureen indicated she would ask “maybe a little more open-ended questions relating it to their lives,” or “sharing a story, like... he [the book character] feels sad, what is something that makes you feel sad” (Interview, May 7, 2009). Stage 2 in the emotion discourse process allowed children to provide more details about their thoughts and feelings, or gave the children an opportunity to clarify their original statement about emotions.

Stage 3 in the emotion discourse process consisted of the child making a follow-up statement about emotions or feelings. This was done by answering the teacher’s questions, making a clarifying statement about his feelings, or using behavioral cues to reinforce a previously made statement. Stage 4 in the emotion discourse process was a transitional stage that: (a) moved the dialogue from the concept of emotion to the actual labeling of the emotion, (b) moved the dialogue from predominantly verbal behavior to behavioral cues, or (c) reaffirmed the child’s follow-up statement, providing affirmation and closure to that part of the discourse. The excerpt below demonstrates the emotion discourse process between Leanne and one of her preschoolers.

01: Abby: She’s sad ((growling noises in background))
02: Leanne: You think so?
03: Abby: He is (. ) angry: ((making angry face as she says it))
04: Leanne: [you think-]

05: Leanne: How do you know he’s angry?

06: Abby: Because his his hands (.) ((Demonstrates with hands)) scrunch up

07: Leanne: [oh:]

08: Abby: [cause] his fingers are like- ((making a fist))

Line 1 is Stage 1 (emotion statement) with the child making a statement about an emotion that is portrayed by a book character. Stage 2 (teacher prompting) is seen in Line 2, where the teacher asks a clarifying question “You think so?” The child makes another Stage 1 statement combining behavioral cues with the statement “He is angry.” The teacher seeks to expand on the statement (Stage 2) by asking another question (Line 5). The child then answers with another statement about the emotion (Stage 3) in Line 6. Finally, Stage 4 closes the emotion discourse process with a topical transition moving from verbal discourse to behavioral discourse (making a fist) in Lines 6 and 8.

The next excerpt displays the stages of this emotion discourse process, with the teacher initiating the conversation by stating that the child thinks someone is sad (Stage 1) after looking at a picture in a book. In this excerpt the teacher combines Stages 1 and 2 by making a statement and immediately prompting the child by asking a question (as well as making the connection with the emotion label and the text). The child answers in Stage 3 (as well as making the connection between the emotion “sad” and a behavioral cue “tear”), and the teacher completes the transition (begun in Line 2) from the concept of sadness (as an emotion) to the label of the emotion (Stage 4) in Lines 4 and 5.

01: Sherry: You think she’s ↓sad

02: Sherry: Wonder why she’s sad ((pointing to a word))
Because she has a tear

Now that word is ↓sa:d=

=down there

**Extending emotion discourse.** Within the context of bookreading, teachers demonstrated diverse methods to extend emotion discourse occurring between themselves and children, or children and their classmates. Appendix S includes a list of methods used in Classrooms 1 and 2 by teachers to initiate or extend conversations about emotions. Several methods actively drew upon the book itself for extending the emotion discourse (i.e., using drama to portray emotions, using scenarios to act out emotional events, using punctuation in the book, such as an exclamation point, to talk about a feeling). Four different methods were used by teachers in *both* classrooms during bookreading.

One method used by the teachers when children were in the midst of emotional events (e.g., conflict) was helping the children to choose and then say words appropriate to a particular classroom situation. The following excerpt from the final interview with Classroom 1 teachers highlights, not only the reasoning behind this particular method, but also the discourse pattern itself (Interview, May 14, 2009). When asked by the researcher how the children expressed their feelings most of the time, the teachers engaged in the following conversation:

01: Sherry: It depends on the time.

02: Luanne: Sometimes a lot of them

03: Sherry: Sometimes they use their hands . . . they get upset and use their hand and then we kind of intervene when the other one will come and tell us about it, about what happened.
Luanne: Someone will come tattle, come and tell us.

Yeah, or we'll see it happen or we intervene that way and we try and talk to them and ask them how that makes them feel . . . who do you need to talk to and so a lot of times we’ll call the child over there to take care of it, or we’ll have them go talk to them [another classmate] first. And they’ll come back and say, well, they won’t listen to me. And then we intervene again . . . We want them to do it independently first.

Sherry: Figure it out first themselves.

Yeah right.

Sherry: Cause that’s part of Creative Curriculum. Can they intervene? Can they take care of the situation on their own? Or can they do? Do they know what to do next? That way it enables us to see what we need to see.

Researcher: The situation ends up being resolved.

Sherry: Uh-hum, most all of the time.

Figure S1 (Appendix S) demonstrates how the teachers worked with the children when this method is applied. Additionally, the following conversation segment demonstrates one teacher’s use of this method during typical classroom activities to help children become more independent and resourceful.

Brianna: She um she Adria hit my ba:ck

Sherry: [oh]

Sherry: did you talk to Adria?

Brianna: =No

Sherry: =Well talk to Adria=

Sherry: =What happened?

Brianna: [I don’t like it] when you hit me on my ba:ck
Second, teachers used a book’s storyline to help children connect their lives at school with the book, as demonstrated in the following dialogue between a teacher in Classroom 2 and two children (italics indicates direct text from the book).

01: Maureen:  *Paul was still feeling bad as he walked by the playground.*

02: Maureen:  *He didn’t like it when the other kids called him oddball.*

03: Maureen:  Do you guys like it when other people call you names?

04: Carl:  No

05: Maureen:  What do you tell them when they call you [names]?

06: Dean:  [Please] stop!

07: Maureen:  Please stop.

Third, teachers in both classrooms used inflection, intonation, and prosody (i.e., the use of a sing-song voice) to alert children to emotional states. The following lines feature text from *Five Little Monkeys* and demonstrate how Maureen (Classroom 2) used this technique to highlight emotions.

01: Maureen:  *Excuse me says momma (. ) lights out (. ) sweet dreams (. )*

02: Maureen:  *and no: more monkeys reading in bed†*
Drama also was used by Maureen to portray emotions and feelings to the children. She manipulated her voice to portray different book characters and she raised her voice and whispered, as found in Line 4 above.

Although both teaching teams used some of the same strategies in their conversations regarding emotion, each classroom conducted bookreading differently and, therefore, utilized other methods of extending emotion conversations as well. Classroom 1 held bookreading in small groups of one teacher and 4-5 children. Leanne and Sherry used real-life emotional events to discuss emotions and feelings, regardless of the content of the book. Appendix T (Transcript 1) includes an example of their use of this strategy during bookreading. The teachers in Classroom 2 tended to use made up scenarios during bookreading to elicit discussions about emotions, such as in the following scenario:

01: Maureen: Jarrett, what if I think you hit Jennie and I said (.)
02: Maureen: Jarrett did you hit Jennie?
03: Maureen: Should you get angry at me or should you say (.). >tell me something<
04: Jarrett: °You should say you should°
05: Carl: °Get angry°
06: Maureen: You should get angry?
07: Maureen: Sometimes we do get a little angry but you need to use your words and say
08: Jarrett: Please STOP it
Patterns Found in Teacher-Child Emotion Discourse at Breakfast

While numerous examples of teacher communication patterns were observed during bookreading, it was challenging to ascertain specific interaction patterns during emotion discourse at breakfast in both classrooms. Much of the emotion discourse revolved around activities at the breakfast table, with children talking to each other about toys, family activities, or types of food. Teachers tended to ask questions of the children, complete attendance reports, and eat their own breakfast. In many respects, however, the same or similar patterns (emotion indicators, emotion discourse process/IRF pattern, and emotion discourse methods to initiate and extend conversations about feelings) emerged from the emotion segments, although lower in frequency, and without books or pictures as prompts. A brief description of those patterns used most frequently follows.

Repetition of words and sounds. As in bookreading, sometimes teachers took advantage of repetitive words, phrases, or sounds to converse with a child, particularly one with speech and language delays. In the following dialogue, the Classroom 1 teacher, Sherry, and two children, Adria and Mimi, have a brief conversation that includes emotions.

01: Sherry: =Drink your milk
02: Adria: I'm gonna drink my milk a:ll up (.)
03: Mimi: °Mmm-hmmm°
04: Sherry: =Mmm-h:mmm ((echoing Mimi’s tone))
Mimi: Mmm-h:mmm ((echoing))

Sherry: =Mmm-h:mmm↑ ((echoing))

Adria: I'm good↑ ((smiling))

Sherry: Yeah↓

**IRF pattern.** Teachers primarily utilized the IRF pattern even during breakfast. Leanne, in Classroom 1, reminded the children at her table that Abby was ill one day and not at school. She and Brianna (a child at the table) had a dialogue in which they came to an agreement that Abby would feel better and happier if the class made a card to send home. Although not so much an instructional teacher-child pattern in this case, this brief conversation is consistent with traditional IRF patterns, in which the teacher initiates and directs the conversation, with an expectation that the child will respond to queries, followed by a comment that appears to summarize or evaluate the child’s response. This is demonstrated in the excerpt below.

Leanne: Remember Abby doesn’t feel too ↓ good (. ) Her stomach ↓ hurts

Brianna: ° And she went ↑ home °

Leanne: = Yeah = she went home (. ) But > she’ll be back on < Monday

Leanne: Maybe we could make her a card today

Brianna: .hh ((Brianna nods affirmatively))

Leanne: You think > that would be ↑ nice <

Brianna: Yes ((noding))

Aaron: ° That would make her happy °

Leanne: [That] would make her ↑ happy = you ↑ think
10: Brianna: And that would make her feel [better]

11: Leanne: [You think] that would make her feel better

Guiding words in emotional events. Both classroom teams utilized either real-life situations or scenarios to help children cope with emotional events. Appendix U (Transcript 2) refers to such a situation in which one teacher, Leanne (Classroom 1), assisted a child in dealing appropriately with what could have turned into a conflict between two children at breakfast. Similarly, in the excerpt below June (Classroom 2) guided a boy at the breakfast table on the words to use to help defuse a potential conflict.

01: June: Were you trying to ↑help him? ((about another child))
02: Adam: Yeah I was getting the cereal (. ) He made me tattle
03: June: Oh but don’t point at him. I don’t think he li:kes that
04: June: °What are you going to do (inaudible)°
05: Adam: °Nothing-°
06: June: He said no (. ) Just say, Lemar, no thank you=I don’t ↑want any

Role of Emotion Discourse in the Classroom

The third research question considered the role emotion discourse played in the classroom as viewed from the perspective of the teachers. These findings are reported in terms of: (a) teacher role in social emotional development, (b) teacher perspective related to the importance of developing social emotional skills, and (c) teacher Discourse model (guiding principles) related to emotion discourse in the classroom, particularly as it supports in the development of preschoolers’ social emotional skills. These results were based on teacher interview data.
**Teacher role.** When asked about the role the teacher plays in social emotional development, the overwhelming response was one of being a role model. The teacher assistant in Classroom 2, Mary, asserted:

I think really a lot from us. I think we’re kind of like, they see us, like, throwing a fit, cause let’s say we’re talking about one of our supervisors. I mean, we come in here all mad, they’re going to think, well, you know, you did it, so why can’t I throw a fit? And I stomp my feet or roll my eyes at you? You did it when you walked in the door? So, I think our role to them is very important. We have to be the role models. (Interview, October 15, 2008)

**Teacher perspective.** Each teacher viewed emotion discourse in her classroom as extremely important, playing a vital role in each preschooler’s social and emotional development, as well as supporting cognitive development throughout the school years. The following excerpt from a teacher interview emphasizes the perceived importance of social emotional development for each and every child in the Head Start classroom (Interview, May 7, 2009).

```
01:  Researcher:   How important is social emotional development in your classroom?
02:  Maureen:   INCREDIBLY important. We have learned in the past that there are quite a few students who are very immature emotionally and unfortunately several of those are going to be going to kindergarten.
03:  June:   Kids can’t—you can’t focus or learn or, you know, be a part of having good friendships and stuff. All that comes after you learn [get] that emotional stuff down. It’s scary to think the kids (you can’t go through this), what’s going to happen when schools require so much more in kindergarten (inaudible) that require play and social interactions. It’s scary.
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Likewise, another teacher (Leanne) reiterated the importance of social emotional development as being “very important for them to succeed,” and “it is something we’re working on every day” (Interview, October 16, 2008).
In an effort to better understand teacher perspectives, the researcher conducted multiple readings of the teacher interview data and searched for key words that were used repeatedly. These key words, delineated into four themes, outline the Discourse model for the teachers participating in this study. Themes emerging from both sets of interviews were related to the concepts of teacher purpose, relationships, communication, and having a clear vision of what children are verbalizing and/or not verbalizing (see Appendix V, Figure V1).

**Discourse model.** Discourse models are “theories (storylines, images, explanatory frameworks) that people hold, often unconsciously, and use to make sense of the world and their experiences in it” (Gee, 2006, p. 61). All four teachers and the two teaching assistants appeared to subscribe to the same, if not a very similar, Discourse model when it comes to social emotional development and the role emotion discourse may play in the classroom.

In attempting to describe how important talking about emotions and feelings are in the classroom, the teachers contended that the foundation lay in *relationships*—relationships between adults in the classroom, children with their peers, and adults with children. Both sets of teachers described the relationship among the teachers themselves as being one of friendship. One of the key words across all four interviews was friend/friendship. The teachers in Classroom 1 stated, “Our relationship, our classroom adult relationship, is very good. We have a positive friendship type” (Interview, October 16, 2008). The teachers reiterated this point by stressing to the children in their classroom that “we try to show how our friendship works and how it can work with them.” Teachers in Classroom 2 noted that it is important at the very beginning of the day for children to
“bond and unite for the day” (Interview, May 7, 2009). Maureen stressed that point when she said that bookreading and getting ready for breakfast as a group is a kind of “bonding time” (Interview, May 7, 2009). When asked about the importance of the teacher-child relationship, Leanne answered:

> It is so important. . .If there’s not a relationship, there’s not trust. They don’t feel that you’re there to help them or don’t care about them. It’s, it’s just immeasurable—the importance of having a good relationship. Especially when a child’s very upset and out of control. Having a relationship, having someone, having an adult that’s there—they know is there to help them. (Interview, October 15, 2008)

Similarly, Maureen stated that “one of the most important things is gaining some sort of connection with the child” (Interview, October 15, 2008). She went on to indicate that without this connection, “they’re not going to respect you, they’re not going to listen to you, and, and you’re going to be fighting this ugly battle…” (Interview, October 15, 2008). Leanne strongly asserted that “until you build that connection with another child, it’s, it’s not that you dislike them, it’s just that you don’t feel that close to them as you do to the ones you know well” (Interview, October 15, 2008). Sherry, in Classroom 1, reported that “if you don’t get a bond there then it’s hard to work with a child that you don’t get a bond with. So you try and get as many bonds with each child as you can” (Interview, October 16, 2008). The teachers in both classrooms stated in some form or another that they viewed their classroom as a family. This was reiterated by the Site Director when she described both sets of teachers as seeing the children in their care as being one large family. Sherry put it most succinctly when she said:

> Friendships, family, we are like [that]. We treat each other as family. Like a school family here. And we try to stress that in here. We try to use that a lot. We develop that with songs and with our words and things like that. (Interview, October 16, 2008).
According to the teachers, they spent a great deal of their time observing the children during emotional events, getting a clear vision of what they are saying or not saying. All four teachers reported feeling comfortable delving into the feelings and emotions of the children in their care. Sherry said that they “try to sit down and talk to them if they’re upset and try to figure out why” (Interview, October 16, 2008). Maureen made a point of getting to know the children, especially the expectations they have in group time so that she is able to recognize when “kids need help with social interactions…and step in” (Interview, October 15, 2008). The teachers ask questions of the children, particularly when they witness an emotional event. Sherry indicated that they do a lot of that with her comment:

> We tell them to look at their faces, you know, look at their faces and look at your face. Why, you know, why is? What does their face look like? We do a lot of that. “Why is he upset?” “Would you like that, if someone took?” You know, kind of stop and think and to realize, to get them to understand what is better, “what should you have done differently?” Handle differently. We do a lot of that.

(Interview, October 16, 2008)

Observing and listening to the children as they talk about their feelings supports the next guiding principle of emotion discourse—communication of emotions.

Key ideas related to *communication of emotions* were used by teachers in both classrooms. These ideas were related to words, from teachers being aware of their own words, to teaching the children their words (with which to express themselves), to finding positive ways of saying things to each other. The following excerpt from the post-interview with the Classroom 2 teachers demonstrates the seriousness with which the teachers saw communication of emotions in their classroom (Interview, May 14, 2009).

01:  June: And I think there was a time when that wasn’t okay. I don’t know if it’s just me or maybe the way I was raised—my family didn’t talk about emotions, we were like very closed
off—and sometimes, sometimes I’m like to a kid, “that makes me mad when you do that.” There’s something about that that kind of like, it doesn’t seem like I should be telling a kid that he made me mad, but it is okay. Because they need to know that everybody has different feelings and emotions and what you say or do can impact others.

02: Researcher: Okay, so at the risk of sounding kind of corny, how does that make you feel?

03: June: I’m okay with it now, but it just took me a long time to get used to it.

04: Researcher: So, there was a certain discomfort?

05: June: Yeah, exactly.

06: Maureen: It was like that for me. When I’m mad it was never okay in my family to be mad “cause I’m your father, you shouldn’t be mad at me.” It goes to my head. But I’ll, I’ll tell the kids “I’m really mad instead of hitting someone I’m going to” and I’ll act out being a star.

07: Maureen: And sometimes I have to do it more than once or twice. I’ll say “I’m still angry” so I’ll need to do it again. This time I’m going to be a balloon and they’ll start saying “oh be a pretzel.” Be this and by the end

08: Researcher: And you’re doing this when you really are angry.

09: Maureen: I do it when I’m angry or not. I figure when I’m really mad is when it’s most effective for them to see.

Underlying the guiding principles of relationships, child observation, and communication of emotion is the purpose for emotion discourse, as viewed from the perspective of the teachers. Prevalent across teacher interviews and classroom observations (video clips and transcripts) were phrases related to keeping the child safe. Sherry (Classroom 1) stated the purpose in this way, “We’ve talked about how, what our job is and, you know, what we want to to—what we are here for really—to keep you [the child] safe. And your [the child] job is to help me keep you safe” (Interview, October 16,
2008). Likewise, Maureen (Classroom 2) described the process of talking with the children about keeping them safe and having the children repeat back to the teachers, “It’s our job to help you keep it that way” (Interview, October 15, 2008). Both classrooms have corners of the room designated as a “safe place” for the children. Leanne stressed, “It helps the child calm down while they’re there and keeps them calm, gives them the space to, uh, get themselves together” (Interview, October 15, 2008). The teachers tended to equate safety, particularly the safe place, with the classroom environment, stating that the teachers “make a big impact on the classroom environment in general” (Interview, October 15, 2008). Mary described the purpose of the safe place as a key piece to the entire classroom environment with this comment:

> Basically, it’s for kids who are having an emotional time or, you know, they just need their own time to themselves. They can go in the box. We have the breathing techniques posted up. We have pictures of their families in a binder in there. It’s so they can just relax and be by themselves and chill out. (Interview, October 15, 2008)

In sum, the participating teachers and teacher aids viewed themselves as a “we” rather than an “I.” Many of their references contained the pronouns “we,” “our,” and “us.” In several instances, teachers would correct themselves when referring to “I” or “me” and restate their position in the plural. Teachers alluded to a certain freedom in their classroom, not only to talk about emotions, but also to display their own emotions in appropriate ways at certain times with the children. The guiding principles of relationships, communication of emotion, clear vision of what children are verbalizing and/or not verbalizing, as well as their overarching purpose of keeping the children safe form a framework from which the teachers perceive themselves, the children in their classrooms, and the role of emotion discourse.
Chapter 5
Discussion

The focus of this section is on the major findings that provided not only the best insight into the teacher-child interactions about emotions, but also demonstrated the importance of teacher awareness in structuring activities, the role of emotion words teachers and children use, and the strategies teachers employ during emotional events. Since only four studies have examined emotion discourse involving preschool children (Burger & Miller, 1999; Feeny et al., 1996; Kyratzis, 2001; Laible & Song, 2006), none of which focused on teacher-child emotion discourse, the current study extends the literature in this area. An effort has been made, however, to look at similar studies involving discourse and teacher roles to provide a context for the findings from this study. Additionally, limitations of this study and implications for research and practice are discussed.

Emotion Words During Breakfast and Bookreading

The researcher found that bookreading elicited more emotions words from teachers and children than did breakfast across both classrooms. Breakfast will be discussed briefly, with a more lengthy discussion on the aspects of bookreading that seemed to elicit emotion conversations.

Breakfast. No studies examining teacher-child emotion discourse during mealtime or snack were found in the literature, although some studies were found that highlighted the advantages of teacher-child interaction during mealtimes in preschool settings. In the current study data revealed that at breakfast teachers did not prompt
children to discuss their feelings nor did teachers scaffold such dialogues, even when the content of conversations might have easily led teachers to do so in a natural way. In a study examining conversations at playtime, story time, and mealtime, Snow and Beals (2006) found these routines provide excellent opportunities for extended discourse between teachers and preschoolers, with greater exposure to more sophisticated vocabulary. Additionally, Snow and Beals found a relationship between teacher-child conversations during these routines and language acquisition and later academic success. Other research focusing on teacher-child conversations at mealtimes specifically reveal that these conversations enhance vocabulary acquisition (Beals, 2001; Snow & Beals), social emotional skills (Murray, 2000), and explanatory and narrative conversation skills (Dickinson & Tabors, 2001; Snow & Beals).

Breakfast was chosen as a context in the current study because it was thought to be a good setting for teacher-child conversations. As recommended by research (c.f., Dickinson & Tabors, 2001; Snow & Beals, 2006), both classrooms conducted breakfast family style, with children sitting together at a table, serving their own food, and then passing the bowls on to another child. Teachers prompted children to talk about topics at the table, but spoke little themselves, outside of comments relating to table manners or answering a direct question posed by the children. To discover possible reasons for such a paucity of emotion discourse, one needs to look carefully at the responsibilities incumbent on the classroom teachers during morning routines in the Head Start classroom.

Since breakfast was one of the first activities in the morning, teachers in both classrooms were responsible for helping children transition from home to the classroom,
conduct the meal in a family-friendly manner, and complete paperwork (e.g., attendance). Several of the video clips showed teachers seated at tables holding large binders on their laps, while helping the children serve themselves and simultaneously eat their own breakfast. Although not time-consuming, the paperwork seemed distracting for the teachers as they attempted to engage the children during the meal. In fact, a large portion of one breakfast period in Classroom 2 involved the teacher asking children around her about which children were absent that day. In addition to paperwork, teachers were called upon to help children as they arrived, talk to parents who accompanied their children to the classroom, and attend to constant interruptions from children, parents, therapists, adult volunteers, office or support staff, and other visitors to the classroom.

Conversations, once started, were often interrupted, and rarely finished.

Perhaps what may be taken away from the observed breakfast sessions was that teachers appeared to miss some opportunities for talking about emotions. On the one hand, a teacher might initiate a conversation about how a child is feeling and actually lead the child in a conversation about emotions. Yet, on the other hand, a teacher might very well miss a child’s reference to his/her feelings while insisting that he/she finish eating breakfast. Whether such interactions are intentional, teacher-initiated ones or responses to children-initiated conversations, unless teachers make themselves available as responsive, interested conversational partners, these interactions are not likely to occur.

**Bookreading.** Two elements emerged as possibly impacting the frequency with which emotion words were used by teachers and children during bookreading. The first was the structure of bookreading time, including the reading style of the teachers. The
second factor was the choice of books selected to be read. Both of these elements are discussed below with relevant literature highlighted.

**Structure of bookreading.** Bookreading was conducted in the morning in both classrooms, however the format differed. Findings reveal that Classroom 1 bookreading (conducted in small groups) elicited almost twice as many emotion words as Classroom 2 (conducted in one large group), thus raising the question about the efficacy of type of structure in supporting teacher-child conversations about emotions and emotional events. No studies that focused on social emotional development or emotion vocabulary in preschoolers were found that addressed the efficacy of large-group bookreading versus small-group bookreading. However, several studies that have examined correlates of emergent literacy development and vocabulary growth have endorsed the structuring of small groups of children during literacy or bookreading activities (see Connor, Morrison, & Slomisnki, 2006; Whitehurst et al., 1994)

While the question of reading-group size was not specifically examined in the current study, a similar question pertaining to bookreading and vocabulary development was investigated by Whitehurst et al. (1994). In this 1994 study, Whitehurst and his colleagues examined the effects of an interactive reading intervention based on the principles of dialogic reading. Children were read to in small groups of no more than 5 children and one teacher. Participants included 73 3-year-old children from diverse (50% African American, 25% Hispanic, 25% European American) low-income families across 5 child care centers. Children were randomly assigned to one of three groups (bookreading in small groups using dialogic reading principles, bookreading in small
groups with dialogic reading principles plus bookreading at home, or a play activity with limited teacher attention).

The intervention was designed to enrich children’s language development by actively engaging them during bookreading. Dialogic reading is based on three broad principles: (a) encouraging children to participate, (b) providing teacher feedback, and (c) adapting teacher reading styles to children’s maturing language abilities. Whitehurst et al. (1994) demonstrated that significant increments in children’s language development can result from early childhood teachers using dialogic reading principles, especially when conducted in small groups of children rather than a large-group bookreading environment.

The Whitehurst et al. (1994) study was replicated recently by Mincic (2009), who was interested in the emotional development, including the vocabulary development of preschoolers. Mincic examined 114 Head Start children (some enrolled in half-day and some enrolled in full-day sessions) who were randomly divided into two groups (control and intervention). In the control groups, bookreading was conducted as usual, with teachers reading books as they typically would read. In the intervention groups teachers used dialogic reading methods with small groups of children. Mincic reported that children in the half-day Head Start intervention classes demonstrated the greatest affective perspective-taking skills of all groups. Children in the full-day Head Start intervention classes, however, demonstrated the least affective perspective-taking skills. Mincic also reported that children in classes receiving the intervention (half- and full-day) demonstrated stronger vocabulary skills, particularly related to emotion, compared with children in classes not receiving dialogic reading techniques. Whitehurst et al.
(1994) concluded that dialogic reading principles can enhance the language development of preschoolers. Similarly, Mincic’s research shows that reading techniques like dialogic reading influence the growth of emotion vocabulary. It would be of value to further examine emotion discourse in light of reading techniques, such as those based on dialogic reading principles, including the size of the bookreading group in preschool settings.

While the teachers in the current study conducted bookreading in completely different structures, the teachers used the same bookreading teaching style. Although they never referred to their bookreading style as dialogic reading, the observed style was quite similar to this popular method. For instance, whether in small groups or one large group, the teachers attempted to engage the children as they listened to the story by asking “wh” questions (e.g., why, where) and providing encouragement and feedback to children’s responses. This occurred during broader conversations about the storyline, as well as during emotion discourse. While teachers in both classrooms used similar bookreading styles, the structure in which bookreading was held impacted the types of conversations and interactions that occurred between teachers and children.

Classroom 1 bookreading was a child-directed time (children selecting their own books) that allowed for free-flowing ideas, questions, and conversations to occur. Teachers reported that the children tended to choose books that the teachers had read previously (at undetermined times). As a result, the teachers read less from the books, but encouraged the children to look at the pictures and, whether from memory or by using content and clues to guess, tell the story using their own words. During one videotaped session in Classroom 1, Brianna “read” the book, to the other children sitting on the floor. Sherry (the teacher) interspersed questions, and provided some clarity, but basically
listened as Brianna told the story. Bookreading in Classroom 1 also provided a time for differences of opinion to emerge, which gave teachers opportunities to discuss children’s feelings and their subsequent actions. Classroom 1 teachers carried on extended conversations with the children during this time, using books as tools or props. It was apparent from the informal setting that the children felt free to change reading groups, exchange books, and comment on the stories.

Alternatively, bookreading in Classroom 2 was conducted as a large group, serving as a time when the children would “bond and unite as a group for the day” (Interview, May 7, 2009). It was teacher-directed with Maureen sitting in a rocker with the children arranged in a semi-circle around her. Each child sat on his name-place on the carpeted area. Typically, Maureen chose the book to read and tended to use the book as a springboard for other activities or conversations that would occur later in the day. For example, Maureen used a book about emergency vehicles to introduce the topic of vehicles and the people who drove them; as a transitional activity the children pretended they drove motorcycles to the breakfast tables. It was anticipated that the topic of vehicles would arise later in classroom discussions.

The expectations of the teachers in Classroom 2, as demonstrated by the large group bookreading, the seating arrangement, and the placement of the teacher as the central figure, may have exerted some influence on the expression of and discussion about children’s emotions. The structure of bookreading in Classroom 2 appeared to provide the children with less opportunity to display emotions and talk about their feelings in the context of the storyline, regardless of the teacher’s bookreading teaching style. While Maureen used dialogic reading techniques and she was engaging and
enthusiastic, she did not elicit the emotion discourse (and emotion vocabulary) to the same extent as the teachers in Classroom 1 during small group bookreading. Children in Classroom 1, seated in small groups, able to move around freely, and choose their own books, expressed their emotions and interacted with their teacher more frequently about those emotions. And, although this structure sometimes resulted in a cacophony of noise, it, nevertheless, enabled and empowered children to engage not only their minds to the story, but also their feelings. Clearly the differences between bookreading in Classroom 1 and Classroom 2 lay less with the bookreading style of the teacher and more with the structure.

Choice of books. No studies were found that have examined the role that books play in emotion discourse for young children. Studies that have looked at books and emotions have focused on parents reading to their preschoolers, particularly in terms of theory of mind and mental state language (Adrian, Clemente, Villanueva, & Rieffe, 2005; Symons, Peterson, Slaughter, Roche, & Doyle, 2005). The teachers in this study were free to choose whatever book and topic they wished for bookreading. Not surprisingly, the sessions that elicited the most frequent use of emotion words were those in which the chosen book was one that featured or emphasized feelings (e.g., What are You So Grumpy About?).

More emotion words were used by teachers and children during Session 2 of Classroom 1 bookreading than in any other session. During this particular session, Sherry sat with three children to talk about the pictures in two different books. Although never referred to by name, the two books apparently displayed pictures of children crying, hugging, and laughing. Sherry guided the conversation to focus on the emotions that
seemed apparent from the pictures. She brought up tears (i.e., crying) and sorrow, clutching teddy bears and loneliness, and included not only the original children reading with her, but also additional children who joined this conversation. Highly engaged, the children responded to each of her comments or queries, talked about their own feelings (as they related to the story), and expanded on one another’s comments about feelings. During Session 3, Leanne read the book *What are You So Grumpy About?* This book elicited much conversation about what made children grumpy. The book was engaging, fast-paced, with the narrator asking questions of the reader about what makes her grumpy or frustrated. Regardless of the negative or positive tone of each book, emotion words were used frequently during sessions where books either included direct questions about emotions or pictures that displayed emotions or feelings. Appendix W includes a partial list of books from Classrooms 1 and 2 that elicited conversations about emotions more than other books read during data collection.

**Emotion Words Used by Teachers and Children**

**Most frequently used emotion words.** One finding from the current study was that teachers and children most frequently used emotion words that have been described as basic emotions (see Bretherton et al., 1986) (i.e., *happy*, *mad*, *sad*, *angry*, and *grumpy*). These findings are similar to those found by Feeny et al. (1996) in a study that examined preschool children as they interacted with familiar adults (parent or teacher) about emotional experiences they may have had during a school day. The study focused on the emotion words used by children during narratives, as well as relationships between adult questioning or prompting and children’s responses. Feeny et al. reported that children
spoke about happiness and affiliation more frequently than any other emotional state, however, they did not examine teacher emotion words and they used strict operational definitions for what constituted emotion words (i.e., emotion words were to denote the emotional state rather than suggest the emotion).

Although the teachers in the current study indicated during pre- and post-interviews that they understood the value of and desire to delve deeply into the emotions of the children in their care, five emotion words were used repeatedly by teachers and children (happy, mad, sad, angry, grumpy). And while bookreading did elicit emotion words such as curious, loneliness, and furious, they were used exclusively by teachers and also came directly from the text of the book. In some cases, especially in Classroom 1, Sherry or Leanne would use the label itself (e.g., curious) and have the children repeat the word and talk about its meaning. Much of the time, however, the text drove the emotion words that were used. The teachers who took time to expand on words and ideas related to them, seemed to have more contemplative and substantive conversations with children about their feelings. Additional research is needed in this area, especially intervention studies to assess changes in children’s emotions as a result of changes in teacher’s behavior.

Sung (2006) examined what teachers believe about the role of socialization on children’s emotional development in preschool. She found that, although the three teachers in her study understood the importance of their role in children’s social emotional development and expressed a desire to empower children to appropriately express their emotions, the teachers did not tend to discuss emotions other than happy, mad, and sad. The teachers reported that they did not feel confident delving deeply into
children’s emotions in the classroom due to the following: (1) an inadequacy within themselves to appropriately help the children in their care, (2) lack of training on how to handle deep emotional issues, and (3) lack of time in the classroom schedule. Ironically, the teachers in the current study stated that they felt they received excellent training on one social emotional approach (Conscious Discipline©). They also reported that they received support from their administration, as well as from the overall Head Start administrative and teaching regulations (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1996) that allowed a better teacher-child ratio than can be found in many other preschool settings. These factors enabled them to provide the children with the time and emotional energy to have in-depth discussions about issues and emotions that were important to the children.

Observations during bookreading and breakfast revealed few emotion words beyond the basic emotional states (i.e., happy, mad, sad) or sound effects (e.g., “blech,” “eeewww”), which begs the question as to why teachers did not delve very deeply into children’s emotions, even though they expressed a desire to do so. In particular, during breakfast the teachers did not initiate conversations about emotions beyond the typical question “How did that make you feel?” The questions and comments heard during breakfast seemed superficial, typically comments about the children’s weekend or the food on the table (e.g., “Don’t you like applesauce?”).

Bookreading, on the other hand, provided more opportunities for teachers to discuss deeper emotions with children. The teacher in Classroom 2 appeared constrained from delving too deeply because of the group nature of this activity, although she indicated differently in the pre- and post-interviews. And, although the teachers in
Classroom 1 seemed to have a better bookreading structure for probing more deeply, they
did not typically do so. Whenever an emotion word emerged out of the book text that
might have produced a deeper conversation about the emotion, the teachers usually
transitioned from the concept of the feeling to the label. For example, one of the books
focused on children being curious and lonely. While the teacher in Classroom 1 did ask
what it meant to be curious and/or lonely, once several children responded, she focused
on the correct pronunciation by saying the word “curious” and having the children repeat
it several times.

**Types of emotion words used.** Children and teachers used various types of
emotion words during bookreading and breakfast. Overall, they used emotions words
related to caring and social concern (49%) most often. Similar to Burger and Miller
(1999) and Kyritzis (2001), broad definitions for what constituted emotion words were
used; this enabled a more realistic perspective of how preschoolers express their
emotions. Similar to these studies, results from the current study revealed that the context
of interactions influenced the type of emotion words used.

Little research examining the types of emotion words used by preschoolers has
been conducted. Thomas and Ostrosky (2009) examined the frequency and types of
emotion words used by preschoolers in five Head Start classrooms during Center Time.
They found that participating children used primarily emotion reaction words (e.g., “Stop
it you baby”), followed closely by those related to fear, anger, and aggression (e.g., “I’m
scared”). Emotion words related to caring and social concern (e.g., “I love you”) were
used to a small extent by the children, predominantly during dramatic play. Although
Thomas and Ostrosky did not examine the teachers’ use of emotion words, their findings
expanded earlier emotion word research by broadening the operational definitions as to the different types of emotion words used by preschoolers from low-income families.

When comparing the current study with that of Thomas and Ostrosky (2009), it is obvious that the frequency and types of emotion words used by preschoolers during play with their peers are different than emotion words used by children when interacting with their teachers. The emotion words used most frequently in the previous study were described as emotion reaction words—used primarily as spontaneous responses to events or other children (Thomas & Ostrosky, 2009). While preschoolers in Classroom 1 bookreading used emotion reaction words frequently, the children in Classroom 2 bookreading did not. What may account for the similarities and differences between emotion words used in the previous Thomas and Ostrosky study and bookreading in the current study may lie in the structure of the classroom routines. The setting of the previous Thomas and Ostrosky study was Center Time, largely child-directed, typically consisting of small groups of children, with teachers assuming a hand-off approach—very similar to that of Classroom 1 bookreading in the current study. Although the teacher was clearly present in bookreading, she was not the central figure, and the conversation flowed around her more than through her. She facilitated the conversation rather than leading it.

Like the Thomas and Ostrosky (2009) study, the preschoolers in Classroom 1 bookreading used emotion reaction words more frequently than the children in Classroom 2 bookreading (who used very few). The preschoolers (in the previous Thomas and Ostrosky study) in Center Time were often seen playing with a teacher present (e.g., having her hair done in Dramatic Play), but, similar, to Classroom 1 bookreading, the
conversation was led by the children, resulting in frequent use of diverse emotion words (Thomas & Ostrosky, 2009).

**Teacher-Child Emotion Discourse**

Teachers believed very strongly that they were role models for the children and that they played a role in the emotion discourse in the classroom, which was of paramount importance. Leawitt (1994) described the nature of the interactions between a child and her caregiver (i.e., teacher) as “responsive caregiving” (as cited in Einarsdottir, 2003, p. 105). In a study examining the role of preschools and preschool teachers, Einarsdottir further described responsive caregiving as “an understanding and appreciation of the child, reciprocity, and empathy” (p. 106). Similar to Sung’s study (2006), teachers in the current study expressed a desire to help the children in their care develop social emotional skills that would aid them as they matured and became involved in a variety of relationships. The teachers emphasized the value of children being able to talk about feelings, label them, and understand their own emotions. They spoke of being role models, thereby practicing what they intended to teach in the classroom.

**Influences on the teachers.** Bakhtin (1986) asserted that speech is continually being shaped by “voices” or discourses that serve to directly or indirectly influence interactions. Participating teachers were influenced by discourses that shaped their classroom behavior and speech, down to their choice of words. In the current study, a combination of the Head Start Program Performance Standards (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1996), Conscious Discipline© approach, and family perspectives appeared to form the “authoritative discourse” (those writings or beliefs that
exert power) for the teachers. Although there were many sources of “internally persuasive discourse” (those influential voices that tend to impact our speech and language, but that change over time), these teachers seemed to be impressed by voices that exerted much influence and tended to remain somewhat fixed in authority.

A Head Start teacher needs to be consistently mindful of the dichotomy between teaching social emotional skills and teaching academic skills to the children in her care (Thomas & Ostrosky, in press). In a case study that closely examined the implementation of a social emotional approach in one Head Start classroom, Thomas and Ostrosky described the balancing act that a teacher walks as she attempts to: (1) develop relationships with the adults with whom she works; (2) achieve an emotionally welcoming environment for the children in her classroom; (3) follow the dictates of Head Start Program Performance Standards in meeting academic outcomes; and (4) implement a newly adopted social emotional approach that provides specific guidance on social emotional development (Conscious Discipline©). Like the teaching team in this case study, the teachers from Classroom 1 and Classroom 2 walked the same fine line, seeking to fulfill academic outcomes for children and simultaneously further their social emotional development to prepare them for kindergarten. Also similar to the teaching team in the case study, the teachers in the current study sought to balance the influences of the Head Start Regulations and those of the Conscious Discipline© social emotional approach. And, of course, behind all of these influences, lay teachers’ own family histories and personal philosophies related to handling emotions and how they are to be discussed.
In 1965, Head Start began with the perspective of helping children from low-income backgrounds gain a foothold academically and play a part, albeit a small one, in breaking the cycle of poverty (Zigler & Valentine, 1979). Since that time, the Head Start Act has been reauthorized several times, resulting in the most current reauthorization (2007), which seeks to align the goals and objectives of Head Start with those of No Child Left Behind (2002). Thomas and Ostrosky (in press) found that the Head Start Regulations, in the form of the Program Performance Standards (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1996), are the backbone of much of what a Head Start teacher is expected to do and achieve with the children in her care. At the same time, Head Start teachers are taught from the onset that a main premise of early childhood programming is to ensure that children are socially and emotionally ready to enter kindergarten. Only recently (since 1997) have the more academic standards and child outcomes been published, resulting in stressed teachers who often are unsure of the endgame (Thomas & Ostrosky, in press).

The Head Start regulations mandate that local programs choose and implement at least one social emotional curriculum for each classroom. Like the Head Start program in the Thomas and Ostrosky (in press) case study, the program in the current study chose to adopt a broad, sweeping social emotional approach for the entire program and then provide supplementary curricula to classroom teachers. The administrative team chose Conscious Discipline©, renowned for its approach to revitalize all of the relationships in the program, beginning with the adults as they interact with each other.

Conscious Discipline© is a classroom management program (also called a social emotional philosophy or approach) that empowers teachers and children (Bailey, 2000).
The management program is based on brain research, child development information, and developmentally appropriate practices. It is designed to “provide systematic changes in schools by fostering the emotional intelligence of teachers first and children second” (p. 11). The tenets of Conscious Discipline© have been influenced by research from the fields of medicine and science (c.f., Bohr, 1958), psychology (c.f., Polter-Efron & Polter-Efron, 1995), and education and learning (c.f., Elias, Bruene-Butler, Blum, & Schuyler, 1997). No research on the efficacy of this classroom management program with preschool children has been published, although some research has been conducted with middle-school aged children. Bailey developed the management program using, what she termed, seven basic skills (i.e., composure, encouragement, assertiveness, choices, positive intent, empathy, consequences) for “brain smart classroom management” (p. 15).

Last, but not least, family perspectives, values, and mores about emotions lent a strong voice that teachers in the current study heard. Bakhtin (1986) emphasized that everyone has influential voices that emerge and tend to induce specific behaviors or attitudes. All of the teachers in the current study reported a struggle within themselves as they balanced their own family issues regarding emotions and emotional expression with the principles found in Conscious Discipline©. Bowlby (1969) discussed the importance of a caregiver fully understanding her own issues related to interactions and relationships while seeking to better understand the children in her care. While none of the teachers or teaching assistants reported dysfunctional family backgrounds or relationships, all indicated to a certain extent that, in the course of implementing the program, they had been reminded of constraints placed upon them by parents and grandparents. For
example, June indicated that she found that she needed to continually practice the techniques from Conscious Discipline©, stating that:

One thing about Conscious Discipline© is it is something you need to practice in here [the classroom] on a daily basis because for the majority of the people it’s such a change in language from the way you were raised, from what you heard as a child, what you have in your mental tape recorder. (Interview, May 7, 2009)

Nowhere is the influence of these authoritative voices—in the form of regulatory documents, curricular material, and family belief systems—more evident than in the teacher communication patterns that emerged from the current study. Conscious Discipline© provided the teachers with, not only a tool with which to teach and practice social emotional skills and skill building, but also a philosophy from which to guide the children in the very words they use to develop those skills. One pattern of communication that was revealed by close examination of the emotion discourse segments was one in which the teachers helped children find their words, particularly emotion words, during emotional events. Teachers guided the children during conflict or times of great emotion to find the words they should use to appropriately express their feelings (see Figure T6). Of course, of additional impact would be other forms of professional development, such as inservice or preservice opportunities. Although the teachers in the current study were not asked to provide specific training they may have received on children’s social emotional development, these types of opportunities can have great effect on teachers’ practices.

One of the main tenets of Conscious Discipline© is to remind children to use their words. Both classrooms are riddled with words; walls are covered with colorful pictures and comments (some questions, some statements) that seem to form a mantra for the teachers and children about using words to express themselves. Teachers in both
classrooms used this communication pattern regularly, whereby they gave children words to use when an emotional event arose. In a study by Girolametto et al. (2000) that examined teacher directiveness during bookreading and play dough activities, the researchers found that bookreading elicited more types of directive behavior, such as managing the behavior of children (e.g., calls for attention), asking yes/no questions, and directing conversations. Although directiveness was not examined in the current study, teachers did appear to use directives, such as telling children the words to use (in an effort to guide children through emotional events). Directives may have been used to forestall further conflict with peers, or simply to instruct children on appropriate ways to express emotions. Regardless, teachers regularly utilized this strategy of prompting children to use their words during bookreading and breakfast.

**Emotion discourse process.** Although much has been written about the IRF instructional patterns in classrooms, a focus on IRF during emotion discourse with young children has not been studied. While the teachers in Classrooms 1 and 2 used the IRF pattern consistently, a distinct pattern of interaction emerged from those segments of conversations devoted fully to talking about feelings. This pattern of interaction, termed the *emotion discourse process* (see Figure Q1), emerges out of the traditional IRF pattern, but allows the teacher to probe what Kagan (2007) calls the “blended emotions” (rather than single-state emotions) of the children—those feelings that are complex and frustrating to understand and express (p. 8).

A conversation, once turned to emotions, tends to become more reflective and focused on words and sometimes accompanying behavior. The emotion discourse pattern might be viewed as occurring in stages, in which one conversational partner begins the
conversation by making a statement about an emotion (Stage 1). This is followed by the
teacher (usually) prompting further discussion by asking a question or making a follow-
up statement. Stage 3 includes the child’s response, typically followed by a more
directive teacher statement that, in effect, moves the conversation to a different level
(Stage 4).

The emotion discourse process observed repeatedly in the current study resulted
in the child elaborating on the emotion he expressed as a result of the teacher prompts (in
Stage 2). The conversation risked coming to an end without these prompts, whether
questioning or commenting, by the teacher. With the teacher prompts, children were
encouraged to say more, to explain, to express the feeling, or to demonstrate their
feelings (using their face or body). During the last stage the teachers appeared to take the
children to another, although more superficial level. Stage 4 almost seemed anti-climactic
when viewed from the perspective of Stages 1 through 3 (which brought the child to a
better understanding of his emotion, or gave the teacher more insight into his emotion).

In the current study the teachers appeared to transition rather abruptly to Stage 4,
particularly after helping children to better articulate their feelings in Stages 2 and 3.
Teachers in Classroom 1 and Classroom 2 used this transition, during bookreading more
than breakfast. The teachers tended to do one of three things in this stage of emotion
discourse. First, they moved from focusing on the concept of the emotion (e.g., feeling
angry about an event) to the label of the emotion (e.g., angry or mad) by pointing out to
the children that they not only can feel anger but also can read the word “angry” or
“mad.” In several instances, teachers asked children to repeat the emotion label. Second,
teachers moved from talking about the children’s emotions to either a demonstration of
accompanying behavioral cues or, third, simply reaffirming what the children had already expressed. Regardless of the type of transition done in Stage 4, teachers appeared to bring the conversations about emotions and feelings to a sudden close. Perhaps this abrupt ending to the emotion discourse was related to the discomfort teachers may have felt in delving deeply into children’s emotions (see Sung, 2006), or the thought that preschool children are not ready to confront many of the “blended emotions” as described by Kagan (2007). It also is possible that the teachers felt constrained by their own classroom schedule and objectives to spend too much time on such conversations (Thomas & Ostrosky, 2009; in press).

Inherent in the discussion about the emotion discourse process is the function of these four stages for teachers, particularly as they indicated a desire to delve more deeply into the emotions that the children in their care expressed. Stage 1 appears to serve as an introduction to a conversation about emotions or an emotional event, with Stage 2 characterized by teacher prompts, giving children an opportunity to elaborate. Stage 3 ideally serves as a period when children share elaborated responses. Preferably, the stages should be cyclical, with the discourse partners volleying back and forth between Stages 2 and 3. In terms of the activities, very rarely did such volleying occur between teachers and children. This may have been due to the constraints of the environment, schedule, or the activity itself. It was disappointing to see that in many of the observed activities, the four stages, particularly Stages 2 and 3, did not appear to function in a manner that encouraged teachers to explore the complex emotions that children experience daily. Similarly, this same issue arose as the teachers’ discourse model was revealed through the course of the study.
**Teacher Discourse model.** Bakhtin’s (1986) “authoritative discourse voices” can clearly be heard when considering the influence of Conscious Discipline© and the Head Start Performance Standards on the classrooms in the current study. In one sense the belief system held by these teachers has already been described, namely, one of modeling healthy relationships, using emotion words, guiding children in choosing and using emotion words to express themselves, and instructing children to achieve positive academic and social emotional outcomes. It is important, however, to clearly delineate the guiding theory to which these teachers ascribe that serves as their discourse model (Gee, 2006). Above all, the teachers in the current study saw themselves as women whose primary job was to keep their students safe. This phrase about safety was heard in many of the conversations during bookreading and breakfast. If one describes their discourse model as a set of pillars, “keeping the children safe” (as their primary purpose) is the first pillar and makes way for the other pillars in the discourse model—relationships, communication of emotion, and a clear vision of what children are verbalizing and/or not verbalizing (see Figure W7). The teachers all defined themselves in terms of relationships, with each other and with the children. They each, in their own way, spoke of the importance of authentically communicating their own emotions, and then allowing the children to express their feelings. And, finally, the teachers asserted that one of the most important elements in teacher-child interaction was one of ongoing child observation, particularly during times of emotional upheaval or excitement. The teachers and teaching assistants emphasized the need for a clear vision of what the children are saying, or, sometimes more importantly, what they are *not* saying related to their feelings or emotional events.
The discrepancy, however, between what the teachers expressed in the interviews and what was observed concerning the depth to which teachers probed into children’s emotions, needs to be acknowledged and briefly discussed. While the teachers in both classrooms expected to discuss emotions with the children in their care, and certainly appeared to believe that they did just that, the observed activities (i.e., bookreading, breakfast) did not reveal these deeper conversations between teachers and children. This is not to say that these conversations never occurred; they, in all likelihood, did occur during the day—perhaps outside during play, at the art table, or at an unexpected moment during the classroom schedule—and, most likely, in a private setting between one teacher and one child. Further research that examines these conversations at other times during the day needs to be done in order to provide a more complete picture of what may not so much be a discrepancy in the current study’s findings, but missed opportunities to observe and record these conversations.

Implications for Teachers

Five primary implications are identified for teachers. First, the findings emphasize the importance of teachers to carefully consider how they structure bookreading, including their reading style. All of the teachers in Classrooms 1 and 2 were enthusiastic, realized the value of reading to children, and understood the importance of having conversations about emotions with individual children or groups of children. Yet, the structure of bookreading, from the number of children involved, to the way seating was arranged, to the manner in which the teacher conducted herself during this interaction, played a part in ensuing emotion discourse.
Second, since sessions that included books emphasizing emotions and emotion labels elicited more emotion words from both teachers and children, it is imperative that classrooms are well-stocked with reading and picture books that explicitly talk about children’s feelings. At the very least, classrooms should include pictures and posters that display emotions. Perhaps teachers need to search out and purchase or borrow from the library the books that provide the following: (1) emotional events (of characters) that are integrated naturally into the storyline, (2) emotional language (i.e., emotion labels) that are a naturally-occurring part of the story text, and (3) pictures that powerfully and realistically portray children and adults (i.e., book characters) expressing feelings.

Third, it is imperative that teachers be honest appraisers of their own emotions and feelings, particularly in regard to the origins of those emotions (e.g., family belief systems) and the ways in which emotions can be expressed and/or discussed. Teachers in the current study reported resisting talking about their own feelings with their students, but shared that in some cases it was healthy for children to know that teachers got angry or frustrated, as well as felt embarrassed and excited. Fourth, it is important for teachers to know they are supported by program administration, particularly when it comes to helping children cope with and talk about their emotions. Teachers need to know that it is alright to take the time and invest the effort in sensitively talking with children about what they are feeling, regardless of time constraints and various expectations on them. Although the observed activities in the current study did not appear to offer opportunities for in-depth conversations about children’s emotions, it is essential that teachers realize the importance of, not only being emotionally prepared for such conversations, but also being available during the context of busy, sometimes chaotic early childhood.
environments. Such availability might include flexibility in scheduling, arranging areas in the room for private conversations, and giving children opportunities to genuinely express their emotions—regardless of how inopportune or inappropriate they may seem in the context of the active classroom.

And, finally, it is essential for programs to provide ongoing professional development on effective strategies concerning, not only teaching, but also modeling, positive and healthy social and emotional skills. While Head Start programs are mandated to provide classrooms with social and emotional curricula, accompanying professional development and training opportunities are not always provided for teachers. It is crucial for teachers to not only feel comfortable, but also competent, talking about emotions with children.

**Limitations of the Study**

The current study has several limitations that must be discussed. The first limitation involves the small sample size. Although most of the children in Classrooms 1 and 2 and all of the teachers and teaching assistants participated in the study, the sample size was small (total of 36 participants). The findings, therefore, should not be generalized beyond these two Head Start classrooms.

The second limitation was inadequate equipment. The audio equipment played an important role in the study, ensuring that conversations were heard clearly. And, although somewhat concerned by the noise level of the classroom, particularly during breakfast, the researcher was dissuaded by the classroom teachers from using individual microphones or a table microphone to record conversations. While the videotape
recorded the conversations adequately, there were instances in which the researcher (in transcribing later) needed to rely on the teachers repeating children’s words for an accurate rendering of the conversations.

Similarly, the video equipment (i.e., camcorders and video tapes) did not prove to be entirely reliable. Every session was recorded using a different university camcorder, rendering it difficult to rely on the equipment. Two sessions were unable to be transcribed due to interference on the tapes. Additionally, the Site Director interview could not be transcribed word for word because the “voice-activated” feature of the tape recorder did not work consistently.

Third, the primary researcher was responsible for collecting all data through videotaped classroom observations and teacher interviews. The researcher transcribed all of the data, working with graduate students for interobserver agreement. Additionally, all analyses were led by this researcher, providing a limited perspective on the observations and interviews.

**Future Research and Conclusion**

Emotion discourse between teachers and preschool children is one area in which there exists rich opportunities for research. Three suggested ideas for future research follow. A closer examination of the impact of large-group versus small-group bookreading on teacher-child conversations about emotions would be valuable and contribute immensely to existing literature. Bookreading is a classroom routine that is done in different ways in preschool classrooms across the country. Teachers not only use various instructional and reading methods to have storytime, but also organize the
activity and environment in diverse ways. More research on the size of bookreading
groups, as well as the actual structure of the environment (e.g., seating arrangement of
children and teacher) is needed.

Second, an investigation of the conversations about feelings that occur between
teachers and preschoolers during other meals or snacks in Head Start would be helpful in
that it would provide a comparison to the breakfast in the current study. Perhaps teachers
are less distracted during snack or a later meal (e.g., lunch) when attendance is complete
and morning interruptions are finished. Additionally, of value would be an examination
of snack or meal time in other preschool settings, such as pre-kindergarten programs or
child care settings. And, finally, researchers need to expand the literature on relationships
that may exist between books for young children with a plethora of emotion words and
pictures displaying feelings and the teacher-child emotion discourse that occurs.

Vygotsky (1978) emphasized the importance of language in children’s learning,
not only of their culture and community, but also of their own inner being, albeit their
emotions. The teachers in the current study sought to better understand the feelings of the
children in their classrooms. The pre- and post-interviews demonstrated that these four
teachers had strong beliefs that they are responsible for making sure that children in their
classroom are understood, well-cared for, listened to, and loved (see Pianta, 1999).
Understanding that most, if not all, of the children in their care are from families living in
chronic poverty (see McLoyd, 1990), these teachers and teaching assistants viewed their
role as providing responsive caregiving and instruction (Einarsdottir, 2003). Dahlberg,
Moss, and Pence (1999) described this type of teacher-child relationship as intense,
“implying a complex and intense web connecting people, environments, and activities”
(as cited in Einarsdottir, p. 109). This belief system emphasizing the critical importance of positive relationships with children appears to be quite prevalent among teachers and caregivers of the youngest population, as summarized by a participant in Einarsdottir’s study, “Respect and loving care always comes first” (p. 109). That same idea or concept was expressed by Head Start teachers in Thomas and Ostrosky’s studies (2009; in press) and echoed by the teachers in the current study.
References


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Appendix A

Index of Studies of Emotion Discourse: Preschool Children
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<td>European American descent with children between 2.6 and 3.0</td>
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<td>Feeny, Eder, &amp; Rescorla, 1996</td>
<td>Examined the feeling state of preschoolers’ narratives</td>
<td>28 white middle and upper-class preschool children; 16 boys and 12</td>
<td>Adult-child conversations about the school day; Data collected 4 times</td>
<td>Children talked most frequently about affiliation;</td>
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<td>Examined general age and gender patterns</td>
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Appendix B

Informed Consent Packet for Teachers
Dear Head Start Teacher,

I am a doctoral candidate in the College of Education at the University of Illinois. My advisor, Dr. Michaelene Ostrosky, and I would like to invite you and your Head Start classroom to participate in an exciting research project looking at the conversations about emotions teachers and preschool children have in the classroom. Conversations in the classroom, particularly about emotions or emotional experiences, can be powerful, as you well know! The relationship between teachers and children is among the most influential relationship a child can have. Research tells us that the teacher-student relationship, especially as it is played out on a daily basis, impacts academic achievement, peer relationships, and the overall atmosphere of the classroom. Dr. Ostrosky and I would like to spend some time in your classroom for the next 4 weeks, videotaping two different daily activities. We hope to observe some of these interactions between you and the children in your classroom as you deal with and talk about emotions and/or emotional events during the day.

Our research involves four types of data collection procedures. One method is the observation of the classroom conversations about emotion between teachers and children and the writing of fieldnotes. A second method will be the video and audio recording of these conversations during two different activities—book reading and snacktime. The third method will be conducting two interviews with teachers. In addition, a member of the administrative team will be interviewed during the course of the study. Finally, parents will complete a brief demographic questionnaire and checklist about their child’s social emotional development. Each of these methods will help us to gather the most accurate information about conversations about emotions or emotional events.

Observations, Video and Audio Recording. We will observe and videotape two activities 1 day a week for 4 weeks in your classroom in the fall. First, we would like to observe an activity with a small group of children that would include reading a book together and discussing it. Book-reading need not be any longer than 15 minutes in length, depending on the book, the attention span of the children, and the schedule for the day. While we do not plan on choosing the books to be read, we would ask that you try to focus on the emotional aspects of the characters or plot or periodically choose a book that deals with children’s emotions. Second, we would like to observe snacktime or mealtime, depending on your preference and the schedule for the day. As you know, children love to talk about themselves and their family and friends during meals, and we hope to be able to observe some of these interactions.

We anticipate spending no more than 45 minutes per day in your classroom on one day a week over the 4 week time period. In order to accurately capture the interactions (verbal and nonverbal) we plan on using video equipment in your classroom. The video equipment will consist of a free-standing camcorder located approximately 10-15 feet from the activity itself. The microphone will be located on the table (during mealtime/snacktime) and near the group on the floor during book reading. At least one researcher will be in attendance with the recorder at all times. We understand that having observers and video and audio equipment can be quite intrusive in the classroom. To facilitate this, we will plan on spending at least one to two weeks...
in the classroom simply observing you and the children without equipment. We hope that the children will get used to seeing us and feel more comfortable with us in their classroom. And, with your permission we will plan on introducing the equipment to the children with an activity specifically designed for that purpose.

Informed letters of consent will be sent to each parent. Any child who does not return a signed consent form will not be video or audiotaped in any way; Nor will any of the conversations or interactions that they are a part of be used in the data analysis. To ensure that only children for whom signed informed consent forms have been returned are recorded, we may ask that you group such children together for observational and recording purposes.

Teacher and Administration Interviews. Each participating teacher will participate in two interviews—at the beginning of the study and at the conclusion of the study. The second interview will include viewing one videotaped classroom activity and discussing it as part of the concluding interview. Your participation will help us to learn more about children’s emotions and the way they express them, as well as the nature of your conversations with them during discussions of or times of great emotion. Your participation in this project is entirely voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time during the course of the study without penalty. You may also decline to answer any of the questions in the teacher interviews or on the daily checklist. At any time you may listen to or view the tapes and may specify any parts you do not wish to have displayed or included in the data analysis. All of your information will be kept confidential, with pseudonyms used in place of identifying information. For participating you will receive $50 each and classroom books on emotions.

This study will ultimately be written as a paper to complete a dissertation for Ms. Thomas. Journal articles and conference presentations may be developed from this research project. You may request a copy of the final research report after the project is completed. The audio- and videotapes will be in the possession of the researchers and will be used for comparative and instructional purposes, such as a class at the University of Illinois or conference presentation.

We do not anticipate any risk for you greater than normal life. Should you experience discomfort or embarrassment at being audio- or videotaped, you may ask that we not record on that day and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time. Please contact Ms. Thomas or Dr. Ostrosky with any questions about this research project. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research, please contact the Bureau of Educational Research at the University of Illinois at (217) 333-3023. You may also contact the University of Illinois Institutional Review Board at 217-333-2670 (may be called collect) or irb@uiuc.edu. In the consent form on the next page, we discuss the specifics regarding the videotaping procedures and later analysis, use, and disposition of the videotapes. The researchers will pick up the signed consent form.

Sincerely,
Teacher Informed Consent
Page 3: Consent Form

Teacher's Name: ________________________________

Date: ________________________________

Name of Project: The Nature of Teacher-Child Interactions in Emotion Discourse

Researchers' Names: Dr. Michaelene Ostrosky and Dawn V. Thomas

I consent to participate in the project named above. I have read the explanation of the procedures to be followed and was assured of the following:

1. I can withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. I can choose not to answer any questions during the observations and interviews. Any questions or inquiries I may have will be answered.

2. The analysis of the audiotape and videotape data obtained in this study will be confined to the investigator and researcher. I may listen to the audiotape and/or view the videotape at any time during the study. I can specify that any part of the data not be displayed to others or used in data analysis.

3. The audiotapes and videotapes will remain in the possession of Dr. Ostrosky and Dawn V. Thomas, and that they will be used only for comparative and instructional purposes.

4. Pseudonym (an alias or false name) will be used for any individual in this study in any write-up or published report of this research project.

5. Any child who does not return a signed consent form will NOT be used in any audiotape or videotape. Nor will any conversation including that child be used in data analysis.

Teacher Signature: ____________________________________________
Appendix C

Informed Consent Packet for Administrators
September 2008

Dear Head Start Administrator,

I am a doctoral candidate in the College of Education at the University of Illinois. My advisor, Dr. Michaelene Ostrosky, and I would like to invite you to participate in an exciting research project looking at the conversations about emotions teachers and preschool children have in the classroom. Research tells us that the teacher-student relationship, especially as it is played out on a daily basis, impacts academic achievement, peer relationships, and the overall atmosphere of the classroom. Dr. Ostrosky and I would like to spend some time in several classrooms for the next 4 weeks, videotaping two different daily activities. We hope to observe some of these interactions between teachers and the children in their classroom as they deal with and talk about emotions and/or emotional events.

Our research involves four types of data collection procedures. One method is the observation of the classroom conversations about emotion between teachers and children and the writing of fieldnotes. A second method will be the video and audio recording of these conversations during two different activities. The third method will be conducting two interviews with teachers. In addition, a member of the administrative team will be interviewed during the course of the study. Finally, parents will complete a brief demographic questionnaire and checklist about their child’s social emotional development. Each of these methods will help us to gather the most accurate information about conversations about emotions.

One interview will be conducted (audiotaped and transcribed) with a member of the administrative team during the course of the study. Your participation will enable us to present a broader picture of the teachers and classrooms by providing contextual information about the site and Head Start program as a whole. Your participation in this project is entirely voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time without penalty. You may also decline to answer any of the questions in the administrative interview. At any time you may listen to or view the tapes and may specify any parts you do not wish to have included in the data analysis. All of your information will be kept confidential, with pseudonyms used in place of identifying information.

This study will ultimately be written as a paper to complete a dissertation for Ms. Thomas. Journal articles and conference presentations may be developed from this research. You may request a copy of the final research report after the project is completed. The audio- and videotapes will be in the possession of the researchers and will be used for comparative and instructional purposes, such as a class at the University of Illinois or conference presentation. We do not anticipate any risk for you greater than normal life. Please contact Ms. Thomas or Dr. Ostrosky with any questions about this research project. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research, please contact the Bureau of Educational Research at the University of Illinois at (217) 333-3023. You may also contact the University of Illinois Institutional Review Board at 217-333-2670 (may be called collect) or irb@uiuc.edu. In the consent form on the next page, we discuss the specifics regarding the audiotaping procedures and later analysis, use, and disposition of the tapes. The researchers will pick up the signed consent form.
Administrator Informed Consent
Page 2: Consent Form

Administrator's Name: _____________________________________________

Date: __________________________

Name of Project: The Nature of Teacher-Child Interactions in Emotion Discourse

Researchers' Names: Dr. Michaelene Ostrosky and Dawn V. Thomas

I consent to participate in the project named above. I have read the explanation of the procedures to be followed and was assured of the following:

1. I can withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. I can choose not to answer any questions during the observations, interviews, or in completion of the daily interaction checklist.
2. Any questions or inquiries I may have will be answered.
3. The analysis of the audiotape data obtained in this study will be confined to the investigator and researcher. I may listen to the audiotape at any time during the study. I can specify that any part of the data not be used in data analysis.
4. The audiotapes will remain in the possession of Dr. Ostrosky and Dawn V. Thomas, and that they will be used only for comparative and instructional purposes.
5. Pseudonym (an alias or false name) will be used for any individual in this study in any write-up or published report of this research project.
6. Any child who does not return a signed consent form will NOT be used in any audiotape or videotape. Nor will any conversation including that child be used in data analysis.

Administrator Signature: ___________________________________________
Appendix D

Informed Consent Packet for Parents
September 2008

Dear Parents,

I am a doctoral candidate in the College of Education at the University of Illinois. My advisor, Dr. Michaelene Ostrosky, and I would like to invite your preschool child to participate in an exciting research project looking at the conversations about emotions teachers and preschool children have in the classroom. Conversations about emotions and emotional experiences can be powerful, as you well know! The relationship between the teacher and the child is one of the most important relationships a child can have. Research tells us that the teacher-child relationship, especially as it plays out on a daily basis, impacts future academic work in school, relationships with friends, and the overall atmosphere of the classroom. Dr. Ostrosky and I would like to spend some time in your child’s classroom for the next 4 weeks, videotaping two different daily activities. We hope to observe some of these interactions between your child’s teacher and children in her classroom as they deal with and talk about emotions and/or emotional events during the day.

We will be observing your child’s classroom a couple of times a week during a book-reading time between the teacher and children, as well as snack time. Both offer wonderful opportunities for discussions about our feelings and emotional events. In order to accurately capture the interactions (verbal and nonverbal) we plan on using video equipment in the classroom. The video equipment will consist of a free-standing camcorder located approximately 10-15 feet from the activity itself. The microphone will be located on the table (during mealtime/snacktime) and near the group on the floor during book reading. At least one researcher will be in attendance with the recorder at all times.

We understand that having observers and video and audio equipment can be quite intrusive in the classroom. To facilitate this, we will plan on spending at least one to two weeks in the classroom simply observing the children without equipment. We hope that the children will get used to seeing us and feel more comfortable with us in their classroom. At the conclusion of this letter is a consent form that we hope you will sign, allowing us to observe and record some conversations between your child and his/her teacher. Any child who does not return a signed consent form will not be video or audiotaped in any way; Nor will any of the conversations or interactions that they are a part of be used in the data analysis.

Your child’s participation will help us to learn more about children’s emotions and the way they express them, as well as the nature of conversations with their teacher during discussions of or times of great emotion. Your child’s participation in this project is entirely voluntary, and your child may be withdrawn at any time during the course of the study without penalty. At any time you may listen to or view the recordings made of your child and may specify any parts you do not wish to have displayed or included in the data analysis. Additionally, we would like you to complete a brief checklist about your child’s social emotional development. Your decision to allow your child to participate or not participate in this study will have no effect on their current or future relationship with the Head Start program.
All of your child’s information will be kept confidential. Pseudonyms (false names) will be used instead of identifying information. Any video clips that contain identifying information will not be used for dissemination purposes; that information will also be changed by the use of pseudonyms during data analysis. This study will ultimately be written as a paper to complete a dissertation for Ms. Thomas. A journal article and conference presentation may be developed from this research project. You may request a copy of the final research report after the project is completed. The audio- and videotapes will be in the possession of the researchers and will only be used for comparative and instructional purposes.

We do not anticipate any risk for your child greater than normal life. Sometimes children may experience discomfort or embarrassment at being audio- or videotaped. Should your child demonstrate discomfort and not wish to be taped, you will be contacted and your child will be withdrawn from the study. All efforts will be made to make the taping a pleasant and fun experience for the children. Please contact Ms. Thomas or Dr. Ostrosky with any questions about this research project. If you have any questions about your rights or your child’s rights as a participant in this research, please contact the Bureau of Educational Research at the University of Illinois at (217) 333-3023. You may also contact the University of Illinois Institutional Review Board at 217-333-2670 (may be called collect) or irb@uiuc.edu. In the consent form on the next page, we discuss the specifics regarding the videotaping procedures and later analysis, use, and disposition of the videotapes. The researchers will pick up the signed consent form.

Sincerely,

Dawn V. Thomas  
(217) 244-3346  
dthomas3@uiuc.edu

Michaelene Ostrosky  
(217) 333-0260  
ostrosky@uiuc.edu
Parent Informed Consent
Page 3: Consent Form

Child’s Name: ____________________________________________

Date: ____________________________________________

Name of Project: The Nature of Teacher-Child Interactions in Emotion Discourse

Researchers’ Names: Dr. Michaelene Ostrosky and Dawn V. Thomas

I give my consent for my child to participate in the project named above. I have read the explanation of the procedures to be followed and was assured of the following:

1. I can withdraw my child from the study at any time without penalty.
2. Any questions or inquiries I may have will be answered.
3. The analysis of the audiotape and videotape data obtained in this study will be confined to the investigator and researcher. I may listen to the audiotape and/or view the videotape at any time during the study. I can specify that any part of the data not be displayed to others or used in data analysis.
4. The audiotapes and videotapes will remain in the possession of Dr. Ostrosky and Dawn V. Thomas, and that they will be used only for comparative and instructional purposes.
5. Pseudonyms (an alias or false name) will be used for any individual in this study in any write-up or published report of this research project.
6. Any child who does not return a signed consent form will NOT be used in any audiotape or videotape. Nor will any conversation including that child be used in data analysis.

Parent/Guardian Signature: ____________________________________________

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
APPROVED CONSENT
VALID UNTIL

OCT 20 2008
Appendix E

Participant Roster Sheet
Table E1

*Classroom 1 Bookreading Roster*

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*Child moved during data collection*
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*Bookreading conducted in large group. All children involved every day except when absent (AB)

**No consent

***Maureen only read during bookreading

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149
### Table E3

**Classroom 1 Breakfast Roster**

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* Moved during data collection
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* No consent
Appendix F

Teacher Interview Protocol
Teacher Pre-Interview

1. I want to thank you so much for agreeing not only to talk to me today, but also for participating in this research project. If I were to ask you to describe your relationships (in general) with the children in your classroom in one or two words, how would you describe them? I realize the descriptions might be different for various children, but overall how would you describe then?
   a. Would you like to elaborate on that description?
   b. Why ____________________ (put in the word or phrase they used)?

2. How important would you say the teacher-child relationship is?
   a. What kind of impact does it have on you?
   b. What kind of impact does it have on the child?
   c. What kind of impact does it have on the classroom (e.g., environment, other children)?

3. Your program is implementing the Conscious Discipline approach to social emotional development and learning. What kind of impact has this program had on you?
   a. What kind of impact has this program had on your interactions with other teachers or staff?
   b. On your interactions with the children in your classroom?
   c. What kind of impact will this program have on the children you have in your classroom now?

4. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate your day-to-day interactions with many of the children in your classroom?
   a. Why do you say __________ (put their rating in)?
b. Can you identify the reasons behind that rating?

5. How important is social emotional development in your classroom?

6. How do you see your role in a child’s social emotional development?

7. How would you describe the conversations about emotions or emotional events in your classroom?
   a. How often do they occur in a day?
   b. How do you tend to handle these conversations?
   c. How comfortable do you feel during these conversations?
   d. How comfortable do you think the children are during these conversations?

8. Could you describe an interaction between you and a child where the child is obviously expressing his feelings about something or someone?
   a. How did he express his feelings?
   b. How did you respond to his expression of emotions?
   c. What was his response to you?
   d. How was the situation resolved, if, at all?

9. Thank you so much for taking the time to talk with me. Is there anything else you would like to say about your interactions or conversations about emotions?
Teacher Post-Interview

1. First of all, I’d like to set the stage to get a little classroom context in the classroom. Both of these activities, bookreading and breakfast, were in the morning. Do you think that made any difference to the type and level of conversation you and the children may have had about emotions?

2. Each classroom had a different way of conducting breakfast. Could you describe breakfast in your classroom?

3. Each classroom also had a different way of conducting bookreading. Could you describe bookreading in your class?

((Video clip is viewed by researcher and teachers))

4. Can one of you, or both of you, describe the interaction between you [the teacher in the video clip] and either a particular child or the children as a whole?
   a. In this video clip, what would you rate (1 being poor and 5 being excellent) the interaction during that particular clip?
   b. Were you surprised by anything you saw on the video clip?

5. You have now been implementing Conscious Discipline© for a year with these children. I wonder what kind of impact it has had on this particular school year?
   a. Could you elaborate?

6. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent how would you rate your day to day interactions with the majority of your, the children in your classroom?

7. Would either of you like to share anything else about conversations about emotions or emotional events in your classroom?
Appendix G

Administrator Interview Protocol
Administrative Interview

1. I want to thank you so much for agreeing to talk with me today. I am so excited about this research project and am enjoying working with the teachers and children in their classrooms! If you were to identify an overarching goal of this program regarding the relationship between the teachers and children, how would you describe it?

2. Early in the study you identified and selected the teachers participating in this research. The criteria included being in Head Start for at least one year, using English in the classroom, has experience implementing the social emotional approach or a curriculum in the classroom, and has received positive supervisory evaluations on interactions with children in the classroom. Other than meeting those criteria, how would you further describe each of the teachers you selected for participation?
   a. [Prompt] Would you care to elaborate on your description?
   b. Are there any examples of interactions that you would like to share that you have observed in the classrooms?

3. This Head Start program is currently implementing the Conscious Discipline approach to social emotional learning in its classrooms. What is it about these teachers or classrooms that you think allows for successful implementation of this philosophy?
   a. Are there other classrooms where the philosophy is not implemented so successfully?
   b. What do you think may be the issues or challenges in those classrooms?

4. As you know, one thing I am looking at is communication patterns used by teachers and children as they talk about emotion or an emotional event. What have you, as [part of the child development management team] or [the site director] noticed in your classroom
observations about the conversations teachers have with children about their feelings and emotions?

a. [Prompt, such as How do you mean?; Would you care to elaborate on that?; Could you give me an example of something you observed?]

5. What kind of professional development does Head Start offer in the way of children and emotions in the classroom?

a. Discuss the types and topics of training opportunities.

6. Thank you so much for your time. Is there anything you would like to ask me or add?
Appendix H

Parent Questionnaire
Parent Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions regarding the child.

1. What is your child’s name? _____________________________________________

2. What is your child’s date of birth? ________________________________________

Circle the following regarding you and your relationship to the child.

3. Gender of person completing this questionnaire: Male Female

4. Your relationship to this child:
   a. Father
   b. Mother
   c. Grandmother/Grandfather
   d. Sibling
   e. Other (_____________________________)

5. Your age range:
   a. Under 20 years of age
   b. 20 to 25 years of age
   c. 26 to 29 years of age
   d. 30 to 35 years of age
   e. 36 to 45 years of age
   f. Over 45 years of age

6. Your education:
   a. Less than High School
   b. High School Diploma/GED
   c. Some College Coursework
   d. Associate’s Degree
   e. Bachelor’s Degree
   f. Master’s Degree or higher
7. Daily routines you are involved in with this child during a typical day (circle all that apply):
   a. Waking up and dressing
   b. Eating breakfast, lunch, dinner (_______________________________)
   c. Dropping off or picking up at Head Start classroom
   d. Playing, watching TV, other family activities (_______________________)
   e. Bedtime activities
   f. Other (describe:__________________________________________________

We all experience emotions and feelings during the day. Sometimes our children feel happiness, sadness, or anger. Sometimes they are bored or frustrated. And they usually let us know how they are feeling. There are many opportunities to talk about feelings with our children—when they have had their feelings hurt, they are sad about a pet running away, or scared of the dark. Please answer the following questions regarding any such conversations you and your child may have had about emotions (both negative and positive emotions).

8. How often do you and your child have conversations about his/her emotions?
   a. Never
   b. 1 to 3 times a day
   c. More than 3 times a day

9. When do you seem to have most of your conversations about emotions?
   a. During meals
   b. During play
   c. During bedtime activities
   d. Other (___________________________________________)
Appendix I

Operational Definitions: Types of Emotion Words
Physiological Sensation (adapted from Dunn, Munn, & Bretherton, 1987).

*Positive and negative* words and phrases that enable a child to express his emotions relating to bodily sensations and physical states, including words expressing physical preferences.

Examples: disgust (“It’s yucky”); hunger (“I’m hungry”); physical comfort (“I need a hug,” “kiss better”); sick/pain (“I hurt,” “ouch”)

Caring and Social Concern (adapted from Howe, 1991)

*Positive and negative* words and phrases pertaining to the pleasure of, affection for, or disliking of objects (i.e., toys, dolls) and people; illustrating an individual’s nurturing concern toward and opinion of themselves and/or others; and describing the emotional state of a child.

Examples: affection (“I love you”); pleasurable description of self/others (“I’m happy,” “That’s funny”); dislike, hate (“I hate you”); distress (“I’m so sad”); concern or sympathy (“I’m sorry”)

Fear/Anger/Aggression (adapted from Miller, 1982; Miller & Sperry, 1987)

*Positive or negative* words and phrases describing fear, frustration, anger, and aggression.

Examples: fear (“I’m afraid”); anger (“I’m so mad”); aggression (profanity); malicious teasing

Emotion Reaction

*Positive or negative* words and phrases that typically do not seem to be emotion words yet express what a child is feeling and demonstrate the expressed emotion indirectly.

Example: expressions of surprise or inflection, negative or positive (“whoa,” “oh man,” “yippee,” “good job”); directives (“here we go,” “why you steal my toy?”)

Sound Effects

Are *not* words found in a dictionary.

Example: (“blech,” “uh-ha,” “grrr”)
Appendix J

Transcript Notation
some [talk]  Square brackets indicate the onset ([) and end (]) of
[overlap]  overlapping talk
end of line=  Equal signs indicate latching (no interval) between utterances
=start of line  Equal signs indicate latching (no interval) between utterances
(,)  Untimed pause (just hearable)
-1.2  Pause timed to nearest tenth of a second
bu-  A dash shows a sharp cutoff of speech
Underlining indicates
under; over  emphasis
CAPITALS  Capital letters indicate talk that is louder than surrounding talk
°soft°  Degree signs indicate talk that is more quiet than surrounding talk
>fast<  Less than and greater than signs indicate talk that if faster or
<slow>  slower than surrounding talk
ho:me  A colon indicates an extension of the sound or syllable that it follows
↑ word↓ word  Arrows indicate marked rising/falling shifts in intonation in talk following
hah  Laughter
.hh  Audible breath
hh  Audible breathing out
(inaudible)  Speech that cannot be heard
(unintelligible)  Speech that cannot be understood
Nonverbal
((laughs))  behavior
[at the table]  Explanatory information
...  Ellipses indicate omitted talk

(Adapted from Gail Jefferson, 1989)
Appendix K

Bookreading Emotion Words for Classroom 1 and Classroom 2
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Table K1

*Classroom 1 Bookreading*
Table K2

*Classroom 2 Bookreading*

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Appendix L

Individual Frequencies for Bookreading and Breakfast
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<td>Maci</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>3, 8</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arif</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4, 10</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Nakia</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>4, 2</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mimi</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>4, 2</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>95</td>
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<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aaron</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4, 1</td>
<td>Hisp</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* AA=African American; EA=European American; Hisp=Hispanic

**Reported in frequencies

** Unidentified child was 1 child or a small group of children speaking in unison

Note: Table in order of largest number of emotion words used to smallest number during Bookreading
Table L2

*Classroom 2 Individual Frequencies*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Race/Ethnicity*</th>
<th>ASQ-SE Score</th>
<th>Number of Emotion Words: Bookreading**</th>
<th>Number of Emotion Words: Breakfast**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jarrett</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>5, 1</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4, 6</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carl</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4, 8</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lemar</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4, 9</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pierre</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4, 9</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jose</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4, 9</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owen</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4, 9</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Braden</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4, 9</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>Unidentified Child***</td>
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<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naseem</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4, 9</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marlene</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4, 9</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4, 9</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anai</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4, 9</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cindy</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4, 9</td>
<td>AA</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jennie</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4, 9</td>
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<td>40</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abigail</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4, 9</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>Renee</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4, 9</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*AA=African American; EA=European American; Hisp=Hispanic

**In frequencies

***Unidentified Child is 1 child or a small group of children speaking in unison

Note: Table in order of largest number of emotion words used during Bookreading to smallest number
Appendix M

Frequency and Percent of Emotion Words During Bookreading
Figure M1

Frequency and Percent of Emotion Words During Bookreading

Classrooms 1 and 2 Bookreading

Classroom 1 Bookreading

Classroom 2 Bookreading
Appendix N

Breakfast Emotion Words for Classroom 1 and Classroom 2
Table N1

Classroom 1 Breakfast

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Teacher Emotion Words*</th>
<th>Valence*</th>
<th>Teacher % of Total Emotion Words**</th>
<th>Child Emotion Words*</th>
<th>Valence*</th>
<th>Child % of Total Emotion Words**</th>
<th>Total Emotion Words*</th>
<th>% of Emotion Words per Idea Unit**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>168</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* In Frequencies
** In Percentages
Table N2

*Classroom 2 Breakfast*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Teacher Emotion Words*</th>
<th>Valence*</th>
<th>Teacher % of Total Emotion Words**</th>
<th>Child Emotion Words*</th>
<th>Valence*</th>
<th>Child % of Total Emotion Words**</th>
<th>Total Emotion Words*</th>
<th>% of Emotion Words / Idea Unit**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8 1</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2 13</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 2</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 1</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1 6</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4 8</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5 2</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6 8</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6 2</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2 1</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
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<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
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<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6 0</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0 10</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>27 13</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>15 41</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In Frequencies  
**In Percentages*
Appendix O

Frequency and Percent of Emotion Words During Breakfast
Classrooms 1 and 2 Breakfast

Classroom 1 Breakfast

Classroom 2 Breakfast

Figure O1

Frequency and Percent of Emotion Words During Classrooms 1 and 2 Breakfast

178
Appendix P

Initiation-Response-Follow-up Pattern
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiation</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Follow-up</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher: What are you so grumpy about?</td>
<td>Student: Ahhh</td>
<td>Teacher: Yeah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher: <em>Did you get up on the wrong side of the bed?</em></td>
<td>Student: ((nods affirmatively))</td>
<td>Teacher: You did?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher: Did somebody leave the toilet seat up and you didn't notice?</td>
<td>Student: No, he did</td>
<td>Teacher: He did?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher: Student: ((nods affirmatively))</td>
<td>Look at the toilet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher: Were all your favorite clothes in the laundry so you had to wear an outfit that looked goofy?</td>
<td>Student: ((nods affirmatively))</td>
<td>Teacher: Did it look goofy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher: Does he look silly?</td>
<td>Student: Yeah</td>
<td>Teacher: My dad looks like that when he goes golfing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*italics = book quote*

Figure P1

Initiation-Response-Follow-up Pattern
Appendix Q

Emotion Discourse Process
Figure Q1

Process of Teacher-Child Emotion Discourse During Bookreading Activity
Appendix R

Comparison of Teacher Bookreading Methods
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classroom 1</th>
<th>Classroom 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use of authentic conflict to discuss emotions and feelings</td>
<td>Use of scenarios to elicit discussions about emotions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References to emotions and behavioral cues</td>
<td>References to emotions and behavioral cues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of rhythmic repetition and prosody</td>
<td>Use of rhythmic repetition and prosody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relates book plot to children's real lives</td>
<td>Relates book plot to children's real lives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of vocal inflection and intonation to reflect emotion</td>
<td>Use of vocal inflection and intonation to reflect emotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Conscious Discipline© activities</td>
<td>Use of Conscious Discipline© activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of traditional teacher-student conversation pattern</td>
<td>Use of traditional teacher-student conversation pattern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of book text to demonstrate typical facial cues</td>
<td>Use of book text to demonstrate typical facial cues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of labeling emotions in phonetic ways</td>
<td>Use of structure of book to elicit emotion talk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of words to get children's attention</td>
<td>Use of drama to portray emotions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix S

Teacher Guidance in Using Emotion Words
Figure S1

Emotion Discourse “Teacher Guidance in Using Words”
Appendix T

Transcript 1: Using Real Life Events
01: Brianna: Sherry
02: Sherry: Yes?
03: Brianna: Sherry
04: Sherry: Yes?
05: Brianna: She um she ANakia hit my ba:ck
06: Sherry: [oh]
07: Sherry: did you talk to ANakia?
08: Brianna: =No
09: Sherry: =Well talk to ANakia=
10: Sherry: =What happened?
11: Brianna: [I don’t like it] when you hit me on my ba:ck
12: Sherry: Say (. ) well that hur:t me
13: Brianna: That hurt me.
14: Sherry: [That was] not being friendly
15: Brianna: [I’m goin]
16: Sherry: [Sit there] and talk to her.
17: Brianna: ((walking to ANakia))
18: Sherry: Say (. ) that was be- not being frie:ndly to me
19: Brianna: That’s not being friendly to me
20: Zameer: Sherry
21: Sherry: We don’t hit in Head Start
22: Zameer: [Sherry]
23: Sherry: [What are you] gonna do next time?
24: Zameer: [Sherry]
25: Sherry: What should we do different next time?
26: Zameer: [Sherry]
27: Sherry: ((to ANakiah)) Why did you hit her-
28: Sherry: Did you want her attention or (.) what did you want? Why did you hit a- her?
29: ANakiah: °I was looking for the book°
30: Sherry: Oh: you was looking for that book
31: Sherry: So instead of hitting her next time could you go up and say (.)
((tapping on shoulder to demonstrate)) Can I look at that book please†
32: ((ANakia nods affirmatively))
33: Sherry: Would that be better?
34: Zameer: [Sherry]
35: ((ANakia nods affirmatively))
36: Sherry: ((to ANakia)) You want to try it?
37: Zameer: [Sherry that’s]
38: Sherry: Go try it go try it
39: Zameer: [Sherry]
40: Sherry: ((to ANakia)) °Go try it°
41: Zameer: [Sherry (unintelligible)]
42: ((ANakiah goes over to Brianna and stands there))
43: Sherry: °Tap her on the shoulder°
44: Sherry: =Tap her on the shoulder=
45: Zameer: [(unintelligible)]

46: Sherry: = She doesn’t know you’re talking to her

47: ((ANakiah leans down and taps her on the shoulder))

48: Sherry: Say her name (. ) Say her name↑

49: ANakiah: Brianna (. ) Brianna

50: Brianna: =What↑

51: ANakiah: (inaudible)

52: ((Girls exchange books))

53: Sherry: LOOK how that worked↑

54: Sherry: That worked so well, didn’t it? (. ) Sure that was very good
Appendix U

Transcript 2: Guiding Words to Prevent Conflict
01: Leanne:   Sam
02: Leanne:  why don’t you ask Brad to scoot up
03: Leanne: so you can get by?
04: Leanne: >Sam<
05: Leanne: °Brad°>could you scoot up<
06: Leanne: so I can get ↑by
07: Leanne: Right?
08: ((Brianna shows her the empty milk cup))
09: Leanne: Oh
10: Leanne:  good
11: Brianna:  [Can I?]
12: Leanne:  [Yes]
13: Aaron:  [Can I get] down
14: Leanne:  =Si
15: (2)
16: Leanne:  ((to Mimi)) Mimi
17: Brianna:  ((crossing in front of camera)) [SCOOT UP] BRICE
18: Leanne:  ((to Brianna)) Uh- uh-
19: Leanne:  That wasn’t very friendly:
20: Leanne:  Ask him again (. in a friendly voice (.)
21: Leanne:  Ask him again in a friendly voice ((stroking Brianna’s back))
22: (1.2)
23: Leanne: Say it in a friendly voice
24: ((Brianna looks away smiling))
25: Leanne: How could you say it? (.)
26: Leanne: Brianna
27: Leanne: °How could you ↓say it°
28: Brianna: (inaudible)
29: Leanne: ↑Huh
30: Leanne: °You could say°
31: Leanne: excuse me Brad
32: Leanne: ((to Brad)) Brad
33: Leanne: >did you hear her<?
34: Leanne: Oh: look
35: Leanne: >he scooted up< for you
Appendix V

Teacher Discourse Model
Figure V1

Discourse Model of Teachers
Appendix W

Partial Booklist
Partial Booklist:

*Three Little Kittens* by Paul Galdone

*When I Feel Sad (The Way I Feel Books)* by Cornelia Maude Spelman

*What Are You So Grumpy About?* by Tom Lichtenheld

*Go Back to Bed!* by Ginger Foglesong Guy