Reflections of Parents and Teachers on the Process of Daily Transitions Into Infant-Toddler Child Care

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, Beatrice and Harold Gurley, who were my first teachers; my husband, Dr. Marc Traum, who has always supported and encouraged me, and granddaughters, Payton and Kelsey Lewis, who are my inspiration.

Acknowledgments

As a doctoral student in the Department of Child and Families Studies (CFS) at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, I have come to know and benefit from the encouragement, support and guidance of many of my professors, administrative staff at CFS and student colleagues. As this journey comes to a close, I want to acknowledge several of these individuals who have been especially helpful along the way. First of all, I want to express my deep appreciation for my dissertation committee chair, Dr. Mary Jane Moran. She has been an amazing teacher, mentor, and coach throughout all aspects of my academic experience at the University, and she has prepared me for my next steps in teaching at Central Michigan University. Dr. Moran not only taught me the skills I needed to be a qualitative researcher, she taught me the art that is required to *look and look again*.

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I am especially grateful to the teachers and parents who agreed to participate in my study. Their generosity of time, and willingness to share their experiences so openly in the spirit of learning and self-reflection was truly inspiring. Additionally, I want to acknowledge the Director and Site Director of the center. These individuals were helpful in multiple ways throughout the study, and they made sure to provide coverage for participant teachers during research activities that required they be outside of the classroom (e.g., VSRIs).

Finally, I want to sincerely thank my family and friends who have been extraordinarily patient and understanding while I have been away completing this degree. I will be forever grateful for their willingness to wait for me and their confidence in my potential.

Abstract

This qualitative study considered seven parents' and three teachers' values, beliefs, perspectives and meanings of within the context of daily home-to-child care transitions in one infant-toddler center in a Southeastern land-grant university early childhood laboratory school. Sociocultural and attachment theories anchored the study and the developmental niche conceptual framework informed the methodology. Primary methodologies included naturalistic observations, video tapes of transitions and parent and teacher interviews using the video stimulated recall interview (VSRI) method. Data were analyzed using the constant comparative method, creating vignettes, and ensuring trustworthiness through the creation of thick descriptions, triangulation of data, and reflective journaling. Findings include: (a) teachers partnered with parents to create and implement individualized strategies in order to support children and parents during the process of daily transitions, (b) parents and teachers had different perspectives and often assigned diverse meanings to the same event during transitions, (c) parents and teachers periodically felt uncertain, apprehensive and/or tense during daily transitions.

This study contributes new knowledge to the field of early childhood education, and is the first study in the U.S. to uncover particular aspects of the psychology of teachers and parents, by revealing some of the ways parents and teachers experience daily transitions differently through juxtaposing and weaving together their thoughts and feelings. Data was collected through VSRIs in a novel way with teachers and parents, a method typically used with teachers only. Vignettes were a unique aspect of this study; not only providing a compelling form of presentation, but also a valuable approach to

data analysis that illuminated the nuances of transitions. As such, an attempt to delve more deeply into parent' and teachers' values, beliefs, perspectives and meanings assigned to transitions took place. Finally, the notion to broadly define the process of home-to-child care daily transitions and include time throughout when teachers, parents and children reflect on, plan and prepare for transitions was proposed..

Implications include the need for longitudinal studies in diverse settings and the use of methodologies that make visible social-emotional and pedagogical aspects during these brief, intimate, yet public times and professional development that includes these understandings.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Increasing numbers of infants and toddlers spend time in organized child care centers in the U. S. (Laughlin, 2013; Smith, 2002; U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1990). Twice daily, during home-to-child care transitions, parents and teachers caring for young children (a) exchange information about events in children's homes and child care settings as well as children's development and caregiving needs (Perlman & Fletcher, 2012, p. 541), (b) discuss their caregiving routines and customs and their values and beliefs (Reedy & McGrath, 2010), and (c) build meaningful relationships.

The primary purpose of this qualitative study is to explore and describe parent-teacher interactions (i.e., communications, behaviors) within the context of home-to-child care daily transitions in infant-toddler classrooms and to gain an understanding of the meanings assigned to the experiences; the underlying values and beliefs that inform them; and the perceptions of parents and teachers, both shared and individual. In my experience, the phenomenon of daily home to child care transitions is a broader concept than the typical definition used in research. Parents' and teachers' experiences expand beyond the contextual boundaries of physical space (i.e., classroom, child care center) and temporal units (i.e., morning drop off and afternoon pick-up hours), and likely includes time in family homes, during transport to the center and parent work hours. Although I recognize the need for and value of further exploration of parents' and teachers' experiences of daily transitions across this more comprehensive context, the focus of this study is limited on daily transitions within the classroom setting. Therefore, in this study, *daily transitions* are defined as physical, social, practical and social-

emotional experiences involved in handing over young children between parents and teachers typically occurring twice daily (morning and afternoon/evening) in early care and education settings.

As a licensed clinical social worker and infant mental health specialist working in a range of settings and with populations over the past 25 years, I have developed a deep appreciation for attending to and understanding the beliefs, values and emotional experiences of infants' and toddlers' parents and teachers. For example, during the year prior to conducting this study's first phase, I observed parents' and teachers' interactions during daily transitions in several of the study site's infant-toddler classrooms. This experience of "being there" (Schwandt, 2007, p. 206) prompted me to reflect on the phenomena of daily transitions in infant-toddler child care settings. Wondering about the verbal exchanges and non-verbal interactions occurring between parents and teachers during transitions, I listened carefully to their conversations' emotional tone. I heard parents and teachers not only discuss the young children they mutually cared for, but also express concern for each other and share stories about their lives outside of the classroom. For example, I noticed that one mother consistently thanked each of the teachers for caring for her son before leaving each day and another mother consistently asked teachers what they did over the weekend before she shared her child's weekend experiences with them. These observations inspired me to deeply and purposefully consider the meanings that parents and teachers ascribe to these daily transitions and to pursue these foci in this study.

On numerous occasions throughout my career, I have observed the power of relationships between providers (e.g., teachers, home visitors) and parents in different

practice settings, including child care. I have also seen both positive and negative outcomes when the complex, intimate interactions between providers and parents were misunderstood. How might these outcomes be different if individuals had an opportunity to step out of the immediacy of their work together and more closely observe and reflect upon their underlying beliefs, values, perceptions, and the meanings assigned to these times with each other? Would this opportunity for reflection provide individuals, and me, new insights and bring to light those elements of the relationships that are often difficult to see, define, and make sense of? These questions informed the development of this study's research question:

> What stands out to parents and teachers in terms of what they say, do, think, and feel during daily home-to-child care transitions in one child care setting?

It is important to gain a deeper understanding of parent-teacher relationships, specifically those that unfold during daily transitions in infant-toddler child care centers, as one step toward improving the quality of practice in infant-toddler child care in the U.S. As a scholar, I am interested in considering the nuances of relationships that contribute to the young children's and families' well-being in a wide range of cultural contexts (i.e., homes, child care settings, communities, countries). As a social constructivist, my stance has shaped the study design to include the voices of parents and infant-toddler teachers in data collection and analysis to ensure that their unique perspectives are heard and reported, in turn helping ensure trustworthiness. I have drawn upon a naturalistic inquiry paradigm, employing most of the characteristics of this approach including: (a) classroom observations; (b) researcher as primary data gatherer; (c) use of tacit knowledge; (d) purposive sampling; (e) inductive data analysis; (f)

emergent design; and (g) trustworthiness criteria (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, pp. 39-43). This study's data sources include classroom field notes of parent-teacher interactions during daily transitions, parent and teacher interview transcriptions, and videotapes of daily transitions.

Video-stimulated recall interviews (VSRIs), as a methodological tool contributed to the ability of parents and teachers to recall and revisit their behaviors, feelings and thoughts during daily transitions, and enhanced the reflective process as these parents and teachers considered what stood out to them. For teachers, VSRIs also provided a window into particular transition moments, that they assessed as important indicators of when they met their transition goals with parents and children.

This qualitative study is anchored by two theories: sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1962, 1978; Rogoff, 2008) and attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969, 1973); and this study's methodology is informed by the developmental niche framework (Super & Harkness, 1986, 1997). Two concepts from sociocultural theory are particularly salient. The first is the belief that individuals learn or acquire knowledge and skills through a cognitive process involving engagement with others in shared experiences mediated through discourse and tools (Vygotsky, 1962, 1978). The second concept involves participatory appropriation, which refers to "how individuals change through their involvement with one or another activity, [and] in the process become more prepared for subsequent involvement in related activities" (Rogoff, 2008, p. 60).

Attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969, 1972; Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978) has been the theoretical foundation of a substantial amount of infant-toddler child care literature that includes social-emotional development, parent-child relationships,

teacher-child relationships, and separation behaviors (Howes, 1999; Raikes & Edwards, 2009). This theory is an important compass in early childhood education and practice, and several of this theory's relevant tenets inform the study design and findings. These attachment tenets include (a) attachment relationships involve emotional connections between children and their parents and/or caregivers that are representative of children's internal desires to be near others; (b) early attachment relationships influence later social behaviors; and (c) attachment involves the individual's understandings of other social relationships; the individual's Internal Working Models of the social world (Bowlby, 1969, 1973; Mercer, 2011).

The Developmental Niche (Super and Harkness, 1986) is a framework that conceptualizes the interconnections between the child and culture, and the niche helped inform this study's methodology (1986) by considering development within cultural contexts (1986). There are three components, or functional sub-systems included within the niche: 1) physical and social settings, 2) child care and child rearing traditions and practices that have been established in the past, and 3) the psychology or beliefs of caregivers (1986). A brief description of the study context draws from first two sub-systems as a backdrop for foregrounding the study's focus within some aspects of the niche's third sub-system, the psychology of the caregiver. In particular, the specific aspects of the subsystem that are explored include parents' and teachers' beliefs, values, perspectives, and meanings about the nature and needs of children during transitions as part of childrearing (1996) in out of home child care.

To explore these phenomena, I will bring the aforementioned aspects of the caregiver's psychology to the study's forefront and listen to parents' and teachers'

perspectives, while keeping in mind the dynamic and mutually-informing contexts of the other two subsystems of the developmental niche (e.g., physical and social settings and cultural caregiving practices). This view is informed by the sociocultural concepts asserting that individuals develop and learn through engaging in activity with others (Vygotsky, 1962, 1978); that "individual development constitutes and is constituted by social and cultural-historical activities and practices" (Rogoff, 2003, p. 51); and that while individuals develop through involvement in activities with others, they simultaneously "transform cultural tools, practices and institutions" (Rogoff, 2003, p. 52).

Historically in the U.S., a majority of the transition research has focused on children and their families who are involved in the early-intervention system (Kilgo, Richard, & Noonan, 1989; Rimm-Kaufman; Pianta, 2000), as well as children transitioning from preschool to public school or between grades in public schools (Howes, 1990). A limited number of studies have examined transitions of infants and toddlers in early care settings, and many of those studies have been conducted in other countries (Bove & Cescato, 2013; Endsley & Minish, 1991; McGrath, 2007; Owen, Ware, & Barfoot, 2000; Perlman & Fletcher, 2012; Xu, 2006).

Very little research has examined the beliefs, values, perspectives, and meanings assigned to the experience of daily transitions, with none juxtaposing parent and teacher experiences revisited during video stimulated recall interviews.

Chapter Summary

This study's purpose and rationale have been described with the theoretical underpinnings and conceptual framework linked to the methodology. Specifically,

particular aspects of the caregiver's psychology, the developmental niche's third sub-system, have been highlighted as the investigation's foci and will be shown in the upcoming literature as needing further study. Following the literature review that includes both theoretical considerations and pedagogical practices in the U.S. and globally, the study's purposes and procedures will be described. Findings are presented and discussed in chapter four. Finally, conclusions, limitations and a discussion with implications for future research and practice are included.

Chapter II

Review of the Literature

Chapter II is comprised of two sections that include theoretical considerations and conceptual framework, followed by empirical research highlighting what is known about practices and experiences within home-to-child care daily transitions. The first section, which includes a detailed description of sociocultural and attachment theory and the developmental niche framework, provides a historical overview, major tenets, and rationale for use with and linkages to the study's methodology. Sociocultural and attachment theories and the developmental niche framework will be used in this qualitative study as a "lens to view" (Creswell, 2007, p. 39) culture and caregiver relationships. To situate daily transitions in infant-toddler child care within this broader field of study, the second section of chapter II begins with an overview of early child care literature in the U.S. The overview is followed by a review of Italian, Norwegian, Canadian, and Australian studies which have focused specifically on aspects of daily transitions in infant-toddler child care, as well as what is known about over-arching foci in U. S. settings. Chapter II concludes with a review of the limited literature examining specific aspects of the psychology of the caregiver (i.e., beliefs, values, perspectives, and meanings) during daily transitions in infant-toddler child care classrooms.

Theoretical Underpinnings and Conceptual Framework

Sociocultural theory.

Sociocultural theory's key tenets provide a foundation from which to explore and understand parent-teacher interactions within infant-toddler classrooms in the context of

daily home-to-child care transitions. These tenets are drawn from the contributions of Lev Vygotsky, a prominent socio-cultural-historical theorist; Alexei Leont've, a colleague of Vygotsky; and Barbara Rogoff, a neo-Vygotskian and developmental psychologist.

Sociological theory's history and methodological contributions. Post-revolutionary Russia's historical and social contexts influenced Vygotsky's development of sociocultural theory in at least two ways: (a) it was the basis of immediate challenges that Vygotsky faced daily, and (b) it was a wellspring of inspiration (Cole & Scribner, 1978; Ryle, 1999). During this time in Russia, the field of psychology was fiercely divided; and in 1923, the prestigious Institute of Psychology in Russia appointed a new director, Kornilov, a leading Marxist psychologist (Langford, 2004). In 1924, Vygotsky brazenly presented a paper "Consciousness as an Object of the Psychology of Behavior" at the Congress on Psychoneurology (2004). This paper stirred controversy in the institute. Rather than returning to introspective psychologists' prior positions, Vygotsky aimed to create a new unifying theory that would involve both description and explanation of human psychological processes. Vygotsky's goals included (a) identifying the brain's structures that underlie specific operations, (b) establishing relationships between comprehensive accounts of developmental history and simple and complex forms of behavior, and (c) detailing social contexts in which behavior develops (Cole & Scribner, 1978).

Vygotsky also contributed to scientific methodology. He asserted that all phenomena should be studied as a process in motion and change, and that the scientist is charged with reconstructing the foundation and developmental pathway of behavior and

consciousness (Cole & Scribner, 1978). Vygotsky believed the "experiment could serve as an important role by making visible processes that are typically hidden below the surface of habitual behavior" (Cole & Scribner, 1978, p. 12). Vygotsky's scientific method include the following implications: (a) "analyzing process not objects" (for example, onsite interviews and observations in schools, homes and communities are often as beneficial or better than laboratory experiments; (b) "explanation versus description," informed by qualitative (detailed descriptions from careful observations) and quantitative data; and (c) " the problem of fossilized behavior," referring to the notion that an experiment must consider the history of culture, society and developmental history of the individual (Vygotsky, 1978, pp. 61-65).

Principles of Vygotskian theory. Vygotsky (1962, 1978) proposed that individuals learn knowledge and skills through a cognitive process that involves engaging with others by sharing activities and experiences. Furthermore, he suggested that each generation uses the previous generation's knowledge, signs, and tools as a foundation on which to build new knowledge, while creating new ways of seeing, understanding, and behaving.

Vygotsky also postulated that learning occurs as individuals actively engage with each other in cultural practices, using signs or language and tools, including, for example, maps; writing instruments such as pens (Vygotsky, 1962, 1978; Cole & Scribner, 1978); and computers and cameras. The social context includes the entire "social milieu" and should consider all three levels: (a) the most proximate level at which an individual is participating in the moment; (b) the "structural level" an individual is influencing and is influenced by (i.e., family, child care center, etc.); (c) the broader "cultural and social

levels," including features, tools, and such as " language, numerical systems, and the use of technology" (Bodrova & Leong, 1996, p. 9). Vygotsky proposed that through social activity individuals are able to internalize learning and knowledge and eventually engage independently in the learned activity. This notion is known as the "zone of proximal development" (Moll, 1990; Rogoff, 2003). Vygotsky claimed that culture influences not only an individual's knowledge, but also how one thinks, remembers, listens, and communicates (Bodrova & Leong, 1996).

Vygotsky referred to language as the "quintessential tool of the mind" (Bodrova & Leong, 1996; Lantolf, & Poehner, 2014). Symbolic activities (i.e., practical intelligence and sign use) may operate independently in young children, but unite as an organizing function in adults; "this [function] is the very essence of human behavior" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 24). Vygotsky proposed that mental tools (i.e., using mnemonics, generating associations, and drawing inferences, etc.) not only support an individual's ability to attend, remember and think more effectively, but also change the way an individual attends to input, remembers, and thinks (Bodrova & Leong, 1996; Pressley, Johnson & Symons, 1987).

Vygotsky's concepts of inner speech and meaning are salient in studying individuals interacting in context. According to Vygotsky (1986), "Inner speech is for oneself, external speech is for others," differing not only in dimension (e.g., quantity) but also in character (e.g., quality) (pp. 225-226). Due to the difficulty of measuring inner speech, Vygotsky (1986) studied children's egocentric speech, a vocal expression of a child's egocentric thought typically present between the ages of three to seven years old. He postulated that egocentric speech transforms into inner speech around that same time

and that both types of speech function as mental orientation supporting individuals in overcoming difficulties and solving problems. Thus, Vygotsky (1978) was noting that speech is essential in organizing higher psychological operations because speech is both symbolic and links internal speech to verbal speech.

Vygotsky (1986) defined *meaning* as a thought phenomenon and delineated the phenomenon of verbal thought as a union of word and speech. Word meanings change both as individuals develop and with the ways in which thought functions. The relationship of thought and word is a dynamic and reciprocal process in which thought is not just expressed in words, but instead comes into existence *through* words. Thought, therefore, "does not merely find expression in speech, it finds its reality and form" in speech (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 219). Vygotsky (1986) noted, "Consciousness is reflected in a word as the sun is reflected in a drop of water" (p. 256). Thus, as individuals engage in reflective practice, giving voice to and making visible internal speech and ideas, they are better able to continue learning about and from their experiences.

Barbara Rogoff (1990, 1993, 2003), a neo-Vygotskian and developmental psychologist, has purported that individual development is best understood within social, cultural and historical contexts and must not be considered apart from an individual's dynamic involvement in sociocultural practices within his/her dynamic communities. According to Rogoff (1993),

> To understand development, we must examine children's involvement in activities in terms of its function in achieving locally valued goals, conscientiously avoiding the arbitrary imposition of our own values on another group; interpreting the

activity of people without regard for their goals renders observations meaningless. (p. 10)

Rogoff (1982) also noted that context is a "web of relations interwoven to form the fabric of meaning" (p. 149). Thus, the study of activity is situated in time, place, and relationships. Rogoff further affirmed that human development's socio-cultural perspective involves a comprehensive observation of individuals in relationship to others in their cultural communities and of contextual activities and environments. The unit of analysis, as informed by Rogoff's interpretation of sociocultural theory, is bound to a particular time and place, further clarified by one's past and present experiences and is best understood when the situated nature of experience is considered as an integrated whole.

Building upon socio-cultural theory, Rogoff (2008) proposed the concept of *participatory appropriation*, which refers to "how individuals change through their involvement with one or another activity, in the process becoming more prepared for subsequent involvement in related activities" (p. 60). Rogoff (1995) described appropriation as a "process of becoming versus acquisition" (p. 144). In an infant-toddler classroom, for example, this "process of becoming" may unfold as a parent and an infant-toddler teacher actively share in the daily activities of caregiving and over time work together to learn how to share the support of infants' and toddlers' social-emotional and general developmental needs during daily transitions. Moreover, Rogoff (2008) explains that "by engaging in activity [and] participating in its meaning, people necessarily make ongoing contributions (whether through concrete actions or in stretching to understand

the actions and ideas of others). Hence, "participation is the process of appropriation" (p. 65).

In summary, sociocultural theory contributes to this study with both theoretical tenets and methodological guidance, specifically in terms of learning theory and understanding culture's role in development through shared activities. The historical perspectives of Vygotsky and his theory's development as well as a detailed description of the theoretical principles are salient to this study. Additionally, a description of Rogoff's contributions to Vygotsky's theory, particularly the concept of participatory appropriation, was presented. The following section reviews attachment theory, the second theory anchoring this study.

Attachment Theory.

Attachment theory further contributes to understanding the development of early relationships between parents and their infants and toddlers, as well as between teachers and the infants and toddlers they care for. Moreover, attachment provides conceptual knowledge about separation experiences that occur twice daily as infants and toddlers transition from parents and home to teachers and child care each morning and from teachers back to parents and home in the evening (Dolby, Hughes, & Friezer, 2014). John Bowlby, a renowned psychologist, psychoanalyst, and psychiatrist, studied the nature of infant and primary caregiver (i.e., mother) relationships through extensive observations across three decades, beginning in the early 1950s. Later, the World Health Organization asked him to write a report about homeless children's mental health (Bowlby, 1969). Through his sustained effort to better understand children's connections

to their mothers as well as disruptions occurring through separation, long-term absence, and grief (Bretherton, 1992), Bowlby developed what is known as attachment theory.

Bowlby (1969, 1973) described attachment behaviors as a pattern of actions occurring between an infant and parent/caregiver numerous times during the day. In theory, the pattern typically begins when the infant initiates engagement with the parent/caregiver by signaling a need (i.e., crying, smiling, following, etc.), and the parent responding to the infant's signal(s) and meeting the need of the infant (i.e. picking the infant up, feeding the infant, soothing the infant, etc.).

Psychologist Mary Ainsworth was a student of Bowlby and later his colleague. She further developed attachment theory by identifying child attachment classifications (i.e., ambivalent, avoidant, secure patterns) based on coded observations of behaviors demonstrated by children during brief separations from and subsequent reunions with their attachment figures. Ainsworth developed the Strange Situation method, a clinical research protocol used with infants and toddlers for observing attachment and separation behaviors and classifying attachment form (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978).

Today, a more expansive understanding of the meaning assigned to the term *attachment* "comprises a range of age-related behaviors, emotions, and cognitions" (Mercer, 2011, p. 27). According to Mercer, attachment theory is a prevailing theory in illuminating early social development and the formation of young children's primary relationships with parents/caregivers, although this theory has received some criticism. For example, Thompson and Raikes (2003) identified the following ongoing concerns that attachment researchers need to address:

> The need for growth in theoretical models of the development of attachment; to carefully and systematically validate measures of attachment security in age-appropriate ways, to conceptualize and study more inclusively the relations between attachment and later behavior, and to understand the complex relations among attachment, risk, and later functioning have been with attachment researchers from the beginning. (p. 713)

Nevertheless, among attachment theory's key tenets (Bowlby, 1969, 1973; Mercer, 2011) that are generally accepted and/or have received minor criticism and are relevant to this study include:

- Attachment involves an emotional bond between children and parents/caregivers as the result of a "basic human motivation" (e. g., the desire to be near others).
- Attachment is a robust process and does not require very specific experiences or persons (e.g., the birth mother) to support it. Infants are born with adaptive behaviors and display infant engagement behaviors (i.e., rooting, sucking, clinging, following and signaling another person by smiling or crying) that increase the likelihood of adult caregivers' closeness (1969, 1973).
- Between the ages of six months to approximately 36 to 48 months, children are likely to develop and display close emotional attachments to familiar caregivers. Young children demonstrate emotional attachments through their behavior (a) in preferences for specific familiar caregivers (i.e., parents, family members, teachers, etc.); (b) in their propensity to seek closeness to these caregivers, especially in times of distress; and (c) in their capacity to use their caregivers as a

secure base in which to explore the environment and learn. The development of attachment is enriched when caregivers are perceptive of their children's needs and are responsive to their communications. Some parents/caregivers have fairly consistent signal and response patterns, and infants develop expectations of this level of reciprocity within their caregiving relationships (1969, 1973; 2011). During this period of development, young children experiencing brief and uncommon separations from their parents/primary caregivers will often protest the separation and experience some level of distress (1969, 1973). Children who experience longer separations may grieve the loss and enter a mourning period, but are often able to develop a new attachment relationship within favorable circumstances. Demonstrating protest and distress during separation is a typical and desirable developmental event, indicating attachment has occurred. When children reunite with parents/caregivers (e.g., their secure base), they typically experience a sense of relief (Ainsworth, 1979).

- Early attachment experiences are essential in determining later social behavior. Later emotional and personality development is rooted in early emotional attachments, and the nature of behavior toddlers show towards familiar adults has some continuity with social behaviors they show later in life.
- Attachment involves mental representations of social relationships, and these representations later develop into an Internal Working Model (IWM) of the social world (1969, 1973; 2011). The IWM includes memories, emotions and thoughts of an individual, and involves the individual's understanding of who his or her attachment figures are; how accessible and responsive they are; and how

> consistent, if at all, they are for the individual. Over time, an individual's view of the attachment figure and their sense of self become interwoven. An individual who received inconsistent and unresponsive care may develop a self-image of being unworthy of care (Bowby, 1973).

Attachment has three primary functions evident in infants' behaviors: proximity maintenance (e.g., staying near the parent/caregiver and resisting separations); safe haven (e.g., turning to the parent/caregiver for comfort or support); and secure base (e.g., using the parent/caregiver as a support from whom to move away to explore and then to return to and recharge) (Hazan & Shaver, 1994). Awareness of attachment and attachment behaviors is especially important for parents and teacher/caregivers who want to be sensitive and responsive to young children's developmental and emotional needs, while also meeting adults' needs of relationship building and communicating at the beginning and the end of the day (Dolby, Hughes, & Friezer, 2014). Thus, it is important to closely study home-to-child care daily transitions through the experiences and social-emotional realm to ensure that the exchange of young children between primary caregivers take into account the caregivers' beliefs, values and goals to provide positive, continuity of care.

Developmental Niche Framework.

Conceptualized by Super and Harkness (1986; 1997), the developmental niche is a framework conceptualizing the interconnections between the child and cultural system. Additionally, the niche provides a structure to organize data that help ensure situating development within a context that reveals the manner in which culture shapes children's development. This framework was originally designed to support data analysis of

observations of children in their home settings (1997). Since its initial development, however, it has been adapted for other community settings, including schools (Harkness, Hughes, Muller, & Super, 2005, p. 339) and home-to-school transitions (Meyers, 1992). Researchers have used the developmental niche framework to conceptually organize and analyze data in researching child motor, cognitive, and language development; emotional expression; sleep and arousal; literacy and numeracy; temperament; and health (Super & Harkness, 1997).

Super and Harkness (2005) describe this framework as an integrated systems model. The child is in the model's center, representing the "primary view of the child" from which the child would "look outward to the everyday world, which is conceptualized in terms of three sub-systems" (p. 338). The three sub-systems are 1) physical and social settings, 2) child care and child-rearing traditions and practices, and 3) caregivers' psychology or beliefs (Super & Harkness, 1986). According to Super and Harkness (2005), these subsystems have the following attributes: (a) subsystems interconnect with each other within the larger cultural system; (b) subsystems independently interact with the larger cultural system; and (c) within subsystems, children actively contribute to constructing their own niches through their qualities and developmental influences that help inform the ways in which behaviors and development are influenced and unfold across cultures. These attributes are particularly important to consider when studying behavior *in situ*, such as during daily home-to-child care transitions (Super & Harkness, 1986).

The first subsystem of the developmental niche, physical and social settings, refers to places where people provide opportunities for children to learn within their

environment such as at home, in a child care facility, and in community settings (Super & Harkness, 1986; 1997). The second subsystem involves customs of child care and child rearing, offering children possibilities for gaining competencies the family values. Super and Harkness (1986) have suggested that customs are behaviors most community members practice routinely; as a result, these behaviors are considered typical and often go unnoticed and unquestioned.

Super and Harkness (1986) have asserted the psychology of the caregiver, the third subsystem, includes "caregiver ethnotheories of child behavior and development and affective orientations that parents bring to their experience of caregiving" (p. 556). In addition, these researchers have proposed that the most important ethnotheories are "beliefs concerning the nature and needs of children, parental and community goals for childrearing, and caretaker beliefs about effective rearing techniques" (p. 556). These beliefs are typically implicit and often considered "natural" or the "right way" to behave or think about a situation. Ethnotheories influence caregivers' decisions regarding where and when children spend time, and who influences the competencies children develop (p. 556). According to Dr. Marva Lewis (2000), a social worker,

> Cultural topics that may be examined in this subsystem include caregiver ethnotheories about feeding practices, sleeping, toilet training, values, concepts of independence and autonomy, …. discipline standards and techniques, the quality and type of child's play, beliefs about spoiling, cuddling or holding infants, and ethnotheories about what constitutes a responsive parent and optimal attachment behavior of developing children. (p. 93)

In summary, the developmental niche is an important and useful conceptual framework that informs this study's methodology. The discussion of the psychology of the caregiver, the niche's third subsystem, is not intended to fully investigate participants' ethnotheories, but rather to identify the specific aspects of caregiver beliefs, values, perspectives and meanings in relationship to childrearing. The following section describing research on home-to-child care transition practices in the U. S. is situated within the larger context of early care and education and informed by global trends intended to illustrate what is generally known about this important part of the child care day and what is less understood.

Home-to-Child Care Daily Transitions across Diverse Contexts

Home-to-child care daily transitions are family life occurrences that have increased globally among infants, toddlers, parents and teachers. The following is a literature review that begins with a historical overview of child care in the U. S. The review illustrates a slowly and steadily developing awareness of and interest in the needs of younger children in child care as the number of women with infants and toddlers have entered the work force and have chosen organized child care settings. The issue of home-to-child care daily transitions is highlighted both in the U. S. and globally, specifically in Italy, Norway, Canada, and Australia. Also included are the few empirical studies in the U. S. examining the psychology of the caregiver as defined in this study.

Historical overview of child care in the United States. Cultural beliefs and values have influenced the development of child care practice and policies in the U. S. These policies have affected almost every aspect of child care, including administration, funding, practice, program development, quality, and research (Duncan & Brooks-Gunn,

2000; Lombardi, 2003; Zigler, 1991). Additionally, to understand the political beliefs and values influencing legislation, considering the historical context is also helpful (Heclo, 1997; Palley, 2012). Palley (2012) suggests that the limited number of policies addressing working parents' needs is undergirded by the belief of some that parents should be rearing their own children (p. 631). Joan Lombardi (2003), the first Associate Commissioner of the Child Care Bureau in the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, identified six phases in child care policy's history in the U. S.: (a) charitable service; (b) financial assistance for poor mothers; (c) emergency aid; (d) an "afterthought"; (e) a part of welfare reform. She noted that in the early part of the twentieth century in the U.S., child care was viewed negatively and was not considered to be an acceptable choice for families except in emergency situations. Furthermore, the U.S. government did not perceive child care as an option for the public good and, as a result, did not support child care policies or funding for children and families. Finally, although some people believed that child care provided a safer alternative for poor parents while they were working, this belief did not extend to the general population.

However, during the last four decades in the U. S., two major political movements have influenced changes in child care policy: the War on Poverty and welfare reform. During the mid-1960's, the War on Poverty was a political and social effort that President Lyndon Johnson initiated to eliminate socioeconomic inequality. Head Start, one of this initiative's child development programs, was designed to address the needs of preschool children from impoverished families (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, n. d.). Soon after Johnson's State of the Union speech in 1964, Sargent Shriver assembled a

panel of child development experts to develop a child development program addressing the needs of preschoolers living in disadvantaged communities.

The design of Head Start was intended to "break the cycle of poverty" by providing a comprehensive program meeting the emotional, social, health, nutritional and psychological needs of preschool children of low-income families. Two of the primary tenets of the program influencing its design were that the program was culturally responsive to the communities it served, and that through volunteer hours and donations (i.e., federal share), communities would invest in the program's success. An eight-week Project Head Start was launched in the summers of 1965 and 1966; and under the Nixon administration, Head Start was transferred to the Office of Child Development in the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. The program continued to expand throughout the next three presidential administrations; and in September of 1995, under the Clinton administration, the first Early Head Start grants were awarded. Head Start was reauthorized in 2007, and the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act added more than 64,000 slots for Early Head Start and Head Start programs in 2009. Since its beginning in 1965, the Head Start program has served over 30 million children, and has contributed in a variety of other ways to the child care field including quality program standards, program design, and research. (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, n. d.).

The American values of work and self-sufficiency have fueled welfare reform. Lombardi, (2003) stated that welfare reform's public policy was the primary driver behind the conceptual shift toward child care as a policy for the public good. By the beginning of the 21st century soon after this philosophical and policy shift, the concept of

education reform arose; and, the idea of good child care involved providing an educational experience for all children (2003).

According to the U.S. Census and as shown in Table 1, the percentage of young children (i.e., birth to three years) who had mothers in the work force and who were enrolled in organized child care (i.e., child care centers, nursery schools, etc.) increased from 32.2% in 1987 to 45.3% in 2011 (Smith, 2002; Laughlin, 2013; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990). This jump represents a 41% increase in the number of infants and toddlers enrolled in organized group child care during the last 25 years (Laughlin, 2013; Smith, 2002; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990).

Table 1

Percent by year of U. S. children (birth to 3 years old) whose mothers were employed and who were enrolled in child care centers.

	Year			
Age	1987	1997	2011	% Change
< 1 year	14.1%	14.9%	15.9%	+11%
1 – 2 Years	18.1%	21.7 %	29.4%	+62%
Total	32.2%	36.6%	45.3%	41%

Note: This table was adapted from three sources:

(a) Adapted from "Who's minding the kids? Child care arrangements: Spring 2011," by L. Laughlin, 2013, *Current Population Reports*, Series P70-135, \p. 3. Retrieved from U.S. Census Bureau website http://www.census.gov/prod/2013pubs/p70-135.pdf

(b) Adapted from "Who's minding the kids? Child care arrangements, Spring 1997," by K. Smith, 2002, *Current Population Reports*, Series P70-86, p. 4. Retrieved from U.S. Census Bureau website https://www.census.gov/prod/2002pubs/p70-86

(c) Adapted from "Who's minding the kids? Child care arrangements: 1986-87," by U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990, *Current Population Reports*, Series P-70, No. 20, Retrieved from U.S. Census Bureau website https://www.census.gov/sipp/p70-20.pdf

In the 1980s, early childhood literature focused primarily on transitions of infants, toddlers and preschoolers within the early intervention system (Kilgo, Richard, & Noonan, 1989; Rimm-Kaufman; Pianta, 2000), children transitioning from preschool programs into public school programs (Howes, 1990), measures of quality child care (Harms, Cryer, & Clifford, 1990; Honig, 1985; Whitebook, 1989), and the effects of child care on infant-parent relationships (Belsky, 1986; 1988).

The study of what is meant by quality child care in the U. S. began in earnest in the 1990s and continues (Burchinal, Roberts, Nabors, & Bryant, 1996; Deater-Deckard,

Pinkerton, & Scarr, 1996; Howes, 1990; Scarr, Eisenberg, & Deater-Deckard, 1994). Other early childhood issues that began appearing in the literature during the 1990s included child-teacher relationships (Howes & Hamilton, 1992; McCartney, et al., 1997), child care experience and developmental outcomes (Broberg, Wessels, Lamb, & Hwang, 1997; Burchinal, 1999; Campbell, Lamb, & Hwang, 2000), and cultural contexts of caregiving from which interest in transitions emerged (Bhavnagri & Gonzalez-Mena, 1997; Gonzalez-Mena, 1992).

As experience with infant-toddler child care has increased in the United States, greater attention has focused on the potential value of early care as well as the specific developmental, cultural and family factors that pertain to this growing sector of child care. This increase in awareness has contributed to the developing focus on the daily transitions in early childhood. Over time, experience with and understanding of transitions in child care has evolved, including a particular interest on infant-toddler child care transitions. A search of the literature on infant-toddler child care transitions between 1940 and 2010 revealed no empirical studies between 1940 and 1950, whereas 2,840 articles were published in 2010. Between 1990 and 2010 the number of empirical articles has increased over 200 % from the previous decade. Yet, these studies primarily focused on transitions in the early intervention system, the first time a child transitions from home to a child care program, transitions between child care into preschool and preschool into public school, and separation behaviors of children, parents, and teachers during transitions (Lombardi, 2003). Early childhood research in the first decade of the twenty-first century continued to focus on the transition between early intervention programs and public schools (Rosenkoetter, Whaley, Hains, & Pierce, 2001; Rous, Myers, & Stricklin,

2007; Rous, Hallam, McCormick, & Cox, 2010) and between preschools and public school programs (Iruka, Gardner-Neblett, Matthews, & Winn 2014; McIntyre et al., 2013).

The need to study parent-teacher relationships in the context of daily home-to-child care transitions in infant-toddler classrooms is a salient issue in the field of early childhood education for the following reasons: (a) the number of infants and toddlers in child care centers has steadily increased in the U.S. since the 1980's (Phillips & Adams, 2001; Ackerman & Barnett, 2009); (b) because the U.S. population is becoming more diverse, being aware of the range and contextual variations/scope of parent beliefs and values is important (National Council of La Raza, 2011; US Census Bureau, 2013); (c) research suggests that most parent-teacher communication occurs during child drop-off and pick-up times (Powell, 1989); (d) evidence demonstrates a correlation between positive parent-teacher communication and positive child-caregiver relationships (Owen, Ware, & Barfoot, 2000), and between positive parent-teacher communication and child care quality (Ghazvini & Readdick, 1994; Xu & Gulosino, 2006); and (e) less has been studied, written, and reported on regarding this important "crossing over the threshold" experience in infant-toddler child care settings (Bove & Cescato, 2013, p. 29).

The etymology of the word *transition* is rooted in the Latin word, *transire*, which means passage. As such, transition is typically defined as a "passage from one state, stage, subject or place to another" (Merriam-Webster, 2011). In the U.S., transitioning between home to child care is generally defined as relatively brief physical, social, functional, and psychological experiences involved in handing over a young child between parent and caregiver that typically occurs twice a day (at drop-off and pick-up

times (Reedy & McGrath, 2010). In early childhood education literature both in the U. S. and selected countries, such as Italy, the concept of transition often involves a process of moving or changing programs or services, typically….generating both new opportunities and challenges for children, families, and staff (Bove & Cescato, 2013; Rous & Hallam, 2006).

The definition of *transition* in early childhood is bound by context, culturally and historically defined, and varies across groups, peoples, and countries (Bhavnagri & Gonzalez-Mena, 1997; De Gioia, 2013; Gonzalez-Mena, 1992; Hujala, Turja, Gaspar, Veisson, & Waniganayake, 2009). Transitions occur in informal and formal caregiving settings (i.e., homes, child care settings, early intervention programs and public schools) and social spaces (i.e., family homes, neighborhoods, and communities); and they are nuanced by parent, caregiver and societal beliefs and values about child development and caregiving approaches (De Gioia, 2013; New, 1999; Wise, 2003). Furthermore, transition beliefs and customs vary among groups (i.e., racial, ethnic and socioeconomic) and countries. These differences can be seen in inter-cultural and cross-cultural research regarding parent and caregiver beliefs, values, and behaviors (Baumgartner & McBride, 2009; Izumi-Taylor, Lee & Franceschini, 2011; Wise, 2003; Xu, 2006). For example Xu (2006) found that transition practice varied depending on the attitudes of teachers, parents, and grandparents toward children's reactions to separations. Soon after Xu's study, Klein, Kraft, and Shohet (2010) illustrated variations in practice based on "children's level of stress during separations and times of dramatic family life changes" (p. 393). Thus, variations in contexts, participation, and practices within transitions have

mirrored the emerging trends in early care and education in the U. S. with similar outcomes evidenced around the globe.

Global concepts of daily home-to-child care transitions. For centuries, parents around the world have relied upon others (grandparents, siblings, relatives, and community members) through informal and formal arrangements to assist them in caring for their infants and young children (e.g., Rogoff, Mistry, Göncű, & Mosier, 1991; Meyers, 1992; Morelli & Tronick, 1991). In some contexts, assistance with child care has involved physically exchanging the child between parent and the caregiver; transferring responsibility for providing safety; and ensuring that the child's physical, health and emotional needs are met, such as sleeping, eating, and comforting (Bove & Cescato, 2013; Endsley & Minish, 1991; Perlman & Fletcher, 2012; Xu, 2006). The transition process is unique and reflective of the cultural beliefs and values held by parents and caregivers who are engaged in the process (Bove, 2001). The following is an overview of selected transition characteristics that reflect cultural differences and similarities beginning with (a) time needed to build relationships, (b) space, (c) parent-teacher interactions and communication, and (d) parental views of caregivers as social supports.

In Italy, the child care practice of *inserimento*, is distinct in many respects from those in the U. S. *Inserimento* "roughly translated as [settling in] or [period of transition and adjustment] is the strategy of beginning relationships and communication among adults and children when the child is entering an infant-toddler center or preschool program for the first time" (Bove, 2001, pp. 109-110). *Inserimento* represents the process of communication and relationship building that takes place among all of the

center's staff, the parent(s), and the child. During *inserimento*, teachers foster the children's and parents' adjustment to the center by encouraging parents to directly care for their infants and to provide teachers guidance about their children's care (Bove, 2001, p. 110). Parents are invited to spend as much time as they feel is necessary for their child's adjustment to the center. During the process, they participate as co-observers with teachers by sharing their experiences about home and comparing those… with their child's experiences within the center (Bove, 2001). The ultimate goal of *inserimento* is to "extend the value of relationships among all adults" (Bove, 2001, p. 112). This practice is in stark contrast to most home-to-child care transitions in the U. S.

Unlike the typical daily transitions in the U. S., home-to-child care transitions in Italian child care settings allow parents and children to settle in before entering the classroom. These slower paced transitions reflect the traditional Italian pedagogical values of gradual separation, which is known as *ambientation* (Bove, 2007). During morning transitions, parents and teachers usually discuss events and/or issues of importance to the child and family in an unhurried manner; meanwhile, the parent may also be in physical contact with the child (i.e., hugging, kissing, caressing). During these extended exchanges, the parent and teacher provide the child an opportunity to feel safe and secure and to say goodbye at his/her own pace (Bove & Cescato, 2013). The designated space in Italian child care centers is believed to help ensure attention to daily transitions, including time to cross boundaries from home to child care.

Cross-cultural studies have described differences in the use of space in relationship to home-to-child care daily transitions. For example, in Italy[1], during morning and evening transitions, parents and children typically meet with their teachers outside the classroom in a separate space created specifically for the transition. With adult-size seating and children's books, this inviting transition space provides parents, children, and teachers an opportunity to be together before they enter into the classroom in the morning or leave to go home at the end of the day (Bove, 2007). In contrast, parents and children directly enter the classroom in many U.S. child care centers and meet with teachers and other children during morning transitions (Xu, 2006; Grady, Ale, & Morris, 2012). Seldom are spaces in the U.S. created specifically for transitions, even in the most resource-rich child care centers.

Several studies have revealed the complex nature of daily transitions in which parent-teacher relationships and interactions unfold. According to Xu (2006) and Billman, Geddes, and Hodges (2005), studies in Norwegian, Canadian, and Australian child care settings illustrate that the multi-faceted nature of exchanges within home-to-child care daily transitions influences communication as well as parents' and caregivers' degree of satisfaction. In a Norwegian qualitative study, for example, parents and teachers reported high levels of satisfaction with parent-teacher partnerships; yet both also expressed a need for more information. Almost one third of the parents reported they

[1] The researcher discussed Italian infant-toddler child care customs and transitions in more depth than those of other countries. The knowledge of Italian child care was gained through her relationship with Dr. Mary Jane Moran, her primary professor, who is the P.I. of a cross-cultural study of infant-toddler child care teachers in Milan, Italy and the University of Tennessee, Knoxville laboratory schools.

did not have enough information about their child's day, and another third stated the only reason they had enough information was because they had requested it (Drugli & Undheim, 2012). Furthermore, the researchers found that teachers expressed reluctance in exploring home and family issues with parents unless children were not doing well in the center. They also indicated they should only provide center-focused information. Teacher perspectives were identified as a respect for family privacy and seemed to lack understanding of the potential value of gaining parents' knowledge, beliefs, and insights about children's home cultures (Drugli & Undheim, 2012).

In a large naturalistic observation study in Canadian child care centers, Perlman and Fletcher (2012) observed parents/guardians (n=1000) and children during morning drop-offs. These researchers found that one third of the parents/guardians were never greeted by teachers during morning transitions and that 20% of the children were not greeted upon arrival. Teachers communicated with parents/guardians using "small talk" (about such topics as the weather) 12% of the time and participated in "co-caring communication" only 15.3% of the time.

However, in a qualitative study with 40 first-time mothers who had infants and toddlers in Australian child care centers, Rolfe and Armstrong (2010) found that the majority of mothers felt caregivers were a source of social support for them. The perception of social support was higher when mothers communicated daily (i.e., verbally and in writing) with caregivers. Additionally, case studies showed that parents perceived open, honest, respectful, reliable, friendly, and helpful communication as important in developing supportive relationships (Rolfe & Armstrong, 2010). Perlman and Fletcher (2012) refer to one of the customs of infant-toddler child care in the U.S. as "co-caring

communication," which is "sharing of such information seen as essential in creating and maintaining continuity for children between the home and center environments" (p. 541). Many studies have found that effective communication between parents and teachers in early child care programs has positive outcomes for parents, children, and caregivers) (Owen, Ware, & Barfoot, 2000; Rentzou, 2011; Shpancer, 2002; Zellman & Perlman, 2006).

Home-to-child care daily transitions vary across cultures. In the U. S. the typical transition, known as drop-off" and "pick-up, is fast-paced and involves the parent to teacher handing the child over and sometimes a brief verbal discussion. In other cultures a slower paced approach is taken, characterized by a time and space that allows for and encourages parents to linger with their child and teacher as long as they wish to during transitions. Practices related to interactions, communication, settling in, use of space, and parental support also differ. Across the studies reported here, practice is historically bound and often formalized by policies as well as cultural beliefs and values.

Psychology of the Caregiver within Home-to-Child Care Daily Transitions

Throughout the range of studies across countries and cultures, very little has been studied about the *psychology of the caregiver*, with particular aspects defined here as parents' and teachers' beliefs, values, and perspectives and meanings assigned to childrearing within daily transitions, particularly in infant-toddler child care settings. The concept of the psychology of the caregiver is often reflected in both spoken and unspoken aspects of child rearing (i.e., sleeping, feeding/eating, toilet learning, breast/bottle feeding, holding/carrying, cleanliness/messiness, language(s), discipline/guidance, play/work, etc.).

In a qualitative study of a large East Coast child care center, McGrath (2007) found that both mothers and teachers were primarily concerned about the children's care, yet had differing views of the children and expectations of each other. Teachers, for example, wanted parents to be partners in information sharing, while parents were more interested in receiving information from teachers about their child's daily experiences. Findings included these types of differences often led to discomfort and contributed to a lack of trust in parent-teacher relationships (2007).

Moreover, in a qualitative study in a U.S. university's laboratory child care center, Xu (2006) found that teachers, parents, and grandparents expressed different perceptions on how to help toddlers deal with the stress of separation during morning transitions. Nevertheless, both parents and teachers rated their relationship satisfaction level as high.

Chapter Summary

In reviewing transitions, home-to-child care daily transitions have been defined and an overview of both global and national research has been provided. Involving teachers, parents, and children, these research studies examined physical and social settings (including spatial and temporal issues) and caregiving customs (including greetings, communication topics, departures, and separation behaviors). A larger percentage of the infant-toddler research has been conducted in Europe and Australia with less focus on this issue in the U.S. Child care research's history in the U.S. has also been reviewed, including various ways in which early childhood transitions have been explored and interpreted. Again, this review illustrates that the focus on daily home-to-child care transitions in infant and toddler classrooms has been limited, and that even less is known about the beliefs, feelings and experiences of parents and teachers intimately

involved in these essential experiences, which provide opportunities for both parents and teachers to partner in co-caring relationships.

The sociocultural and attachment theories described above anchored this study. The developmental niche conceptual framework, specifically informed this study's methodology. The term *psychology of the caregiver* was first defined based on the definition proposed by Super and Harkness (1986), and later explained how four aspects to this subsystem are the foci of investigation.

The review of child care research in the U. S. demonstrates how the focus has changed regarding sociocultural and historical contexts. Home-to-child care daily transitions have been defined and a review of literature specifically considering daily transitions, both in the U. S. and globally, has been presented. This review demonstrates that although the number of infants and toddlers in child care settings has increased in the U. S., few empirical studies of home-to-child care daily transitions in infant-toddler child care in the U. S. have been published. Furthermore, this review reveals the limited knowledge of the caregiver's psychology, particularly beliefs, values, perspectives, and meanings regarding daily transitions in infant-toddler childcare.

Chapter III

Purpose and Procedures

The primary purpose of this qualitative study is to explore and describe parent-teacher interactions (i.e., communications, behaviors) within the context of home-to-child care daily transitions in infant-toddler classrooms and to gain an understanding of the meanings assigned to the experiences; the underlying values and beliefs that inform them; and the perceptions of parents and teachers, both shared and individual. Based on a review of the literature, little is understood about this sensitive, transitory aspect of early care and education in the U. S., particularly in the areas of parents' and teachers' psycho-social and emotional experiences. The developmental niche (Super & Harkness, 1986) informed this methodology in two ways. First, it provided a framework for organizing teacher data; second, it served as a compass for data organization and integration in order to present the meanings associated with particular transition experiences. As such, the research design is intended to support the exploration of the following question:

> What *stands out* to parents and teachers in terms of what they say, do, and feel during daily home-to-child care transitions in one infant-toddler child care setting?

Following the definitions of *belief*s, *values*, *perspectives* and *meanings*, an overview of the methodological rationale and a description of the context, participants, and study design are included. Next is a detailed description of the procedures and analysis, including strategies for ensuring trustworthiness. A description of my role and philosophical stance comprises the chapter's last section.

Definitions of Beliefs, Values, Perspectives, and Meanings

This study focused on the beliefs, values, perspectives and meanings of parents and teachers in relationship to their experiences during daily transitions in an infant-toddler child care setting. In general, *belief* is defined as an individual's feeling or sense that something is true, right, or good (Merriam-Webster Online, 2014). For the purposes of this study, the following definition was used: "a belief is a proposition which may be consciously or unconsciously held, is evaluative in that it is accepted as true by the individual, and is therefore imbued with emotive commitment; further, it serves as a guide to thought and behavior" (Borg, 2001, p. 186). For example, some parents believe that infants need to be held and carried by adults to promote attachment, while other parents believe that holding and carrying infants promotes "spoiling" and dependence.

Values may be defined as an individual's perceptions that a principle or quality is innately desirable (*Merriam-Webster Online*, 2014) as well as useful or important (O*xford Dictionary Online,* 2014). This study used the following definition suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985): "that criterion or touchstone, or perspective that one brings into play, implicitly or explicitly, in making choices or designating preferences" (pp. 160-161).

The word *perspective* originates from Middle English and is taken from the verb *perspicere*, which is formed by two words: *per*, meaning through, and *specere*, meaning to look. *Merriam-Webster Online* (2014) defines *perspective* as (a) "the interrelation in which a subject or its parts are mentally viewed: also point of view"; and (b) "the capacity to view things in their true relations or relative importance." *The Free Dictionary Online* (2014) defines perspective as "a particular attitude toward or way of

regarding something." This study defined *perspective* as an individual's attitude or point of view about something (object, person, relationship, interaction, situation, etc.). In contexts that involve shared caregiving, such as child care settings, two individuals may or may not share the same point of view about the same thing. For example, a young toddler's teacher may have the perspective that the child is not ready for toilet learning, while a parent may have another perspective and insist that the teacher begin toilet learning with her child.

The concept of meanings has been the subject of many philosophical debates, resulting in a variety of interpretations. In one approach, *meaning* is considered an action that resides "in the consciousness of the actor (i.e., intentions, motivations, desires, attitudes, beliefs), and thus the researcher uses methods of psychological enactment (empathy) to facilitate the actor's description of the action" (Schwandt, 2007, pp. 185-186). In the second approach to understanding *meaning*, Schwandt (1986) states that the actor's intentions are not considered. Instead the meaning is interpreted through the supports and constraints (i.e., "norms and constituting rules") of a larger system (p. 186). Both of these approaches imply that meaning is fixed and that there is "a meaning" to discover (p. 186).

A third approach, the hermeneutic tradition, proposes that meaning lies neither in the actor's intentions nor in the act itself, but instead is dynamic, incomplete, and "exists only in the reading of the text" (Schwandt, 2007, p. 186). Therefore, "meaning is created or constructed each time one seeks to understand: hence understanding meaning is never complete" (p. 186). In this study, *meaning* is understood as an outcome of a co-

constructed process among participants and between participants and the researcher. Therefore, this definition of *meaning* includes a fluid and ongoing process of discovery.

Rationale for Qualitative Naturalistic Inquiry Study

Naturalistic inquiry is defined as a paradigm (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and a methodology Scwandt (2007) that places importance on understanding and depicting social action (i.e., the meaning, character, and nature of social life) from the perspective of participants. According to Schwandt (2007), "It aims at faithful, authentic, reproduction or representation of [others'] ways of life" (p. 206). Lincoln and Guba (1985) proposed five axioms that are foundational in the naturalistic paradigm: "(a) The nature of reality; (b) The relationship of the knower to known; (c) The possibility of generalization; (d) The possibility of causal linkages; and (e) The role of values in inquiry" (pp. 37-38). In this study, the first four established axioms were met. The first axiom, the nature of reality, recognizes that there are multiple realities and that the phenomenon must be studied holistically. This axiom is met in this study as parents and teachers were observed in interaction, during typical times when daily transitions occur, within a natural setting of infant-toddler child care classrooms. The interviews of parents and teachers included reviewing videotape footage of their interactions in order to gain understanding of their perspectives, beliefs, values, and meanings assigned to their experiences.

The second axiom, the relationship of the knower and the known, asserts that the researcher and the question or foci of inquiry "interact to influence one another; the knower and the known is inseparable" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 37). I facilitated teacher and parent interviews and multiple video tapings during twelve weeks. Through

this series of steps, I ensured that the initial and subsequent data collected were interdependent. Through this inquiry process, the stories unfolded. According to Lincoln and Guba, "Each [step] influences the other and the direction that the data gathering will take in the next moment is acutely dependent upon what data has been collected, and in what manner" (p. 100). As Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommended for such research, I created a context in which the ways data were generated (interviews, videotapes, field notes) ensured that the manner and direction of data collection unfolded continually and informed subsequent steps of the data generation (p.100) .

Regarding the third axiom, the possibility of generalization, Lincoln and Guba suggest the goal of naturalistic inquiry is to form a "working hypothesis" to describe an individual case (1985, p. 38). This study's goals are aligned with this axiom and do not propose to make generalizations outside of the study's context.

The fourth axiom, the possibility of causal linkages, acknowledges that all "entities are in a state of mutual simultaneous shaping"; therefore, to truly determine cause and effect would be "impossible" (1985, p. 38). Again, this study does not attempt to consider causal linkages but to describe and draw from the experiences of particular parents, teachers and children in one setting.

Finally, the fifth axiom, the role of values in inquiry, identifies five corollaries that consider the influence of values on the inquiry (i.e., inquirer, paradigm, substantive theory, and context) and considers the resonance and dissonance of each. It is beyond the scope of this study and associated timeline to adequately address this axiom; therefore, only the first four axioms are used to inform this study.

Context

I conducted this study at a large Southeastern land-grant university's early childhood laboratory school that provides full-time child care to 100-110 infants, toddlers and preschoolers. The child care center holds a state license awarded annually by the state's Department of Health and Human Services and is housed in an academic department focused on the development and education of children and the study of families. The lab school is among the oldest in the U. S., begun in 1929, and situated across three sites (two infant-toddler buildings and one preschool/kindergarten building) located on opposite ends of the campus. Located in two adjacent buildings, the four potential infant-toddler classrooms provide early care and education to children from 6 weeks to 36 months, and vary in enrollment from 8 infants to 15 toddlers. Three of the infant-toddler classrooms are designed as a continuity of care model in which children typically enter as infants and stay with their same teachers and classmates for up to three years. The fourth classroom is designed as a mixed-age, early-preschool classroom. All classrooms are staffed with a lead teacher and an assistant teacher, as well as student teachers, work-study students, and teacher aides. One infant and two toddler classrooms were the focus of this study and they are depicted in Figure 1.

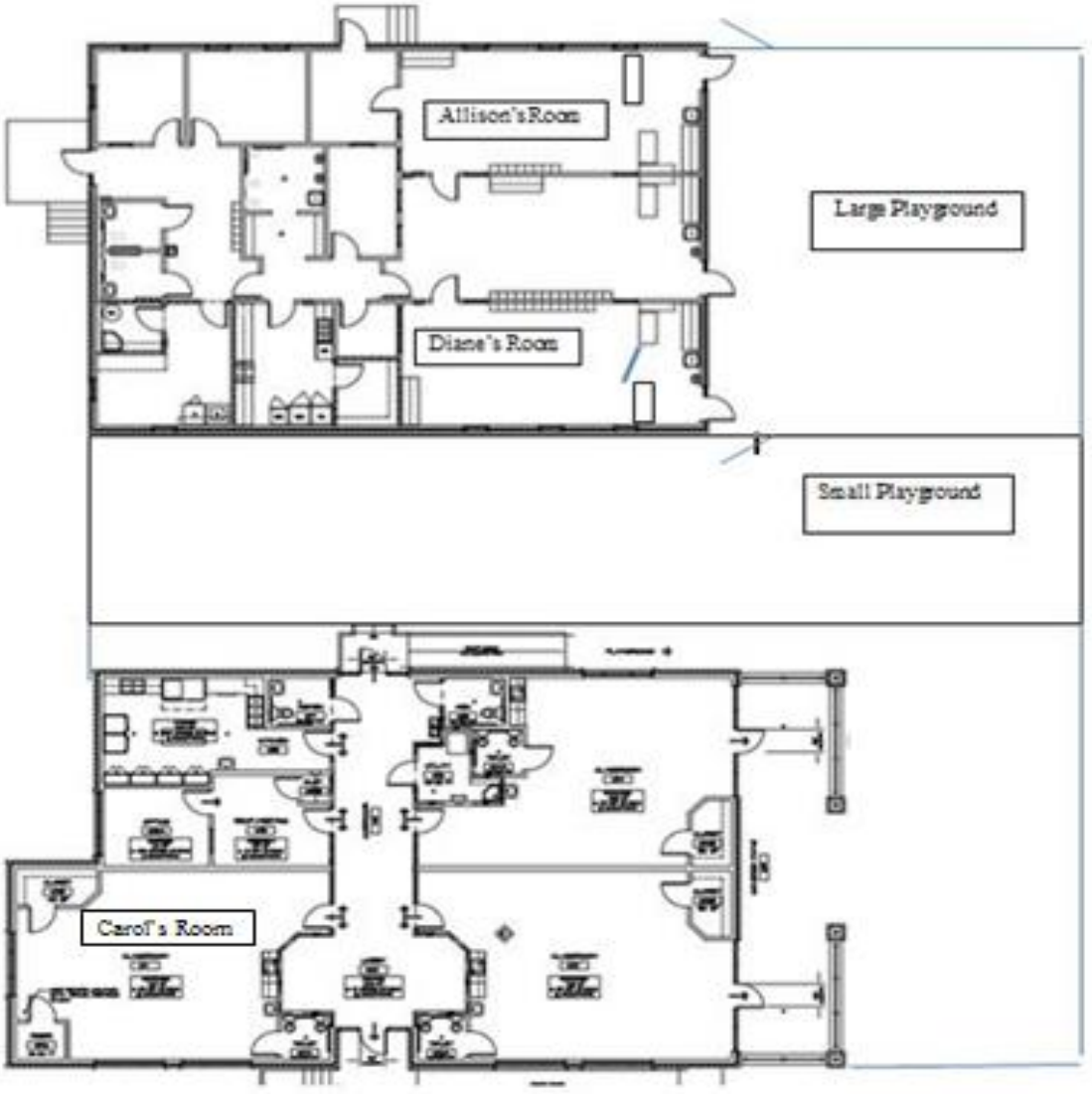


Figure 1. Architectural Drawings. This drawing represents the study site, three classrooms within two side-by-side child care buildings. Teachers' classrooms are identified by the teachers' pseudonyms. The blue line represents a wooden fence-like divider with a gate for entering the main part of Diane's classroom.

Participants

Participants in the study included three infant-toddler classroom teachers and seven parents of five children enrolled in the three infant-toddler classrooms. Initially, four lead teachers and four assistant teachers were invited to participate in the study with potentially 38 parents, depending upon which classrooms were selected due to participating teachers. For this study's purposes, lead teachers and assistant teachers are referred to as teachers. Infants and toddlers of parent participants were not considered primary participants. Although these children were videotaped, along with their parents and teachers, as they were held, carried, or played with during daily transitions, no aspect of their development or behavior (i.e., language, cognitive, motor, emotion) was analyzed.

Procedures

The study's design duplicated procedures for both parents (n=7) and teachers (n=3) and was implemented across two stages.

Stage 1 (20 weeks). Stage 1 of the study was completed in fall 2013, and it involved four phases: (1.) recruitment and selection of teachers and parents; (2.) baseline activities; (3.) data collection; and (4.) analysis of teacher data (see Figure 2).

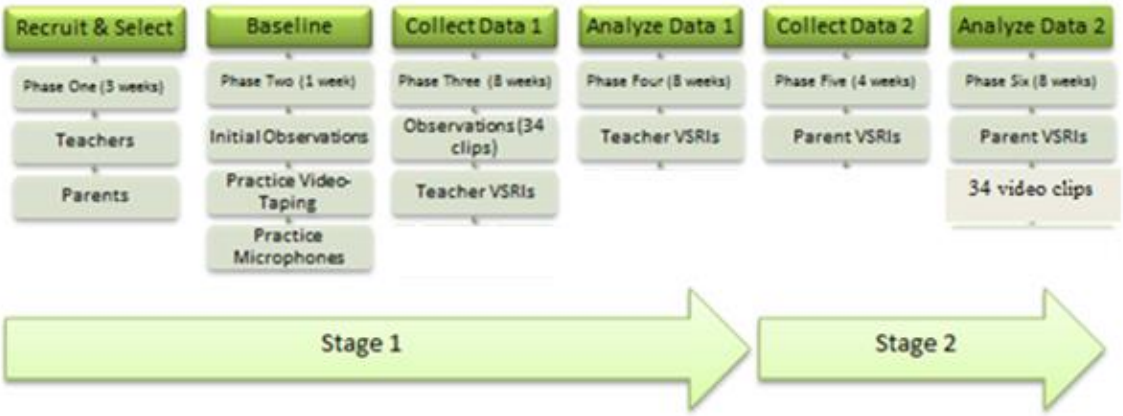


Figure 2. Research Design. The six phases of the study are identified; the two arrows illustrate the beginning and ending of the design's stages.

Phase 1 - Recruitment and selection.

Teacher recruitment and selection. A purposive sampling method (Babbie, 2010) was used to recruit participants with the specialized knowledge, experiences, and insights that are of interest to this research study (i.e., qualified infant-toddler teachers and the parents of infants and toddlers who are in their classrooms). The recruitment process was launched when I attended an infant-toddler teacher staff meeting and presented information about the study and enrollment procedures, distributed consent forms, and informed teachers that participation in the study was completely voluntary. Interested teachers were asked to sign consent forms (see Appendix A), complete a brief demographic questionnaire (see Appendix B), place them in sealed envelopes, and leave them with the center receptionist. Consent forms were secured in a separate folder, locked in a file cabinet at the center, and collected by me after a five-day waiting period. Five teachers consented.

A sub-sample of three infant-toddler teachers was selected from the sample of five teachers through a stratified random sampling approach (Babbie, 2010). To ensure representation from both lead and assistant teachers, the sample stratification involved two steps: (a) the first two selections could be either a lead or an assistant teacher; and (b) the third selection was dependent on the first two selections, so that the result included at least one assistant teacher and at least one lead teacher among the total of three teachers. Teacher names were shuffled, selected, and listed by order of selection. Selection proceeded down the list to ensure that the first three teachers were not all from one category (lead or assistant). Thus, should the first two names be assistant teachers, I moved down the list and selected the first lead teacher to complete the sub-sample. Demographics of participant teachers (n = 3) are displayed in Table 2. Other infant-toddler teachers from the sample who signed consent forms, but who were not selected as participants (n=2), were informed of the outcome. Pseudonyms are used for all participants; the list of participant names and the list of pseudonyms are stored separately in the doctoral advisor's locked cabinet.

Table 2

Demographics of Participant Teachers

Pseudonym	Age	Highest Degree	Years Teaching*
Allison	49	AA	22
Carol	36	BS	12
Diane	32	BS	8

Note. AA = Associate Degree; BA = Bachelor's Degree
*Rounded to nearest year

*Parent recruitment and selection. T*he following procedures occurred after the teacher selection. Flyers were posted in the child care center on parent bulletin boards (see Appendix C). Using the center's listserv, I sent an email to parents indicating I would be available two days at the center to respond to their questions during morning and afternoon transition times. Interested parents received information packets from their children's teachers, completed consent forms (see Appendix D), and placed them in sealed envelopes. They returned them within seven days to the center's receptionist for storage in a secured file cabinet. Parents who did not sign consent forms were asked in an email to consent to allowing their image and the image of their child(ren) to be captured on video if I taped them during daily transitions in the classroom. Twenty-five out of 32 parents in the 3 classrooms agreed to either participate in the study (n = 24) or have their image and the image of their child(ren) (n = 1) recorded during videotaping. I attempted to avoid videotaping during daily transitions of children and parents who did not consent by focusing the camera away from those individuals when they were present during

taping, repositioning to keep their faces away from the camera, and keeping the camera focused above the heads of children in the shot. When images of non-consenting parents or their children were captured during videotaping, those images were edited out of the tapes.

Two parents (e.g., one parent per family, either mother or father) from the three teachers' classrooms were selected using a stratified sampling method to ensure variation in arrival and departure times, thus allowing adequate time to videotape each parent transition. For example, an effort was made not to include parents who arrived and departed at the same time. Prior to selecting parents/legal guardians, I reviewed classroom sign-in/out logs to determine parents' typical arrival and departure times during daily transitions over the previous month and confirmed trends with classroom teachers. I then followed the same procedure of shuffling parent names and recording the selection order for each classroom.

From the sample, I created a sub-sample comprised of sample parents, representing two families in each of the three classrooms, whose typical arrival and departure times varied. I drew and recorded names across a time grid to map the consenting parents across times. Two parents were drawn for each teacher and stratified so that the chosen parents had different arrival/departure times. Two of the selected parents asked if they could participate as a couple due to their work schedule that could affect taping schedules. This request was granted, increasing the number of participant parents from six to eight.

Incentives for parent participation included a $15.00 gift certificate for children's toys or books for each classroom when 75% of the parents in the classroom signed

consent forms for themselves and/or their children to be videotaped during parent-teacher classroom interactions.

Phase 2 – Baseline.

Classroom observations. The first two days of the study's initial week, I conducted baseline observations in each teacher's classroom during daily transitions from 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.to 5:30 p.m. I took field notes (see Appendix E for an example) of potential contextual factors that might influence the logistics of the study's methodology, specifically the videotaping process (i.e., obstructed views, volume and noise, camera placement, etc.). Observations were not videotaped during this time period.

Spending time in the classroom facilitated the development of relationships with teachers in the study and familiarized other staff, families, and children with me (Bae, 2005). I also held informal meetings with teachers to learn more about their classrooms, including the children and families and daily routines. Collaborating with three classroom teachers, I established a schedule for videotaping morning and evening transitions (see Appendix F). In the latter part of the week, I began pre-data collection by videotaping transitions in each teacher's classroom, while teachers became accustomed to wearing microphones. I videotaped from 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. and from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. The videotapes' primary focus was the interactions between parents and teachers during daily transactions. The purposes of these practice videotapes were to introduce teachers, parents, and children to the experience of being videotaped and to record baseline data.

Phase 3 - Data collection.

Classroom observations. Videotaping was conducted one to two days per week during morning and afternoon/evening transitions for six weeks. A total of 3.5 hours of

video footage was recorded, including 34 video clips recording parent-teacher dyads during morning and afternoon transitions (i.e., 1 hour in Allison's classroom with two families, 1.25 hours in Carol's classroom with two families, and 1.25 hours in Diane's classroom with two families). Upon completing the videotaping, I reviewed each video clip and recorded on a slip of paper the name of the teacher and parent in the clip and clip's the start and end time. Using a stratified random-selection process to ensure that each teacher would have one clip of each parent to review, I selected two clips for each teacher by drawing the slips of paper until each teacher had two video clips to review (i.e., one of each parent). The specific video clips for each teacher were then copied onto a jump drive, which was given to teachers with directions for the review process.

The video-stimulated recall (VSRI) interview methodology was implemented in this study. This methodology is "an introspection procedure in which videotaped passages of behaviour are replayed to individuals to stimulate recall of their concurrent cognitive activity" (Lyle, 2003, p. 861). According to Goldman (2005), VSRI is a "reflective process, a collaborative inquiry between research partners: teacher and researcher. VSRI is intended to reveal teachers' thinking and feelings about specific classroom episodes which they choose to reflect upon with the researcher" (p. 408). According to Hadfield and Haw (2012), video-stimulated recall is a "reflective modality" often used in educational research that is aimed at "understanding and improving professional practice" (p. 316). Lyle (2013) asserts that "the method has considerable potential for studies [that consider] teacher/educator behaviour, in particularly complex, interactive contexts, characterized by novelty, uncertainty and non-deliberative behavior" (p. 862).

Goldman et al. (2007) suggest that using video recording in research requires the researcher to consider five interconnected questions. Of these, the most salient considerations for this study are the following:

- What learning is occurring through the process of videotaping (i.e., recording, editing, analyzing)? For example, who did I choose to focus on when the teacher and parent moved away from each other during transition, and why did I choose to follow that participant? According to Goldman et al., when an object or an event is recorded continuously, it is important to note what was recorded and try to reflect on why these choices were made.
- Consider how videotaping will be used initially and how will it may be used differently across the study. Will it be used to create a "thick description," or to record nuanced elements of action or the phenomenon? Or will it be used to "locate particular analysis in times and spaces"?
- Will videotaping provide a media form to "tell the story" and help the audience understand what happened? And/or will it help "participants and/or learners" as the research unfolds or subsequent to the study? (pp. 5-7).

I scheduled a two-hour video-stimulated recall interview with each teacher. In preparation for the interview, they were asked to review the video clips and select up to six minutes of footage to discuss during their interviews. Teachers chose how they wanted to divide the footage, but were asked to stay within the guidelines of three minutes of footage that represented meeting transition goals and three that represented

not meeting transition goals. In preparation for the interview, teachers wrote down their selections of video footage in terms of meeting or not meeting transition goals and the start and end times of each footage section of footage.

During the interview, I prompted each teacher by asking, "Tell me about the segment that you have chosen and what stands out to you." The teachers were encouraged to take the initiative and stop the video and/or rewind the clip in order to review and make comments on segments of the tape that she wanted to discuss further. I asked several open-ended and follow-up questions to further clarify teachers' comments (see Appendix G). The interviews were videotaped and audiotaped. A transcriptionist was hired to transcribe interview tapes (see Appendix H) immediately after taping was completed.

Phase 4 – Analysis.

Analyze teacher interviews. In Stage I, I analyzed teacher interview data to explore my research question, "What meanings do teachers ascribe to what they say, do, and feel during daily home-to-child care transitions in one child care setting?" I completed an initial data analysis (see Appendix I) using the developmental niche sub-categories (i.e., physical and social setting, customs of caregiving, psychology of the caregiver [i.e., teacher]).

I reviewed all video clips and compared my observations with my field notes. After the teachers selected video clips, I viewed the clips a second time and read the selected sections of transcripts. Upon completing this review, I recorded detailed descriptions of activities that occurred within each clip's physical and social setting (i.e.,

spatial, temporal, etc.); and I identified the teacher's and parent's caregiving customs (e.g., routines, greetings, separations, caregiving behaviors).

Teacher interview data were analyzed. This data was drawn from five video clips from which teachers made selections to be reviewed, field notes I had taken during transitions, and individual teacher interviews. A constant comparative method was used to triangulate data from videotape transcriptions, videotapes, interviews, researcher classroom field notes, and research journal (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Conceptual memos and data displays were used to organize emerging themes and behavior patterns (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This process was also employed in Stage 2 of the study.

Initially open coding was used (see Appendix J) to break the data down into segments and identify similarities in among teachers' descriptions of events and activities. Then I examined the entire interview by carefully comparing different parts to the whole to explore consistency within (Boeije, 2002). By the end of Step 1, a summary of each teacher interview had been completed and a list of provisional codes had been identified. Additionally, I noted core messages of each teacher's interview, and I considered inconsistencies (2002).

Soon after I had completed this cursory analysis of teacher interviews, I began comparing it with other teacher interviews that I had analyzed. Through the use of axial coding (see Appendix K), I compared different interview segments that I had identified as dealing with the same theme and that had been coded the same (Boeije, 2002). I then looked for patterns and grouped codes to compare relationships between categories (Daly, 2007), and to link teachers' experiences and perspectives in meaningful ways.

Seven themes initially emerged from which three over-arching ones became dominant. The teacher themes were related to the following teacher's beliefs about transition goals (i.e., their own goals, parent goals); feelings about their ability to meet expectations (i.e., their own expectations, parent expectations, professional standards); and reflections focused on the influence transition experiences have on their relationships with parents and young children. These themes most closely represented teacher beliefs, values, perspectives, and meanings that were more deeply analyzed in Stage 2 of the study.

After the interview, preliminary analyses were completed. Constant comparative analysis was employed to complete a first sweep of the focus group data. Open coding was used to label categories and identify core messages (Boeije, 2002).

In summary, this study's purpose has been described, the research question identified, and key terms defined. In addition, the context and selection of study participants explained. Furthermore, the axioms and characteristics of naturalistic inquiry paradigm/methodology and the rationale for choosing this methodology have been addressed. The study design has been described and illustrated by a diagram depicting the two stages, which includes six phases. The procedures for Stage 1 have been described in detail, including recruitment and selection, observation, teacher interviews, teacher focus group, and analysis of teacher interviews. The following section describes Stage 2, which involves parent interviews and data analysis. Additionally, several key elements in qualitative research that include trustworthiness, my role as researcher, and my theoretical position are discussed.

Stage 2 - (10 Weeks).

The final phase of data collection involved both parents and teachers. This phase not only provided data for constructing a thick description of participant experiences but also increased the study's trustworthiness through data triangulation. Stage 2 involved two phases: Phase 5 included data collection from parents through individual VSRIs; Phase 6 involved using the constant comparative method across each parent interview, between parent interviews, and between parent and teacher interviews. These analyses are presented using vignettes within the context of socio-cultural context of one child care center, as well as rich descriptions, data displays, and diagrams.

Phase 5 - Data collection.

Parent interviews. Prior to this phase of the study, parent participants were invited to consent to participate in individual VSRI interviews (see Appendix L).

In Stage 2 of the study, I collected data by conducting interviews with participant parents using the same data collection and analysis methods used in Stage 1. Parents reviewed the same video clips for their VSRIs as those that their children's teachers had reviewed during their VSRIs. During the interview parents were encouraged to take the initiative and stop the video and/or rewind the clip in order to review and make comments on segments of the tape that they wanted to discuss further. Parents were asked to identify segments of video clips that stood out to them. Finally, parents were asked to reflect on and give voice to their beliefs, feelings, and experiences regarding daily transitions based on their observations of their video clips and their transition experiences (see Appendix N).

Phase 6 – Analysis.

Final analysis. Classroom video tapes, classroom video tape transcriptions, parent and teacher VSRI transcriptions and my field notes were included in the analysis of data in Phase 6. Initially, parent interviews were analyzed in the same manner as the teacher interviews and I use the niche sub-systems to organize teacher data and began to code the data. However, it was deemed inappropriate and not useful as I moved toward the belief that vignettes were the appropriate strategy to employ. Once vignettes became the format by which I analyzed, made visible and juxtaposed parents' and teachers' experiences, this initial attempt to categorize and code using the sub-systems was discontinued. As Ely, Vinz, Downing, and Anzul (1997) noted, vignettes are "Narrative investigations that carry within them an interpretation of the person, experience or situations that the writer describes" (p. 70). A summary of parent responses to selected video clips was created using data displays as seen in Appendix O. The data in these displays were compared to teacher data for the same videotaped events.

Further, these narratives are considered "Portraits created through condensing and compiling" data (Garner cited in Ely, et al., 1991, p. 73). Data reduction was informed by continual analysis of parent interviews using conceptual memos (Miles & Huberman, 1994) (see Appendix P). The intent was to construct a deeper, more complete view of the ways in which teachers' and parents' interpretations wove together, and in the process identify "gaps, silences and contradictions" among the participants (Ely, Vinz, Downing, & Anzul, 1997, p. 72). Consequently, the vignettes created in this study reveal a range of "truths" – a range of meanings and perceptions that illustrate both individual and shared knowledge.

Trustworthiness Strategies

Most qualitative researchers do not generally accept conventional reliability and validity tests (i.e., internal validity, external validity, reliability and objectivity) because they are based on assumptions of an external, objective reliability (Daly, 2007). Rather, alternatives have been proposed to ensure trustworthiness (Daly, 2007; Creswell, 2007; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). These alternatives were employed in this study.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) originally proposed the term *trustworthiness* to describe the quality of an investigation and its findings contributing to believable outcomes within the academic community. These researchers developed and operationalized a set of criteria that included credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Credibility is defined as the researcher's assurance of agreement between the participant's views and perspectives and those that the researcher has reconstructed and represented as the participant's views and perspectives (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Schwandt, 2007). Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 283) define *transferability* as the determination of whether the findings from one case or study are applicable to another, and the process of validating each source of information gained during the study against at least one other source. *Dependability* takes into account the natural world's dynamic character and considers factors of both instability and phenomena or change resulting from the study itself (1985, p. 299). Schwandt (2007) suggests that the dependability criterion refers to the researcher's responsibility to ensure that the study is logical, traceable, and documented. The fourth criterion, *confirmability*, is defined as the researcher's ability to make visible connections between study findings, assertions, and data interpretations (p. 299).

The following techniques were interwoven throughout this study to increase the likelihood of meeting the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability:

- Prolonged engagement: I have been involved with the study site as a graduate assistant, participant observer, and a researcher for over three years. This amount of time on site provided me the opportunity to understand the contextual culture; to test for researcher and/or participant misinformation; and, most importantly, to build trust among staff and parents (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, pp. 301-304).
- Persistent observation: Over the past three years, I had multiple opportunities to observe parent-teacher interactions during daily transitions, allowing me to identify the phenomena's salient features and to explore them in greater detail. Multiple observation overtime provided me with the foundational knowledge and rich detail anchored by contextual knowledge and described comprehensively (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, pp. 304-305).
- Triangulation: Data (drawn from classroom observations and field notes supplementing interview transcripts) was compared within and across the two groups (parents and teachers). Such comparative analysis increased the findings' credibility. Parent and teacher interview data was compared by creating vignettes that included participants' voices to ensure parent and teacher beliefs, values, perspectives and meanings assigned to scenarios were carefully represented. As such, the use of multiple sources, methods, and theories in this study has been deemed by naturalistic researchers, Lincoln and

Guba 1985), as representative of systematic and carefully constructed research procedures (pp. 305-306).

- Thick description: I ensured this study's transferability by using thick descriptions, providing detailed descriptions of the study design (i.e., recruitment, selection, site, participants, methods and analysis) in order to understand the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Geertz (2003) states that to explain culture one must engage in "thick description" as opposed to merely offering "factual accounts without any interpretation," which he refers to as "thin description" (p. 147). According to Geertz, thick description has five characteristics: (a) "it is interpretive of the flow of social discourse"; (b) the process of interpretation tries to "rescue the 'said' of dialogue" (c) it is detailed and notes the event's most minute, "microscopic" elements; (d) "As an interpretive practice, thick description creates the world it describes"; and (e) it creates a way of knowing culture, making it "public and readable through text" (p. 140).
- Reflexive journal: The concept of *reflexivity* refers to the process of self-reflection that the researcher engages in to gain awareness of his or her biases, preferences, and perspectives in relationship to the research study. Reflexivity is also a process that provides insight into settings, social contexts, and social phenomenon. The reflexive journal used in this study was valuable in capturing data (Scwandt, 2007, p. 260). I maintained a reflexive journal throughout the classroom observations in Stage 1 and during parent interviews in Stage 2 of the study.

My Role as a Researcher

I entered this study with prior knowledge of the physical environment, many of the policies and procedures, and some of the classroom practices and customs; I also had prior relationships with several of the teachers, staff members, and parents. With this knowledge and relationships, I made reasonable assumptions, and created a tenable plan for the study, and navigated through the internal systems to make connections with new staff and families. However, in order to complete this study I needed mentorship, special knowledge, and insights of Dr. Mary Jane Moran, my faculty dissertation chair, and colleagues.

In Stages 1 and 2 of the study, my role was to coordinate and conduct all elements of the research (i.e., study design, data collection, data analysis, and reporting). My efforts involved communicating with many different individuals and organizations (i.e., my dissertation chair, internal and external IRB committees, the child care center's director and site director, and participant teachers and parents) to facilitate reciprocal communication, and to ensure different perspectives were voiced, heard, and considered in decision making. For example, prior to designing the study, I met with the director and two site directors of the proposed study site, (i.e., infant-toddler child care center) to discuss the project, get their input on the design, and request approval of the study at their location. This process provided valuable insight into recruitment methods and data collection, and it solidified the administration's support of the project.

My prior relationships with some of the teachers and parents at the center facilitated the process of recruiting new teachers and parents and helped to establish a

level of trust between the participants (teachers, parents) and me during classroom observations and interviews.

I recognize differences between the therapeutic interview and the research interview (i.e., regarding role, objectives, methods, ethics, etc.). However, my knowledge, skills and years of experience as a licensed clinical social worker guided me in my approach to interviews and the teacher focus group (i.e., building rapport, creating a safe and supportive environment, asking open-ended questions, using listening skills, engaging in reflection, etc.). At other times, I felt challenged in my role as researcher and reflected on this challenge with my dissertation chair. Occasionally during the study, I (*the social worker/therapist*) felt I needed to protect information participants revealed during observations and interviews, rather than revealing and exploring that information as *the researcher* I experienced this tension as ambivalence. My inclination to protect information that seemed to be sensitive may in part be due my commitment to the social work ethic of client confidentiality to which I am personally and professionally bound. Grappling with this challenge was an important learning process that I experienced during this study, and one I will continue to reflect on in future research.

My Theoretical Position

My work for over 25 years as a licensed clinical social worker and infant mental-health specialist with infants, toddlers, young children and their families has occurred in a wide range of contexts, including homes, child care centers, and community programs. This range of settings and populations has provided me with a deep appreciation for attending to and understanding the beliefs, values, perspectives and meanings of caregivers (both parents and teachers). For example, during the year prior to this study, I

observed teachers' and parents' interactions during daily home-to-child care transitions in several of the study site's infant-toddler classrooms. Coupling my past experiences with the more recent ones, I became convinced that a study aimed at exploring the following was worthwhile and important: the numerous efforts involved in parents and teachers' transition exchanges and the teachers' need to "read" parents' perceived needs in order to respond sensitively and promptly.

As a social worker I am guided by my professional code of ethics (National Association of Social Workers, 2008) in terms of my professional conduct and research (see Appendix Q). Additionally, my work with parents and young children has been greatly influenced by my training and work with Dr. T. Berry Brazelton, and the Touch Points© Institute. The Touch Points© Approach's Guiding Principles and Assumptions were also useful as a guide in developing relationships and working in partnership with parents and teachers in my study (see Appendix R). My research approach was also influenced by the scholarship of Daily (2007), Creswell (2007), and Lincoln and Guba (1985).

For example, Daly (2007) uses a metaphorical "Cascade of Knowing" (see Figure 3) to describe the framework of qualitative research (p. 22), and I use this metaphor in describing my study's philosophical and theoretical positioning.

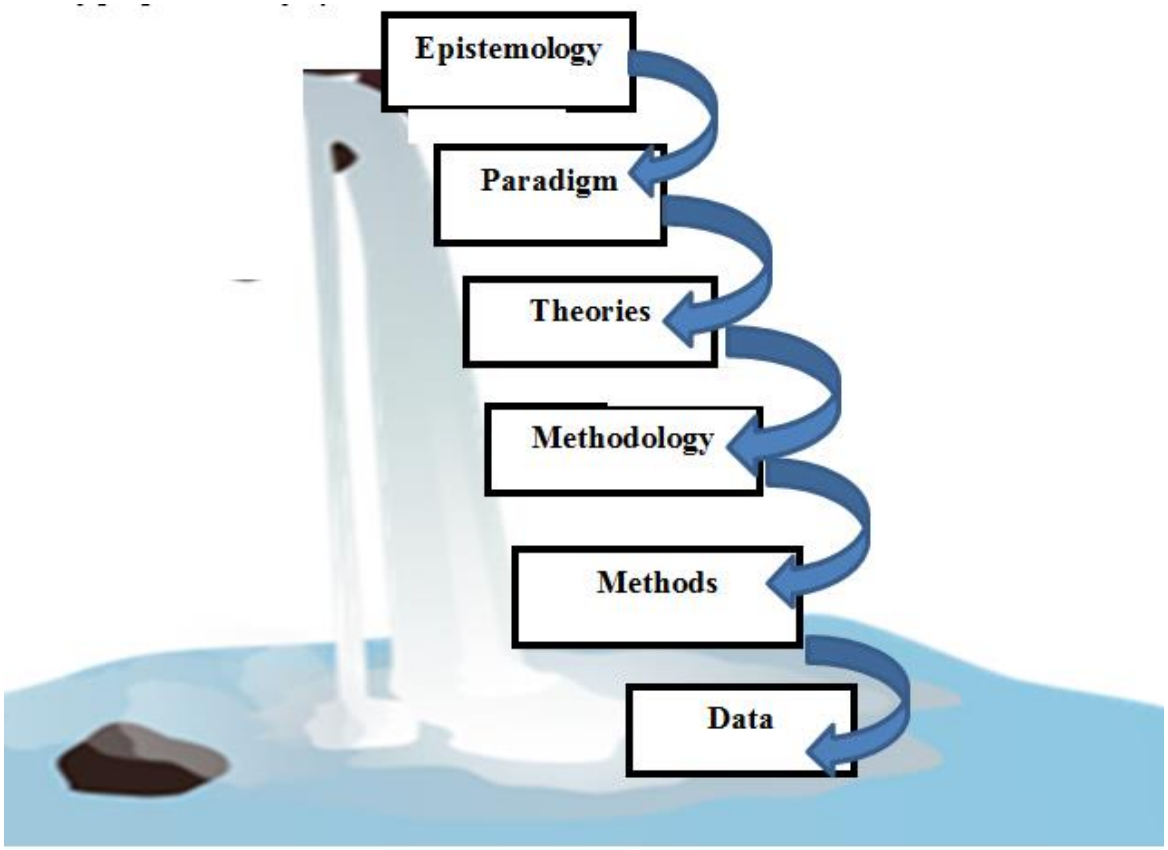


Figure 3. Cascade of Knowing Metaphor. Adapted from *Qualitative Methods for Family Studies & Human Development* (p. 22), by K. J. Daly, 2007, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

In the metaphor, the cascade's source is the epistemology, which guides the "path of inquiry" (p. 22). Along the epistemology continuum, I position myself towards the subjectivism end in acknowledging my beliefs that individuals experience life through their own perceptions and come to understand meaning within the context of others, and that multiple realities exist. As the water first plunges, it flows into a realm of paradigms, which "steer the course of the flow" the research's flow and in which the researcher considers the questions of science's sets of beliefs, habits and tools (Masterman, 1970). The importance of identifying one's paradigm before engaging in qualitative research

cannot be underestimated because it influences not only what the researcher looks for and sees, but also what previous experience has taught the researcher to see (Kuhn, 1962).

I embraced a social constructivist-historical paradigm and was guided by this perspective within the study. Furthermore, I was mindful of this paradigm's following implications identified by Daly (2007): (a.) the study's primary focus was in the way parents and teachers co-construct meaning of their experiences during daily transitions; (b) although there was some focus on what happened, the primary focus was on the meaning parents and teachers ascribed to their experiences; and (c) acceptance that the researcher had a significant role in the way meanings are constructed. To address participants' and researcher's co-construction in the study, I took the following steps suggested by Daly (2007):

- acknowledged my role as a co-constructor in the interview process;
- shifted inquiry of understanding meaning from an initial individual focus to a broader focus on patterns of meaning within the larger sample;
- considered how participants constructed reality in terms of the research topic;
- maintained reflexivity through individual and group meetings; and
- brought forth my voice as the researcher in the written methods, analysis, and findings sections.

Chapter Summary

As this study unfolded, several theoretical perspectives were infused: Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (1962, 1978); Super and Harkness' developmental niche framework (1986); and secondarily, Bowlby's attachment theory (1969, 1973, 1982). The blending

of these theories and structure guided me in choosing the qualitative methodology of naturalistic inquiry. I specifically used the data-collection methods of purposive sampling, naturalistic observation, video-stimulated recall interviews, and focus groups. I also implemented constant comparative analysis methods, including (a) conceptual memos; (b) open coding; (c) axial coding; (d) identifying themes; and (e) creating thick, rich descriptions.

In this chapter, I have identified the primary purpose of this naturalistic inquiry as exploring and describing parent-teacher interactions during home-to-center transitions (i.e., verbal and non-verbal communications and behaviors) occurring within infant-toddler classrooms during morning and evening home-to-child care transitions. I have focused on four key aspects of participants' experiences: their (1) values, (2) beliefs, (3) perceptions, and (4) the meanings they assigned to selected experiences. The research question and the study design have also been described. Furthermore, I have provided a rationale for my choice of implementing a qualitative naturalistic inquiry paradigm and methodology as defined by Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Scwandt (2007); and I have explained how this study meets the naturalistic paradigm's four foundational axioms (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, pp. 37-38). Finally, I have explored both my role as the coordinator and researcher of the study, and the evaluation and validation strategies I employed to increase the trustworthiness of the findings.

Chapter IV

Findings

Findings are presented through a collection of vignettes that were created from the following data sources: classroom video tape recordings, parent and teacher interviews and field notes. Vignettes were chosen as a way to present the material in order to "bring particular people, time, place and events together to reveal implicitly the significance of the story told" (Ely, Vinz, Downing, & Anzul, 1997, p. 72). Within each vignette, parents' and teachers' voices recall and reflect upon the same scenarios. Their voices, alone, would have told only a partial story. Their voices collectively tell a more developed story illuminating similar and different beliefs, values, perspectives and meanings regarding participants' shared experiences of daily home-to child care transitions. By using vignettes, the storytelling is enhanced; it creates a discourse and offers the potential for a deeper understanding of the nuances of daily home-to child care transitions. Following a description of the physical and social aspects that situate the study, teachers' vignettes are presented across three narratives: (a) Carol's Story; (b); Diane's Story and (c) Allison's Story.

Physical and Social Contexts

Physical contexts. Daily home-to-child care transitions occur within physical and social contexts in this study these include three infant-toddler classrooms in one early child care center. An infant classroom and young toddler classroom are located in one building, and an older toddler classroom is located in an adjacent building, connected by a fenced outdoor breezeway. The two buildings share two playgrounds, a grassy space

between and a large playground behind the building that houses the infant and young toddler classrooms (see figure 4).

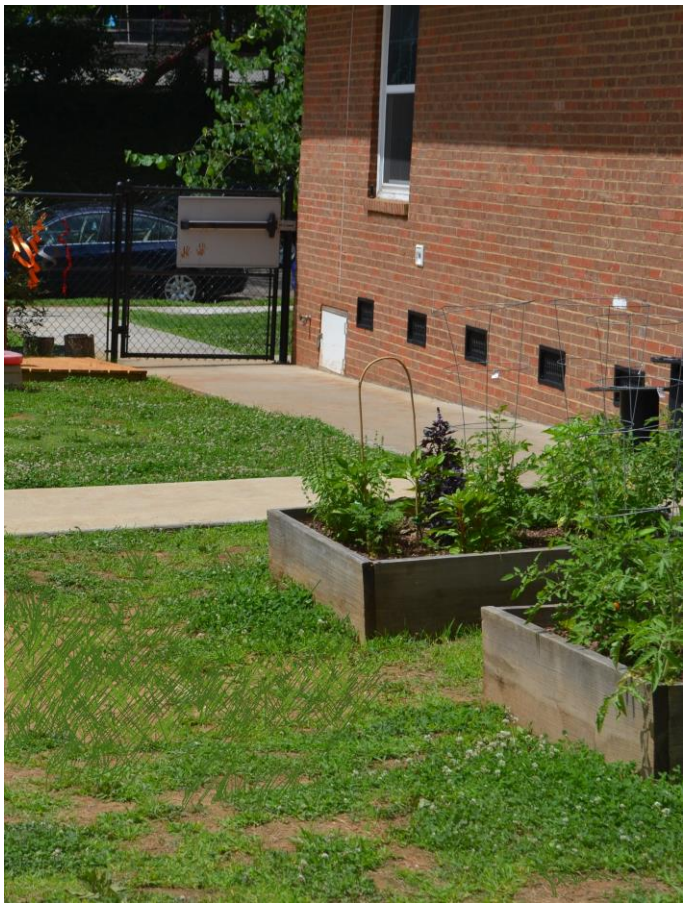


Figure 4. Photograph of Grassy Space Between Two Buildings.

Parents and young children in the infant and young toddler classrooms enter and exit through doors that are in the front of the classroom that also open onto the large playground. Teachers typically enter and exit their classrooms through separate doors in the back of the classrooms. The back doors lead to shared spaces that include an inside

gym/play area where children have free play on rainy days and yoga classes, an art supply room, a teachers' lounge, small conference room, children's library, adult and toddler restrooms, kitchens, and a storage area. In the older toddler classroom, parents and teachers enter and exit through the same door that is located in the front of the classroom. This doorway leads to a central hallway that connects to two classrooms for mixed-age children and pre-kindergarten children, as well as a reception area, a kitchen and the site director's office.

All classrooms include a physical separation between the front and the back of the rooms, including the most obvious barrier in the infant classroom where there is a gate that connects to a shelf and diapering table (see Figure 5). In the infant and young toddler rooms low shelves define a pathway to cross through between the front and the back of the room.

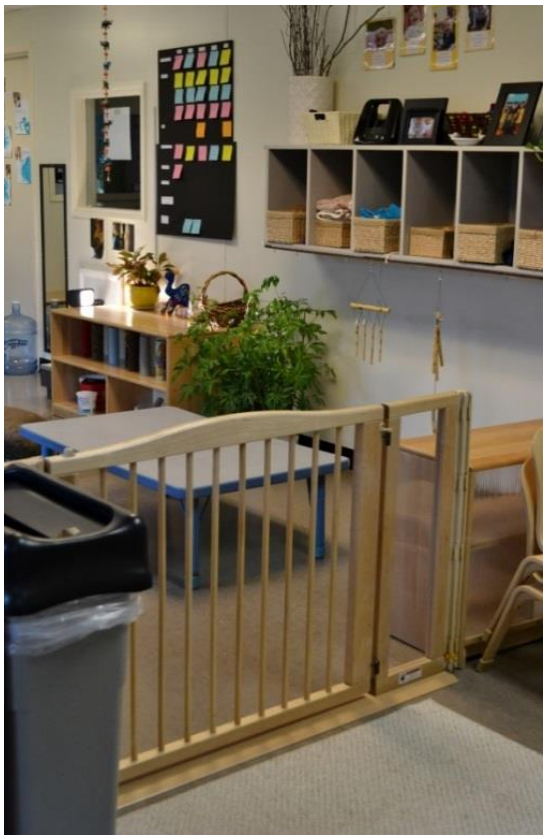


Figure 5. Photograph of Infant Classroom with Wooden Gate. View of the gate taken from the entry way towards the back of the room.

Typically just inside the entryway there is a small table or shelf for parents to sign their children in and out of the classroom. Nearby information for parents is displayed (i.e., daily checklists regarding individual child's care, classroom activities and upcoming events and resources) on cabinets, shelves, bulletin boards, and dry erase boards (see Figure 6).

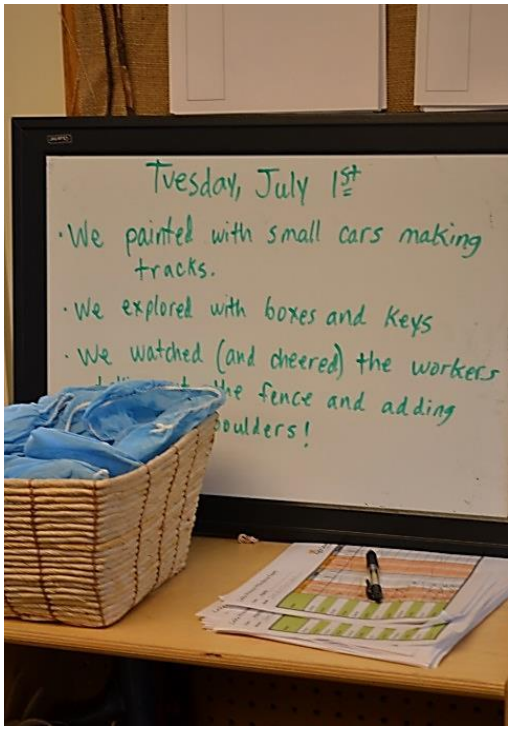


Figure 6. Photograph of a classroom sign in/sign out sheet. A daily activities information board is also displayed on the shelf in the classroom near the entryway.

In the infant room there is no carpeting in the entrance way where there is a child size sink, and an adult size basin for hand washing and activity clean-up. Visitors leave their shoes in these entry way areas in all three classrooms. Across the classrooms, there are diapering tables and storage areas for diapers and wipes. Depending on space and classroom design, at least one child size table and chairs is set up, used for lunch, snack and small group table activities. Toddlers begin toilet learning in the young toddler classroom by using the toddler size bathrooms in a separate room adjacent to their classroom and older toddlers use the toddler bathroom located in their classroom.

Located just inside each of the classrooms, children have individual storage spaces (i.e., wall shelf units for infants and young toddlers, cubbies for older toddlers for children to store their personal belongings, including for outerwear, extra clothing, and naptime items (see Figure 7).



Figure 7. Individual Storage Spaces. Spaces are decorated with children's pictures and family photos and include baskets to hold children's personal belongings.

Room designs are unique, dynamic, and flexible, yet also similar in many respects. For example, each classroom has quiet areas typically located in the back of the room, decorated with area rugs, pillows, and a basket of soft toys and/or books. In various locations around the classrooms, learning centers (i.e. block area, library, dramatic play, and art) are set up depending upon the children's ages and interests.

Infants sleep in cribs clustered in twos and threes located in the back of the room. As infants celebrate their first birthday, they move to a sleeping cot. During naptime,

cots are brought from a nearby storage closet and distributed among the classrooms, where lights are lowered and soft music is played.

Windows are on either one or two sides of each classroom and are low enough to the floor that standing infants and young toddlers can see outside. The windows face different directions: children in the older toddler classroom look out onto the street and see children and families arriving at the center; children in the infant room look out on a small playground and see older children and a bird feeder; and young toddlers look out on the center parking lot (see Figure 8) and see parents and children from their classroom leaving and returning to cars. The young toddlers often wave goodbye to their parents in the morning after being dropped off.



Figure 8. Photograph of the Young Toddler Classroom Window. This window overlooks the parent parking lot.

The center is open year round, Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p. m. Typically families arrive for transitions between 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. and between 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. However, some families may arrive later in the morning, and some may pick up their children earlier in the day. Parents often alert teachers to changes affecting transition schedules and their child's attendance. The duration of morning and afternoon drop-offs in the three classrooms averaged four and a half minutes (n=15), and the range was between 1:57 to 6:13 minutes. The average transition time in this study was considerably longer than other studies have reported (e.g., 27 seconds in Endsley, 1991; 67 seconds in Perlman & Fletcher, 2012). Morning transitions were generally shorter than afternoon transitions.

Social context. Morning and afternoon transitions are relational times dominate by social exchanges among families and between parents and teachers. As an observer, I quickly realized these interactions required my full attention in order to take in the various visual, auditory, tactile and emotional exchanges as parents, teachers and children fully engaged in the process of transitions. During morning transitions, parents often arrived holding their child in one arm and carrying bags full of their children's personal belongings and supplies (such as diapers, extra clothing, and favorite objects) in the other arm. As the parents and children entered the classroom, teachers greeted them with a friendly hello, and the parents responded in kind. Parents often expressed affection to other children, who had come to welcome them, and briefly chatted with other parents in the room about their children, family, and work life. Parents typically took little time before they embraced their children and handed them over to their teachers, followed by a routine which often involved removing shoes (in the infant and young toddler

classrooms only), signing their child into the classroom, hanging up jackets and carryall bags, and storing supplies and food items. Many of the parents appeared to have this process down pat and took little time to complete it. While parents completed their routines, teachers stood or sat nearby, remaining alert and available to the newly arrived parents and children while continuing to engage with and manage the other children in the classroom. Teachers typically waited and watched to give parents the time needed to complete routines before approaching them.

Once parents finished their routines, some took time to hold, talk, and play with their children while others waved a happy good-bye and blew kisses. All parents conversed with teachers to discuss any questions, requests or concerns. Occasionally, teachers and parents also showed personal interest in each other as they shared stories about family, vacations, diets, or upcoming events, such as weddings and children's birthday parties. Some siblings accompanying parents participated in morning transitions as well; for example, they played with infants and told stories about themselves and their family to the teachers. At leave-taking, teachers and parents typically partnered to prepare and support children as they separated from their parents. During separations, teachers and parents used many common strategies, such as hugging, kissing, informing children that the parents were leaving, and reassuring children that parents would return. They also created and engaged in individualized strategies, which are described in detail later in this chapter.

In the afternoon, from 3:30 to 5:30 parents returned to the center to pick up their children. Toddlers were often the first to greet parents at the door, as they seemed to be very familiar with their afternoon schedule (lunch, snack, and mom and dad come to get

me). Welcomed by teachers, parents once again entered classrooms greeting and embracing their young children.

Once parents settled in for a minute or two, teachers typically exchanged information and shared a special story with parents about their child's day. Teachers knew that by the end of the day many parents and children were fatigued and anxious to get home or pick up another child from school. Teachers rarely had much time for one-on-one conversations with all parents; but when they did, they continued to remain focused on the children in the classroom and the parents coming and going. Parents often shared important information about their child such as new behaviors or development, health issues, family events, or upcoming schedule changes. During this time, teachers were able to "fill in the gaps" by providing information to parents about their child's day that they had missed out on while they were working and away from their children. Parents repeatedly spoke about their appreciation for teachers sharing this information at the end of each day.

The pattern of parent arrivals in the afternoon was one of ebb and flow with a slow start, a peak of activity from 4:45 to 5:15 with the last child picked up by 5:30. During the peak, teachers were busy greeting parents, saying goodbye to children and parents, and attempting to give every family an update of the child's day. Some parents would wait a few minutes to talk with the teacher if she was engaged with another parent; others quickly said good-bye and did not speak directly to the teacher.

Vignettes

In the following vignettes, parent and teacher interactions during 10 morning and afternoon transitions are used to create three stories or narratives.

Carol's story. Carol is an early childhood teacher in the older toddler classroom. At the time of the study, she had been the primary teacher of many of the children in the classroom since infancy when they enrolled in the center. Over the last three years in this continuity-of care-classroom, she established her own goals to promote and maintain trusting relationships with children and parents. During her interview with me, Carol reflected on the question that I had posed to her prior to the interview regarding her transition goals:

> I think it's made me really consider that I should reflect more on [my transition goals] as a teacher. Some of this is very instinctual and automatic, and a lot of these habits are developed over time; but in going back and watching, it's, I think, astounding that each day for just a couple minutes each day, you develop these habits. They are just so incredibly specific to the triangle, the pairing of the parent, the child and you and your own ideals and your relationship with the child and the parent. It is amazingly individualized, and it's born out of, I guess, instinct and in your values; but I just never gave it that much thought, and I guess I am amazed and sort of proud of that part of my work. You know it's special.

Carol pointed out important attributes of her approach to facilitating transitions, noting that her eye is not just on the parent but also on the child and herself. Upon reflection, she realized her practice emerged from her ability to "read" the needs of the parents and children, to ground this knowledge in what she values, and to pull off this nuanced interaction in only a few precious minutes. Her "habits of mind" are an amalgam of her personal disposition, experiences, and values and those of the families

she cares for. This nuanced, genuine approach to each family is gratifying to her. It is an intricate "give and take" and when done well requires her to manage several competing tasks.

Carol also believes that it is her role as an early childhood teacher to partner with parents in supporting and fostering children's social and emotional development during daily transitions. She reflected on her transition goals during her interview:

> I think you definitely do have goals that relate to individual children and parents that you are greeting. But I think there's a secondary set of goals, too, that relate to how *I* [italics added] am managing the children that are already in the classroom. I think basically the most important goal is transmitting that you respect the parent and that you value that time, however short it is, when they pick up and drop off.

Carol indicated that she believes parents want to have accurate and timely information about their children and she values not only clear and concise verbal communication, but also easy access to written information. She remarked, "I want to make a parent's transition through the classroom … the most effortless that it can be." She also reflected on classroom procedures she had implemented that illustrated the attention to detail required to create an effortless transition, including the way in which child information is available daily for parents: "Part of that is having the daily chart next to the sign-in [sheet] so that they're not carrying their child and having to walk around other kids and dawdle about the classroom looking for the information they need."

Carol continued to consider her own experience as a parent with children in child care when she asserted, "I think a lot of that…comes from, you know, my own experiences as a parent and having those feelings that either I want to be home with my child and … where is this sheet?" She described the important information that she as a parent and parents in her classroom want to know at the end of the day that is often communicated in writing on daily log sheets: "I [would] need to figure out if they napped or not, or if they ate a good lunch or they didn't.…" Therefore, Carol's perspective seemed to be influenced by her experience with the families with whom she worked in her classroom and by her own transition experiences as a parent of young children in child care. For Carol, as a both a teacher and parent, "It's all important to them [parents], so I think that even though it [accessible child information] seems at the outset kind of a small thing… that's how you impart security and confidence to parents—confidence that you care."

Carol values parent-teacher partnerships; however, she recognizes the complexities of these relationships when parents and teachers have different perspectives and goals. She noted in her interview that there are "moments where you know the parent and the teacher really just have different goals"; and she described these situations: "It's very tricky. It's very tricky."

Carol's capacity to reflect deeply and to consider what she brings to her work as an early childhood educator was apparent in this comment:

> I feel over the years … what I want to provide and how I've changed as a teacher … has stemmed from a lot of my own parent experience with

> picking up my own children from childcare and seeing, you know, what do I like in other classrooms, what don't I like. And I think it's helped me attend to making, trying to make, it at least a meaningful experience—meaningful and efficient.

Thus, Carol repeatedly returned to her experiences as a parent transitioning her own children from home-to-child care. She values clarity and easy access to basic information about children's days and believes such access brings comfort and confidence to parents. By providing such access to information, she also conveys that she closely observes children's daily experiences and considers parents' as well as children's needs throughout the day. Thus, transitions may take only a few minutes, but Carol prepares for them throughout the day, much like we will see next when teachers, Diane and Allison, prepare for transitions by making note of stories to tell parents during transitions, and creating special separation rituals.

The next two vignettes chronicle some of the interactions among Carol, and parent Roy, Jacob's father, and Jacob, his son. The first vignette illustrates how morning transitions were, at times, stressful for Roy and Jacob, while the second vignette highlights issues related to communication and meeting Roy's goals during an afternoon transition.

"Papa, who's picking me up today?" It was 8:35 a.m., and Roy had a meeting in his office scheduled for 9:30 a.m. Despite their late start, Roy arrived at the child care center in plenty of time to drop off Jacob, then drive to work, find a parking space, and walk to his office. This tightly scheduled plan all hinged on Jacob's ability to say

goodbye without being "clingy" or saying "Papa stay." Based on my field notes, Roy and Jacob walked up the steps; entered the lobby; and were greeted by the center's staff: Betty, Marilyn, and Mel. Jacob buried his head into Roy's shoulder.

Roy said, "Jacob, say good morning to everyone Jacob." Jacob turned his head away from the other children.

Betty smiled and reassured him, "That's okay, Jacob; you can come out to say hello to us when you feel ready." She informed Roy, "His class is out on the playground, but they may be coming back inside soon."

"Thanks," said Roy. Who do you think is here this morning [Jacob]? Do you think that your friend Alex is here today?"

As Roy and Jacob approached the door to go outside, all the children in Jacob's classroom were coming up the stairs and ramp toward the door to enter the center with Carol and a student teacher. Standing with his back to the door and with his hand on Roy, Jacob was motionless as the children moved in closer to him. He appeared bewildered by the crowd of toddlers, as if looking for a safe and secure connection. At that moment, he saw Carol kneeling among the sea of toddlers. He pushed through, flung himself into her arms, and embraced her. Carol and Roy smiled. Before leaving for work, as recorded on the classroom video tape, Roy told Jacob, "I will pick you up today." He waved to Jacob and said, "I love you. Have a great day, little guy." Roy looked at his watch, said goodbye to Betty, and hurried out the door.

Later as we met during her interview, Carol reflected on her experiences with Roy and Jacob during morning transitions:

> I feel that Jacob's dad is very, he seems to be really structured, in the way he drops off and picks up. … So, I feel like Jacob's transitions in and out are really, really smooth because his dad pretty much does it the same way every single time; and that's in my mind, [he's] enormously supportive of his emotional needs. Jacob really likes there to be a routine and finds security in that.

This vignette illustrated a scenario in which a parent chose to directly say goodbye to his child. However, in reviewing the video, another issue, the *parent* s*neak out* (emphasis added) was raised; Carol reflected,

> We've communicated with all the parents [in our classroom] like, 'Please don't sneak out. It's confusing for your child. They wonder where you are. It sometimes makes them cry.' But I think for parents, and I know that I felt this way as a parent, that it is one of the most tempting things to do, ever, because you know that your child's happy. You don't want to disrupt that.

Carol continued to describe her beliefs about the importance that she places on having parents say goodbye to their children directly prior to leaving the classroom. She also emphasized that from her experience, this is an issue for other early childhood teachers:

> The sneak-out scenario is a big deal for teachers. It is probably one of the most heartbreaking things you usher children through. I think that's one of the classic, you know; it's a classic, I don't want to say conflict, but, ah, difference in perception between teachers and parents. I think that if

you're not thinking about and reflecting on those moments and letting that judgmental attitude come in, that it can really affect your relationship with these parents.

Later during his interview, reflecting on differences that he and Jacob experience between morning and afternoon transitions, Roy stated, "…drop-offs were definitely more challenging, always, than pickups you know. Pickups in general, like I said 95% of the time, he's very happy to see me and wants to go; and this is a happy thing." In comparison to the more predictable pick-up experiences Roy described drop-off experiences as variable:

> Um, drop-offs, ah, you know they started off really hard when we were first starting going [to the center] at 1½ [age of Jacob]. Then they got progressively easier; but um, you know, it's different every day. You know, some days, ah, he might get in the classroom and just, you know, there's always that moment he stops, sort of looks around; and there's all, you know, these kids and their teachers and, you know. Even to this day, he'll still grab my hand or my leg or something; and he, you know, he'll even sometimes say, 'Papa, stay'; and he wants a little extra [laugh] papa there. There are a couple students and his friends [who] try to come up and either give him a high five or a hug; and he doesn't want that right away, he's never wanted that right away. So especially if someone's coming at him, he might turn to me and ask me to stay; so there are days like that.

It appeared that Jacob's unpredictable to morning transitions created additional stress and concern for Roy who wanted to ensure that his son was comfortable at the center before he went to work. Roy admitted,

> It's really hard for me to turn my back and leave, and so I'll have to stay for a few minutes until he's comfortable. . . . I think I'm a little apologetic, probably; and I feel a little bit like I don't, you know, [know] whether I should or not. I don't know, but I feel like this is it. He doesn't always do this, so I don't know why he's doing it today. Then there are other days when, you know, he'll walk in and stop for [a] second and then he'll see something going on that he'll want to run right to and join. Those are the easiest days for me as a parent, um; and that could be inside the classroom or when they're outside. . . . He doesn't like any uncertainty, … the last thing I tell him before I leave is who's going [to] pick him up. He'll ask sometimes even on the drive in, 'Papa, who's picking me up today?' He likes a plan.

In this vignette, Roy described his concerns and the hurdles he and Jacob experienced during morning transitions.

Carol drew heavily upon her own experiences as a parent for establishing routines and strategies during morning transitions. She implied during her VSRI that while she believes sneak-out behavior adds to the stress of an already challenging time of day, she had to take care not to impose her beliefs on parents. Roy clearly reflected Carol's belief that the best approach to decreasing transition stress for children is to "read" the child and look for the environmental triggers

increasing the difficulty for Jacob. Carol valued Roy's established routines that helped to create a sense of security for Jacob. Roy, however, had a different perspective; and he expressed concern about morning transitions, describing them as "progressively easier, but different every day." Although he recognized some progress, he clearly understood that Jacob felt most uncomfortable during drop-offs when children and adults gathered around him and when others approached him too quickly.

"…we're suspending adult conversation to include him." Carol was sitting on the floor with a small group of children looking at leaves with magnifying glasses when Roy walked into the classroom. She heard Jacob joyfully call out, "Papa's here," and saw him running towards the front door. Carol moved over to the small table that Jacob and Roy were standing next to in the front of the room, and Roy knelt to give Jacob a hug. While they discussed the afternoon plan for Jacob to get a haircut, Roy picked Jacob up in his arms and began to walk towards the sign-out sheet.

Carol stood up; touched Jacob gently on the shoulder; and asked, "What did we play today on the playground that was so funny? Do you remember?"

"Taco Bell!" Jacob replied.

Carol nodded and affirmed, "We played taco shop."

"Taco shop, yes, and did you make tacos for everybody?" Roy asked Jacob.

Jacob replied, "We maked [sic] a meatball."

"Made a meatball, a big meatball! Yes. Jacob, what did we have that was very, very spicy?" Carol asked Jacob.

Jacob replied, "Salsa!"

"Salsa!" Carol exclaimed.

Roy told Carol, "Jacob had that yesterday for dinner." He then asked Jacob, "Did you have green salsa or red salsa?"

Jacob excitedly replied, "Green!"

Carol explained, "We were pretending very spicy salsa."

Roy and Carol laughed. Roy stated, "Oh yeah, it turns out you do sometimes like spicy salsa."

Carol concluded, "So yeah, we did that on the stick area [of the playground]. We played taco shop in that stick area, didn't we?"

Roy gave Jacob a hug, and then he softly said, "Well, good. Good. Good. Good. Well, that sounds like fun little guy."

Carol reflected on this scenario during her interview, considering several aspects of her ability to effectively communicate with Jacob and Roy. First, she expressed some concern that she had not been able to physically move closer to them sooner during the transition, and that she believes that this is an important indication to parents that a teacher is attending to them. She stated, "I just seemed really far away. I wished that I had sort of moved in a little sooner and really communicated with my body and physical space that I am attending to a conversation with you." She seems to believe that her professional practice in the classroom is another way to demonstrate respect to parents:

> To me, that's really important; and its part of that dance that you're doing. As a teacher, you really are having to make sure that you're attending to the classroom and sort of the activity level in the classroom, but also being respectful to those parents that are picking up…showing them, 'I am ready

to speak to you and I am ready to have a respectful conversation with you and I am going to do that first.'

Carol also expressed the tension that she often experiences in balancing her goals of attending to the parent and of managing her classroom:

I think a big thing that I feel that this particular group of children need is consistent, calm actions on the part of the teacher; and I think this [is] a trend that all teachers see. But when adults are standing in the classroom, I think they [the children] think, 'What's going to happen? This teacher is in motion. I better follow.' So in essence, staying low to the ground as long as I can, I really feel meets those secondary goals.

Once again, Carol read the needs of individual children, their parents, her own actions and of the children remaining in the classroom. In essence, Jacob and Roy's transition is an act within an act. Carol is managing multiple experiences at one time, moving the transitioning family to the forefront of her attention but always keeping others in sight and under consideration. She choreographs this "dance," which is dependent upon deep knowledge of children's and parents' needs and the requirement to vary her approach depending on which families are leading the transition movement. This teacher, like others in this study, positions and repositions herself in a multi-faceted, nuanced approach to transitions, and she considers different points of view by putting herself in the parents' and child's shoes.

Carol also reflected on the structure and function of the story she and Jacob had shared with Roy during the transition. She described viewing the videotape: "I cringed when I first watched it because I was watching myself and because it is very vain [but]

it's such a clunky conversation. It just seems very stilted to me …." Carol reflected on her realization that the stilted conversation was actually part of the process of integrating her and Roy's goals for Jacob into his daily transitions:

> Then I realized one of the transition goals that we've [Carol and Jacob's parents] always had for Jacob is sharing with his parents special moments at school that he can talk to his parents about. And so the stilted nature of that conversation was me asking questions and then waiting for him to respond and then, you know, kind of drawing the conversation out of Jacob.

During her interview, Carol further described and evaluated her practice:

> I was slowing down my conversation and waiting for Jacob to chime in. Really, the conversation is functional, you know, It's not just a conversation between me and another adult; we're actually suspending the adult conversation to include him. In essence, [we are] inviting him into the conversation. That's very important. … I think I had a realization that, you know, that's a very big deal.

Carol continued reflecting on transitions in general:

> It did occur to me that transition goals in [the] morning and the evening are very, very individualized. It is often a very specific process that is born out of information that you collect at the home visit about what the parent is really focused on and what they continue to be interested in their child's development.

Carol continued to reflect on the unique strategies that she had implemented with Jacob and she described how she became aware of Jacob's parents' interest in developing sense of humor. She explained:

> He really enjoys having comedy moments with the teachers and then also sharing those moments with his parents. They've sort of indicated through conversations and anecdotes that Jacob is developing this sense of comedy, but that sense of comedy is rooted in his use of words, an area of great skill for Jacob. He has an amazing vocabulary and so much of these comedy moments in Jacob's life stem from him playing with words or inventing interesting scenarios.

Carol believed that Jacob could be thinking to himself, "Okay. If I say this, is it funny?" or "If I present a situation to a teacher in this way, is it funny?"

Carol's decision to tell the taco shop story was intentional and based on her belief that Jacob's parents were not only interested in his daily activities but also valued his sense of humor. Carol noted, "I think he likes to play through similar scenarios at home. I met that goal of sharing a special moment that occurred at school with the parent and sort of making that dual connection." In this instance, Carol found a strategy that not only bridges child care center time with home time but also gives his parents something to explore with him during the evening—a way of linking his school space with his home space.

Carol's perspective of this scenario seemed positive:

> It is hard to be at school all day, and they [the children] have to be patient. They have to expend energy just getting through the day, sharing the attention of a very few adults. The time that they do have with their parent

> [at the end of the day], just that physical contact, it is much more immediate than what we can give them sometimes. It's really special, and that's a thrilling time of day for them. You know, it's nice to see that because in watching this video again, there are just moments where Jacob is just beaming, you know, he's got his daddy. This is great!

Carol understood the success of this evening transition as a function of her commitment to parent-teacher partnerships, a focus on child and family goals, and her attention to detail. After reflecting on the scenario, Carol stated, "This conversation seems clunky; but it's just very interesting. When you watch [the video], you just see different elements of your practice."

Roy reviewed the scenario as well; and when asked what stood out to him, he said, "I noticed he's really paying a lot of attention both to what I'm saying and to what Carol is saying and he's doing a really nice job which he doesn't always do, even now, responding to questions appropriately.". Roy clarified his statement by saying, "Let's say responding to the actual question rather than just talking about whatever he wants to talk about and, you know, he does that with me and my wife most of the time." Roy also seemed to believe that Jacob was capable of communicating at a higher level than he often demonstrated in social situations outside of the home: "He'll have more or less normal conversations for a three-year-old [at home]; but I notice that often with other people he doesn't respond directly to questions at the same rate that he responds to questions from us."

Roy also appeared to value Jacob's ability to communicate and interact with his teachers, other children and family friends. He compared the scenario to conversations that Jacob has with had in social situations and he reflected:

> Whereas, here, when Carol was asking those questions, he had the answers, you know. He was working to recall what they had done, but then he gave the answers; so I thought that was great and that, you know, it suggested to me with his teachers, the ones he's most comfortable with, like Carol and Belinda, … it suggests to me he's really, really comfortable with them.

Roy's understanding of Jacob's capacity to express himself in this scenario as well as at home seemed to be based on believing that communicating is easier when one feels comfortable in his surroundings, when he is among people with whom he feels secure. Roy acknowledged that his own experience in learning a foreign language as an exchange student provided him with such insight: "I think about learning a foreign language. I was an exchange student. With my host family, you know, they could understand me; and I could understand them much better than I could other people just because of the familiarity."

Although Roy recognized that comfort and familiarity were two elements seemingly supporting Jacob's progress in communicating socially with adults and peers, he seemed to believe that during the scenario Jacob should have been communicating more with his peers:

> I think especially at that time, less worry now, I wanted to see his interaction with his peers; and so, you know, I like seeing him playing with the other kids. … I love it now-a-days, and I wanted to start to see it then; but you know, he'll talk to the other kids; and, you know, he'll tell them 'bye,' or at least sometimes. He'll even tell them what he's going to do, 'Papa and I are going to ride the bus,' or, 'Papa and I are going to the store', or, 'We're going [to] go right home'."

Roy admitted, "I always try to [ask] Jacob to say 'bye-bye' to everybody. He doesn't always do it on his own, even if he gets prompting." I asked if getting Jacob to say "goodbye" voluntarily was one of his goals for Jacob, Roy said, "Yeah, definitely, obviously not just at school but in other social interactions." Roy further clarified:

> Sometimes he's good at it, and sometimes he's not. I mean, still when we walk in the building [the center] in the mornings, although he's always in a good mood and happy to come, whoever is sitting at the front desk will say 'good morning,' and it still takes prompting from me to say, 'Jacob, look at her and say, 'Good morning.'

As Roy reflected on Jacob's reluctance to greet the receptionist and to communicate effortlessly, he seemed to consider Jacob's perspective and wondered, "Alright, he is usually a little bit, I don't know if it's stunned or, you know, he's just not quite ready to engage right when he walks in." Roy's perception was that as the day progressed Jacob felt more comfortable and it was easier for him to engage with his peers. His description of Jacob's interactions

with children in his classroom during afternoon transitions indicated that Roy also valued Jacob's ability to develop relationships with children in the classroom. Roy continued,

> But on the way out [of the classroom], you know, he's usually in a pretty good mood; so I think then it should be easier for him to turn to everybody and say 'bye-bye' and often nowadays he does, especially if I say, 'Jacob, say bye to everybody.' They all turn and go, 'Bye-bye, bye-bye,' and sometimes [he] even [says "good bye"] by name to the different children. Yeah, which is nice; but yeah, I want to get him to do that.

In this series of reflections, Roy revealed much about his concerns about Jacob's tentative nature and reluctance to communicate. He revealed concern that Jacob's abilities seen at home are not always reflected at the center, yet he acknowledged that the stability of having Carol as his teacher for an extended time had created a comfort level allowing Jacob to reach his potential at times. Roy's comments are a reminder that that all parents have some apprehensions and require comfort and assurance from their young children's teachers.

In multiple ways, Carol seeks to provide a bridge across the threshold between home and the center for Roy and Jacob. She demonstrated ways she assigns meaning to effective transitions, characterizing them as well organized and unambiguous, incorporating both the parents' and her goals. For example, Carol strategically positions herself in close proximity to families during transitions to ensure they feel she is fully engaged in their comings and goings. She is keenly observant and individualizes transitions to meet each family's

needs. Furthermore, she does not position parents ahead of children in terms of her attention during transitions, but rather attempts to ensure that both are receiving what she perceives they need.

Carole also perceives her role as being to orchestrate exchanges that are pleasant; informative; and in many respects, instructional. For example, Carol actively modeled for Jacob and probed him gently to recall a daily event. It was as though she was sending him home with a shared story that Jacob and Roy could retell and share in a meaningful way with his mother at home.

Diane's story.

"A little bit of my way and a little bit of her way…." Diane was preparing to meet Brady, an infant, and his mother, Candace, during one of the first home visits that she would complete as a newly hired infant teacher in her job at the center. Prior to accepting this position, she had been an early childhood teacher for seven years for a nationally replicated early childhood program serving newborns to five-year olds. While reviewing the application's questionnaire that Candace had completed about Brady and her family, Diane was interested to learn that Candace was breastfeeding and that she substituted fresh goat's milk when she was unable to breastfeed. Diane felt a bit apprehensive as she recalled what she had thought:

> He drinks goat's milk … Whoa -- I've never had a parent be like this before.… I was really excited to meet her, but also very nervous. How's she going to feel about him eating food at school? We don't have goat's milk at school. How is this all going to play out?

Diane met Brady and Candace later that week; and during the home visit, Diane asked about Brady's preferences and nutritional needs and found that he did not like to drink breast milk or goat's milk from a bottle. Diane believed that knowing the parent's preferences was important, and so she asked how Candace wanted her to handle Brady's milk intake while Brady was at school:

Candace: "What do *you* (emphasis added) want to do?"

Diane: "I think we just put the goat's milk in a cup."

Candace: "Okay. If that's what you want to do."

Later sharing in her interview that she was both surprised and relieved by Candace's response, Diane remarked, "It was really refreshing, I guess; and it just made me feel a little bit more at ease. … Add a little bit of my way and a little bit of her way, messed in together; so it was really nice."

Candace also reflected on the way in which she and Diane constructed shared knowledge about how to ensure that Brady's eating at school reflected her values and routines at home:

> I never feel like I need to give a whole lot of instruction to her, you know, and I think some parents may, you know, some maybe more than others, … some people are kind of particular like [they might say], 'Well, I really like this. I like it done this way' and things like that don't matter as much to me. I kind of like them having different people's way of doing things.

In this scene, Diane was uncertain about how to broach this important issue with Candace and decided to invite her suggestions on what she could do to support her wishes at the center. Diane seemed to believe that being open to

Candace's ideas was a good strategy. As a result, Candace felt "at ease" and valued the opportunity to share ideas with Diane.

"Love language." One morning, Candace entered the classroom quickly, greeted Diane, and gently lowered Brady over the gate into Diane's arms. Candace then hurriedly moved to the counter and began unpacking jars of homemade baby food that she had prepared for Brady over the weekend. As she took out each jar, she read aloud the name of the label on the jar: "This one is apple and yellow squash; and I made this one last night, plum and pear." Diane listened as Candace described the contents of each jar and then acknowledged her efforts: "You must have been really busy all weekend making those. I'm sure that he will love them."

Several weeks later during Diane's VSRI, while reflecting on Candace's commitment to Brady's nutrition and wellness, Diane wondered if this food preparation was one of the ways that Candace expressed her love for her son:

> Yeah, [I think that Candace believes] my child is going to be nutritionally taken care of. You know what I mean…? … Maybe that's her love language. You know how everybody has a different love language; maybe that's hers. [I think that Candace might be saying], 'I'm going to show my baby how much I love him by making fresh, organic homemade baby food, having fresh goat's milk, just nursing him, and being up to speed on all of that' … maybe that's it. Maybe that's hers.

While Candace stored the food that she had made for Brady, Diane expressed her belief that Candace's hard work and dedication to her child were deep and loving acts.

She also encouraged her when she said, "I'm sure that he will love them." Diane's perception of Candace's efforts gave her a window into what Candace valued and the way in which Candace conveyed her love for her son whether she was with him or not.

During my interview with Candace: I asked her about making homemade baby foods for Brady and the day that she brought various foods to the center, She replied,

> It was fun. It's fun and it's really for such a short period of time that you make food, you know; and then they're ready for table food. But, yeah, he's a great eater. I know I get carried away. It was a lot. I know. I know. I'm not sure how I did all that; but lots and lots of coffee, lots of coffee.

Candace clearly valued providing her son with natural foods, conveying her belief in nutrition's importance. Her commitment to this belief was evident in her efforts to breast feed, provide fresh goat milk, and make homemade organic baby food on the weekend. She seemed to believe that the hard work and dedication were worth it for her son. Therefore, Diane may have identified one of the ways in which Candace expresses her love for her son, especially when away from him during the day.

"Sad morning." Earlier in the week, several children and family members had been feeling a little under the weather. The cold rain and dreary skies only added to the low spirits of some of the children and parents entering the infant classroom one morning. Greeting Bailey, a student teacher, who entered the classroom, Diane commented, "I hope we don't have rain all day. I think that we could all use a little sunshine, so many children have gone home sick this week."

Abe quietly came into the classroom with his son, Sean, in his arms. Abby, Sean's mother and Sara, Sean's older sister, followed. Diane was surprised to see Sean this morning because he was not feeling well the day before and had gone home early. Abby dropped off Sean's bottles and left quickly to bring Sara over to her classroom. Abe removed his own shoes, opened the infant gate in the front of the room, and placed Sean next to Diane where she was sitting on the carpet. He then returned to the front of the classroom and quietly began to store Sean's diapers and wipes in the cabinet under the changing table. Sean appeared to be frowning, keeping his eyes fixed on his father. Diane asked Sean, "Are you watching Daddy?"

In a sober tone, Abe informed Diane that Sean seemed to be okay during the evening and did not have a temperature.

Diane replied, "Yeah that happens. Oh, I'm glad he's feeling better." Sean began to cry, and Diane picked him up and asked Abe, "Did he have a good night?" She then looked at Sean and queried, "Oh, you see Daddy? Are you not done giving Daddy hugs this morning?"

Abe immediately replied, "I'm not leaving just yet."

Diane reassured Sean, "No, he's going to come back."

Shortly, Abe walked back over and sat down next to Diane and Sean. Abe reached out to Sean, cuddled him, and asked, "Hey, bud, are you going to hang out some?"

Later during my interview with Diane, she discussed this transition: "They're just quieter than everybody else, and I guess they're just a little slow to warm, … all of the other families cannot wait to see me and talk to me about their child's day and are very chatty."

Diane continued by discussing strategies she used that morning to foster the parent-teacher relationship:

> I greeted them, … let them do their thing. I'm not bombarding them because I feel they're still warming up to me and still trying to figure me out. It's not always about everything you say to somebody, … let them [the parents] come in, ease in; let them put their things away for their baby, kind of do their little morning rituals; and then they'll come over and sit down and talk. I like it too. I like it to be nice and calm like our room is all the time and especially with them because they just have a hard time, and I just can't figure them out.

Diane had attempted to create a calm space that allowed parents the freedom to "ease in" to their morning routine. The meaning she assigned to Abe's quiet behavior was that he needed time to make his transition. She believed this time was challenging for this family, and she was still unsure what they needed. Her approach was to stand back, watch closely, and wait. She believed that this family deserved the time and opportunity to show her what they needed from her, so she remained open to the possibilities.

Diane noticed Sean's somber look; and when he began to whimper, she said, "Oh goodness. Got those hands in his mouth. Are you having a sad morning?"

Abe replied, "Yeah. He woke up kind of hard."

"Did he? Has he had breakfast this morning? Diane inquired.

Abe looked down at Sean and nodded affirmatively. He spoke softly as he began to tell the story of Sean's sad morning: "…and then he was mad that we didn't have extra jars for him, or as Sara calls them, pots, pots of food, I think she thinks he is Pooh Bear.".

Diane smiled and replied, "That's really funny. Oh, poor Sean. Oh my goodness. Okay."

Abe continued, "No, I was expecting when I came to get him [yesterday], I was expecting there to be, you know an evening of pain; and [yet] he was perfectly fine."

Diane exclaimed, "Good. I'm so glad. No, we were, I guess, with Sara being sick too, and then."

Abe quickly responded, "Well, she just had like -- it wasn't the flu. She just had food poisoning."

Diane acknowledged, "Oh. We thought it was the stomach bug that's been going around. Well good. I'm glad he's not feeling bad. Yeah. Good. Well, we're glad he's back today."

Abe and Abby met together for their VSRI, and they described this transition as having both typical and unique qualities. They stated that during that time period they both worked at the university and commuted together in the mornings and evenings.

> Abby: "He actually used to drop off more often because I would have to be at work and it was actually pretty rare [that I would be present during morning transitions]."
>
> Abe: "I would drop the kids off myself so that was atypical … probably just because we were running a little early that morning. Normally, I would be with Sara dropping Sean off and then take Sara to class."

Abe related that he and Diane would not always have lengthy discussions in the morning unless there was something important to discuss. Abe and Abby continued to discuss the interaction that had occurred between Diane and Abe that morning and to make sense of it in terms of their child's development during that time and their evolving relationship with Diane. Upon more reflection about the morning event, Abe noted, "That's typical if something's been out of the ordinary and it's not just business as usual; [otherwise] that kind of interaction doesn't really happen. That was a little bit longer conversation, but I'd say she always kind of asks." Abby described "how his night was."

As Abe and Abby continued to discuss their experience of morning transitions, it became clear that they typically had brief discussions with Diane, and that was fine with them. They did not seem to expect or desire to have long conversations in the morning, unless there was "something of importance to discuss." Abe continued,

> . . . just as she presents in that particular incidence, it was because he had gone home early the day before, so she wanted to know if he was doing well, essentially; but I mean now in the morning when I drop off, it's more chit-chat stuff than it is what he ate for breakfast.

Abby agreed, "Yeah, if they ate breakfast used to be more important."

Abe also stated,

> Yeah, I mean, at that time period it was because they all were like getting bottles; and there was the transition from bottle to solid food … and he was also in the phase where we were trying to get him to stand more; and so, um, he was a little more clingy than he is now, too.

Abby agreed, "Now, he's always eating."

They both looked at each other and laughed.

Once again, Abe and Abby noted they expect Diane to have longer conversations with them regarding something out of the ordinary, such as an illness, or something of a developmental nature, such as transitioning from bottle feeding to solid foods. Otherwise, they seemed to value shorter interactions during morning transitions, which fit with their busy work and commuting schedules.

Diane seemed concerned that that she was still trying to figure them out because most parents wanted to talk in depth. In this instance, Diane assigned a different meaning to the parents' quiet behaviors:

> I think just from experience …, I've had a lot parents that have been pretty quiet … and then eventually they do [open up]. You just have to be patient and wait for it so you know, and it's nothing I'm doing; it's, you know, that's just how they are as people; so you can't expect everybody to be the same way, So therefore, you can't treat everybody the same way, and that's just how I see it.

Although the situation continued to puzzle her, she believed that the parent-teacher relationship would improve with time and that she would feel more comfortable. On the other hand, the parents were quite satisfied with their transitions, noting they did not need more from her on most days.

"I don't want him to ever think I will sneak away…." Abby returned to the infant classroom after dropping Sara off in her classroom. Abby and Abe prepared to leave the classroom for work, and Diane turned Sean around on her lap for him to see his parents leave. Sean began to point his index finger in the air. Diane noted this gesture

and said, “Got your finger out. He’s holding his little finger. Does he do this a lot with you all? Stick it out when he’s like sitting around?”

Abby laughed and replied, “No, but he likes to wave,” and she began waving her hand to demonstrate Sean’s new skill.

Diane also laughed and replied, “Oh, he’s very friendly. Anyone who comes in, he’ll go to the gate and smile and look at them. Everybody wants to say ‘Hi’ to Sean.” Diane then looked directly at Sean and said, “You go to greet everybody, don’t you? You crawl to the gate to say hello to everybody. [Are] you going to say bye to mom and dad?”

Abe said, “Bye, Sean.”

Diane said to Sean, “Say ‘have a good rainy day.’ Say ‘bye.’” She held his small hand in hers and helped him wave to his mom and dad as they left the classroom.

Later, Abe considered this part of the transition as he reviewed the video clip:

> Yeah, he was clingy; but he was okay with us leaving and that’s the other thing, the whole [bye Sean] that Diane instigates. We make sure that he sees us leave, and he knows we’re leaving even if it means it makes him upset. That can be difficult for them [teachers], but I don’t like the alternative of just skipping out.

Abby added, “But, they’ve always known when he’s going to have trouble; and they come pick him up because we know he quits [crying] in like a minute after we leave. I don’t want him to ever think I will sneak away.”

Abe declared, “I think it kind of makes the transition from there easier. He knows [Diane is the person that will handle his needs].

Abe and Abby expressed their belief in the importance of saying good-bye directly to Sean. They valued the routine that Diane practiced with Sean (i.e., helping him

to wave, saying good-bye) when they left; and Abe expressed trust that once they walked out the door, Sean would have "the person that will meet his needs." As Abe and Abby discussed their beliefs about the importance of directly saying goodbye to Sean, they implied that this directness matters to them because they don't want to trick Sean or confuse him. Clearly, Diane had closely observed their behaviors and devised a strategy that seemed to help Sean separate from his parents as they left for the day.

"It's happening at home, too." Most of the infants in the classroom were awake from their afternoon naps and sitting with Diane and several student teachers on the carpet near the front of the room. They were quietly playing with toys and looking at books, and some of the infants were being held by their teachers. These were a few relaxing moments for all in the late afternoon sunlight before the anticipated flurry of activity began when parents returned to reconnect with their children, learn about their day, and prepare for their trips home.

Around 4:30 p.m., Candace opened the classroom door and walked over to the infant gate. She greeted Diane who was seated on the floor holding another infant. Diane looked towards Brady and said to him, "There's mom." Brady turned around and began to *army crawl* towards his mother, kicking his feet, laughing, and squealing with excitement. Candace encouraged him, "You come here.… You give it to me.… You give it to me…. "

Diane smiled and said to Brady, "Oh my goodness. You want mama? Go get her. Yeah. Oh, so sweet. So sweet." Candace opened the infant gate, reached down to pick Brady up, and hugged and kissed him. Diane looked up at Candace as she described in detail how Brady had eaten his green-bean snack that day: "We offered him the table

food you brought today. During our morning snack, he ate a lot of the cheese, and he ate a couple of the peas, and he tried some of squash during lunch." Candace smiled and nodded. Diane continued her story:

> This afternoon, he tried some of the green beans at snack. He'll eat and he'll eat, and he'll put one in and he'll chew it. Then he might not chew one as well and swallow it, and he'll kind of gag a little. I feel like he just gets too scared. It's as if he is saying 'Okay. I'm done. I don't want any more.' But hey, it was great, he did a great job trying them, and he was picking everything up and eating it. He did so great!

Diane reflected during her interview on this interaction with Candace: "I think that's a big deal for infants, and you need to be able to really communicate that and remember this is what he ate and this is how he was eating." Diane's comment suggests that she believes informing parents about their children's daily activities they especially value is very important. Diane further reflected, "…letting her know that he is getting a little frustrated and a little scared sometimes, still working, learning how to chew his food. [Knowing] that it's happening at home too made me feel a little bit better about it.

Diane implied that she worried about Brady when he choked on the green bean during snack, and she seemed reassured to learn from Candace that Brady had also choked when eating them at home.

Candace later remarked about her communication with Diane:

> I don't know; I might have hogged her time; there was a lot going on in the room. There were lots of parents. I always loved talking to her. There

> does seem to be one thing that Diane's really good at doing, like the continuity between what you're doing at home and what you see at school; and then she's really good about, she just always knows specific things to tell me that she sees him doing.

Candace discussed her thoughts about their discussion; "I like to communicate with her about what he's eating … we were talking about him kind of gagging on some stuff." Initially, Candace expressed feeling a bit guilty, stating that she believed she may have been "hogging" Diane's time when "there were lots of parents" in the classroom; nevertheless, she reported, "I always love talking to her." This comment suggests that she believed Diane was very busy during afternoon transitions and had very limited time to talk with parents about their children individually. Yet, the fact that she met Candace's need to hear specific stories from Brady's day made Diane happy.

As Diane and Candace continued talking about Brady's day, Diane noted, "He's just, he's more focused on the going and getting places and then now, starting to pull up on things." At this point, two other parents entered the classroom. Diane exchanged greetings with the parents as they began taking off their shoes near the front door, washing their hands, entering through the infant gate, walking to the back of the classroom to hold their babies, and moving around the classroom to collect their children's belongs. As soon as Diane and Candace ended their conversation, one of the parents, who had been waiting to speak with her approached Diane and asked, "Anything we need to know?" Diane took a deep breath, and responded, "She had a great day. We

sat outside today on the quilt, and she looked at a book about baby animals. She was so excited, and she patted the pictures with her hand. So sweet."

Diane later considered this experience when she noted, "It's hard to make sure you tell everybody everything because they [parents] all want your attention and want to hear lots about their child's day." Diane continued describing her experience of afternoon transitions:

> I've had people waiting in line, not a real line, but they're waiting. They want to talk to me about something; and then you feel rushed, and so your conversation with the other parents really isn't as authentic as you really want it to be because you can feel these other parents are like [I have to talk to you]; and it's just really hard to balance all of it. To make sure you're talking to them about things that I know that are important to them, but also things that I feel like are important for them to know.

Diane seemed to believe that it is her responsibility as a teacher to be fully available to each parent and to provide each parent with her undivided attention and authentic self. She also seemed sure that parents expected this time from her and that if she could not be available to every parent she was not fulfilling her responsibility. Interestingly Candace identified one of Diane's strength's as "… she knows specific things to tell me that she sees him doing." Still, at times, Diane seemed overwhelmed by an imaginary line of parents who "all want her attention, and want to know lots about their child's day." She acknowledged that it was a challenge for her to "balance all of it." Thus, she assigned meanings to some of these challenges as being less than desirable. Diane strives to engage in genuine

exchanges during a time of the day that is fast-paced, and that requires individualized interactions with each family.

When Abe and Abby were discussing their afternoon transition experiences and what they needed that differed from their morning transitions, Abe noted,

> Well, you know there's more stuff changing, development wise; and obviously he spends the majority of his time here; you know, I see him maybe 4 hours out of the day, but they [teachers] see him for the bulk of the day, so they get to see stuff that I'm not seeing. So, it's important to learn what he's up to; and the other thing too is she'll tell us stuff that he's doing, and then we can kind of expand on that at home or reinforce it. So, that happens a lot.

Abby noted, "[Sean is] always super happy to see us at the end of the day. . . . I always try to ask how his day went. Sometimes, a lot of times when I pick up, there are two or three other moms picking up and/or dads, so it can be kind of crazy."

Abe added, "Yeah, I don't think I have any goals at pickup other than to get him. I'd say now, mostly, if I pick them up its actually pretty quick most of the time. It's just getting them [his children]. I don't want a conversation, just [an update on] the out of ordinary kind of things...." Abe seemed to be surprised that Abby was still asking Diane about Sean's day: "I pick them up later; he's one of the only kids there. She's [Diane's] prompted to talk to me; if something's interesting, she tells me. I don't really have to ask."

The preceding vignettes have been presented to describe and explore the beliefs, values, perspectives and meanings of Diane and three parents who have children in her classroom. As a new employee at the center, Diane was just beginning to meet the infants and their parents who would be in her classroom when the study began. For Diane, developing relationships with the children and parents was a primary focus of her work, and was reflected in the daily transitions between home and the center. As she discussed some of her concerns, she reflected, "I know sometimes I wonder too, well if it is my stress of starting a new job and figuring out my role in the classroom and then trying to figure out like what they [parents] need."

At times during this process, Diane appeared to be determined and excited to put her ideas into action; yet at other times, she was apprehensive and "stressed." Diane seemed to believe that parent-teacher relationships are crucial, and she expressed delight in opportunities to sit on the floor with parents in the classroom and converse with them. Diane intentionally provided parents with time and a space to get settled in before she approached them with questions or information during transitions. In this relaxed environment, Diane believed that she would have the opportunity to share daily stories about children's activities with parents, exchange information with them, and facilitate separations. During the year that I worked with Diane, she often discussed her joy in watching parents and their infants play together and listening to small groups of parents chat with each other in her classroom. She also expressed excitement about meeting new

parents in her initial home visits and working closely with them during those first days that their children entered the classroom.

During her interview, Diane reflected:

> I think maybe I'm getting to know them a little bit more now. I mean she [Candace] is still like that, like very busy/rushed. You know like she's, 'Hey. Ah, tell me what happened. Uh huh. Uh huh. Oh okay. Alright. Okay. See you tomorrow,' and then she's just out of the door and that's just her. She's just, I think she's like that in life 'cause we've talked a lot about, you know' and when I say "talked a lot," I mean like on a number of different occasions, very short amounts about just like her stress and how she is working on calming herself down a little bit and things like that; so I think like this is just her personality.

Diane also noted, "Sometimes Abe will come in and sit down, and you're like 'Oh okay. Hey. How are you? What's going on?' But it's not all the time. Abby is not like that all of the time." Diane also seemed to believe Abe and Abby might feel guilty about leaving Sean in child care for the entire day because of some of their comments,, such as "[Oh, we're just the parents, our child's here till the end of the day everyday]." Diane reflected,

> I know that they both have some guilt about that [being away from him all day], and they make comments kind of like that sometimes. We just have some [parents] that take off their shoes every day and want to come sit down on the carpet and in the mornings and talk and chat; and I know a whole lot about all of their lives, and you know, it's just -- it's not them.

In many respects, Diane's description of these two families is similar, in that they both typically communicate quickly with limited dialogue and while involved in activities (i.e., putting supplies away, looking at daily logs, etc.). This communication style is different from the one Diane prefers and seems to enjoy. Still, Diane had figured out Candace and found a way to be in tune with her. Candace noted, "I'm sure too they, you know once they're around the parent more, they kind of get to know our personality and you know there's some mornings that she'll say, 'I can tell you are really rushed [this morning], so I want to tell about something this afternoon.'" Diane also understood that Brady's nutrition was a priority, not just by listening to Candace's words, but also through close observation and reflection. Thus, they had found a way to partner together.

What aspects of Diane's relationship with Abe and Abby had presented more confusion for her in determining how to move forward? Diane thoughtfully and strategically created an environment she felt would invite and encourage parents to converse during morning and afternoon transitions. She believed that sitting down, playing with their baby, and having a relaxed discussion with their child's teacher was worthwhile for many of the families in her classroom. Still some of the families did not want to interact in this way and they were satisfied with a brief update about their child at the end of the day.

In the parent-teacher partnership, Diane needed to find a new way to communicate with Abe and Abby about their beliefs and values in terms of daily transitions. She needed to understand what they wanted and what was important

to them. The challenges for Diane were listening for and understanding this family's love language, as she had done so effectively with Candace.

Through this communication process, Diane must encourage Abe and Abby to indicate what types of information they want to exchange during transitions and how they want to share this information. It would be helpful for Diane to understand that Abby and Abe value her stories about Sean and the updates that she shares with them, especially when something out of the ordinary occurs. It is also important for her to know they are most interested in sharing stories at the end of the day.

In each of these scenarios, Diane demonstrated her belief that relationships with children and families in her classroom are important. She had genuine, meaningful conversations with parents about their children; displayed excitement as she observed young children demonstrating their newly developed skills; and praised parents for their efforts.

On the other hand, Diane questioned her ability to attend to multiple families and to have authentic conversations with parents, especially when she felt pressured by other parents who were waiting to talk with her. Diane expressed concern that she could not understand the needs of one of her families and she reflected upon her own efforts in establishing a secure parent-teacher relationship with them.

Yet, unlike Diane, both of the families in the vignettes perceived Diane as successful in attempting to connect with them during daily transitions and to provide valuable information about their child. They also acknowledged that due

to multiple responsibilities, Diane's role presented challenges that at times made it difficult for Diane to meet all her perceived responsibilities.

Allison's story.

Allison, an assistant teacher in a young-toddler classroom, has over twenty years of early-childhood teaching experience. Her story unfolds through several vignettes constructed from videotaped morning and afternoon transitions of Allison and two parents, Brenda and Iris, and their VSRI interviews. Through this analysis, Allison's beliefs, values, perspectives and meanings as well as those of Brenda and Iris are revealed.

Window goodbyes and kisses through the fence. The fog hadn't quite lifted on this early Monday morning; and outside the classroom window, the sky above the parking lot was a dreary gray hue. From the classroom window overlooking the parking lot, Allison and two toddlers knelt, waving, blowing kisses, and saying goodbye to one of the children's parents who had just left the classroom. The cheerful exchange among Allison, the two children at the window, and the parents in the parking lot was upbeat and joyful.

Toddler: "Bye-bye. Bye-bye."

Allison: "Bye, Mommy; bye, Daddy. See you later. Okay? Yeah, bye-bye. They're getting in your jeep, your green jeep. See them?"

Toddler: "Bye-bye."

Allison: "Blow a kiss. [Kiss sound] Bye."

Another Toddler: "Mmm. Bye."

As Allison knelt by the window with the two children, Iris, a parent, quietly opened the door and carried her son, Isaac, into the classroom. She looked over at Allison and the children who were waving goodbye and smiled as she began to remove Isaac's socks and shoes, hang his small book bag on a hook near the entryway, and move toward the diapering table. Allison got up from the window and moved toward Iris to greet her and Isaac

During Allison's reflection on this scene, she felt that she had taken too long to greet Isaac and Iris. Allison said, "I couldn't believe that I didn't [say hello], that he came in the door and I didn't even say anything to him [Issac]. . . . I don't think that I do that very often, but I was helping other children say bye." Allison expressed dissatisfaction with her inability to attend to multiple situations; and as she considered her behavior, she noted, "I was focusing on Ely saying bye to his parents. Even if I did say hello [to Iris and Isaac], when I got up it was still several seconds, that they came in. She put his backpack up." Believing that greeting children and parents upon their arrival in the classroom is an essential part of her role, Allison asserted, "He deserved a hello from his teacher when he first walked in." Expressing her commitment to supporting children through the process of saying goodbye to their parents, she remarked, "I would like to think that maybe when he first walked in the door . . . . I needed to finish what I was doing with Ely. I still agree that I needed to finish what I was doing with Ely, but I should have looked up and said 'Hi.'"

Once Iris left the classroom that morning, Allison also brought Isaac to the window. Two other children and a student teacher joined them at the window; and they all waved, blew kisses, and said good-bye to Iris.

Allison: “Bye mommy, say bye. Do you want to blow her kisses?” Allison gently held Isaac’s hand and helped him blow a kiss to Iris.

Iris: See you later Isaac, love you.”

Iris later reflected on this scene during her VSRI and stated that one of the things that stood out for her as she entered the classroom that morning was that Allison was very engaged with the children at the window, and she enjoyed watching this interaction. Iris affirmed,

> The first thing I noticed was that she was really focused on the children whose parents had left; so like in the beginning, it was the kids that were by the window waving goodbye to their parents and then you know later with Isaac, so that I thought was really nice, you know.

Iris seemed to believe that this routine was important for the children and the parents and that it was something she valued in her own experience at the center. She noted this routine when she recalled

> It seems like there is a pattern . . . that’s what makes him comfortable. He knows that I’m going to leave, he knows that Allison’s very attentive to him during that time and if he is upset that they can go to the window which they do pretty much every time, still, to say goodbye, . . . I think that pattern -- it’s just something comfortable [that] he knows to expect each time. Maybe that’s what makes him comfortable.

Here, Iris assigned meaning to her son and other children’s leave-taking routine. She believed that his comfort was supported by a dependable series of

steps that unfolded every day. The routine shepherded him and her as she crossed the boundary of the child care space, marking her time away from him.

Yet, Brenda, another parent in Allison's young toddler class, described her morning transitions as difficult times of her day. Due to her work schedule, her husband typically brought their son, Brandon, to the center. Brenda stated that her husband did not report difficult morning transitions, but that she felt those transitions were more difficult for her and Brandon because they were outside his routine. She explained during her interview, "because of that reason, it's a very different experience for me because in the morning, if I drop him off, it's very out of his routine and he can get pretty upset that I'm dropping him off."

For example, she recalled "…preparing to have a bad drop-off …" one Monday morning. She and Allison were talking about when she "should make the break, but he ended up being fine." Brenda stated that Allison was often in the classroom or outside on the playground when she arrived with Brandon in the morning. She seemed to appreciate Allison's implementing creative strategies that they (i.e., Allison, Brenda, and the other classroom teacher) had developed to address their transition process. Believing that their *kisses through the fence* [emphasis added] routine was particularly helpful, Brenda recalled,

> We [Allison and Brenda] were trying to figure out the best approach; and he is fine if you distract him with something else, normally he's fine. So we [Brenda and Brandon] gave each other kisses through the fence which he thought was funny, and then he was fine and went to class. . . . just

something where it seems like we're physically separated but he still has a connection and it seems to help him transition and to being here.

Brenda may have also recognized her own competency when she noted, "I don't feel like I get upset about dropping him off anymore; it's more thinking, 'Ok, how am I going to make this easier for him today?' because, you know, as he's gotten older I don't feel like I'm going to cry every time I hear him cry, and things like that." Brenda's recollection linked her distress to Brandon's but also revealed their newfound comfort with the strategy that had been created. Brenda also recognized that Brandon's difficulty transitioning occurred because "it was out of his routine." Supporting their morning transitions, Allison created a new routine for Brenda and Brandon to cross the threshold between home and child care.

"Climbing is in". Mornings are often times for parents to share important information about their young children with teachers. Iris typically arrived early and used this time when few children and parents had arrived, to share information about Isaac's development and seek advice from Allison.

One morning, Iris seemed to be particularly interested in Isaac's physical development and inquired about community resources that she and Isaac could access to foster his climbing ability.

Iris asked Allison, "Oh, I was going to ask you do you know like any really good jungle gyms around here for kids his age because I went to Kids Playground yesterday which was really -- but I wasn't sure if you knew of any others here."

Allison responded, "Dyer Park. Have you been to Dyer Park"?

Iris shook her head and said, “No, No.”

Allison gave Iris directions to the park that was close to the child care center and stated, “There is a park and a picnic area. Sometimes we’ll walk over there.”

Iris responded, “Okay. I’ll try that. . . . I’ll have to look for that because he really wants to climb.”

Seemingly pleased with the information Allison had given her, Iris declared to Allison and Isaac as she was leaving the classroom that morning, “Climbing is in right now.”

Allison smiled at her, looked over at Isaac, and announced, “Climbing is in. Anything we can do to climb. Right?”

Later surprised she helped Iris by sharing information with her about the nearby community park, Allison reflected,

> I thought when I said that, she would say, yeah, I’ve been there, but I was looking for a different one, and I don’t know any other ones to tell her, really, because I don’t have little children anymore. . . . That’s just part of our community. They moved here; she doesn’t know where that is, so I was able to tell her where it [the park] was.

Reflecting on the morning conversation, Iris shared she had been concerned about Isaac’s physical development and had taken him to the park that weekend for him to play and climb. Stating she often asked Allison for information about Isaac’s development, Iris added,

> . . . sometimes I feel like, if I'm searching the internet, I'm getting conflicting advice or even from my family, and I feel like it's also probably conflicting to Isaac if things are happening one way in the classroom, and then I go home and try to do something different . . . . I try to do things the way they [his teachers] do things because they know way more than me as a first-time parent.

Yet, Allison had assigned a different meaning to their exchange. Her reflection suggested she believed her knowledge about children's community resources was not current and, therefore, not valuable to parents. Apparently she thought most parents were aware of the community resources; therefore, she did not perceive that information's potential benefit for first-time parents and those new to the community.

Iris seemed to believe that she could trust Allison to provide valuable information when she stated, "They [his teachers] always seem to have an answer for the questions that I have; and if they don't, I've asked Allison for things, and she will go find a good credible source that helps me with something." Iris was not just looking for a playground; she was looking for a credible source of information, someone that she could count on to give her the answer. She learned over time that she could trust and depend on Allison to meet this need.

Daily stories. It was 3:30 in the afternoon, and Allison was keeping a watchful eye on the parking lot outside her classroom, knowing that Brenda, Brandon's mother, would be coming to pick up her son soon. Brenda was often one of the first parents in Allison's classroom to pick up her child. Brandon was at the front of the classroom

playing quietly with a puzzle on a small table next to the window. He seemed familiar with the typical afternoon routine: lunch, naptime, snack, and outside play/pick-up time.

Allison reflected on the many events of the day and tried to remember a specific story about Brandon that she would like to share with Brenda. Later reflecting on this scenario, Allison commented to me, "I think it's important for me to give them, give the parents, specific things about what a child has done." She appeared to believe that as an early educator it is essential to share a story with parents each day about their child, and she seemed to value her ability to closely observe each child in her classroom during activities in order to remember specifics. Allison continued, "…it's hard to remember specific things that happened during the day … when a parent is on their way in or … I know that she picks him up around four, I'm thinking, 'What do I remember?'" Allison reported that in the past she used various methods for keeping track of children's daily stories, but recently had been relying solely on her memory to keep mental notes of twelve active toddlers' daily activities. Allison acknowledged, "It's just a lot to remember."

When Brenda arrived, she was greeted at the door by her son Brandon and another toddler who often greeted her as well. Brenda kissed Brandon and said hello to the other toddler who then ran back into the room, smiling. From the middle of the classroom, Allison walked to the entryway and greeted Brenda as they began to discuss Brandon's day. Allison offered the story that she remembered from earlier in the day:

> He is not usually interested too much in imaginary play; but today I was asking him if he wanted to play with Caley and give the baby doll a bottle. And he was doing that. …Then he wanted to hold his own baby doll …;

> he was giving the baby a bottle, and he was putting it in the baby's eyes and in the baby's mouth.

As Brenda listened to Allison's story, she nodded, smiled, and caressed her son's head. She then asked him if he had played with a baby doll that day.

Later, Allison reflected on the scene, stating that she decided to tell Brenda this particular story because "…it was unusual for him, so that's why I wanted to tell his mom." Wondering if Brenda found the story valuable, Allison recalled, "She didn't seem as interested as I thought she might be; but what's she going to say, you know, 'That's great?'" In a second review of the video clip during her interview, Allison observed that Brenda was actually looking directly at her while she was telling the story, followed by Brenda asking Brandon about his imaginary play. Still, Allison seemed to have difficulty "reading" this parent's positive, non-verbal communication; this difficulty resulted in her being doubtful that her storytelling made a difference. However, Brenda's recollection of this scene revealed that she appreciated the story about his developing interest in imaginary play:

> One other thing that stood out was when Allison brought up imaginary play. That has been a continuing conversation …because he has not shown a lot of interest until the last few months. … That was great to hear because we were concerned about that. He is doing a lot more of that now, but it was good to see that he was beginning to do some of that even back then.

Brenda and Iris both described their positive experiences of hearing stories about their children during daily transitions. A first-time mother, Brenda stated that Brandon

had stayed at home with his grandparents during his first year of life; and when she and her husband moved to the area from out of state, Brandon entered childcare for the first time. Brenda declared, "I think it was more traumatic for us as adults than him; so we just had it built up in our heads, you know, that he's going to school for the first time which was a major adjustment."

Brenda described the meaning that she assigned to sharing daily stories with Brandon's teachers:

> The things that they tell me and the things that I share with them, I feel we're doing it to try to, like, fill in some gaps – maybe; and maybe this is the reason, you know, this is happening, or this is happening; and it's all to help him develop more; and I think if more people and more places did that, you know, that I mean you could help kids a lot.

At the time of her participation in this study, Iris, also a first-time mother, had just moved to the community from another state. She asserted,

> She [Allison] will almost always tell me something that Isaac did during the day … I love that because I feel like I'm missing a lot; and it's very hard, you know, sometimes to be working and missing when he's changing so fast. She always tells me something that happened during the day that was interesting, which makes me feel, yeah it actually makes me feel better about the whole process and that she's, you know, helping me share in what I missed out on, but also like to learn about his changing and what I can watch for when he's at home.

Iris not only believes that daily stories are to keep her informed about and connected to her son's daily life, but she also values the opportunity to share daily stories with Jack, Isaac's father, a full-time graduate student. She stated,

> During the school year, he doesn't pick up or drop off, … of course he's very concerned with Isaac's development and the things that happen during the day, and even more than me feels like he misses out a lot right now; so I'm always telling him whatever I hear from Allison … I think it's really important for him too, even more so.

Allison believes that sharing specific stories about the children in her classroom with parents each day is very important. She said that telling daily stories "is part of [her] job…." In reviewing the videotape a second time, observing Brenda's attentive response to her story Allison seemed to recognize that Brenda also valued the story. Both Brenda and Iris also expressed a deep appreciation for daily stories, which seemed to provide them an emotional connection to their children's daily experiences. Daily stories may, in fact, help parents to "fill in the gaps" of information and help them feel a more connected during by knowing what they "missed out on".

"It's my job!" A committed early childhood teacher, Allison believes it is her professional responsibility to ensure each of the children in her care are safe, attended to, nurtured, and supported in all aspects of their development. Additionally, she is compelled to meet the needs of these children's parents to ensure that they have up-to-date information about their children, that they are comfortable and confident regarding their children's care and education, and that they trust her. At times, Allison appeared to

be walking a tight rope as she tried to meet all of the needs of the children in her classroom, as well as the needs of the parents entering and exiting the classroom during morning and afternoon transitions. In the following vignette, some of the challenges she faces during a busy afternoon transition are illustrated.

Brenda had just arrived for an afternoon transition and was attempting to sign a form that has been left for her. Her son, Brandon, came to greet her at the doorway and tried to participate in the process by pulling on the paper, grabbing the pen, and saying, "Mine, I do." By this time, six other toddlers had gathered around Allison in the entryway and were conversing about mommies coming to pick them up soon.

Brenda commented, "He's definitely in the twos at home. I don't know what happened to him."

Looking puzzled, Allison replied, "And he's not even two yet."

Brenda smiled and said, "He's done everything early. He got all his teeth before he was one." She knelt next to Brandon who was sitting on a small chair with one foot in the air, waiting for his shoe. Brenda asked, "Are you ready for me to put on your shoes?"

As Brenda collected Brandon's shoes, another mother entered the crowded entryway; and two more toddlers ran toward her as if to determine whose mommy had arrived. "Mommy," exclaimed one of the toddlers. "No, my Mommy," the other toddler declared. The commotion in the classroom continued to swell for a few more minutes as the parents began discussing their work days and the children continued to vie for attention. A child, whose parent had not yet arrived, walked over to Allison, reached up

to her, and said, “My mommy.” Allison knelt and hugged her, presumably to reassure her that her parent would arrive soon.

Later during her interview, Allison reflected on this scene and expressed concern about her response to Brenda’s comments: “There’s a lot that I could say about that, and I didn’t say anything. I wasn’t prepared. I didn’t have any thoughts together about it.” Seemingly concerned she was unable to respond spontaneously and effectively to Brenda’s statement about Brandon “definitely being in the twos,” Allison reflected on this issue:

> That is part of my job. . . . I am less able to talk to parents on the fly … I’m just not as fast to think. I know that about myself which I just have to accommodate for by thinking about it and then knowing what I want to say the next time.

At one point in the scenario, the two parents began discussing their mutual workplace. Allison was standing nearby, but was not part of the conversation. Later, she reflected on that scene:

I was misplaced. I had nothing, no one. There was no reason for me to be over there standing up talking to these two adults because they were talking to each other. I’m not sure what my role should have been.

Allison appeared uncertain about her role as she wondered whether she should have focused on the children in her classroom or the parents and children to whom she was saying goodbye. She described the scene: “Now I’ve got most of the children over here [standing near her], and it’s time for me to go back into my classroom and take care

of these children that are gathered around [me]." Noting the care and safety of the children in the classroom as her priorities, Allison continued:

> I guess [I was] waiting for her to leave, but she's talking to another parent now; and I've got two parents that I'm saying bye [to] and children that I'm saying bye to, but I'm losing control of my classroom here, and I think maybe I should have just gone back in my class [into the middle of the classroom] and said bye from there.

Allison seemed to be pulled between two conflicting beliefs: first, that she must be attentive, responsive and available to the children in her classroom; second, that she must also be available and respectful to the parents and children in transition.

As she considered the scenario further, Allison also noted that after the parents finished their conversation, she and Brenda discussed other valuable information about Brandon, including his developing language, a recent health concern, and a classroom activity that he had enjoyed.

In a follow-up discussion about this particular transition, Brenda specifically noted how much important information she and Allison had exchanged in such a brief time

> Just in the few minutes that we spend together at the end of the day, we typically share a lot of information about Brandon, even you know, like we've connected on a personal level; and we'll talk about, 'Oh, what's your family doing this weekend?' and things like that.… You know, a lot of information can be shared in a very short amount of time.

In reviewing of the scene, Allison stated that the hectic atmosphere might have contributed to her challenges in "doing more" to address Brenda's concern about "two-year-old behavior." Allison recalled, "It was a little chaotic right there," and continued to consider potential solutions:

> In the late afternoon, a lot of times I'll use *pull out activities* [emphasis added]; and maybe my job should have been to get something out for this student teacher before I know what time Brenda comes, you know, and maybe I didn't fulfill what I needed to do by giving them all something to do so that I was able to talk to Brenda.

Brenda also recognized that having a conversation with Allison in the classroom is sometimes challenging. However, seeming to value Allison's efforts in giving personal attention, she noted,

> I tell people all the time where he goes to school and his teachers, that we are just so lucky to have them, … I don't think that every school has that interaction at the end of the day. They show that they really care about your child as a person and their development and, you know, helping you understand what you can do to help them in certain areas.

There was a striking difference between the parents' high praise of Allison and Allison's self-evaluation. Across the vignettes, parents continually asserted their perspectives that Allison is a competent, caring, attentive teacher. They noted through examples of Allison's strategies, such as kissing through the fence and daily stories, how valuable these exchanges were to them. They were comforted, felt at ease and valued the attention Allison gave them and their children. Yet, Allison often critiqued herself in

negative ways, noting that she was missing opportunities to connect with parents, doubting her attempts to share information in a timely and helpful way, and feeling conflicted about her role and division of attention. Through the opportunity to see and see again the transition video clips, parents' and Allison's perspectives of and meanings assigned to exchanges were illuminated and sometimes even changed. As a result, new understandings were gained about the importance of these few transitional minutes for both teachers and parents in the daily lives of their young children enrolled in child care.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the three classrooms' physical and social contexts were described as a backdrop for the narratives presented that incorporated a series of vignettes involving three infant-toddler teachers and five parents and their children. Dominant patterns of behaviors emerged, feelings and thoughts contributed to the evolution of the three primary themes: (a) teachers partnered with parents to create and implement individualized strategies in order to support children and parents during the process of daily transitions, (b) parents and teachers had different perspectives and often assigned diverse meanings to the same event during a daily transition, and (c) even parents and teachers in this well-resourced, high-quality early childhood center felt unsure, apprehensive, and sometimes tense during daily transitions. These findings are discussed in Chapter V, as well as the study's limitations and implications for future research and practice.

Chapter V

Conclusions, Limitations and Discussion

This study adds new knowledge to the field of early childhood education by uncovering some of the social-emotional and practical experiences of teachers and parents as they participate in daily home-to-child care transitions. This study's guiding question is "What stands out to parents and teachers in terms of what they say, do, think, and feel during daily home-to-child care transitions in one child care setting?" Findings suggest the value of observing, documenting, and analyzing parent-teacher interactions in making visible exchanges for both parents' and teachers' critical reflection. Moreover, some of their beliefs, values, perspectives and meanings assigned to their transition experiences can be uncovered.

In the literature review, only one-fourth of the 19 studies exploring transition experiences used the voices of both practitioners and parents (Drugli & Undheim, 2012; Endsley & Minish, 1991; Grady, Ale & Morris, 2012; Klein, Kraft, & Shohet, 2010; McGrath, 2007; Xu, 2006). Moreover, none of these studies used vignettes to situate and weave together experiences from both practitioners' and parents' viewpoints. Therefore, this study attempted to describe the shared experiences of parents and teachers in order to begin understanding (a) the instances in which they comprehend exchanges similarly and differently, (b) some situations that are explicit and others that are fraught with uncertainty, and (c) the ways these experiences are unique to participants as they endeavor to meet needs and goals for themselves and the children. Studying transition infrastructures and surface-level experiences such as, average length of transitions (Endsley & Minish, 1991; Grady, Ale & Morris, 2012; Klein, Kraft, & Shohet, 2010);

broad sweeping routines (Grady, Ale & Morris, 2012; Klein, Kraft, & Shohet, 2010); parents' satisfaction level (Drugli & Undheim, 2012); and parent-teacher discussion topics (Klein, Kraft, & Shohet, 2010) is not enough. Rather, this study begins to show that the energy, time, commitment, and need to create authentic transitions for both parents and teachers requires slowing down, looking deeply, and tapping into teachers' and parents' hearts and minds. The remainder of this chapter includes the study's limitations, findings, and implications for future research and practice.

Limitations

The sample size and homogeneity are limitations. However, the small sample size did allow for time and opportunity to delve more deeply into the participants' thoughts and actions. A particular segment of the general population was represented: white, well-educated, affluent, two-parent households and teachers. This population is representative of university laboratory schools in the U. S., which are situated in academic settings and are facilities for teacher education and faculty research.

Ideally, this study would have spanned a longer time frame. Had the study spanned a school year, changes would likely have been seen: (a) in children's behaviors and needs for various reasons including increased ages, (b) the evolution of teacher practices as they developed understanding of parents through reflection, and (c) the design and implementation of unique strategies. Furthermore, conducting this study in two diverse settings (such as a university laboratory school and a Head Start center, for example) might have been more informative. These two environments serve different populations, have varying teacher expertise, and involve different policies and practices.

Thus, the trends emerging in this study could have been further explored across time and settings.

Due to the small sample size and composition, limited time frame, and single setting, the findings reported here are not generalizable to other populations. With that said, this qualitative study's goal was to describe *in situ* the experiences of parents and teachers during two transition times. From this initial attempt to garner parents' and teachers' beliefs, values, perspectives and meanings in one setting, I, along with others, are now poised to replicate aspects of this study in new places, across diverse time frames, and with varied and larger populations.

Discussion

Home to child care transitions are actually an even broader concept than I have defined in this study, that of morning and afternoon transitions that occur inside of the classroom setting. The breadth of this concept was alluded to as parents and teachers spoke about their processes of transitions that extended beyond the boundaries of the classroom to families' homes, in the car on the way to and from the child care center, and in parents' work settings. Furthermore, in a prior pilot study with parents of infants in child care, I found that parents described daily home transitions with stories that began when their children woke up in the morning and they began to prepare to bring them into child care and ended after they had picked them up from care and spent their evening together until bedtime.

Here, in this study, I chose to focus on parents and teachers experiences of transitions that took place inside the classroom during morning and afternoon time periods in order to delve deeply into the nuances of parents and teachers experiences that

became evident as video stimulated recall interview transcriptions, video tape footage, and field notes were analyzed. Next is a discussion of the findings that include (a) the individualized nature of transitions; (b) the varying perspectives and meanings parents and teachers assigned during transitions; and (c) the uncertainties and challenges that teachers and parents faced during transitions.

1. Transition strategies are not typically one-size-fits-all. Teachers partnered with parents to create and implement individualized strategies in order to support children and parents during the process of daily transitions.

Through classroom observations and parent and teacher interviews, several traditional transition rituals were noted (i.e., greetings, storing personal belongings, handing the child over, separation rituals such as waving, blowing kisses, etc.); however, these rituals were interspersed with unique, individualized strategies, tailored to address a particular parent's and/or child's needs. Often, parents and teachers co-created these strategies during conversations in transitions and parent-teacher conferences.

Previous research has reported little about teachers' nuanced attempts at finding ways to alleviate parents' and children's challenges (Drugli & Undheim, 2012; Grady, Ale & Morris, 2012; Klein, Kraft, & Shohet, 2010; Perlman & Fletcher, 2012). Certainly, these attempts are made; but in this study, such attempts were identified as parents and teachers tapped into their perceptions of need and the meanings they assigned to particular transition experiences. In most cases, strategies bridged the threshold between home-to-child care, mediating the leave-taking and coming together of parents and their children. Further, these strategies were situated within parents' and teachers' emotional realms as teachers and parents voiced their concerns, their uncertainties, and

pondered whether their attempts were effective. These attempts were squarely aimed at both parents and children and were informed by teachers' personal and professional lives.

Several of the vignettes illustrated these individualized strategies. For example, one of Carol's approaches engaged Roy and his son, Jacob, in an inclusive storytelling activity during an afternoon transition that met not only the teacher's goal of sharing valuable information with the parent but also Roy's goal of increasing Jacob's communications skills. As this triad engaged in retelling the taco story, the details of Carol's technique emerged to include modeling the exchange in hopes that Roy and Jacob could continue revisiting it as they left the center and re-entered their home. In Allison's classroom, Candace and her son, Brandon, needed support to ease the distress of separation during morning transitions and what Candace reported as "…preparing to have a bad drop off …." Candace met with Allison to discuss concerns and seek solutions, and together they created the strategy called "kissing through the fence." Unlike in the research reported in chapter II in which transition strategies were influenced by attitudes of teachers, parents, and grandparents towards children's reactions to separations (Xu, 2006) and children's level of stress during separations (Klein, Kraft, & Shohet, 2010), the transition strategies for Candace and Allison, as well as all of the parent-teacher dyads, emerged from a series of planned reciprocal exchanges, informed by both personal and pedagogical experiences.

Although kissing through the fence is not necessarily exceptional, what is special is that this strategy provides insight into what is needed to tailor such transition strategies. In the examples reported in this study (e.g., Allison's and Iris's mutual interest in supporting Isaac's climbing, and Diane and Brenda's solution to serve goat's milk in a

cup), the effective strategies' composition comes from shared meanings and perceptions of both parents and teachers as transition partners.

It was repeatedly evidenced that teachers reflected on and prepared for transitions in attempting to create genuine, authentic exchanges throughout each day. For example, Allison identified which story to tell Brenda, and Diane anticipated Abe and Abby's need to keep transitions relatively simple with little conversation. Teachers not only thought about what to do, but also spent considerable time considering what the actions and verbal exchanges of parents meant to them and how their interpretations informed interactions during transitions. The teachers' strategies were creative, well planned, developmentally appropriate and supportive of parent-child relationships, and they were well executed. Although in many ways, teachers and parents worked together in developing these strategies, it became evident that teachers perceived they carried more of the responsibility than parents to ensure the "success" of personalized transitions.

The vignettes clearly revealed that during daily transitions teachers multi-tasked on functional and emotional levels. They were responsible for meeting the needs of transitioning children, and those remaining in the classroom. Simultaneoulty, they also attempted to meet the needs of parents. This *triad of engagement* required teachers to engage in intimate conversations with children and teachers while at the same time maintaining awareness of the environment and the emotional tone of the larger group. Furthermore, teachers were compelled to be aware of the emotions of children and parents, requiring a self-reflective stance. Teachers' multi-tasking did not go unnoticed by parents. Parents voiced their appreciation of teachers' challenges and abilities to juggle these multiple responsibilities well A parent noted during an interview "… here

she seemed to be able to focus pretty exclusively on us as we were leaving, and you know, understandably sometimes she's got kids tugging at her or doing naughty things in other parts of the room and so she can't really have even a short conversation, and so you know, we just have a quick conversation…" Another parent remarked "You have to be efficient with toddlers running around, I guess."

2. Parents and teachers have different perspectives and often assign diverse meanings to the same event during a daily transition.

On the surface, parents and teachers appeared to be in sync with one another during home-to-child care transitions. Typically, parents and teachers went about their business of saying hello, putting away belongings, and entering/leaving the classroom. During morning transitions, when children expressed sadness and cried as parents left, teachers offered hugs and reassuring words. At the end of the day, teachers and parents greeted each other cordially, discussed highlights of the children's day, and encouraged children to wave goodbye. In these scenes, it is not obvious differences might exist in the ways parents and teachers experienced their transitions. Yet, in many cases, the data from this study reveals a different reality.

In previous studies reported in the literature review, other methodological stances for studying transitions focused on "the view from afar." These stances included studying behaviors that can be easily measured such as the following: time taken to transition (Endsley & Minish, 1991; Grady, Ale & Morris, 2012; Klein, Kraft, & Shohet, 2010; Xu, 2006); typical verbal exchanges (Klein, Kraft, & Shohet, 2010); and less often, not so visible considerations, such as parent satisfaction (Drugli & Undheim, 2012). Throughout this study, however, I have found that observing home-to-child care

transitions once or twice is insufficient to capture the essence of the narrative. Moreover, the full account is not apparent only by listening to the teacher's perspective during the interview and by conducting classroom observations. Rather, having a full account requires, at the very least, hearing a second voice, in this case the parents'. Some might argue, and I agree, that other voices would add to the story; but such an addition was outside this study's scope.

Across all five families, the comparison between teachers' intentions to inform and support parents and engage in in-depth conversations and parent's reflections on these conversations, revealed how parents and teachers often came away from their exchanges with different perspectives and meanings. For example, Allison shared information about a local playground yet later felt she had failed to help Iris, however, felt Allison's information was very useful. In fact, Iris reported, "she [Allison] always seems to have an answer for the questions that I have." Additionally, Allison attempted to share a story with Candace, Brandon's mom, chronicling his dramatic play with a baby doll. But upon reflection, Allison not only felt that Candace didn't seem particularly interested but also was uncertain she had been helpful. However, later when Candace viewed the video clip she exclaimed, "That was great to hear because we were concerned about that [his ability to engage in dramatic play]." Diane also expressed concern that parents who were typically quiet in her infant classroom and rarely sought in-depth conversations with her might not like her. However, when Abe and Abby reflected on a transition with Diane, they were quite satisfied and stated they didn't need a lot of conversation. Instead, they preferred to leave quickly and take their children home. In another instance, Diane was initially "nervous" when she learned that Brenda

supplemented breast milk with goat's milk. She thought, "We don't have goat's milk at school. How is this all going to play out?" However, she later assigned meaning to this practice as the mother's "love language." In fact, she acknowledged that the mother was not unduly demanding and that she often collaborated with her on Brady's feeding and other routines.

As a final example, Carol modeled for Jacob's dad, Roy, how she helped Jacob extend and tell a story from his daily play. Carol's goals were to find strategies not only to help Jacob engage in conversations with others but also to share his "comic moments" with his family. Later, Carol and Roy separately reflected on the scene and each described Jacob's participation in the conversation. Carol assigned a different meaning to the "taco shop story" than Roy did. Viewing the exchange from a pedagogical, tactical perspective, Carol described how she slowed her timing, used leading questions, and offered specific prompts. Whether or not intentionally, she seemed to provide Roy and Jacob a scaffold for continuing to support him "in public' spaces in order to meet his potential that he so effortlessly revealed to his parents at home. Roy noted that the exchange was delightful to see because Jacob was less likely to engage in such a rich exchange at school like he did at home. Roy believed Jacob revealed this ability due to his comfort level at child care and his close relationships with his friends and teachers.

These examples illustrate the dynamic and transformative outcomes of viewing transitions up close; understanding transitions through the experiences of both parents and teachers; and considering their perspectives and assigned meanings across time, albeit a limited timeframe . Making transitions visible for each parent-teacher

dyad/triad's micro-analysis enabled me to juxtapose the experiences of parents and teachers as they revisited and constructed their meanings.

3. Even parents and teachers in well-resourced, high-quality early childhood centers feel unsure and apprehensive and experience tension during daily transitions.

Over the two years prior to the study and during the study, I observed infant-toddler teachers in an early childhood center fill multiple roles, including educator, caregiver, parent partner, and classroom manager. During transitions, teachers were responsible for greeting parents and children, engaging in reciprocal conversations that were authentic and informative, integrating parent information into goals and strategies, and supporting children and parents during separations. Additionally, teachers provided care and education for the other children in the classroom and ensured their safety by closely observing them and intervening as needed while transitioning other children.

Transitions sometimes create tension because teachers are faced with competing roles and responsibilities. Morning transitions may require teachers to give their undivided attention to a parent and child who are experiencing difficulty in separating. At the same time, their attention is needed to ensure the other children's safety and well-being and to communicate with teacher assistants and parents. For example, Allison described being pulled between her responsibilities both of supporting children in the routine of saying good-bye to parents at the window and of being responsive to another parent and child entering her classroom. Allison recalled, "I needed to finish what I was doing with Ely [the child saying goodbye]; but I should have looked up and said, 'Hi [to the parent and child entering the classroom].'"

Afternoon transitions can present similar tensions, placing teachers between respectfully responding to parents who deserve to know about their child's day and attending to other children in the classroom waiting for their parents' arrival. Carol eloquently described the ambivalence she felt about this dilemma when she remarked, "I think basically the most important goal is transmitting that you respect the parent and that you value that time, however short it is." These so-called choices require the teacher to balance her roles and implement the best possible solution that will meet the needs of the individual (child and parent) and those of the other children in the classroom. Teachers are challenged to balance multiple responsibilities during transitions; thus, planning, keen observation skills, flexibility, poise, self-awareness, and critical reflective practice are required.

While in the classroom, parents also faced challenges in juggling multiple responsibilities. For example, Candace met her child's nutritional needs by making homemade organic baby food, and Iris sought \a playground for climbing to address her child's developmental concerns. Parents comforted their children and ensured their sense of security by "never sneaking out," "kissing through the fence," and informing them about the "plan [for afternoon] pick up in the morning." Along with their roles and responsibilities while transitioning into and out of the classrooms, parents had additional roles and responsibilities at home and at work, creating tension as they faced choices of meeting their child' needs and the needs of others (including other family members and employers).Parents spoke indirectly about their busy lives, still the message was clear. For example, Candace stated, "I've really been trying to get to work on time … it's hard in the morning; it's a lot to get a 5 year old [and] I guess he's almost 18 months old

together and get myself [ready as well]." Several of the parents discussed the distress they felt leaving their children after difficult separations. For example, Roy described his feelings: "It's really hard for me to turn my back and leave, and so I'll have to stay for a few minutes until he's comfortable." Brenda stated, "I don't feel like I get upset about dropping him off anymore, … I don't feel like I'm going to cry every time I hear him cry [like I used to do]."

The choices parents face in these situations are not clear cut; the choice between being a good parent or a good employee are false dichotomies. Rather, parents must find a way to balance a wide range of roles and responsibilities in order to discern what strategies work best for their child, their family, and others to whom they are committed. Dilemmas during daily transitions are dynamic, sometimes unpredictable, at times emotionally charged, and potentially sources of tension.

As noted in finding one, teachers create individualized strategies to support children and parents during the process of daily transitions. In addition, teachers prepare for daily transitions throughout the day by observing children's play and behavior, identifying salient stories to share with parents, anticipating parents' needs, and considering effective strategies to support children and parents during separations. Parents also spent time thinking about and preparing for their children's transitions. Recalling that he and Jacob often planned their afternoon transitions on the ride to the center in the morning, Roy stated, "He'll ask sometimes even on the drive in, 'Papa, who's picking me up today?'" Candace prepared homemade baby food on weekends and admitted, "It was a lot. I know. I'm not sure how I did all that …."

Teachers and parents believed that individualization was desirable and meaningful. For example, Allison declared, "I think it's important for me to give parents specific things about what a child has done." Iris also noted, "She [Allison] will almost always tell me something that Isaac did during the day… I love that because I feel like I'm missing a lot; and it's very hard." Parents also valued the benefits of individualization and appreciated the teacher's commitment required to individualize transition strategies for children. Brenda confirmed, "They show that they really care about your child as a person, … helping you understand what you can do to help them in certain areas."

Furthermore, parents recognized some of the challenges teachers faced in balancing their responsibilities and they expressed empathy. For example Candace noted after reviewing the video clip, "What stands out the most to me is just how much of her time I was able to sit there and talk to her at that point and there's a lot going on, you know, there's people coming in and out." Abby also recognized the impact of busy transitions when she reflected, "Sometimes, I pick up, a lot of times when I pick up, there are two or three other moms picking up and or dads, so it can be kind of crazy."

Salient Theory

Barbara Rogoff's (2008) concept of participatory appropriation was particularly helpful in explaining the first finding in the study. This finding identified unique transition strategies that were developed through the process of teachers' and parents' shared activity. Teachers described the process of meeting with parents during initial home visits to learn about children's interest and needs and parents' preferences and goals for their children. For example Carol stated,

> transition goals … are very, very individualized. It is often a very specific process that is born out of information that you collect at the home visit about what the parent is really focused on and what they continue to be interested in their child's development.

Through this process, teachers and parents not only exchanged information, but began to learn how to contribute to meaningful transitions in partnership with each other. Diane described her experience with Candace, Brady's mom, in this way, "… add a little bit of my way and a little bit of her way, mixed in together; so it was really nice." As this teacher and parent continued to work together, they built on this experience of sharing knowledge and cooperation. Candace stated during her interview, "I never feel like I need to give a whole lot of instruction to her, … things like that don't matter as much to me. I kind of like them [her children] having different people's way of doing things."

Furthermore, Rogoff (2008) explains that "by engaging in activity [and] participating in its meaning, people necessarily make ongoing contributions (whether through concrete actions or in stretching to understand the actions and ideas of others)." For example, Iris had asked Allison about community parks for her son, Isaac. Although Allison was surprised to learn that Iris did not know about a local park, Iris was very happy with the information that she had received from Allison. As Iris left the classroom, she exclaimed, "Climbing is in right now." Allison smiled at Iris, and then looked at Isaac and said, "Climbing is in. Anything we can do to climb. Right?" In this exchange, it seems that Allison was joining Iris in her quest to provide her son with the opportunity to find opportunities outside of the classroom to play and develop his

climbing skills. Allison and Iris not only shared knowledge, they shared the experience of partnering together in relationship, and supporting the development of Isaac.

Implications for Research and Practice

Implications for future research. This study has identified the need for and value of looking closer at the nuanced aspects of parents and teachers interactions in the context of infant-toddler child care during daily home-to-child care transitions. To address limitations of this study, it would be best to replicate the design with a larger sample size, across a longer timeframe (e.g., a school year), and with diverse populations. Future research might involve the identification and comparison of parent and teacher beliefs, values, perspectives and meanings assigned to daily transitions: (a) among diverse parent and teacher populations (racial, cultural, socio-economic), (b) among varying levels of teachers' expertise, (c) between two diverse settings such as a university laboratory school and a Head Start center program, and (d) among child care programs that follow different policies and practices.

Earlier in this paper, I identified daily home-to-child care transitions as a broader notion than the typically defined concept in research bounded by the physical location of the child care or classroom setting and the time frame of morning drop-off and afternoon pick up hours. This expanded notion was identified though my observations and an earlier pilot study that I conducted. In fact, parents, teachers and children are planning, preparing, organizing and reflecting upon daily transitions throughout the day. The process of daily transitions may be made more visible by describing it as a series of waves. The crest or highpoints of the waves occur while transitions are at the forefront of parents', teachers' and children's experiences (e.g., parents and children are driving or

walking to the center, parents and teachers are sharing a daily story), while the trough or low points of the wave involve reflection and planning for transitions (i.e. parents making baby food or packing the diaper bag, teachers observing an event and planning to tell a parent at the end of the day. During times of planning and reflection, parents and teachers are keenly aware of the significance of transitions yet they are able to step back as the process moves to the background. Further exploration of the experiences of parents, teachers and children within this fuller spectrum of daily transitions would be important.

Implications for future practice. This study revealed that teachers believed the VSRIs provided an opportunity to slow down the process and to look and look again at classroom practice. The interview process not only functioned as a data collection method in this study, but also facilitated teachers in their professional development efforts as they reviewed video clips and recalled, reflected and sometimes reconsidered their initial perspectives and the meanings they assigned to different scenarios. Carol stated "I think it's [VSRI process] made me really consider that I should reflect more on [my transition goals] as a teacher." Offering this model of reflection using VSRIs could be a helpful method of educating pre-service teachers and providing professional development to practicing teachers. This strategy holds promise to would fully engage teachers in the process of developing pedagogical skills and knowledge by: (a) allowing teachers to select video footage to review; (b) identifying footage to discuss based on criteria such as goals met, what stood out to them or other issues of importance to them; and (c) reflecting on pedagogical as well as social-emotional elements to gain greater understanding of their work.

Summary

As noted in the introduction, the study design was created with a mutually informing process in mind in order to weave together the voices of participants with mine as the analysis of data unfolded. Through this parallel process, teachers and parents revisited the details of fast-paced daily home visit scenarios, recalled and reflected upon their beliefs, values, perspectives and meanings, accompanied by the researcher along the journey of reflection and understanding of their stories.

There are two over-arching aspects to be considered, one is the inter-related nature of the findings and the second includes the value of using vignettes. The findings were discussed separately and yet they co-occurred and are inextricably bound. Teachers' beliefs, and to a lesser extent parents', supported the value of creating genuine, authentic experiences in which each child and family were viewed in particular ways. At times, this stance placed additional effort on teachers and parents to fully meet individual needs and "get it right". Data revealed that often the perspectives of parents and teachers regarding a particular transition differed, and at times teachers expressed feelings of uncertainty about their success in meeting their goals. However, video tape clips made transitions visible and we learned through close scrutiny that parents were often quite satisfied and felt "heard" by their children's teachers. The use of video tapes aided participants in recalling, reconstructing and reconsidering their transition experiences. This approach enabled participants to bring up their personal viewpoints and get in touch with them so that they could identify their beliefs and values and articulate their perspectives and meanings. Video tapes were not simply a means to represent experiences but also to mediate the construction of new understandings.

It was possible, then, for me to create rich vignettes that juxtaposed and inter-twined the experiences of teachers and parents into narratives that represented the dynamic, relational aspects of transitions. Vignettes reconnected the pieces, and re-animated the parents' and teachers' interactions during interviews, creating lively conversations on the page and highlighting salient moments that "stood out". Through this method it became evident that parents and teachers often assigned different meanings to the same transition footage. The process of writing vignettes contributed to my ability to revisit, recall and make meaning of what I had observed and discovered. This may be the first study in the U. S. to use VSRI and include parents' and teachers' voices to reveal the intricacies of the interplay that takes place between parents and teachers during infant-toddler home-to-child care transitions.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A
Reflections of Parents and Teachers on Daily Transitions

Teacher's Informed Consent Form

INTRODUCTION

You are invited to participate in a research study that will be implemented at the Center during spring-summer 2013. The research study team includes Linda C. Traum, Child and Family Studies Ph.D. candidate (PI) and Dr. Mary Jane Moran, Faculty Advisor. The purpose of this project is to explore teacher-parent interactions that occur during daily home-childcare transitions (i.e. "drop offs" and "pick-ups") in the context of an infant-toddler classroom. Teachers will be asked to interact with parents, children and other staff members as they normally would during daily transition time periods. The primary objectives of this research study are to: describe the setting, teacher and parent interactions, and to uncover some of the beliefs and values of parents and teachers during transitions of children from home to school. Your consent is voluntary, and you can withdraw from the study at any time, for any reason without penalty. Should you withdraw from the study you will have the option to request all data taken to that point be destroyed.

INFORMATION ABOUT PARTICIPANTS' INVOLVEMENT IN THE STUDY

This study will be divided into two phases: I) video-taping transitions, and II) teacher reflections of transitions.

Phase I

- The PI will observe the classroom daily transition time periods (7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m., and 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.).Video-taping of daily transitions will not begin until later in the first week of the study.
- The teacher will asked to wear a small microphone.

Phase II

- Each teacher-parent dyad will continue to be video-taped for a total of three morning transitions and three evening transitions in the classroom over three weeks. Video-taping will be completed by the end of week three.
- Each teacher will participate in a 2 hour video-stimulated recall interview (VSRI) to view non-edited video tape. During the interview, the teacher can stop the video and make comments on segments of the tape that she/he would like to discuss further. The teacher will be asked to identify two video clips to share with other teachers during a focus group. These interviews will be held in the 1215 W. Cumberland Avenue 236. Jesse Harris Building Knoxville TN 37996-5316or in a private location chosen by the teacher.
- In two-three weeks following the VSRI, teachers will participate in a 1.5 hour focus group held after hours in a classroom at the Center that is located at 2010 Lake Ave, Knoxville, TN 37996.
- Teachers will view video clips of teacher-parent transitions.

- Teachers will reflect and share their comments. The focus group will be audio recorded, and field notes will be taken.

DATA STORAGE

- Audio tapes and audio portions of video-tapes will be transcribed by a professional transcription service immediately after observations, interviews and the focus group.
- Audio tapes will be destroyed as soon as they are transcribed and no later than 6 months from the close of the study.
- Video tapes and audio tape transcripts will be stored and secured in the 1215 W. Cumberland Avenue 236. Jesse Harris Building Knoxville TN 37996-5316 and/or the university secure server.
- Clips of video tapes and transcriptions of audio may be used in presentations in relationship to Linda Traum's doctoral studies at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and other professional conferences and publications.
- Video tape clips will be archived for 5 years to be used in future and ongoing analysis and inclusion in publications and presentations at. 1215 W. Cumberland Avenue 236. Jesse Harris Building Knoxville TN 37996-5316 and the university file server. The file server is secured with multiple layers of protection (password protection and network security measures), and is maintained by an Information Technology Specialist within the College according to the security protocols of the UT Office of Information Technology.
- The transcriber will sign a Transcriber's Pledge of Confidentiality as will Linda Traum and Dr. Moran.

RISKS

There are minimal anticipated risks for participating in the research study. During video-taping of transitions it will be obvious to others in the classroom that you are participating in the study. However, your name and the name/location of the center will be substituted with pseudonyms in all data, publications and presentations.

BENEFITS

You will not directly benefit from your participation in the study. However, the results of the project may be used to inform future studies in understanding teacher-parent interaction during daily transitions in infant-toddler classroom contexts and inform your own practice regarding your practice and beliefs related to home-school transitions.

CONFIDENTIALITY

NO REAL NAMES WILL BE ASSOCIATED WITH THE INFORMATION ANALYZED FOR THIS RESEARCH PROJECT. IF NAMES ARE INCLUDED IN VIDEO CLIPS FOR PRESENATIONS/PUBLICATIONS THEY WILL BE MASKED USING COMPUTER SOFTWARE. ALL DATA WILL BE KEPT IN LOCKED FILE CABINETS AND ON THE SECURE SERVERS AT UTK. ALL MEMBERS OF THE

STUDY TEAM AND THE PROFESSIONAL TRANSCRIBER WILL SIGN A PLEDGE OF CONFIDENTIALITY, AGREEING TO MAINTAIN THESE STANDARDS OF CONFIDENTIALITY.

COMPENSATION

Participants are teachers employed by the Center. They will not receive compensation for participation in the study. However, participants' classrooms may receive additional books for children depending on the level of parent participation in the study.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, (or you experience adverse effects as a result of participating in this study,) you may contact the PI, Linda C. Traum, at**1215 W. Cumberland Avenue, Room 427, Knoxville, TN 37996-1912,** and (561) 670-9875. If you have questions about your rights as a participant, you may contact the Office of Research Compliance Officer at (865) 974-3466.

PARTICIPATION

Your participation in this study is voluntary; you may decline to participate without penalty. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty and without loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed your data will be destroyed, upon your request.

Consent

I have read the above information and received a copy of this form.

Participant Name (print) _____

Participant Signature _____ Date _____

Consent for video-taping procedures.

I have read the above information regarding video-taping procedures and received a copy of this form.

Participant Name (print) _____

Participant Signature _____ Date _____

(Personal Copy-A copy of your signed consent will be provided to you for your records.)

Appendix B
Reflections of Parents and Teachers on Daily Transitions

Teacher Information Form

1. Teacher's Pseudonym: _____(Please leave blank.)

2. What is your gender?
   ___ Male
   ___ Female
3. What is your age?
   ___ 18-24 years old
   ___ 25-34 years old
   ___ 35-44 years old
   ___ 45-54 years old
   ___ 55-64 years old
   ___ 65-74 years old
   ___ 75 years or older
4. What is your ethnicity origin (or race)?
   ___ White (non-Hispanic)
   ___ Hispanic or Latino
   ___ Black or African American
   ___ Native American or American Indian
   ___ Asian / Pacific Islander
   ___ Other: _____
5. What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? If currently enrolled in school, what is the highest degree you have received?
   ___ Associate degree
   ___ Bachelor's degree
   ___ Master's degree
   ___ Doctorate degree

6. How many years have you been teaching?

___ < 1 year.

___ 1-5 years

___ 6-9 years

___ 10-14 years

___ 15-24 years

___ 25+ years

7. How many years have you been teaching children birth to 3 years old?

___ < 1 year

___ 1-5 years

___ 6-9 years

___ 10-14 years

___ 15-24 years

___ 25+ years

Appendix C
Reflections of Parents and Teachers on Daily Transitions

Parent Information Flyer

Appendix C

Observing Daily Home-Childcare Transitions
In Infant-Toddler Classrooms

You're invited to participate in a pre-doctoral research study that will explore teacher-parent interactions that occur during daily transitions (i.e., "drop offs" and "pick-ups") in the ELC.



Classroom Observations:

- Parent participants will be asked to interact with teachers and their child(ren) as they normally ould during daily transitions (i.e., "drop-offs" and "pick-ups"). Six transitions will be video-taped over a 2 week period and transcribed for analysis.
- A small incentive ($15.00 gift certificate for classroom books) will be offered to each classroom when 50% or more of the parents in the classroom sign consent forms to be video-taped during teacher-parent interactions.

Use of video and audio tapes: Your child's teacher will participate in a:

- Video-stimulated recall interview (VSRI) with the researcher, during which time the teacher will be given the opportunity to review video clips of transitions they participated in, and will reflect on the material with the researcher.
- Focus group with other ELC infant-toddler teachers to review video footage of transitions, and together they will reflect teacher-parent transitions.
- Selected tapes and/or transcriptions will be used in professional publications and presentations.

Interested in participating? Want to learn more?

- *To participate*, pick up a packet from your child's teacher in the classroom, read and sign the consent form, place the form in a sealed envelope, and give the envelope to **Barbara, the administrative assistant at the reception desk in the ELC, 2016 Lake Ave, Knoxville, TN 37996 Friday, August 2, 2012.** Your participation in the study is completely voluntary. *To learn more*, Linda C. Traum, Ph.D., candidate in Child and Family Studies will be in reception area of ELC 2016 Lake Ave to answer parents' questions about the study on 7/31/2013 and 8/1/2013 during drop off and pick up times. You can also call or email Linda with questions at at 561-670-9875, or ltraum@utk.edu

Thank you for your consideration of participating in this project.

Appendix D
Reflections of Parents and Teachers on Daily Transitions

Parent's Informed Consent Form

INTRODUCTION

You are invited to participate in a research study that will be implemented at the child care center during spring-summer, 2013. The research study team includes Linda C. Traum, Child and Family Studies Ph.D. candidate, PI, and Dr. Mary Jane Moran, Faculty Advisor. The purpose of this pre-doctoral research project is to explore teacher-parent interactions that occur during daily home-childcare transitions (i.e., "drop offs" and "pick-ups") in the context of an infant-toddler classroom. Parents will be asked to interact with teachers, their children and other staff members as they normally would during daily transition time periods. The primary objectives of this research study are to: describe the setting, teacher and parent interactions and to uncover some of the beliefs and values of parents and teachers during transitions of children from home to school. Your consent is voluntary, and you can withdraw from the study at any time, for any reason without penalty. Should you withdraw from the study, you will have the option to request all data taken to that point be destroyed. Whether you decide to participate or not, there will be no negative effect related to your family's participation in the programs.

INFORMATION ABOUT PARTICIPANTS' INVOLVEMENT IN THE STUDY

This study is divided into two phases: I) video-taping transitions; and II) teacher reflections of transitions, and it will last for approximately 7 weeks, with your participation lasting approximately 3 weeks.

Phase I

- The PI will observe the classroom daily transition time periods (7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m., and 3:30 p.m.to 5:30 p.m.).Video and audio taping of daily transitions will not begin until later in the first week of the study.
- The teacher will be asked to wear a small microphone to clearly record her interactions with you.

Phase II

- Each teacher-parent dyad will continue to be video taped for a total of three morning transitions and three evening transitions in the classroom over three weeks. Video taping will be completed by the end of week three.
- Although infants and toddlers will be indirectly involved in the study, due to the context of the infant-toddler classrooms being studied, they are not participants in the study. The PI will not analyze any aspect of an infant's and/or toddler's development or behavior (i.e., language, cognitive, motor, emotion) that is captured on video tape during observations.
- Diapering and pottying will not be videotaped.

- Should you wish me to discontinue taping for any reason during a particular transition you can simply make this request and I will stop the camera without question.
- Video/audio tapes and my field notes will be analyzed and used in professional publications, conferences during five years following the end of the study and during interviews with your child's teacher and a focus group meeting comprised of interested teachers at cemter.. During these times, teachers will be asked to discuss the meaning they assign to their interactions with parents. Teacher interviews and focus groups will be held in private spaces at the center and will conclude within 7 weeks of the initial taping. These exchanges will be audio taped with tapes transcribed and analyzed.
- Parents will be invited to attend a presentation of the study findings (i.e. demographics, study questions and findings, themes and new insights) at the center upon the completion of the project.

DATA STORAGE

- Audio tapes and audio portions of video-tapes will be transcribed by a professional transcription service immediately after observations, interviews and the focus group.
- Audio tapes will be destroyed as soon as they are transcribed and no later than 6 months from the close of the study.
- Video tapes and audio tape transcripts will be reviewed in the 1215 W. Cumberland Avenue 236. Jesse Harris Building Knoxville TN 37996-5316 and or the university secure server.
- Video tape clips will be archived for 5 years following the end of the study to be used in future and ongoing analysis and presentations. All data will be secured in locked file cabinets at 1215 W. Cumberland Avenue 236. Jesse Harris Building Knoxville TN 37996-5316 and on the university file server. The file server is secured with multiple layers of protection (password protection and network security measures), and is maintained by an Information Technology Specialist within the College according to the security protocols of the UT Office of Information Technology.
- Clips of video tapes and transcriptions of audio may be used in presentations in relationship to Linda Traum's doctoral studies at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and other professional conferences and publications.
- The transcriber will sign a Transcriber's Pledge of Confidentiality as will the PI and Dr. Moran.

RISKS

There are minimal anticipated risks for participating in the research study. It will be difficult to keep your participation and your names confidential during the study as you

and your child will be video taped in the presence of other teachers, parents and perhaps university students. Pseudonyms will replace real names in all transcriptions of video, audio and field notes and names will be masked using computer software in video tape clips used for presentations.

BENEFITS

Parents will not directly benefit from their participation in the study. The results of the project may be used to inform future studies in understanding teacher-parent interaction during daily transitions in infant-toddler classroom contexts. Further, based on the number of parents who complete consent forms there will be a $15.00 award to each classroom for children's books.

CONFIDENTIALITY

NO REAL NAMES WILL BE ASSOCIATED WITH THE INFORMATION ANALYZED FOR THIS RESEARCH PROJECT. ALL DATA WILL BE KEPT IN LOCKED FILE CABINETS IN THE FACULTY ADVISOR'S RESEARCH LAB AT JESSIE HARRIS BUILDING, ROOM 236 AND ON THE SECURE SERVERS AT UTK. THE PI AND THE FACULTY ADVISOR AS WELL AS THE PROFESSIONAL TRANSCRIBER WILL SIGN A PLEDGE OF CONFIDENTIALITY, AGREEING TO MAINTAIN THESE STANDARDS OF CONFIDENTIALITY.

COMPENSATION

Should 50% of parents (in each classroom) consent to participate in the study, a $15.00 award will be given to the classroom for the purchase of children's books.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, (or you experience adverse effects as a result of participating in this study,) you may contact the researcher, Linda C. Traum, at**1215 W. Cumberland Avenue, Room 427, Knoxville, TN 37996-1912,** and (561) 670-9875. If you have questions about your rights as a participant, contact the Office of Research Compliance Officer at (865) 974-3466.

PARTICIPATION

Your participation in this study is voluntary; you may decline to participate without penalty. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty and without loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed your data will be destroyed upon your request.

_____

Consent

I have read the above information and received a copy of this form. (Please initial the statement that you agree with.)

___ I give my consent to participate in this study.

___ I do not give my consent to participate in this study, but will allow my image and the image of my child(ren) to be captured on film/audio in the event that the PI tapes us during daily transitions in the classroom.

___I do not give my consent to participate in this study and I will not allow my image and the image of my child(ren) to be captured on film/audio in the event that the PI tapes us during daily transitions in the classroom.

Participant Name (print) _____

Participant Signature _____ Date _____

Consent for video-taping procedures.

I have read the above information regarding video-taping procedures and received a copy of this form.

Participant Name (print) _____

Participant Signature _____ Date _____

(Personal Copy-keep for your records)

Appendix E
Reflections of Parents and Teachers on Daily Transitions

Field Notes – Parent and Teacher Classroom Observation

Date: 9/26/2013 Date: 4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. Pseudonyms: Allison(T) & Brenda(P)	
Transition Observation Field Notes	**My reflections**
Brenda (M) entered classroom and Allison (T) began to talk quietly with her about his day. Brenda needed to initial paperwork that had been left for her and Brandon (C) began to cry and express frustration that he could not have the paper and pen. Brenda stated to Allison, "he is definitely in the twos". Allison and Brenda continued to discuss several other issues, several children gathered around Allison (some of the children were unconsented and I had to be careful not to film), and at times it was difficult to hear the conversation. I hoped that Allison's mike was picking up their conversation. Another parent entered the classroom to pick up her child (who was consented) and they began to carry on a conversation. At this point, Allison moved back (literally and figuratively) from the engagement with Brenda and allowed the parents time to communicate. Brenda, then began to prepare Brandon for leaving. He was indicating his readiness to go home by pushing on the outside door.	**Reflections on the transition** I wondered about Brenda's statement to Allison, regarding his two year old behavior. What was the meaning of this statement for her, and what did it mean to Allison. I also am curious about how Allison felt when the other parent came in and she was no longer involved in conversation with Brenda. Allison looked somewhat puzzled, as if she was not sure what to do next. **Other reflections** I observed the children talking about their parents' arrival, looking out the window into the parking lot, and looking towards the entryway and door just prior to and after the parent-teacher transition event. This observation made me wonder about their awareness and anticipation of transitions. Although this is not part of my current study, it raises a new level of questions for me that I may want to explore in the future. **Technical** I attempted to use an audio tape recorder today and it failed. This equipment continues to baffle me. frustrating. I will attempt this again tomorrow. Taping today was frustrating with high level of noise in the classroom, low volume level of parent-teacher conversation

Brenda reengaged with Allison in conversation, and they spoke about Brandon's skin rash from the beach and new words that he was saying in school and at home.	

Appendix F
Reflections of Parents and Teachers on Daily Transitions

Classroom Video Taping Schedule

WK/ AM or PM	***Monday***	***Tuesday***	***Wednesday***	***Thursday***	***Friday***
2 AM	Infant COMPLETE-1 9/16/2013 Abby/Abe	No taping	Older Toddler COMPLETE-1 9/18/2013 Renee/Roy	Older Toddler COMPLETE-2 9/19/2013 Renee/Roy	No taping
	Infant COMPLETE-1 9/16/2013 Brenda				No taping
2 PM	Older Toddler COMPLETE-1 9/16/2013 Renee/Roy	Older Toddler COMPLETE-2 9/17/2013 Renee/Roy	No taping	Infant 9/19/2013 COMPLETE-1 Abby/Abe	Infant COMPLETE-2 9/20/2013 Abby/Abe
			No taping	Infant COMPLETE-1 9/19/2013 Brenda/Barrett	Infant COMPLETE-2 9/20/2013 Brenda/Barrett
3 AM	No taping	No taping	Infant COMPLETE-2 9/25/2013 Abby/Abe	Older Toddler COMPLETE-3 9/26/2013 Renee/Roy	Young Toddler COMPLETE-1 9/27/2013 Iris
	No taping	No taping	Infant COMPLETE-2 9/25/2013 Brenda		Young Toddler COMPLETE-1 9/27/2013 Haley

3 PM	No taping	Young Toddler COMPLETE -1 9/24/2013 Haley	No taping	Young Toddler COMPLETE-2 9/26/2013 Haley	No taping
	No taping	Young Toddler COMPLETE-1 9/24/2013 Iris	No taping	Young Toddler COMPLETE-2 9/26/2013 Iris	No taping
4 AM	No taping	No taping	Infant COMPLETE-3 10/2/2013 Abby/Abe	No taping	No taping
	No taping	No taping	Infant-3 COMPLETE 10/2/2013 Brenda	No taping	No taping
4 PM	No taping	No taping	No taping	Young Toddler COMPLETE-3 10/3/13 Haley	No taping
5 AM	No taping	No taping	No taping	No taping	No taping
5 PM	No taping	Older Toddler COMPLETE -3 10/1/2013 Renee/Roy		YoungToddler COMPLETE 3 10/3/13 Iris	No taping
6	Young Toddler 2 Planned 10/7/2013 Haley Young Toddler 3 Planned 10/7/2013	No taping	No taping	No taping	No taping

	Iris				
6		No taping	No taping	Infant- 3 Complete 10/10/2013 Abby/Abe	No taping
		No taping	No taping	Infant- 3 Complete 10/10/2013 Brenda/Barrett	No taping
7	Young Toddler 3 Planned 10/14/2014 Haley	No taping	No taping	No taping	No taping
	Young Toddler 3 COMPLETE 10/14/2014 Iris	No taping	No taping	No taping	No taping

Appendix G
Reflections of Parents and Teachers on Daily Transitions

Video Stimulated Recall Interview Questions
(Individual Teachers)

1. Why did you choose this clip? "What stands out for you in this clip?"
2. Please tell me in your own words what is happening in this clip?
3. What do you recall thinking or feeling during this clip?
4. When you look at this clip:

   What do you recall thinking/feeling during this situation?
   What was you interpretation of the parent's thoughts and feelings?
   Based on your interpretation, how did this impact your behavior?
   Would you say that this video clip is representative of a typical transition or a unique transition?

   a) Prompt - How is it typical?
   b) Prompt - How is it unique?
5. What else do you want to share about this transition that we haven't covered?

Appendix H
Observing Daily Home-Childcare Transitions
Transcriptionists Confidentiality Pledge

Observing Daily Home-Childcare Transitions in Infant-Toddler Childcare Classrooms

P.I. Linda C. Traum

University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Transcriber's Pledge of Confidentiality

As a transcribing typist of this research project, I understand that I will be hearing tapes of confidential interviews. The information on these tapes has been revealed by research participants who participated in this project on good faith that their interviews would remain strictly confidential. I understand that I have a responsibility to honor this confidentially agreement. I hereby agree not to share any information on these tapes with anyone except the primary researcher of this project. Any violation of this agreement would constitute a serious breach of ethical standards, and I pledge not to do so.

Nadele Janson 12-13-13

Transcribing Typist Date

Appendix I
Reflections of Parents and Teachers on Daily Transitions

Initial Analysis of teacher-parent interactions

Developmental Niche Sub-System	**Teacher Pseudonym: Diane; Parent Pseudonym: Brenda**
#1 - Physical and Social Settings	
Environment	
out of the ordinary events	
noteworthy physical elements	
noteworthy temporal elements	Three parents came in to pick up their babies almost all at once. Brenda came in at 0:00 then at 1:26 two other parents came in.
noteworthy emotional elements	During this transition, once Brenda picked up and was holding her baby, the baby on Diane's lap began to bounce and vocalize, Diane said to her in a reassuring voice, " I know, your Mama's coming too".
noteworthy social elements	
Staffing	
teacher-child ratios	Diane and student teacher in classroom,
teachers absence	Assistant teacher shift had already ended
new teacher in classroom	plus two student observers, they had visited classroom before, but they were not consistent caregivers
staffing assignments (roles)	Diane, student teacher covering diaper changes and infant care
number of children near teacher or requesting attention from teacher during transition	One baby is on Diane's lap and she is sitting on floor, 2 other babies are on the floor near Diane and the student observers.
non-verbal and verbal and behavior	
location and duration of teacher-parent interaction	
location of teacher-parent interaction	Interaction occurs in front of classroom, Brenda in front of gate near doorway, and Diane stays behind gate in infant play and sleep area.
duration of interaction	0:00-2:59
gaze	Gaze changes between Diane and Brenda, with moments of mutual gaze towards baby.
expression	
body posture	Brenda stands behind gate during entire interaction, Diane sits on floor during entire interaction
gesture	As baby combat crawls towards Brenda, Brenda physically demonstrates and describes his crawl in terms of military combat. Animated description, Laughter in room. Baby laughing, kicking his feet, vocalizing. ***(Delightful mutual three way interaction)***

Appendix J
Reflections of Parents and Teachers on Daily Transitions

Data Display – Open Coding

Teacher Pseudonym: Diane and Parent Pseudonym: Brenda
To describe the beliefs and values that teachers and parents ascribe to their own verbal and non-verbal behaviors (i.e., gaze, expression, body posture, and gesture) during home to childcare transitions.
Brenda's animated description of baby's *combat crawl*
Diane initiated "We offered him the table food that you brought him" As Diane describes the process of offering the baby green beans. Brenda listens intently, giving direct eye contact to Diane, and at one point Diane describes how the baby gets to a point that he begins to choke on the green bean and seems to get scared. At this point Brenda makes a gag face in response to Diane's story.
Brenda's statement about the shirt her child was wearing. "I love this little shirt, I know its so stained, but I really love it." Diane's response "no, its so sweet"
To reflect on and describe the researcher's subjective experience(s) and her growing understanding of perspectivity (e.g., multiple points of viewing) (Goldman, Pea, Barron, & Derry, 2007, p. 30).
In the review of this clip I recognize a technological need-the need to learn how to move with camera and maintain smooth focus on the image while adjusting position in the room.
Recognition of Diane's capacity to multi-task, when three parents came in the room, began to move herself out of the way of foot traffic to allow parent entering the room the go directly to get her baby, while talking to Brenda, she still looks up and acknowledges parent coming into the room and says hello. Acknowledging other family's older child who came in and transitioning to talk with next family.

Appendix K
Reflections of Parents and Teachers on Daily Transitions

Axial Coding Example

Diane **Physical and Social Settings and Customs of Child Care Described in Scenario**	**Emerging Theme # 3: Teachers aspire to be fully present (physically, mentally and emotionally) for parents during daily home-school transitions**
A typical custom of caregiving that occurs in infant classrooms is sharing detailed information about infant feeding (i.e., foods eaten, amounts, times, likes and dislikes, etc.). This information is often shared by both by parents and caregivers daily during morning and afternoon transitions, and information is often exchanged both verbally and in writing. Brenda entered the infant-toddler classroom at the end of the day and greeted Diane, her son Brandon's teacher, who was seated on the floor behind the baby gate, holding another infant on her lap. Brenda stood in front of the gate and began to talk to Brandon as he began to crawl to the front of the room to his mother. Brenda and Diane commented on Brandon's newly acquired combat crawl and the excitement that he infant showed in his greeting. Brenda: "He looks like he's in the trenches, under the	**A. It is important to share information with parents about their babies and learn what is happening at home.** (D: "I did what I meant, I talked to her what I wanted to talk to her about and sometimes it gets like right now… (at this point in the video-tape clip three parents came in to the room to "pick up" their infants ") **B. It is reinforcing to share information with parents who want to talk to me about their babies.** (D: "I kind of like it and she's very engaging like when I speak to her, she really listens to me and I like that. It's much easier to talk to a parent when they really want to know ".) D: "all of the other **families cannot wait to see me and talk to me about their child's day** and are very chatty and, you know, like they're just, they're so happy that they're here and they just really like me (B & D) and but they don't." **C. It becomes difficult to give parents individual attention when it gets busy in the classroom, when more than one parent comes in during transition.** (D: " it's gonna get really busy (teacher was relating to the action on the video-tape clip) and it's hard to make sure you tell everybody everything because they all want your attention

barbwire". Diane: "He's got his little army crawl going. Yeah, you're gonna go get mom"? [baby laughing] At this point, Brenda opened the baby gate, reached down to pick up Brandon and then moved back behind the gate. Brenda: "You come here. You give it to me". Diane: (laughing) Brenda: "You give it to me". [baby laughing]. Diane: "You are so funny". Brenda continued her conversation standing while holding Brandon, as Diane continued to stay seated on the floor among several other infants and two student teachers. During the observation of the transition, Diane stated to Brenda "We offered Brandon the table food that you brought him." As Diane described the process of introducing green beans to Brandon, Brenda gave Diane direct eye contact. Diane stated "he'll eat and he'll eat and he'll put one in and he'll chew and swallow it and put one in, chew it and swallow it, and then one he might not chew it as well and swallow it, and he'll kind of gag a little. Then he's like, I feel like he just gets too scared." In this same moment, Brenda makes a face like she is gagging, and it appeared as if she had identified with her infant in telling of the story.	and want to hear lots about their child's day".) ; (D: "people waiting in line like not a real line but they're just like waiting like they want to talk to me about something and so then you feel rushed"); (D: "so your conversation with this other parent really isn't as authentic as you really want it to be because you can feel these other parents like "I have to talk to you,"); (D: "all these people swarming around and I'm just talking to her and like I knew I needed to engage her a lot because I'm videotaped but then I like freak out and get paranoid that like "I wonder if this happens all the time like ["what if I'm always doing this?" like whoever comes first gets the majority of the chunk of my attention"); and (D: "I can just see her in her head like ["I'll just have to try tomorrow. No big deal."] but really it might have been a big deal, but, I wasn't available to her. It's just hard because that's not fair to Brenda ".) **D. Reciprocity of relationships indicates parents are interested in what I have to tell them about their baby and I am being helpful to them by sharing information.** **E. Providing personal space and time to "settle in" is another way of communicating with families and creating a welcoming environment. Giving children and parent's time and space to "ease in".** D: "I was still talking to the other parents and like I greeted them and I kind of like let them do their thing. I'm not like bombarding them because I feel like they're still really, you know,

After this occurrence Brenda and Diane continued to discuss Brandon's development. Three parents then walked in to the classroom all at once…….and Diane's attention became ……	warming up to me and still trying to figure me out." D: " I'm still, you know, saying "goodbye" to Jenny and like moving on so I mean that's kind of I guess why I picked this clip because you don't, it's not always about just everything you say to somebody like, D: "let em come in, ease in, ease in, be quiet, let them put their things away for their baby, kind of do their little morning rituals and then they'll come over and sit down and talk and, you know, I like it too, I like it to be nice and calm like our room is all the time".

Appendix L
Reflections of Parents and Teachers on Daily Transitions

Parent Consent (Amendment to Original Consent, May 8, 2014)

INTRODUCTION

You are invited to participate in a research study that will be implemented at the Center during spring-summer, 2014. The research study team includes Linda C. Traum, Child and Family Studies Ph.D. candidate, PI, and Dr. Mary Jane Moran, Faculty Advisor. The purpose of this doctoral research project is to explore teacher-parent interactions that occur during daily home-childcare transitions (i.e. "drop offs" and "pick-ups") in the context of an infant-toddler classroom in Knoxville, TN. Parents will be asked to interact with teachers, their children and other staff members as they normally would during daily transition time periods. The primary objectives of this research study are to: describe the setting, teacher and parent interactions and to uncover some of the beliefs and values of parents and teachers during transitions of children from home to school. Your consent is voluntary, and you can withdraw from the study at any time, for any reason without penalty. Should you withdraw from the study you will have the option to request all data taken to that point be destroyed. Whether you decide to participate or not, there will be no negative effect related to your family's participation in the programs.

INFORMATION ABOUT PARTICIPANTS' INVOLVEMENT IN THE STUDY

This study is divided into two phases: I) video-taping transitions; and II) teacher reflections of transitions, and will last for approximately 7 weeks, with your participation lasting approximately 3 weeks.

Stage 1

- The PI will observe the classroom daily transition time periods (7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m., and 3:30 p.m.to 5:30 p.m.).Video and audio taping of daily transitions will not begin until later in the first week of the study
- The teacher will be asked to wear a small microphone to clearly record her interactions with you.
- Each teacher-parent dyad will continue to be videotaped for a total of three morning transitions and three evening transitions in the classroom over three weeks. Videotaping will be completed by the end of week three.
- Although infants and toddlers will be indirectly involved in the study, due to the context of the infant-toddler classroom and the nature of observations in which parents and teachers may care for them during daily transitions. However the PI will not analyze any aspect of an infant's and/or toddler's development or behavior (i.e., language, cognitive, motor, emotion) that is captured on video tape during observations, and infants and toddlers will not considered participants in the study.

- Diapering and pottying will not be videotaped. Should you wish me to discontinue taping for any reason during a particular transition you can simply make this request and I will stop the camera without question.
- Video/audio tapes and my field notes will be analyzed and used in professional publications, conferences during five years following the end of the study and during interviews with your child's teacher and a focus group meeting comprised of interested teachers at Lake Avenue. During these times, teachers will be asked to discuss the meaning they assign to their interactions with parents. Teacher interviews and focus groups will be held in private spaces at the center and will conclude within 7 weeks of the initial taping. These exchanges will be audio taped with tapes transcribed and analyzed.
- Parents will be invited to attend a presentation of the study findings (i.e. demographics, study questions and findings, themes and new insights) at the center upon the completion of the project.

Stage 2

- Parents will be invited to confidentially complete a two page, written Parents' Profile Form that will ask questions about them and their family.
- Parents will be invited to participate in a 1 to 1.5 hour interview with the researcher to view non-edited video-tape clips of their interactions in the classroom during daily transitions. During the interview, a parent can stop the video and make comments on segments of the tape that she/he would like to discuss further. Classroom teachers have also reviewed these tapes with the researcher in a similar process. The interview will be audio recorded and transcribed. The parent will also be asked to identify two video clips to share with other parents and teachers during a focus group. These interviews will be held in the 1215 W. Cumberland Avenue 236. Jesse Harris Building Knoxville TN 37996-5316 or in a private location chosen by the parent.
- Approximately one to two weeks following the final parent interview, parents will participate in a 1.5 hour focus group with other parents who have participated in the study. The focus group will be held at a time that is convenient for parents in the Center that is located at 2010 Lake Ave, Knoxville, TN 37996. During the focus group, parents will view video clips of teacher-parent interactions during daily transitions, and will reflect and share their comments. The focus group will be audio recorded, and field notes will be taken.
- **DATA STORAGE**
- Audio tapes and audio portions of video-tapes will be transcribed by a professional transcription service immediately after observations, interviews and the focus group.

- Audio tapes will be destroyed as soon as they are transcribed and no later than 6 months from the close of the study.
- Video tapes and audio tape transcripts will be reviewed in the 1215 W. Cumberland Avenue 236. Jesse Harris Building Knoxville TN 37996-5316 and or the university secure server.
- Video tape clips will be archived for 5 years following the end of the study to be used in future and ongoing analysis and presentations. All data will be secured in locked file cabinets at 1215 W. Cumberland Avenue 236. Jesse Harris Building Knoxville TN 37996-5316 and on the university file server. The file server is secured with multiple layers of protection (password protection and network security measures), and is maintained by an Information Technology Specialist within the College according to the security protocols of the UT Office of Information Technology.
- Clips of video tapes and transcriptions of audio may be used in presentations in relationship to Linda Traum's doctoral studies at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and other professional conferences and publications.
- The transcriber will sign a Transcriber's Pledge of Confidentiality as will the PI and Dr. Moran.

RISKS

There are minimal anticipated risks for participating in the research study. It will be difficult to keep your participation and your names confidential during the study as you and your child will be videotaped in the presence of other teachers, parents and perhaps university students. Pseudonyms will replace real names in all transcriptions, of video, audio and field notes and names will be masked using computer software in video tape clips used for presentations.

BENEFITS

Participation in this research study has reasonable benefits. The results of the project may be used to inform future studies in understanding teacher-parent interaction during daily transitions in infant-toddler classroom contexts. Further, based on the number of parents who complete consent forms there will be a $15.00 award to each classroom for children's books.

CONFIDENTIALITY

NO REAL NAMES WILL BE ASSOCIATED WITH THE INFORMATION ANALYZED FOR THIS RESEARCH PROJECT. ALL DATA WILL BE KEPT IN LOCKED FILE CABINETS IN THE FACULTY ADVISOR'S RESEARCH LAB AT JESSIE HARRIS BUILDING, ROOM 236 AND ON THE SECURE SERVERS AT UTK. THE PI AND THE FACULTY ADVISOR AS WELL AS THE PROFESSIONAL TRANSCRIBER WILL SIGN A PLEDGE OF CONFIDENTIALITY, AGREEING TO MAINTAIN THESE STANDARDS OF CONFIDENTIALITY.

COMPENSATION
Should 50% of parents in each classroom consent to participate a $15.00 award will be given to the classroom for the purchase of children's books.

CONTACT INFORMATION
If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, (or you experience adverse effects as a result of participating in this study,) you may contact the researcher, Linda C. Traum, at**1215 W. Cumberland Avenue, Room 427, Knoxville, TN 37996-1912,** and (561) 670-9875. If you have questions about your rights as a participant, contact the Office of Research Compliance Officer at (865) 974-3466.

PARTICIPATION
Your participation in this study is voluntary; you may decline to participate without penalty. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty and without loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed your data will be destroyed upon your request.

_____

_____

Consent
I have read the above information and received a copy of this form. (Please initial the statement that you agree with.)

___ I give my consent to participate in this study.

___ I do not give my consent to participate in this study, but will allow my image and the image of my child(ren) to be captured on film/audio in the event that the PI tapes us during daily transitions in the classroom.

___I do not give my consent to participate in this study and I will not allow my allow image and the image of my child(ren) to be captured on film/audio in the event that the PI tapes us during daily transitions in the classroom.

Participant Name (print) _____

Participant Signature _____ Date _____

Consent for video-taping procedures.
I have read the above information regarding video-taping procedures and received a copy of this form.

Participant Name (print) _____

Participant Signature _____ Date _____
(Personal Copy-keep for your records)

CONSENT

I have read the above information and received a copy of this form. (Please initial the statement that you agree with.) Your consent is voluntary, and you can withdraw from the study at any time, for any reason without penalty. Should you withdraw from the study you will have the option to request all data taken to that point be destroyed. Whether you decide to participate or not, there will be no negative effect related to your family's participation in the programs.

___ I give my consent to participate in a 1 to 1.5 hour interview the study.

___ I give my consent to participate in a 1.5 hour focus group in the study.

___ I give my consent to complete the written Parent Profile Form.

Participant Name (print) _____

Participant Signature _____ Date _____

Participant Name (print) _____

Participant Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix M
Reflections of Parents and Teachers on Daily Transitions

Video Stimulated Recall Interview Questions
(Parents)

1. "What stands out for you in this clip?"
2. Please tell me in your own words what is happening in this clip?
3. What do you recall thinking or feeling during this clip?
4. When you look at this clip:
    a. What do you recall thinking/feeling during this situation?
    b. What was you interpretation of the parent's thoughts and feelings?
    c. Based on your interpretation, how did this impact your behavior?
5. Would you say that this video clip is representative of a typical transition or a unique transition?
6. Prompt - How is it typical?
7. Prompt - How is it unique?

What else do you want to share about this transition that we haven't covered?

Attachment N
Reflections of Parents and Teachers on Daily Transitions

Initial Analysis of Audio Tapes of Parent VSRI

#	Date/ Parent Pseudonym	Reviewing VSRI audio tapes. Parents respond to question: What stood out to you
1	6/9/2014/ Roy	"He's paying attention to what I'm saying and what Carol is saying, and doing a really nice job. He does that with me and my wife all the time. He doesn't do that with others. It suggests to me that with his teachers, people he really feels comfortable with, he does this". "Nice to get a smile, is he happy to see me that's a great feeling." "I like to tell him what he is going to do. He's a kid that likes to know what the plan is". "Checking the chart, I am concerned about different things at different points. Now it is toileting, the chart is helpful". "Nice story I got, and his response, often times the teacher might be distracted, She is not always available"
2	6/13/2014/ Candace	Children near the door. Now they engage in conversation "Seems like a common engagement with Allison we talk everyday" "I feel like the more comfortable he gets the more expressive he gets" "He started later, He didn't show his entire personality at first It was more traumatic for us as adults" The interaction between parents, he was talking about the other child at home, "we usually talk at the door, common gathering point" "Typical in terms of sharing with Allison, he very clearly wanted to leave. I had been out of town. (China), but he was very clingy because I had been gone". "Just in a few minutes that we shared we a lot of information, a surprising amount of information.

Attachment O
Reflections of Parents and Teachers on Daily Transitions

Conceptual Memos Parent Interviews

Date/ Parent Pseudonym	
6/9/2014/ Iris	She also assumed in the beginning that Allsion had asked her about their weekend because that is what Allison always does, Mom spoke a couple of times about how she appreciates that Allison shows interest in Isaac and his life outside of school. She did not feel this level of personal interest at the other child care. Mother calls this child centered. (Memo) Mother seems to value this personal interest in her child. She loves getting the stories about the day at pick up. (Memo) "I feel like I miss a lot and I love that I feel like I miss so much when I work". "She always tells me something, makes me feel helping me share in what I missed out and gives me information on how he is developing and what I can watch out for at home". She expressed trust in the teacher for her advice as a first time Mom. (Memo) " I am always asking her for her opinion on things". Looks on the internet and gets family advice, but still checks with Allison. Things are happening different at school and at home, it is confusing to Isaac. Try to get their advice. (Memo) Unique from the last place there wasn't that option. Always seem to have an answer and if not she will find a credible source to get the answer. (Memo) Mom stated that when she shares information about home, it is often because she is seeking advice from the teacher. (Memo) "I don't know what to expect. He's changing so quickly. Always something to talk about".

Appendix P
Reflections of Parents and Teachers on Daily Transitions

Side by Side Parent-Teacher Video Clip and Teacher VSRI Transcripts
Pseudonyms: Allison (Teacher) and Brenda (Parent)

Parent-Teacher (and Child Interaction) In Clip	Teacher Statement in VSRI
T: He is not usually interested too much in imaginary play but today I was asking him if he wanted to to keep to play with Jayden and give the baby a bottle and he was doing that. Yeah and the he held, he wanted to hold his own baby then and he held a baby and he, he was giving the baby the bottle and he was putting it in the baby's eyes and in the baby's mouth and stuff P: Did you have a baby? [Mother asked child] C: [child was looking at researcher and said her name] P: Yeah. He's looking [researcher's name] Note: Parent was listening and looking directly at the teacher while she was telling her about child's play. She was also stroking the top of her son's head while she listened to the story. (9-16)	T: The reason I included that is because I think it's important for me to give them, give the parents specific things about what a child has done and for me that's kind of hard because it's hard for me to remember specific things that happened during the day with one child and so I know my thinking a lot of times when a parent is on their way in or I see them drive or I know that I know that she picks him up early everyday around 4 and so I'm thinking you know "What do I remember?" or maybe when it's happening, I'm gonna try to remember to tell this to his mom or and so that, I feel that is good for me because I struggle with that sometimes with remembering and I've even had, I don't have it in place right now, but I've even had like systems where I'd write down a little note or something so that I can remember cause days run together and children run together you know and I know that somebody said this or whatever but I can't remember who it was or you know it's just a lot to remember ah some specific things for each things and so R: I would think that it would be. There's so much happening P: Yeah R: in one moment (laughing). It's ok. I don't know how you do it (laughing). So that was P: Specifically Brandon, he doesn't usually play in imaginary play and so that day, I remember that he was near and he seemed interested and so and Jane was playing imaginary play and so him and other children began to be involved in that kind of play and it's unusual for him so that's why I wanted to tell his mom.

Appendix Q
Social Work Code of Ethics
(Specifically related to research and evaluation)

5. SOCIAL WORKERS' ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION (National Association of Social Workers (2008)

5.01 Integrity of the Profession

(a) Social workers should work toward the maintenance and promotion of high standards of practice.

(b) Social workers should uphold and advance the values, ethics, knowledge, and mission of the profession. Social workers should protect, enhance, and improve the integrity of the profession through appropriate study and research, active discussion, and responsible criticism of the profession.

(c) Social workers should contribute time and professional expertise to activities that promote respect for the value, integrity, and competence of the social work profession. These activities may include teaching, research, consultation, service, legislative testimony, presentations in the community, and participation in their professional organizations.

(d) Social workers should contribute to the knowledge base of social work and share with colleagues their knowledge related to practice, research, and ethics. Social workers should seek to contribute to the profession's literature and to share their knowledge at professional meetings and conferences.

(e) Social workers should act to prevent the unauthorized and unqualified practice of social work.

5.02 Evaluation and Research

(a) Social workers should monitor and evaluate policies, the implementation of programs, and practice interventions.

(b) Social workers should promote and facilitate evaluation and research to contribute to the development of knowledge.

(c) Social workers should critically examine and keep current with emerging knowledge relevant to social work and fully use evaluation and research evidence in their professional practice.

(d) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should carefully consider possible consequences and should follow guidelines developed for the protection of evaluation and research participants. Appropriate institutional review boards should be consulted.

(e) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should obtain voluntary and written informed consent from participants, when appropriate, without any implied or actual deprivation or penalty for refusal to participate; without undue inducement to participate; and with due regard for participants' well-being, privacy, and dignity. Informed consent should include information about the nature, extent, and duration of the participation requested and disclosure of the risks and benefits of participation in the research.

(f) When evaluation or research participants are incapable of giving informed consent, social workers should provide an appropriate explanation to the participants, obtain the participants' assent to the extent they are able, and obtain written consent from an appropriate proxy.

(g) Social workers should never design or conduct evaluation or research that does not use consent procedures, such as certain forms of naturalistic observation and archival research, unless rigorous and responsible review of the research has found it to be justified because of its prospective scientific, educational, or applied value and unless equally effective alternative procedures that do not involve waiver of consent are not feasible.

(h) Social workers should inform participants of their right to withdraw from evaluation and research at any time without penalty.

(i) Social workers should take appropriate steps to ensure that participants in evaluation and research have access to appropriate supportive services.

(j) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should protect participants from unwarranted physical or mental distress, harm, danger, or deprivation.

(k) Social workers engaged in the evaluation of services should discuss collected information only for professional purposes and only with people professionally concerned with this information.

(l) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should ensure the anonymity or confidentiality of participants and of the data obtained from them. Social workers should inform participants of any limits of confidentiality, the measures that will be taken to ensure confidentiality, and when any records containing research data will be destroyed.

(m) Social workers who report evaluation and research results should protect participants' confidentiality by omitting identifying information unless proper consent has been obtained authorizing disclosure.

(n) Social workers should report evaluation and research findings accurately. They should not fabricate or falsify results and should take steps to correct any errors later found in published data using standard publication methods.

(o) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should be alert to and avoid conflicts of interest and dual relationships with participants, should inform participants when a real or potential conflict of interest arises, and should take steps to resolve the issue in a manner that makes participants' interests primary.

(p) Social workers should educate themselves, their students, and their colleagues about responsible research practices.

Appendix R

Touchpoints ™ Guiding Principles and Parent Assumptions

Touchpoint's Guiding Principles

1. Value and understand the relationship between you and the parent
2. Use the behavior of the child as your language
3. Recognize what you bring to the interaction
4. Be willing to discuss matters that go beyond our traditional role
5. Look for opportunities to support parental mastery
6. Focus on the parent child relationship
7. Value passion wherever you find it
8. Value disorganization and vulnerability as an opportunity

Touchpoint's Parenting Assumptions

1. The parent is the expert on his/her child
2. All parents have strengths
3. All parents want to do well by their child
4. All parents have something critical to share at each developmental stage
5. All parents have ambivalent feelings
6. Parenting is a process build on trial and error

Adapted from The Touchpoint's approach: Developmental and relational frameworks powerpoint on Brazelton Touchpoints Center website at http://www.brazeltontouchpoints.org/wp-content/uploads/2012_nationalForum/Dev_Framework_Intro_to_Approach_NEWv2_1.

Vita

Linda C. Traum, graduated from the University of Southern Maine with a Bachelor's degree in Social Work, and from Florida State University with a Master's degree in Social Work. In 2002, she completed a post graduate fellowship training program in infant mental health from the Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services in New York City. She currently is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in the states of Florida and Tennessee, and prior to returning to graduate school she provided infant mental health and child and family services with parents and their infants, toddlers, and young children in homes and center-based programs. Additionally, Linda is has received training at the Brazelton Touchpoints Center and is a Touchpoints™ trainer, and she has been a presenter at three Zero To Three National Training Institutes. Linda has over 30 years of professional experience that include direct practice, supervision, management, and professional development in the field of social work and early childhood development services. Linda has completed the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in December 2014.