IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TEACHING PYRAMID

by

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Abstract

This case study was conducted to explore the use of the Teaching Pyramid model for supporting social emotional competence of young children within a Canadian child care program. The Teaching Pyramid is a systematic model that can be used to assist child care providers in supporting children who engage in challenging behaviours into their child care programs. This case study focused on one child care program located in a suburb of the lower mainland of British Columbia that has been applying the principles and practices of this model for almost five years.

Semi- structured individual interviews and focus group interviews were conducted with the child care educators to gather information on their thoughts and experiences when working with children who engage in challenging behaviour and on their experiences with the Teaching Pyramid, including the ways in which an external coach may or may not have supported the implementation process. In addition to the interviews, the participants were asked to write short narratives that were used as a basis of the group interview. The data was then transcribed and codes and themes were uncovered. Nine themes emerged, the first two related to the participants' motivation for the professional practice, followed by three themes concerning the strategies used by the participants. Finally, four themes related to the ways in which the participants engaged in their day-to-day practice.

Preface

The research is an original non-published work by author, Andrea James. The Behaviour Research Ethics Board of British Columbia gave full Board of British Columbia gave full board approval to this research certificate number H14-02453

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Dedication

It is my genuine gratefulness and with my deepest love that I dedicate this work to my wife, my best friend and my soul mate Shannon Lorrie. It is through her never ending support that I have been able to achieve this dream. You never doubted I could do this. Your faith in me never wavered. What would I have done without your eagle eye seeking out those awkward phrases or punctuation problems? Thank you Shannon for everything you are and everything you do.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Approximately five to ten percent of young children in Canada do not develop, or are not given the opportunity to develop, social skills in a nurturing and supportive environment, whether at home, school, or child care (Tremblay, Gervais & Petitclerc, 2008). Children who do not fully develop social skills are more likely to experience serious troubles later on in life, including: expulsion from school, substance abuse, involvement in criminal behavior, and increased mental health problems (Tremblay, et al., 2008). In my role as the Coordinator of the Supported Child Development Program (SCD) I regularly witnessed children as young as three years old being asked to leave child care programs due to their challenging behaviour. The Supported Child Development Program is a government-funded program that supports the inclusion of children with special needs into child care across the province of British Columbia.

Over half the children under the age of five are in non-parental child care during the day (Bushnik, 2006). In my position I witnessed child care educators use a variety of strategies to support children who engaged in challenging behaviour. Time away, telling the child to stop, re-direction, taking away privileges, and ignoring the behaviour were a few of the methods used on a daily basis yet little changed in the children's behaviour, and in some cases children were asked to leave the program. Child care educators often participated in an assortment of professional development training workshops however, this did not always result in a change in their everyday actions. Finding ways to support and help children with behaviour challenges was my impetus for returning to university to complete a Master of Arts degree in early childhood education.

Problem Statement

I began to talk to people and explore research to discover what information I could find to support child care providers in caring for children who engage in challenging behaviours. My intent was to find a tool or strategy that would support child care provider's skills in supporting the inclusion and success of all children in their child care programs. In 2008 I was introduced to an American-based tiered support model that focuses on the reduction of challenging behaviour through the promotion of social emotional skills (Fox, Dunlap, Hemmeter, Joseph, & Strain, 2003). The model is called the Teaching Pyramid; it changed my life and gave me hope for early childhood educators to support and successfully include those children who engage in challenging behaviours into their child care programs.

The purpose of this study was to explore how the Teaching Pyramid can be used within a Canadian context to help child care providers learn and employ effective strategies to foster the success of all children in their child care program, including children who engage in challenging behaviours. This study hoped to explore the following research questions:

1. What do child care educators consider to be challenging behaviour?

2. What motivates educators to change their practices to meet the needs of individual children? How does professional development help?

3. How does the use of the principles and practices of the Teaching Pyramid support child care educator's abilities to promote the success of children with challenging behaviours into their programs?

4. What does the role of the leadership by the director play in this process?

5. How does support from an external coach support the process of implementing the Teaching Pyramid

Theoretical Framework

My life experiences have led me to an interpretivist paradigm through which the world is viewed as ever changing and socially constructed (Glesne, 2011). This paradigm has, as a research goal, the exploration of the social world, seeking to understand why things are the way they are. This exploration occurs through an in-depth and intensive interaction with people from specific relevant environments.

Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist view that learning and knowledge are greatly influenced by culture and context provides a theoretical framework for this study. In a child care program all teachers, all children, and all parents bring with them their own individual realities and ways of knowing based on their daily interactions throughout their lives. Although Vygotsky's focus was on children, his social constructivist views can also be applied to adult learning. Adults bring with them a wide variety of experiences, beliefs, and ideas which then influence their learning and their actions. Through a social constructivist viewpoint learning is viewed as a collaborative process through which people learn from each other. Within a child care program, educators, children, and families interact with and influence one another. One of the ideas that social constructivists such as Vygotsky bring forth is that of motivation, which can consist of both internal and external motivation (University of California, Berkley, 2014). Vygotsky's ideas on motivation influences this research in relation to the participant's motivation to provide an environment that meet the needs of all the children in their program.

Just as Vygotsky's social constructivist theories frame this research, so does Bronfenbrenner's (1994) Ecological Systems Theory. This theory focuses on the influence of

overlapping ecosystems on a child's development, viewing the child as enveloped by the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem. This study focuses specifically on the influences of the microsystem surrounding the child and the immediate day-to-day environment that directly impacts on the child, and the mesosystem, which consists of the linkages between two or more settings that are included in the child's microsystem. In this circumstance it revolves around the child care program and the interaction and processes with the child's family. Despite the focus on the immediate microsystem and mesosystem of the child, one cannot ignore the influences of the other systems. The exosystem includes people and places that do not have a direct impact on the child, and the macrosystem reflects the laws, beliefs, and rules that guide the other systems.

Vygotsky's (1978) and Bronfenbrenner's (1994) theories are relevant to this study because they focus on the impact that culture and life experiences have on a person: each child care provider's background influences his or her understanding and beliefs about supporting children who engage in challenging behaviours. In turn, each of these child care providers who interact and care for these children on a daily basis influence the child's development.

Researchers Position

I came to this research with over twenty-five years of experience in the field of early childhood education and special education. I have seen so much in my career and have very definite views and ideas about professional practice. However, I also brought to this research an open mind about identifying strategies that work for individual children and each child care program. I understand and believe that there is not one quick fix or solution to problems when working with children. I believe in an eclectic approach which can be adapted and modified to meet different situations. The Teaching Pyramid provides this opportunity because it does not

prescribe a particular set of strategies, but instead provides a structure describing the levels of support that should be used.

      As mentioned earlier, I have a previous relationship with the research site, which began long before they began to use the principles and practices of the Teaching Pyramid. My relationship with this child care program has been professional in nature and has evolved over the years.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

In this section I review the research literature on the role of inclusion, definitions of challenging behaviours, and approaches to the reduction of challenging behaviours, including the Teaching Pyramid.

The Role of Inclusion

My work for the past 15 years has been to facilitate the inclusion of children who need additional support into child care settings. It was through this daily work with inclusion that brought me to engage in this research. In reviewing the literature I sought to answer the following questions: What is inclusion? What does it look like in Canada? How does it relate to children with challenging behaviours and the Teaching Pyramid?

Historically in Canada the inclusion of children with special needs, including children who engage in challenging behaviours, fell into the hands of the family. Before the 1960's it was widely believed that children with disabilities could not learn, and thus doctors often encouraged families to place them in an institution (Irwin, Lero and Brophy, 2000). Through the 1960's there was an increase in understanding that children with special needs can learn, proven by behaviourists who demonstrated that when tasks were broken into steps and rewards were used upon achievement of each step learning could be achieved. Irwin, Lero and Brophy (2000) state that by the 1970's segregated preschool programs and half day child care programs for children with special needs began to open up. By the late 1970's some mainstream child care programs began to enroll children with special needs into their child care programs. This practice grew through the 1980's, despite no national policies on the inclusion of children with special needs. Language and terminology also changed as practices changed. From segregation came

mainstreaming or integrated special education (Odom, Buysse, & Soukakou, 2011). By the early 1990's the term inclusion came into use and is still in existence today. The definition of inclusion varies for example, inclusion can be simply defined as all children participating in natural settings (Odom, et al., 2011). In more concrete terms, the *Joint Position Statement of the Division for Early Childhood* and the *National Association for the Education of Young Children* (National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2009) defined inclusion as the rights of children to be full members of their community through access, participation, and appropriate support.

In the mid 1990's governments across Canada began to provide funding to support the inclusion of children into child care settings. Curiously, inclusion of children with extra support needs into child care is not covered by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms as access to public schools is (Irwin, et al., 2000).

What are Challenging Behaviours?

Through my work supporting children with extra support needs into child care programs, I realized that the children most likely to be excluded are those who engage in challenging behaviour – yet it is these same children who need acceptance and successful inclusion the most. What are challenging behaviours? For the purpose of this paper, challenging behaviours is defined as regular patterns of behaviour that interfere with the quality of the child's life, and which usually do not respond to typical developmentally appropriate supports and interventions. Examples of behaviours seen as challenging include: physical and verbal aggression, destruction of property, frequent intense tantrums, and other harmful behaviours (McCabe & Frede, 2007). Child care educators often consider non-compliance with their directions as a challenging behaviour. Strain and Hemmeter (1997) warn that defining challenging behaviour through a list

of actions can be endless, and each person will apply their own experience, values, and beliefs to their definition of challenging behaviours. To deal with this problem, Strain and Hemmeter argue that the definition of challenging behaviours are behaviours that the adult finds disturbing and wants to stop. Because challenging behaviours during the preschool years are one of the strongest predictors of more serious problems later in life (McCabe & Frede, 2007), it is critical that people who work with young children understand their role in supporting the successful inclusion of children with challenging behaviours. Furthermore, challenging behaviours in young children can lead to increased academic and social problems in school and later problems integrating successfully into the community (Whitaker & Harden, 2010).

When children engages in problem behaviours they are often rejected by their peers and receive higher numbers of disciplinary actions at home and school. Understandably it can be very hard for someone working with a child who is engaging in challenging behaviours to develop a quality relationship. When a child engages in challenging behaviour it can negatively affect the quality of the relationship between the child and child care provider. Birch and Ladd (1998) conducted a study with 199 kindergarteners and their 17 teachers to examine the effects of children with challenging behaviour and their relationships with teachers. They found that teachers tended to respond more positively to children who are cooperative and responsible and less positively to those who engage in more challenging behaviours.

Approaches to Support the Reduction of Challenging Behaviours

One key area that children who engage in challenging behaviours often struggle with is the use of social skills that promote successful day-to-day interactions with others.

Social Skills

Despite much of the focus in child care today on young children's learning of traditional "school readiness skills," such as letters and numbers, Raver (2002) argues that children with strong social skills have a greater chance of success in school. It is possible that if a child care program concentrates on teaching social skills, challenging behaviours can be reduced, helping children achieve greater success in relationships, and eventually successful participation in school. This means that child care educators have an enormous responsibility to provide an environment that prevents challenging behaviours, increases social skills, stimulates learning, and encourages exploration by young children. This is an increasingly difficult task for child care providers because in many cases child care workers are underpaid, overworked, and undertrained. (Chudnovsky, 2009)

Fox and Lentini (2006) provide an extensive list of social skills, including: following rules, identifying feelings in oneself and others, controlling anger and impulses, and problem solving. Researchers Han and Kemple (2006) define social competence as:

consisting of six categories of competence: Adoption of social values, development of a sense of personal identity, acquisition of interpersonal skills, learning how to regulate personal behavior in accord with societal expectations, planning and decision-making, and development of cultural competence. (p. 241)

Yet another definition of social emotional development comes from Boyd, Barnett, Bodrova, Leong and Gomby (2005), who state that social emotional development includes identification of feelings, reading and understanding the feelings of others, and management of strong emotions. The National Association of School Psychologists (2002) places social skills into categories to help adults determine the correct intervention when helping children who do not have strong social skills. These categories include:

- Survival skills (e.g., listening, following directions, ignoring distractions, using nice or brave talk, rewarding yourself)

- Interpersonal skills (e.g., sharing, asking for permission, joining an activity, waiting your turn)

- Problem-solving skills (e.g., asking for help, apologizing, accepting consequences, deciding what to do)

- Conflict resolution skills (e.g., dealing with teasing, losing, accusations, being left out, and peer pressure)

In contrast to the term social skills, Michelle Garcia Winner (2012) uses the term *social thinking*, asserting that children who experience difficulties with social situations do best when they are taught the reasons behind social skills rather than simply being taught the actual skills. For example, children with Asperger's Syndrome can be taught how their social mind works and why they react to situations so differently than other children. Furthermore, using the social thinking tools, a child would learn how to better read other's social cues, how to respond appropriately, and how to understand that people all have different points of view (Winner, 2012). Winner states that the basis of social thinking revolves around joint attention, reciprocity, central coherence, executive functioning, sensory integration, cognition and language, and theory of mind, which is the concept that a child eventually learns that another person may think differently than herself.

For the purpose of this thesis, socials skills will be defined as "a complex set of skills that allow children to: make friends, solve interpersonal conflicts, and express and understand feelings in others." (Technical Assistance Centre on Social Emotional Intervention, n.d., bullet 35).

One last aspect of social skills that will be discussed in this thesis is the importance and ways of teaching social skills to young children. Boyd, Barnett, Bodrova, Leong and Gomby, (2005); Hemmeter, Ostrosky and Fox, (2006); Raver (2002), and others, all clearly state that children who possess strong social emotional skills have a far greater chance of early school success. Furthermore, Raver proposes that children who engage in antisocial behaviours also struggle with acceptance from their teachers and peers, participate less often in class, and have poor academic outcomes.

Direct and Indirect Teaching.

Many children naturally learn social behaviours through their daily lives; but many others, in particular those children who have a diagnosis such as Autism and children who live in at-risk situations, may need a more direct approach to learning social skills (Fox & Lentini, 2006). Since it is very important for young children to learn social skills, the next step then is to determine how best to teach these skills to children. Fox and Lentini state that there are three stages of learning which include: skill acquisition, fluency maintenance, and generalization (p. 4). These authors provide specific details of ways to effectively teach these social skills, including: how to explain and demonstrate social skills, a discussion about the importance of children practicing the skills, and also how adults can provide specific positive praise for using the skills. This can all be done within a child's familiar setting such as daycare, preschool, home or school, and is based on the individual skill base of each child.

In contrast, there are a wide variety of programs for purchase that be used to teach children social skills. These purchased programs are administered in specific settings by a familiar adult, school, or child care program that is dedicated to fully implementing the whole process. An example of these types of programs is *social thinking*, coined in the early 1990's by

Michelle Garcia Winner. This program focuses on teaching children that each social situation is different and that thinking about what is needed in that situation is the best approach to social success. (Winner, 2012). *The Incredible Years Program* is another example of a purchased program that can be administered with a group of children 2-3 times a week over a period of 30 weeks (Dunlap and Powell, 2009). This program was created by Dr. Carolyn Webster-Stratton at the University of Washington.

Through examination of the research literature, web sites, and other educational information I found a myriad of programs that are designed to support families, teachers, and child care educators to teach social skills to young children. These programs are designed to include typically-developing children as well as children who have a delay or disorder. Dunlap and Powell, (2009) reviewed empirical social skills programs and categorized them in two ways: (1) programs that use peers to teach social skills, and (2) adult directed intervention programs. Typically-developing peers can support the social emotional skills development of children with delays in social skills. For example, Dunlap and Powell demonstrated that when typically-developing children engage in play with children who have social delays within an interventional model, not only is there a growth in the development of the delayed child, but with the typically-developing peer as well.

Empirically based adult directed social interventions include methods such as direct instruction and play-based interventions, as well incidental teaching that occurs from the use of natural opportunities throughout the child's day. The more directive adult intervention methods include Pivotal Response Training, which is used specifically with children with autism and assessment based intervention designed for children with serious social needs (Dunlap & Powell, 2009). The authors add that, "healthy peer interactions and social development are much more

likely to occur in inclusive settings characterized by developmentally appropriate practice" (p.4).

Positive Behaviour Support.

As stated in the report written by Tremblay, Gervais and Petitclerc (2008), Canadians listed youth violence as one of their top concerns. Since challenging behaviour is recognized by so many people as a problem, researchers have continued to define and improve knowledge on the reduction of challenging behaviours in children. In general, many people who work with young children often use reactive approaches such as punishment, or authoritarian methods to try to stop challenging behaviours (Kayikci, 2009). Kayikci states that the negative impact of punishment on children can include disrupting learning, harming relationships between child and adult, lowering the child's self-esteem, and resentment of the learning environment. He also argues that the use of punishment has not been effective at either improving the behavioral climate in schools or preventing students with problem behaviors from being expelled and placed in the justice system.

Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) is an applied science which is rooted in applied behaviour analysis, inclusion of children with developmental disabilities and person centred values (Carr, Dunlap, Horner, Koegel, Turnbul, Sailor, Anderson, Albin, Koegel, & Fox, 2002, p. 4). It was in 1968 that Baer, Wolf, and Risley published an article that lay the foundation to applied behaviour analysis (Sugai and Horner 2002). PBS has as its focus, the improvement or increased quality of the child's life, including social relationships, self-esteem, participation in daily activities of choice, independence, and the ability to make friends and contribute to society. Another feature of PBS that differs from institutional types of interventions is the focus on its use within real life contexts by the people in the child's day-to-day life. PBS is assessed by its ability to meet the needs of the practical everyday lives of the child and their family. As

discussed by Carr and colleagues (2002), PBS has close links to the ecological paradigm: they have in common the use of multiple systems, and focus on naturalistic research settings where children are observed within multiple settings with multiple interacting influences. Furthermore, these settings are made up of heterogeneous groups of people, and thus must be flexible enough to meet the needs of a variety of children, families, teachers, and other professionals.

One more important key feature of PBS is the focus on the prevention of challenging behaviour rather than the punishment of the behaviour. PBS helps teachers and caregivers to examine the purpose of the behaviour and then modify the environment and teach the child new skills (Fox, Dunlap, Hemmeter, Joseph, & Strain, 2002). To further clarify the definition of PBS Fox (n.d) a researcher from the University of Southern Florida states:

> An approach to developing effective and individualized interventions for children with severe challenging behavior, PBS was developed both from the science of applied behavior analysis and the values of child-centered approaches to learning. In PBS, interventions are designed based on understanding the purpose of the challenging behavior. The positive strategies used to change behavior include teaching new skills, preventing the occurrence of challenging behavior, and supporting the child in achieving meaningful, long-term outcomes. (para. 5)

The Teaching Pyramid.

I have always utilized and taught the principles of PBS in my ongoing work with child care providers, and although it was successful from time to time, there seemed to be something missing. Then I was introduced to the Teaching Pyramid, which is an American framework developed to support the social emotional and behavioural needs of children (Fox, Dunlap, Hemmeter, Joseph, & Strain, 2003). This model uses the principles of PBS and focuses on the

importance of developing quality relationships, supportive environments, social emotional skills, and individual intensive intervention. I asked myself, could the Teaching Pyramid be used to support child care educators in the lower mainland to provide an environment that will help reduce the challenging behaviour that children engage in and promote the success of all children?

The research supporting the Teaching Pyramid was completed in the United States and is based on the cultural ideas, practices, policies, and funding models of that country. Despite many similarities between Canada and United States, there are also many differences. Ball (2010) asserts that there are cultural and geographic differences between the two countries, which include: professional practices, tools, and programs used in early childhood education centres, and caution must be used when importing a tool from one area to another. Ball addresses this concern in her discussion on the usefulness of "re-inventing the wheel" when it comes to ensuring that practices meet the needs of the local conditions.

Challenging behaviour is a problem for child care providers no matter where the program is; it is important to examine the possibility of using the Teaching Pyramid model to support the success of all children into their local child care programs. How might this be achieved? In the United States, a group of federally funded projects came together to send a "unified message about evidence based practices and challenging behaviors" (Dunlap, Strain, Fox, Carta, Conroy, Smith, Kern, Hemmeter, Timm, McCart, Sailor, Markey, Markey, Larliere, & Sowell, 2006, p. 30). Two of these nationally funded programs collaborated on the development of a systematic model they called the Pyramid Model or the Teaching Pyramid, which "builds upon a tiered public health approach to providing universal supports to all children to promote wellness, targeted services to those who need more support, and intensive services to those who need them" (Technical Assistance Centre on Social Emotional Intervention, nd, para 2.) This three

tiered model is comprised of universal, secondary and tertiary supports, as shown in Figure 1. (Fox et. al. 2009)

Figure 1 The Teaching Pyramid (used with permission from Dr. Lise Fox)

The base of the pyramid focuses on universal supports for all children. These universal supports are foundational practices that are considered a part of a quality early childhood education program. The foundation of the Teaching Pyramid promotes the importance of developing supportive and responsive relationships, which is the key to a quality child care program (Fox, et al. 2003). When a child has an adult who responds to him/her in a consistent loving manner s/he is more likely to listen, respond, and seek out positive attention from the adult. Developing a successful relationship with a child can be achieved by taking time to listen to the child, playing with the child, and engaging in joint interest activities.

The Pyramid model (Dunlap et al., 2006) authors state that to develop a quality child care program educators not only need to develop relationships with children, but with families as

well. The family is the most important part a child's life; thus, one of the most important aspects of early childhood intervention is that family members must be valued as the principal caregivers of the children. When child care educators take the time to develop relationships with families they create an environment of trust. Child care educators should develop a variety of strategies to ensure the involvement of families in their program by creating opportunities for input into the program (Hemmeter, Fox, Jack, & Broyles, 2007). "Empirical evidence suggests that not only do children's relationship with teachers impact their social relationships but also that children's early relationships with teachers can have a longer-term impact of a child's social competence" (Whittaker & Harden, 2010, p. 144).

When examining relationship development, one of the first questions that came to my mind was whether or not relationship development was linked to attachment theory. I started out by looking at what attachment actually means. Bowlby and Ainsworth, two of the original developers of attachment theory, believe that the main person the child is attached to is seen as a secure base from which a child can then explore the world (Bretherton, 1992). Benoit (2004), a researcher and scientist at Sick Kids hospital in Toronto, states "attachment is one specific and circumscribed aspect of the relationship between a child and caregiver that is involved with making the child safe, secure and protected" (p. 541). He adds that a secure attachment occurs when a caregiver consistently responds to distress in an infant in sensitive and caring ways such as: picking up a child who needs comfort, reassuring the child, and then immediately responding to the child's needs.

Children participate in a wide variety of settings in their young lives. For many children daycare is a very important part of their lives, and because of this, child care providers play a significant role in their growth and development. Bretherton (2004) states that there is strong

evidence that a mother does not have to be the only person a child can be attached to. In fact, a child can become attached to a number of people, such as: a father, grandparents, and even child care providers.

Another interesting aspect of relationship development that is critical for child care educators to be aware of, is the link between the development of quality relationships and a reduction in challenging behaviours. Whittaker and Harden (2010), Birch and Ladd (1998), and Joseph and Strain (2004) report that there is a significant association between teacher-child relationship quality and a child's externalizing behaviour. It is often the children who engage in challenging behaviours who most often need the caring, love, and support that a nurturing relationship can provide. However, due to the behaviours they engage in, teachers often do not work on the development of this relationship and, unfortunately, turn away from the child.

The universal practice (base) level of the pyramid further emphasizes the importance of providing a quality environment within the child care setting. This includes not only the physical environment, but also aspects that make up the environment, for example: the daily routine, rules, and materials used within the classroom. As described in Strong-Wilson and Ellis (2007) the Reggio Emilia approach, encourages the use of the environment as a "third teacher," which is consistent with how the Teaching Pyramid promotes the environment. The environment can be used to support children's development, and can be set up to prevent challenging behavior; but, as pointed out by Hemmeter, et al. (2007), children must be taught about routines and expectations. Fox, et al. (2002) describe quality environments as places where pro-social behaviours are strongly encouraged and children are taught routines and schedules. These authors also describe the importance of adapting and modifying the environment to meet the

needs of the children and providing engaging daily activities as a part of a quality child care environment

A study conducted by Goelman, Forer, Kershaw, Doherty, Lero and, LaGrange (2006) which examined what makes up quality child care in Canada, is the largest and most extensive study examining the quality of Canadian child care. In contrast to the description of quality child care by Dunlap and colleagues (2002), this Canadian study describes quality child care as having five predictors: the wages of the educators and education level, the number of educators in the room, the satisfaction of the educators with their jobs, and whether or not the child care program receives free or subsidized rent (p. 280). These five predictors are referred to as structural features of quality child care. Goelman and colleagues (2006) also refer to quality child care as having process features (p. 281), which are proximal, and include daily actions of the child care educators such as interactions between adults and child, and curriculum planning that meets the interest and developmental needs of the children. Ensuring a quality environment for children involves a very complex set of factors that need to be coordinated, most of which is out of the control of early childhood educators.

The secondary level of the pyramid focuses on social emotional skills. "A common and well-established approach to developing and increasing social competence is for teachers to use instructional techniques to directly instruct young children to use identified social skills" (Dunlap & Powell, 2009, p. 4). As stated by Fox and Hemmeter, (n.d), some children, particularly those who are at risk of developing challenging behaviour, need explicitly planned instruction in social emotional skill such as turn taking, sharing, recognizing their own emotions and the emotions of others, handling disappointment, dealing with anger, and developing friendship skills. The Teaching Pyramid not only emphasizes the importance of teaching social
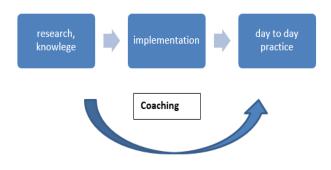
skills, but also the importance of the ways in which these skills should be taught. Instruction of social and emotional skills requires a comprehensive approach that uses teaching strategies that are embedded within planned activities and throughout the child care day (Grisham-Brown, Hemmeter, Pretti-Frontczak, 2005; Landy, 2002).

The top tier of the Teaching Pyramid utilizes intensive individual intervention. When children have persistent challenging behaviour that is not responsive to intervention at the previous levels, comprehensive interventions are developed to resolve the behaviour and support the development of new skills (Fox, Carta, Strain, Dunlap, & Hemmeter, 2009, p. 2). All members of a child's team come together with the family at this time to develop an individual plan to support the reduction of challenging behaviour. Team members can include speech, occupational and physical therapists, a Supported Child Development Consultant, an infant mental health worker, child care educators, and any other community partners that can offer their expertise. This plan is based on the practices of positive behavioural support principles. Ensuring that the bottom levels of the pyramid are in place helps increase the likelihood of success in implementation of the individual plan.

Implementation of the Teaching Pyramid.

Even though it appears that there is much information about strategies for child care providers to support the reduction of challenging behaviours in children, why do these kinds of behaviour persist? How can early childhood educators apply the knowledge they learn in their early childhood training and professional development activities and provide an environment that best meets of the needs of the current children in their program? Karen Blase (2009) examined the movement from interest and knowledge of a topic to action on a day-to-day day basis. One of the most important features of the Teaching Pyramid is its focus on the systematic

implementation of the Pyramid's principles and practices within a child care program. Fox, Hemmeter, Snyder, Binder and Clark (2011) state that the Teaching Pyramid model promotes best practice in early childhood education, prevents problems, and provides a basis of intervention, all through the use of systematic implementation with coaching support. Implementation is based on small steps and focused on goals to support the development of child care workers' skills, and resulting in systemic change and improved outcomes for children. Fixsen and Blase (2009), Metz and Bartley (2012), and Mincic, Smith, and Strain (2009) describe the implementation process as consisting of training, data collection, leadership, supportive policies, and procedures.

Implementation Process

 Figure 2 Professional Development.

In British Columbia all licensed early childhood educators must complete 40 hours of professional development over their five-year license (Ministry for Children and Family, n.d.). How much of this professional development knowledge results in positive change in the child care settings? Cooper (n.d.) states that effective professional development involves these components: theory, demonstration, practice, coaching, and feedback. He argues that professional development alone can result in small growth in knowledge and skill, but not actual change in day-to-day practice. However, with training, demonstration, practice and coaching, there can be a significant increase in knowledge and skills used in daily practice (p. 6)**.** Fox,

Hemmeter, Snyder, Binder, and Clarke (2011) state that professional development should be cohesive, implemented as a team, focused on the teacher's current day-to-day practice, and linked to goals set by the educator. Dunst and Trivette (2012) who believe that professional development is completed through the use of adult learning principles, completed an analysis to identify which adult learning principles are most effective. They achieved this through an examination of 58 studies which were coded according to the learning methods used. They found that training was most successful when conducted in small groups, over multiple times, and in situations where participants can actively use what they have learned (p.180).

Coaching.

The Teaching Pyramid has, as one of its core principles, the use of coaching to support child care providers in implementing what they have learned in professional development activities. A literature review conducted in the United States by The National Centre on Quality Teaching and Learning (2012) showed that there are various types of coaching in the early childhood education field, many of which occur in early childhood settings by consultants or research staff, and generally provided to head teachers or teaching teams. Although I found a significant number of articles on the use of coaching in early childhood education settings in an American context, particularly in the Head Start organization, I could not find anything that related to the use of coaching in Canada. Through personal experience I know that there are many British Columbian agencies that use coaching or consultation to support child care providers in the inclusion of children with special needs. Some larger British Columbian child care agencies may hire or use experts in particular aspects of child care curriculum to coach educators in the use of that curriculum. However, I am not aware of, nor could I find, any

information on a systematic or consistent use of coaching methods with these programs, including the program I work for, Supported Child Development.

The changing of daily practices is difficult for most people. The training child care educators receive provides new skills, but these skills may be crude and incomplete (The National Implementation Research Network (n.d). Coaching can be used to support not only the skills learned in training, but also the integration of new skills with one's own beliefs and attitudes (Fixen, Naoom, Blase, Friedman, & Wallace, 2005). Joyce and Showers (2003) describe four possible outcomes from the use of coaching within an early childhood setting: an increase in knowledge on new practices within the field, a change in attitude toward one's job and the children they work with, development of skills and, most importantly, the appropriate use of these newly learned skills. Joyce and Showers also point out is that the newer the skills are that the person is trying to learn, the harder it is for those skills to be used in day-to-day practice.

Examining the specific meaning of coaching brings up a myriad of titles and definitions for example, Stern (2004) describes executive coaching as a tool for the development of professional leaders to meet short and long term goals for the organization. This type of coaching entails the development of mutual trust and respect, and the coach can be a supervisor, someone from human resources, or an external coach. Donegan, Ostrosky and Fowler (2000), discuss the use of peer coaching, which they define as a process between two educators who work together: talking, reflecting, sharing ideas, and problem solving together within a confidential arrangement. Peer coaching is similar to executive coaching as it must occur within a trusting relationship; yet, Donegan and colleagues state that this type of reciprocal coaching differs from one in which an expert coaches a novice because peer coaching involves a group of peers supporting the development of one another. Yet another form of coaching is called co-

constructed coaching, described by Kempster and Isszatt-White (2012) as an approach that is more specifically designed, involves shared learning and mutually agreed upon direction of goals, and is based on an equal relationship between the two parties. The type of coaching I use in my work to support the implementation of the Teaching Pyramid, called practice-based coaching, is promoted by the National Centre on Quality Teaching and Learning (n.d.). Practice based coaching supports child care educators in the implementation of newly learned skills and is based on a cyclical cycle which consists of: shared goal planning and definition of action steps, having the coach engage in focused observations based on the goals, followed up with reflective conversations and feedback. The coaching can be done by an outside expert, program supervisor, peers, or by oneself. It can also be achieved via on-site observation or through distance support, which uses videotaping to support the coaching process. As with most of the other coaching models, practice based coaching occurs within a collaborative coaching partnership (The National Centre on Quality Teaching and Learning, n.d.).

Practice Based Coaching

The two main components of this type of coaching that drew it to my attention, and eventually its use in my ongoing work, is that the goals are set specifically by the early childhood educators, and in the case of the Teaching Pyramid, is driven by data gathered through The Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool. The other important aspect is that the observations completed by the coach are driven by the child care educators and are very specific to the goals and action plans.

Leadership.

Within each child care program is a leader, who might be the supervisor or the director, but who still plays an important role in the support of children who engage in challenging

behaviours and the strategies used to support these children. In examining the plethora of research and articles written on leadership, I tried to focus on leadership only within an early childhood setting. I found several different types of early childhood leadership discussed in the research, including advocacy, administration, community, conceptual leadership, and career leadership (Taba, Castle, Vermeer, Hanchett, Flores, & Caulfield, 1999). For my purposes, the discussion of administrative leadership was of most interest because it demonstrates the critical role of a child care director in promoting quality child care, and the importance of leadership training for this role.

Another form of leadership commonly found within the early childhood leadership literature is that of early childhood educators as community leaders. Berger (n.d.) wrote that early childhood educators rarely identify themselves as leaders, perhaps due to their separation from the K-12 education and business fields. Stamopoulos (2012) discussed the ideas of pedagogical leadership, or leaders who support how learning will occur within a child care organization. This author focused on the use and implementation of the new Australian early learning framework.   Stampoulos, identified four main types of leadership, within which are specific qualities including: professional knowledge, flexible thinking, drive for change, motivation, and the encouragement of empowerment. Aubrey, Godfrey, and Harris (2013), who discussed leadership in terms of style (transactional leadership, transformational leadership, visionary leadership, and joint leadership), state that not only must a leader have the ability to influence others but must also have additional desirable qualities, such as: warmth, knowledge, goal orientation, and the use of coaching and mentoring; however Aubrey and colleagues add, that the definition of leadership within the early childhood field is not clear and more work needs to be done to define what leadership is.

Chapter 3

Methodology

  This chapter explains the research design and the methodology used in this study; describes the research site and the participants; examines the ethical considerations when engaging in this type of research. The chapter continues with a description of the individual and group interviews and the initial data analysis and ends with an examination of the research trustworthiness.

Research Design

  A case study design was used for this research. Case studies are an optimal method for studying a group of individuals or individuals that have something in common (Glesne, 2011). Baxter and Jack (2008) state that a case is a unit to be analysed due to a phenomenon occurring within a unit. In this situation the case to be analyzed is the successful implementation of the Teaching Pyramid by four child care educators who work together in a child care program. As Glesne argues, a case study allows the researcher to develop a thick description, which goes beyond mere basic facts and generalizations, to using in-depth meaningful portraiture that takes in all the rich details and complex layers of the case. Case studies also help to examine how and why questions.

  Merriam (1988) proposes that the key to defining a case study is the examination of a bonded system. To define a bounded system Baxter and Jack (2008) remind novice researchers that it is essential to carefully define how the case is bound. This can be done by including the time, place, and activity. In this particular study, this is defined as a group of early childhood educators working together in one specific child care program who have been implementing the principles and practices of the Teaching Pyramid since 2009 with the support of an external

coach. This group of people is finite and when interviewed could help bring meaningful insights into the application of the Teaching Pyramid in a Canadian context. The next step for the novice researcher is to determine which type of case study will be utilized. This case blends the two types of case studies, as defined by Yin 2002 as descriptive, I wanted to describe an intervention of phenomena that occurs within a real life situation. I also sought to explore potential solutions in this case study which Yin, describe as an explanatory case study.

In this research, in-depth information will be gathered from the educators at one child care program in order to explore how the Teaching Pyramid model can be used within a Canadian context to help child care providers learn and use effective strategies to support the success of all children, including children who engage in challenging behaviours.

Research Site

This study took place in a child care program in the Lower Mainland that I refer to with the pseudonym Children First Daycare. It is located on a winding, forested street in a family townhouse complex. This middle class neighbourhood is close to schools, local transit, community centres, and shopping areas. According to the 2006 census data (City of Burnaby, n.d.), this is a multicultural neighbourhood with over 40% of its population made up of immigrants. The census data also states that the largest immigrant groups in this neighbourhood are people from China, South Korea, the Philippines and India. The Early Development Instrument (EDI) that is used by the Human Early Learning Partnership gathers information about the wellbeing of children in this province. In the area where this child care program is located, the highest area of vulnerability is in the area of emotion followed closely by social needs. (Human Early Learning Project, (2013).

Children's First Daycare had its grand opening in 1974 and was built to provide a quality child care environment for the local community. The daycare is open five days a week, for children ages two and half to five years old. It holds a licence from the Community Care Licencing Branch of the Ministry of Health for British Columbia and is licensed for 25 children in its program per day in both full- and part-time programs. This child care centre consists of one large bright colourful room where the children play, eat, and nap. There is a small tidy office used by the director, which also holds books as well as cubbies for the children's nap blankets. To the left of the office, there is a little storage room, and a small kitchen area to the left of that. The play room is lit by full length windows that allow for full natural light. In the cubby area there are also two children's washrooms. Outside, there is a large fenced-in play area used by the children that includes: a wooden play structure, an enclosed covered sand box, a neatly paved path for bike riding, a little play house that the children painted themselves, a picnic bench in the shade of tall pine trees, and a peaceful little rockery garden. In addition, there are also several wonderful local parks the children and program the educators can easily walk to.

I became involved with this program in the year 2000, through my work with the Supported Child Development Program at the BC Centre for Ability. Although I was not a consultant for the Children First Daycare, I knew it successfully supported children with special needs. In 2008, after I had been introduced to the Teaching Pyramid, the first child care centre I thought that might be interested in exploring the use of the Teaching Pyramid was Children First Daycare. Then, in 2009 the director of this child care program attended the National Training Institute's Addressing Challenging Behavior Conference in Clearwater, Florida. This conference focused solely on the use of the Teaching Pyramid. From this point on, the director and the early childhood educators were dedicated to implementing the principles and practices of the Teaching

Pyramid within their child care program. It was in 2012, when I finally had the great fortune of being able to take a leave from my position with the SCD program to work full time supporting this child care program as well as several others in implementing the Teaching Pyramid. My primary role was that of implementation coach for both the director and educators

Participants

For clarification, the following distinctions will be made among the participants. Wendy, who is the director of the program and also works with the children, will be referred to as the director. The three people Wendy works with (Pat, Jenny, and Tulip) will be referred to as the early childhood educators or just educators. When discussing both the director and the educators together they will be referred to as participants.

Tulip, a 57 year old woman, has been an early childhood educator for the last 9.5 years and has spent most of those years working at this child care program. She is originally from Bangladesh and in addition to her early childhood education that she received at a private college in the lower mainland, she also has a Master's degree in Zoology from her home country. Pat, a 45 year-old woman, has worked at this child care program for 7.5 years and has been an early childhood educator for the last 8 years. She received her ECE certificate from a private college in the lower mainland. She also has a diploma in business which she received in Australia, and a diploma in basic teaching from her home country of Malaysia. The third educator who works in this program is a 47 year old female, named Jenny, who is from Poland. She has been an early childhood educator for the last 16 years, having received her early childhood education certification from a local continuing education program. She has worked at Children's First Daycare for 14 years, having worked in several other child care programs before this. The director of this program is a 47 year old woman named Wendy who has been an early childhood

educator for the last 22 years, having received her early childhood education diploma in Alberta. She started at this child care program as a regular early childhood educators and took over as director in 1999. Wendy's role at this centre is one of leadership and collaboration. The Board of Director makes the decisions about hiring and firing, thus leaving Wendy the ability to guide and mentor the educators. Her role is not about power, but the ability to empower.

Ethical Considerations

As in all research, ethical considerations or standards of conduct must be ensured in a case study, the first of which is protecting the identity of the participants. This was done by the use of pseudonyms. I also ensured that the identity of the child care program be kept anonymous through the pseudonym Children First Daycare. The second important consideration is in regard to informed consent, which refers to the need to ensure that participants are fully aware of what the study involves, that their involvement in the study is completely voluntary, and that they can withdraw at any time (Glesner, 2011). Participants were given a consent form to read and sign if they were willing to participate. I took great care to ensure that all participants were given complete information regarding the nature of this study, the research goal, their role in the research, and clear information on their rights.

In this particular child care program, the director works with the children alongside the other educators. I was aware that this might lead to a power differential, which could potentially impact the other participants' comfort level when speaking within the group interview. However, since the child care centre parent board is in charge of the hiring and firing at this particular child care program, and the director's role focuses on ensuring child care licencing requirements are in place, the power differential was minimalized.

To ensure that all of the study participants felt comfortable enough to talk freely and openly, the beginning of the group interview occurred without the director. After approximately 30 minutes, she was invited to join in to form the full group interview.

The required UBC BREB ethical review form was completed and submitted online through RISE; and an internal ethics approval process occurred at the participating child care agency. I have no supervisorial role in relation to Children First Daycare, their director, or educators. All digital data is stored in a secure computer system and the written data will be stored in a locked filing cabinet at a secure site. This data will be destroyed after a period of five years.

In addition to the previously mentioned ethical considerations in conducting a research study, I made certain to discuss with the participants my role as researcher because I have a shared history with this child care program. My first interaction with this centre was in 2000, but I then became more directly involved in 2008 when I introduced them to the Teaching Pyramid. As a result, I must acknowledge my biases and opinions about this child care program and my involvement with them that may influence the participants' responses in the interviews; for example the participants may have wanted to respond to my questions with the answers they presumed I was looking for, or may not have been forthright in their answers over a concern that I would judge what they said. To help address this ethical and limitations concern, I was sure to fully disclose this connection. I also built on the relationship and trust that had been developed with the participants to assure our relationship would not unduly influence their responses.

Data Collection

        The table that follows provides a summary of the data collection procedures.

Table 1: Data Collection Process

1	Community demographics. This was gathered through the Early Development Instrument (EDI) and the most recent published data
2	Demographics questionnaire of the participants.
3	Semi structured individual interviews, with focus questions.
4	Written narratives by the participants used as a discussion point for the focus group.
5	Group interview, first 30 minutes with program educators only then with all the participants.
6	Researcher field notes – used throughout the research process.

        As stated by Merriam (2001), there are several methods of recording interview data. For the purpose of this study, I used a digital audio recording device to capture the interviews. I was aware that using a recording device might initially influence the comfort level of the participants; however, once it was turned on, the participants and I seemed to forget it was there. Recording information cannot capture the whole essence of the interviews (Merriam, 2001), so to help gather information not captured on the audiotape and to keep track of my thoughts and interpretations in the moment, I took brief field notes during each interview and then again right afterward. Furthermore, as thoughts and ideas came to my mind between each interview I also recorded them in my notebook.

Prior to collection of the data I attended one of the meetings that the participants have every Friday during nap time. We sat around one of the small children's tables in a darkened room surrounded by sleeping children. Pat, one of the educators, was not in attendance at this time due to a family emergency in her home country of Malaysia, but was expected to be back in a week. I handed out the letter of invitation to the participants and discussed the research, procedures, and expectations with them. I made certain the participants knew that participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time. The participant asked questions about the narratives, wanting to know what they were to be about, and how long there were expected to be. After this discussion the participants said they were comfortable with reviewing and signing the consent form right away. At this point, the discussion focused on when we could set up the interviews. It was decided that the individual interviews would occur over the next week and a half during nap time, either in the centre office or in a room next door.

Interview Questions.

As stated by Merriam (2001), interviews conducted through qualitative research are more like a conversation, but a conversation with a purpose. In my interviews we explored both individual and group perspectives on supporting children with challenging behaviours as well as the use of the Teaching Pyramid within a Canadian context. I used semi-structured and open-ended questions which allowed more freedom to explore ideas. I did, however, need to ensure that we stayed on task during the interviews, so I used focus questions to guarantee the interviews stayed on topic. I wanted to make certain that questions from the individual interviews were utilized to guide and influence my questions for the group discussion and that they all linked back to the research questions. Examples of the questions that were used for the interviews are included in Table 1 in the appendix. I modified and adapted slightly from

interview to interview to ensure that my questions were clear, and to help gather the type of information sought for this study. I wanted to make certain that I used language that was understood by the participants and related to their world experiences (Merriam, 2001). Although the participants are early child educators, I made sure that I avoided too much technical language that could confuse them; I was aware that answers from one question may provide answers to more than one research question at a time.

Examples of questions used for the interviews can be found in the appendix. These were asked in a conversational manner, and other questions were used to explore the answers given by the participants. Questions for the group interviews were based on information gathered from the individual interviews, but were also guided through the use of the narratives that the child care providers brought with them.

Interviews

The first interview occurred on a sunny day with wisps of clouds in the sky. I arrived at the daycare at 1:25pm, the daycare room was dark and quiet as children lay sleeping. The child care educators were laying down gently rubbing the backs of the last few children still awake. Jenny and I went into the small office located in the child care program. I placed the digital recording device on a chair between us and explained that we could just speak normally and the recorder would pick up everything we discussed. I began the interview with a reminder of what we were doing, and how the interview process would proceed. I was surprised to feel myself being nervous as I asked the questions; I felt stiff and even a bit awkward as we talked. However, as the interview progressed I felt more comfortable and confident. We completed the interview in less than an hour and I thanked her and we left the office. Jenny too seemed nervous, but

showed such passion when talking about strategies she used to support the success of the children in her child care program.

The next interview, a few days later, was with Pat. It occurred in a room next door to the daycare because the daycare office was in use. We both sat on little chairs with the digital recorder between us. Pat appeared calm and the interview seemed like a smooth dialogue as we talked and went through each question. Pat showed such enthusiasm when sharing stories about the children. One thing I noticed in the interview with Pat was that after I asked each question she would pause and appeared to thoughtfully consider what she was about to say.

Tulip and I completed the third interview the following week in the small room next door. She seemed a bit timorous; it was so interesting to see that despite the past relationship I had had with the participants there were still nerves and a bit of awkwardness between us in this new type of situation. Tulip's interview resulted in a surprise revelation. We went through question after question in a fairly predictable manner. When I asked about the implementation of the Pyramid, I became aware that she did not actually realize that the child care program was implementing the Pyramid in their program. She used all the language, knew the levels of the Pyramid, remembered the training she had received about the Pyramid, but had not made the connection between it all. She laughed when she realized this. After I turned off the digital recorder, Tulip continued to speak with me, sharing details about her education in Zoology in her home country, details of her move to Canada, her entry into early childhood education, and her regrets at not being able to be in a university lecture position like her friends at her home country.

The last individual interview occurred on a cool and rainy day. We were able to meet in the office again, which meant one person on an adult size chair and one person on a child size

chair. I drew the short straw and ended up on the child size chair. As I reviewed the interview process with Wendy and began with the first question, she said, "Oh you should have given me the questions in advance." This thought had never occurred to me, and I wonder how this might have changed the responses I received from the participants. Though, when we first went over the letter of invitation I did provide a general overview of the questions.

The group interview was booked for the Friday evening of that week, but due to a personal family emergency, the group interview had to be postponed for two weeks. Pizza was ordered and the participants and I gathered around the small rectangular table. Before we turned on the digital audio recorder we engaged in small talk and ate some pizza. Once we turned on the recording device, I reminded the participants why we were there and started the interview by asking questions that had come to my mind during the previous individual interviews. The digital recorder was turned off after one and a half hours, when the discussion seemed to come to a natural end. However, the participants and I ended up talking for another thirty minutes, so I took notes to record information from this subsequent conversation.

In addition to the group interview each participant brought the stories I had asked them to complete about their experience using the Teaching Pyramid within their child care program and or their experiences supporting children who engaged in challenging behaviour in their current child care program.We discussed these stories in our group interview. Most of the stories had been told in the individual interviews, except for Wendy who told her story in the group interview.

Having completed all of the individual interviews and the group interview, but before I began the formal process of analyzing the data several thoughts occurred to me:

1) How different the information was in each interview.

2) How there were common thoughts and ideas that ran through every interview.

3) How each participant used stories in their interviews to answer questions.

Initial Analysis

Braun and Clarke (2012) describe six stages a researcher can go through when examining the data from a case study. These six stages are used to outline the process that was engaged in for this case study. The first step described by Braun and Clark (2012) is becoming familiar with the data; it does not include coding but just becoming very familiar with the information. In qualitative research, analysis of the data starts as soon as the first interview begins (Merriam, 2001). As soon as I finished the first interview, I sat in my car writing in my research journal, reflecting on what I should do differently next time, the thoughts that came about the process, and the things that surprised me. For example, I have had a long term relationship with the participants and I presumed that this would help ease any nerves that might occur. However, at the beginning of each interview, as I turned on the digital audio recorder, I noticed a difference in almost every participant. Their voices wavered a bit, the paces of their speech quickened, and I could hear a bit of nervousness as they spoke to me. In the car after the first interview, I wrote a list of strategies I wanted to utilize next time, such as changing how I asked the first question because I thought it might have been too vague. After my second interview I made notes about how I felt more secure in my approach to ask questions and clarify statements made by the participants.

To further aid my ability to become familiar with the data, after each interview I listened to the digital audio recording and wrote thoughts and questions that occurred to me. Over the next several weeks I began the process of transcribing the digital interviews. Transcription of the

data allowed for a more thorough examination of the data, making it more accessible for the researcher and others to examine.

Halcomb and Davidson (2006), define transcription as the process of reproducing spoken works, such as the one from interviews (p. 38). When it came time to put what was said on tape onto paper the idea was daunting, but the revelations I discovered as I transcribed drove me forward through each word, sentence, and paragraph, page by page.

Once the transcriptions were completed I read through each one several times until I became very familiar with the information. I then began what Braun and Clarke (2012) describe as the second step in data analysis. In this step the researcher begins the initial coding of the data. I used different colours to highlight ideas, topics and words that were meaningful to me, linked to the research question or that appeared common from interview to interview. When identifying these initial codes it was important to look beyond the obvious and explore the complexity of what was said. This analysis needed to occur in a systematic and methodical manner, as the process of looking for rich thick narratives is important for qualitative researchers (Glesne, 2011). I read the transcripts and looked at the colour coding many times over a period of several weeks to ensure I was not missing something or had different thoughts or ideas about what I was reading. I then moved to stage three, which Braun and Clarke (2012) describe as moving from coding to looking for themes. To aid in this process I used an online tool called *The Brain 8, The Ultimate Digital Memory* that I had read about in a research student's blog. This tool allowed me to track each word or phrase that came to me when initially coding the interviews and narratives. In addition, I was able to create subcategories and link ideas together to help me narrow down the ideas, or find commonalities amongst them. Examples of some of these initial themes were: "going back to the beginning," "it's our job," "change things," "projects," "children's interests,"

"choices," and "comfortable talking to their director." Once documented, there were 16 different main themes but within each of those main themes there were 2- 23 words and phrases (codes) that linked specifically to them.

As anticipated, one of the themes was related to the behaviour that children engaged in at their child care program. There were 23 different behaviours mentioned by the participants in either the individual interviews, group interviews, or the written narratives. Another example of initial themes consisted of the strategies the participants used to manage these behaviours. These strategies included ideas such as: "providing adult supervision," "having all educators on the same page," "developing consistent rules and expectations," "teaching children deep breathing," "changing the environment," "using engaging group projects based on children's interest," "using extra staff support from an outside special needs agency," and "having direct adult support." There were approximately 24 different behaviour support strategies discussed, all of which were prevention-based strategies and were intertwined in the stories they shared. Other initial themes included: "group discussions," "talking with families," and "rules and goal setting."

Thematic Analysis

Braun and Clarke (2012) describe step four as reviewing the themes and ensuring the quality of these themes. To aid in this process I wrote the themes I had found onto pieces of paper, putting ones that had similar ideas together to help link the common themes and thus reducing the overall number of themes. I then took these themes and linked them to my research questions to establish a connection between the theme and the question. I also wanted to guarantee that there was enough rich data to support each theme. To make certain there was data linked to each research question, I explored the data in relation to the questions.

Step five and six described by Braun and Clarke (2012) consists of creating a final name for the themes ensuring that they are strongly linked to the research question, and then writing the final report. For the purpose of this thesis, steps 5 and 6 will occur in the discussion chapter.

Issues of Trustworthiness

It is essential to demonstrate the trustworthiness of the research that has been conducted. The table below outlines the various techniques and strategies that were utilized to ensure the trustworthiness of this study. The four main areas that will be used to demonstrate trustworthiness are: credibility, transferability, dependability and, confirmability. (Shenton, 2004).

Table 2: Research Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness criterion	Strategies used by researcher
Credibility	- Member checking technique used to check back with participants on the accuracy of the data, interpretation of the data and, review of the main themes - Well established research methods used, individual interviews, group interviews, written narrative styles, use of analysis following Braun and Clarke (2012) - Deep knowledge and familiarity of participants and their child care environment - Use of different methods, interviews, group interview and written narratives ensure triangulation - Regular meetings held with faculty advisor to debrief and access different perspectives on the data - Thick descriptions were used to provide detailed information of collected data
Transferability	Detailed descriptions and information regarding the site, context and research methods was used to help allow for comparisons to be made to other similar situations
Trustworthiness criterion	**Strategies used by researcher**
Dependability	Research design and process reported in detail to allow for reproduction of study at a future time

Confirmability	• Triangulation, use of multiple methods to prevent researcher biases • Researcher biases disclosed • Limitation of the study outlined • Detailed methodological description used throughout the paper

Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the researcher position, followed by a detailed description of the research site, research participants and some introductory information on how the research interviews were conducted. This chapter concluded with a discussion of the themes using four of the six steps as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2012) and an examination of the research trustworthiness through the examination of credibility, transferability, dependability and, conformity (Shenton, 2004)

Chapter 4

Thematic Analysis

        This chapter begins with the initial themes and then moves on to the definitions of the final themes, as well as a discussion of these themes and what they mean. The research findings are linked to the research questions, and literature review. Limitations of the findings are also discussed.

Final Themes

        After tremendous work there ended up being nine themes. When written down and placed in what I saw as a logical manner, this visual emerged. I was surprised to see it actually resembled a pyramid.

Figure 3 Final Themes

Rationale for the Visual

        When it became time for me to make the final decisions on themes and naming the themes, which Braun and Clarke 2012 would describe as step five, I took all the themes I had written on pieces of paper, put them before me and out loud I told a story of how they related to each other. I started with "passion" and "it's our job;" to me they seemed to belong on the top, as

this ultimately appeared to be the driving force of their success. Then I asked myself, what strategies did they use to help them to do their job with such passion? Over and over each participant discussed how they would "go back to the beginning" or look at what needed to be changed for a child or the program to be successful. They all discussed the importance of including children's choices and interests in their day- to- day planning and through the use of projects. Engagement in the projects seemed also to inspire family and community involvement in their program. The next step was, how were they able to use these strategies?

In all of the interviews as well as the group interview the participants discussed and stressed to me the importance of their Friday meetings. They had started these meetings to make certain everyone had an opportunity to hear and share information which would then be used to help shape their program and to also develop successful strategies. I personally found these meetings very helpful as I knew there was always a time I could meet with the director and educators either as a pyramid coach, a Supported Child Development consultant or as a researcher. It was often very hard to find the opportunity to speak with the whole team at the same time.

The other factors that helped the participants were the ideas, strategies, and structure of the Teaching Pyramid, as well as the ongoing utilization of professional development. With the aid of earlier coaching, the participants learned to set goals for themselves using professional development to help them meet their goals. Lastly, I believe that all of the above was supported through the model provided by their director Wendy. All of the educators mentioned that she was the reason they were able to do their daily job. Wendy acted as a guide to support the process that the team had established in their child care program.

To confirm that I was on the right track with these themes and the way I had linked them together, I met with the participants at one of their Friday meetings. I explained what I had done regarding the data I had gathered and explained these were the themes I had arrived at. I spread the pieces of paper with each theme written on it in front of them, defining the theme as I did so. The first thing the participants said to me when I was finished was "that's us!" They also noted that the way the papers laid out on the table resembled a pyramid, which I assured them was unintentional. In this meeting I asked each participant to tell me their thoughts on what I had shared. Every one of them agreed that passion was their driving force, but that this had to be supported by strategies that were appropriate for each situation and the children they had in their program. They all agreed that to achieve this they had to "go back" to see what they needed to do. The participants said the Teaching Pyramid was the initial tool that taught them the importance of going back. When they used the Teaching Pyramid, they would always go back to the bottom levels to examine the relationship with the child and family, examine the environment and how it was impacting the child or children.

The following are definitions of each major theme that the participants helped to define:

- **Passion** – During the individual interviews, each participant demonstrated what I would describe as passion about a topic or story. This was indicated through facial expressions, tones, and rate of speech. When I went back to the participants to share and discuss the themes that I found, all of them confirmed that I had interpreted their body language correctly and that passion was the perfect word to use.

- **It's our job** - Professional identity – Every participant said in her own way, that supporting children with challenging behaviour is a part of their everyday job as an early childhood educator working in a child care program.

- **Back to the beginning** – Change – All the participants talked about going back. Going back to the beginning, being a reflective practitioner, to see where they could improve or to see where the problem began. The participants all agreed that there had to be constant reassessment in a child care program. This process was facilitated through the use of the Teaching Pyramid.

- **Children's choices and interests** – The needs and interests of the children was the focus in their program. They based their rules, daily planning and classroom environment on the needs, interests and choices of the current children in their program.

- **Projects that bring in family and community involvement** – There appeared to be two types of projects 1) Emergent curriculum projects that focused on the children's interests. The participants planned large and small projects, for example: building an igloo in the classroom. These projects peaked parent interest, and kept the children engaged. 2) Skill based projects – These projects were based on the skills the children needed to develop. These projects were designed through observation, discussions and planning. For example, teaching problem solving skills. The implementation of these projects which focuses on the individual child and moves into what Bronfenbrenner would define as the microsystem, and the mesosystem which is the interconnections between the parts of the microsystem. For example the connection with the families and daycare and the local community. (Bronfenbrenner, 1994)

- **Friday meetings** – Initiated to ensure all of them had an opportunity to talk, plan and make decisions together, and discuss concerns and problems. The meetings lasted one hour and were held in the main child care room as the children napped.

- **Teaching Pyramid** – It's who we are – A systematic approach of support that focuses on relationship development, quality child care environment, targeted social emotional skills and individual intensive intervention. Through the use of the Teaching Pyramid the participants have developed a structure using tools such as observation and discussion to support the ongoing growth and development of their child care program.

- **Professional development, goal setting, coaching** – Participants engaged in regular professional development and shared with each other what they had learned. Goal setting was based on what they had learned, coaching was used by an external support to help the participants implement the knowledge they had acquired in their professional development. (External coaching was short term and had stopped except for occasional support).

- **Director** - Leader of the program, described by the educators as someone who always had their backs, supported them in learning new strategies, worked daily with them and was not afraid to try new things. The participants stated there was a respectful relationship with no hidden agendas. The child care educators also agreed that their director was what drove them and could be seen as an internal coach. Wendy, the director uses Vygotsky's principal of scaffolding learning for the educators by guiding them from the side. (Vygotsky, 1978)

Research Questions

To certify that the final themes were relevant to the study, the themes were linked to the research questions.

Challenging Behaviour

        The first research question asked what the participants considered to be challenging behaviours. This question was explored in several ways, both in the individual interviews and again in the group interview, and in their written narratives. The participants used some generic descriptions of behaviour that are common among preschool age children such as: not listening to adults, not sitting for circle, and not sharing with other children. The participants also discussed more child specific descriptions of challenging behaviour, most of which related to children they had in their program that had been diagnosed with special needs. These descriptions of behaviour included: hitting another child over the head with a block, screaming, and having a temper tantrum that resulted in the child laying on the floor and frothing at the mouth. The stories or narratives written by each participant contained some descriptions of what they viewed as challenging behaviours. For example, one participant described situations in which children grab toys from other children and do not follow the directions given to them by the adults in the room.

Motivation and Professional Development

        The next research question explored the idea of what motivates the participants to change their practice to meet the needs of individual children. How does professional development help? Each participant's interview, in addition to the group interview, contained information regarding this topic. They talked about supporting all children to be successful in their child care program, and supporting the children to learn new skills and prevent challenging behaviour as just another part of their job. They celebrated the success they had when they saw children using new skills and when the strategies they used were successful. The participants also discussed the importance of all educators being on the same page, and one way to guarantee this was participating in professional development together; or if one educators participated in

professional development, what was learned was then shared with all the educators during their Friday meetings. In the group interview they discussed how they tried to find professional development that linked to the knowledge they wanted to gain based on issues in the daycare for example, this spring they participated in a workshop that focused on gun play and rough and tumble play in boys, and a workshop that focused on the emotional regulation in young children.

The Teaching Pyramid

The question that was explored around this topic asked how the use of the principles and practices of the Teaching Pyramid supported the participants' abilities to promote the success of children with challenging behaviours into their programs. Most of the participants, during the individual and group interviews, considered the principles and practices of the Teaching Pyramid to be just a part of who they were currently. They discussed each level of the Teaching Pyramid and linked it to what they did each day such as: spending time with children, talking with families, ensuring that their child care environment met the needs and interests of the children in the program. They also discussed how their child care environment was adjusted on a regular basis to make certain it met the ever changing needs and interests of the children. Almost all of the participants stated that the use of the principles and practices of the Teaching Pyramid helped provide a structure in which they could make decisions, and gave them the tools to support them to promote success.

The Role of Leadership

Each educator was asked about their director Wendy, and how the leadership by the director played a role in their use of the Teaching Pyramid within their child care program. This discussion occurred in both the individual and the group interviews, for example they said: "she always has our back," "she gives us lots of information," "her role is like ours as she works with

us," and "she lets us contribute ideas and listens to us." They all also mentioned that "she is dedicated to the Teaching Pyramid and helps drive us forward with its use."

External Coaching

The final question that was explored in the individual interview was that of the support they received from an external coach to support the process of implementing the Teaching Pyramid. To make it clear, I was their external coach. The discussion regarding the role and support provided by the external coach occurred only in the individual interviews. The participants spoke about how the external coaching provided them with ideas and suggestions that helped their own professional growth and that often the suggestions given confirmed that they were on the right track. They explained how they would always take the suggestions offered and discuss them as a team to help reflect on the ideas. Several educators, as well as the director, mentioned that the coaching had not occurred for a long time, but when it did happen it did not happen very often. The educators mentioned that having an outside person come to watch them made them nervous, but it was a good thing to happen so they could get that outside perspective. When asked how they were doing now that they did not receive any external coaching the response was unanimous, the Teaching Pyramid was a part of who they were, and they have Wendy who always kept them up to date and on track.

Putting It All Together

This child care program demonstrated a passionate belief in providing a supportive environment for all children, including children who engaged in challenging behaviours. Participants did this through focusing on changes that might need to be done to promote success, through a process they called "going back to the beginning." On a daily basis the participants reflected on what needed to be changed in their program to promote success and prevent

challenging behaviours. This change was based on the children's interests and choices and was often created in the form of projects both small and large. These projects brought the educators, children, families and the community together around the daycare.

The participants were able to achieve all of this through the use of their Friday meetings and the systematic use of the Teaching Pyramid. They used professional development that helped to keep all participants on the same page with the latest information, strategies and support to work on their teaching of new skills. Additionally, an external coach worked with the participants to help promote ongoing growth through goal setting. This was all supported by a director with whom the educators were comfortable talking to and who assisted them with advice, decision- making power, leadership and worked alongside them day by day.

Two stories shared by participants illustrate how the child care program put all of these themes to use each day. The child in the first story engaged in intensive intervention needs but did not have a diagnosis.

Megan's Story

Megan was a three year old girl who would throw herself on the ground screaming and kicking when her parents came to get her at the end of the day. She would angrily refuse to leave with her parents. The educators, knowing that it was their job to help support the success of all the children in their program, discussed the situation together at their Friday meetings. They also reached out to the family and, because of other developmental concerns, made a referral to the Supported Child Development program for support. During the meetings the participants used the strategy of "going back" to see what they needed to know about this child, what strategy might best support this child in reducing her behaviour, and learn how to handle the transition of leaving daycare and going home. In this situation the participants decided on the use of a visual

story knowing that this child, who is an English language learner, would benefit from the use of real photos and simple words to tell her the story of going home. Together they took photographs of her engaging in the expected behaviours for going home time. This story demonstrated the transition in a simple step-by-step visual manner. They then read this story with Megan and used it each day before her parents were to arrive to help support her transitions. The use of this strategy was successful in the reduction of this intensive challenging behaviour.

Pretend Gun Play

Another story told by a participant during an individual interview demonstrated how these themes come together. The child care educators and their director all realized that there was a group of boys who liked to engage in pretend gun play. Day by day the educators reminded these boys about the rule of no guns at daycare and worked on planning play activities that would engage these boys in more appropriate play and prevent them from engaging in gun play. However, despite this, the boys would engage in the prohibited play, finding very creative ways of trying to hide it from the educators. Knowing that it is their job to support all children, the educators and the director discussed this situation at their Friday meetings. Gun play can be a very controversial topic, but the educators "went back" and examined the situation from all angles. They realized that this type of play was of interest to these boys and the educators did not want to spend each day telling them no and stop, as this might damage the relationship they had with these boys. It even reached a point when the other children were tattling on these boys as they tried to hide their gun plan.

The educators decided to meet with this group of boys and discussed the idea of allowing gun play. Together with the children they came up with rules to guide this play. These rules included where the play could occur and the rules about how this play could occur, for example

the play could occur in the area under the trees by the play house. The next step was for the educators and director to discuss this situation with the families. Surprising the educators, the families liked this solution and supported the educators, director, and children. The educators then met with all of the daycare children at circle time and explained the new rules and expectations. They reinforced the rules with the children each day and followed through with the set consequences as decided by the children and educators. The participant who told this story demonstrated not only surprise about how well this situation went, but also pride in their process.

The gun play story demonstrated how the participants used their Friday meetings and discussions with the parents to support and plan for the play interests of a group of children in their child care program. They made a significant change to their previous rules and expectations in their program, yet this change was made to meet the intense interest of the children, and to help preserve the relationship with these children. In a recent visit the participants told me that they went to the workshop together on rough and tumble play in boys and learned more about how to provide a quality child care program for the children in their care but also allow for the natural curiosity and inclination that some boys engage in.

What I Learned

The information gathered from this research demonstrated to me how important passion is as well as understanding of the role of the early childhood educator is in the successful inclusion of children with challenging behaviour into a child care program. As mentioned in my introduction, I witnessed children as young as three years old being asked to leave child care programs due to the behaviour they engaged in. When the topic of asking children to leave their program due to problem behaviour came up in my individual and group interviews, the participants were shocked that this would happen. They all exclaimed, "But it is our job to

support all children, perhaps this is not a belief of others in this field." An important aspect of inclusion is the idea and impact that belief and attitude has on its success. As stated in a handout from Child Care Plus (n.d), inclusion is most successful when early childhood educators are able to develop and describe their personal beliefs and attitudes about inclusion as part of their overall philosophy. Since this group of educators believed it was their job to support all children, perhaps this drove them forward along with their passion to find strategies and the help they need to accomplish their job.

I believe that the driving force in the success of this child care program is the dedication of the director in the use of the Teaching Pyramid, making certain all of the educators were on the same page, and ensuring that, as a director, she was always approachable and supportive. She not only modeled the use of effective behaviour strategies, she encouraged and supported the participant's professional development as she understood that ongoing growth is one of the keys to a quality child care program. The director acted as the coach for the educators when the external coaching stopped and she demonstrated her passion daily by working alongside the educators. Coaching is most successful when it occurs within a team that works collaboratively (The National Implementation Research Network, n.d).

All of the participants spoke about how having an external coach helped to provide an outside point of view which, in turn, validated their practices and helped provide information on the use of the Teaching Pyramid. There was definitely a feeling that, except for the initial training, it was the leadership of their director that helped drive them forward, and that the work they engaged in could have been done without the help of an external coach. This surprised me, I wondered if this was due to the fact they had been using the principle and practices of the Teaching Pyramid since 2009, or was the use of an internal coach as effective as an external one?

One of the most surprising aspects of this research was how hard I had to work in the individual interviews to get the participants to describe the behaviours they saw children engage in day to day. Wendy, the director explained that trying to describe challenging behaviour was difficult because it depended on the child. The other participants described the behaviours of the children who attended their program and had a diagnosed need. For example, the young girl who had intense and frequent tantrums, or the boy who hit a girl over the head with a block.

Learning about the participants' definition of behaviour was a research question and an integral part of this study. Although I had not originally planned to, I decided to ask this question again in the group interview in order to gather even more information. When I met with the participants to validate my themes, I asked them once again to describe what they thought challenging behaviour was to them. The participants repeated that this depended on the child, and that it also depended on the mood or beliefs of the educator. In the group interview the participants did share ideas on behaviours such as children who: play fight, push boundaries and do not follow adult instructions. After a discussion about how behaviour is a part of working with children, I asked the participants why they thought it was difficult for them to tell me about the challenging behaviours they witnessed in their child care program. They were quiet for a few moments and then the director told me that there is always behaviour, but it is just simply a part of their job and not something they separate out.

The participants in this study believed that supporting children who engaged in challenging behaviour is a part of their job. They showed passion when the strategies and ideas they implemented were successful, and sought extra support and professional development when they required help or more information. What motivated them to seek these supports? Could the answer be as simple as "because it is our job?" The participants used words and phrases such as:

we do not kick children out, we have to help, it is hard but we support each other, to describe why it was their job to support all children, including children who engaged in challenging behaviour.

The participants described the use of the Teaching Pyramid as the structure they used to support the children in their child care program. They made sure they got to know the children in their program and used a curriculum based on the actual needs and interests of the children they had in their program. They continually made certain the child care environment met the needs and interests of the current children in their program. The participants utilized the principles and practices of the Teaching Pyramid not in a hierarchical manner, but as a circular manner in which it is important to always go back to the beginning either as a part of the process of implementation, or to help solve problems that are occurring in the child care program.

Summary

This chapter began with an examination of the initial themes that emerged from this research. It then moved on to define the final themes and link the themes to the research questions. Narratives were used to demonstrate how these themes link together and a discussion of what was learned occurred.

Chapter 5

Conclusions and Implications

   This chapter begins by summarizing the overall findings of this study. It then continues by examining the strengths and limitations of the study, and then a discussion of the possible applications for the results of the study follows and explores future topics of study. This chapter ends with a final summary.

Conclusions

   The purpose of this study was to examine the use of the Teaching Pyramid model within a local Canadian child care program. Using the Teaching Pyramid principles and practices can help child care educators to support the inclusion of children who engage in challenging behaviours. The research questions that were focused on in this study were:

1. What do child care educators consider challenging behaviour?

2. What motivates educators to change their practices to meet the needs of individual children? How does professional development help?

3. How does the use of the principles and practices of the Teaching Pyramid support child care educator's abilities to promote the success of children with challenging behaviours in their programs?

4. What does the role of leadership by the director play in this process?

5. How does support from an external coach support the process of implementing the Teaching Pyramid?

   Through the use of a case study in which individual interviews and a focus group were used to gather data, nine final themes emerged which all linked to the research questions being explored. This study explored the use of the Teaching Pyramid within a local Canadian child

care program to see if it could be used to support the successful inclusion of children who engage in challenging behaviour into their child care programs. Through my ongoing work I see the successful inclusion of children with special needs on a regular basis, with the exception of when these children engage in challenging behaviours. Research tells us that children who engage in challenging behaviours at a young age can end up having lifelong problems such as: difficulty making friends, academic difficulties, rejection by adults, and drug and alcohol use (Tremblay, 2008).

However, current research also tells us that the systematic use of the positive support model the Teaching Pyramid, can help support child care educators to develop the skills they need to successfully support children who engage in challenging behaviours and to also promote the social development of all children in their child care program (Hemmeter, Fox, Jack, & Broyles).

This study confirms that the Teaching Pyramid can be implemented successfully within a lower mainland child care program. In this case study, the director of the child care program acted as the internal coach to support implementation. The participants reported that this worked better than the use of the external coach, as that coach did not come often, and the director was there every day. This knowledge is important as there is no system or funding in place in British Columbia for the ongoing use of an external coach in the implementation of the Teaching Pyramid, as there is in the United States. One of the driving factors that was discovered through this study was the idea that the inclusion of children who engage in challenging behaviour is an integral part the child care provider's job. This may seem like an obvious conclusion however, as I have discussed through examination of the literature and through my 25 years' experience in this field, child care educators and school teachers struggle with these children. There seems to

be the popular perception that not only do these children not belong in child care, but that it's the responsibility of "someone else" to care for them. Most heartbreakingly of all, it appears all too common that child care educators and school teachers often blame the children themselves for their challenging behaviours instead of looking at the child care environment for solutions and using their tools and knowledge to actively teach these children the skills that will help them for the rest of their lives.

This small child care program however, seems to have overcome these prevalent beliefs and demonstrated the passion and dedication to the support of all children in their child care program. This result can also be seems through the examination of literature by Hemmeter, Fox, Jack and Broyles (2007), Fox, Dunlap, Hemmeter, Joseph and Strain (2003) & Hemmeter, Ostrosky and Fox (2006), all of which discuss and conclude that the use of the Teaching Pyramid model can help child care educators promote the development of social skills in young children and help the prevention of challenging behaviours.

Strengths and Limitations

The strengths of this study lies in the use of a case study focused on gathering detailed information from the participants. The integrated use of semi-structured interviews, group interviews, and written narratives allowed the participants to share more information than could have been gathered from surveys or structured interviews. Furthermore, the use of member-checking, in which I went back to the participants to review my data finding is a strength of the study as this can help improve the accuracy of the interpretation of the data that was collected.

It is important to keep in mind however, that any findings from this study may not be generalizable to other situations. The purpose of a case study is to provide in-depth description, uncover meanings, and illuminate experiences rather than to generalize findings to the larger

population (Boblin, Ireland, Kirkpatrick, & Robertson, 2013). The findings of this research focused on the individual interview, focus group, and written narratives; however, more supportive and descriptive data may have been collected if observation within the child care program had occurred. Another limitation of this study is the size of the program and the number of child care educators. Four child care educators were interviewed all of whom worked in a one room child care program. The participants of this study demonstrated a strong cohesive group before their implementation of the Teaching Pyramid and had demonstrated a dedication to ongoing growth within their child care program. This fact is a further limitation of this study as it further reduces the ability to generalize the results of this study.

Implications

Current research shows the success in the use of the Teaching Pyramid within American child care programs (Fox & Hemmeter, 2014). As mentioned previously this study demonstrates that the Teaching Pyramid model can be used within the Canadian context, although some adaption to the coaching model may be needed.

Secondly, this study provides a wealth of information on the strategies and ideas the child care program used day-to-day to support the successful inclusion of all children into their program. These strategies included the use of projects that brought together the educators, children, families, and even the community. A further implication of this study is the notion of recognizing that children are capable and including them in decisions about the daycare. Allowing children to help develop the rules for the program provided them with a sense of ownership over where they spent long hours every day.

Finally a further implication of this study is the importance of regular communication among educator and families. In many child care programs the educators have meetings, often

unpaid, once a month, and try to talk to one another while also watching the children or on their lunch breaks. In this study all participants mentioned how essential to their success their regular Friday meeting were. These meetings allowed for educators to discuss problems, successes and confirmed they were all on the same page.

On a personal note, I must mention that immersing myself in this study had implications for me professionally. I have been out of the daily field of providing care in a child care program for many years now. Engaging in this study has once again allowed me to see the extreme complexities of caring for children in a child care setting, trying to provide quality care to up to 25 different individuals is a daunting task, one that is undervalued and under paid. This study has further solidified my belief in the use of the Teaching Pyramid within child care programs, and I know I will continue to use its principles and practices in my daily work and teaching.

Recommendations for Future Research

A myriad of ideas for future research comes to mind as my passion has only increased to discover even more. However in focusing on this specific research topic, the use of observation would further enhance the information gathered, also including more than one case study site would also allow for comparisons to occur. How does the use of the Teaching Pyramid change from centre to centre? How does the role of the external coach and director compare in other programs?

For the purpose of this study, the themes and descriptions chosen were used because they rang true for me as a researcher, practitioner and, educator. More importantly these themes resonated strongly with the participants during the member checking meeting who all said, "That's us". I chose to honour their strong connection to these themes. However, were I to do

this research again, I would apply a variety of different lenses to the raw data, the final descriptions and, theme titles.

Further research could also be done to dig deeper into specific details highlighted in this research, such as how the beliefs and attitudes of child care educators impact the successful inclusion of children with challenging behaviour. Further examination of the use of professional development in child care is essential. How important is it to ensure that all child care educators take the same training? Do the individuals who've learned about the principles and practices of the Teaching Pyramid pass that knowledge onto new staff members or, if they move onto a different child care centre, do they share this knowledge with their new co-workers? Is it like the spread of a virus, a very positive, enlightening and supportive virus?

Summary

This final chapter provided a synopsis of the final findings of this study. It examined the strengths and limitations and explored the variety of ways that the results of this study can be applied in future. In addition, future topics that relate to this study were also discussed.

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Appendix A

Letter of Invitation

Centre for Cross-Faculty Inquiry in Education

Faculty of Education, Vancouver Campus

309 - 2125 Main Mall

Vancouver, BC Canada V6T 1Z4

T: 604.822.8638 | F: 604.822.8234

Principal Investigator: Dr. Marilyn Chapman
Director, Institute for Early Childhood Education & Research
University of British Columbia

Co-investigator: Andrea James, MA Student
Early Childhood Education
University of British Columbia

February 10, 2015

A Case Study on the use of the Teaching Pyramid within a Canadian Context

LETTER OF INVITATION

Dear Child Care Provider:

I am writing to invite you and your co-workers to take part in a research study I am doing as part of my Master of Arts degree in Early Childhood Education at the University of British Columbia. This study is inquiring into the use of the Teaching Pyramid within a childcare program. This study will include staff members who work full time at a daycare that has been implementing the Teaching Pyramid model over a several year period and have had some external coaching on its use.

Procedures
If you agree to particulate in this study, you will take part in an individual interview with the researcher for about an hour, and complete some background questions at a time and location that is convenient for you. The questions during the interview will focus on your work as an

early childhood educator, your experiences working with children who engage in challenging behaviour and your thoughts about the Teaching Pyramid.

At the end of this interview you will be asked to write 3 short narratives about your experiences with children who engage in behaviour you find challenging and/or about your experience in using the Teaching Pyramid. These narratives will be brought to the group interview. The program director will be present for part of the group interview.

Communication of Results
The findings from this research will be included in the co-investigator's Master's thesis and shared with you, the participants. The findings may also be shared in subsequent conference presentations and in journal articles by the researchers.

Potential Risk of this Study
This study does not involve anything that could harm or upset you. You do not have to answer questions you might find too personal or sensitive.

Potential Benefits of this Study
You may benefit from this study with an increase in knowledge about the Teaching Pyramid, and an increase in your childcare team cohesiveness.

Confidentiality Concerns
Your name, the name and location of your childcare program will be kept confidential. Pseudonyms will be used for both you and your childcare program. Participants will be asked to keep what is said in the group interview confidential; however, this cannot be guaranteed.

Right to Withdraw
You have the right to refuse to take part in this study, and if you do participate you have the right not to answer any questions and to withdraw from this study at any time.

This is a letter of invitation and you do you not have to respond to it.

If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact me by telephone at telephone at ▮▮▮▮▮ ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ For further information and clarification, you may also contact my research supervisor, ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

Thank you for your consideration

Andrea James
MA Student

Appendix B

Consent form for Participants

Centre for Cross-Faculty Inquiry in Education

Faculty of Education, Vancouver Campus
309 - 2125 Main Mall
Vancouver, BC Canada V6T 1Z4
T: 604.822.8638 | F: 604.822.8234

UBC
a place of mind
THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
Faculty of Education

February 10, 2015

A Case Study of the Implementation of the Teaching Pyramid within a Canadian Context

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Principal Investigator: Dr. Marilyn Chapman
Director, Institute for Early Childhood Education & Research
University of British Columbia
███████████████████████

Co -investigator: Andrea James, MA Student
Early Childhood Education
University of British Columbia
███████████████████████

Purpose:
You are being invited to participate in a study that will explore the use of the Teaching Pyramid model in a childcare program within a Canadian context. This study will specifically look at the use of the Teaching Pyramid in the development of childcare practitioner's skills in reducing challenging behaviour in young children. This study is being conducted as a part of the Master of Arts degree in Early Childhood Education for Mrs. James, the co-investigator.

Procedure:
If you agree to take part in this study, you will be taking part in an individual interview and a group interview. Before the individual interview you will be asked to fill in a short questionnaire

that will gather background information such as your name, how long you have worked in the field, and so on. To minimize the amount of time for participating in the study after work hours, the individual interviews will take place during naptime in a quiet location in the childcare centre, and will last approximately one hour.

After the individual interview you will also be asked to write three short narratives (one to two pages each) about your experiences working in a childcare program. The experiences will be discussed in the group interview with the other participants.

There will be one group interview one to two hours long. The program director will attend part of the group interview. The interviews will be audio recorded and notes will also be taken. The time and location of the group interview will be decided by the participants. One option is to hold it in the childcare centre after the centre closes, with dinner provided by the researcher. If the participants decide that they would rather have the group interview at a different time (for example, on a weekend), the meeting will last no longer than two hours and refreshments will be provided.

Communication of Results
The findings from this research will be included in the co-investigator's Master of Arts thesis and shared with you, the participants. The findings may also be shared in subsequent conference presentations and in journal articles by the researchers.

Potential Risk of this Study
This study does not involve anything that could harm or upset you. You do not have to answer questions you might find too personal or sensitive.

Potential Benefits of this Study
You may benefit from this study with an increase in knowledge about the Teaching Pyramid, and an increase in your childcare team cohesiveness.

Confidentiality Concerns
Your name, the name and location of your childcare program will be kept confidential. Pseudonyms will be used for both you and your childcare program.

Participants will be asked to keep what is said in the group interview confidential; however, this cannot be guaranteed.

The narratives that will be collected will not have any names or information that may identify you, and will be used only within the context of the research and subsequent publications and presentations. All information collected for this study will be kept in a locked cabinet during the study in the principal investigators office at UBC, and thereafter in the Office of Graduate Programs and Research.

Right to Withdraw
You have the right to refuse to take part in this study, and if you do participate you have the right not to answer any questions and to withdraw from this study at any time.

Questions or Concerns
If you have any concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant and/or your experiences while participating in this study, contact the Research Participant Complaint Line in the UBC Office of Research Ethics at █████████████████████████████████
████████████████████

If you have any questions about the study itself, please contact the Co-Investigator ███████ at the number listed above.

A Case Study of the Implementation of the Teaching Pyramid within a Canadian Context

SIGNATURE PAGE

Two copies of this consent letter are provided. Please return this separate signature page in one week and keep the second copy for your records.

☐ I understand the purposes of the research and am fully informed about my roles in this research study.

☐ I am willing to participate in this research study entitled, A Case Study of the Implementation of the Teaching Pyramid within a Canadian Context.

Your Full Name (Please print) _____

Your Signature _____

Date _____

This is a non-funded research study; however, as a small thank you for the time spent outside of work hours

Appendix C

Demographic Survey

A Case Study on the use of the Teaching Pyramid within a Canadian Context

General Demographic Survey

Pseudonym _____

1) Age _____

2) Number of years as an early childhood educator _____

3) Number of years working with this child care program _____

4) Education History

Appendix D

Individual Interview Questions

Research question 1 - What do the participants consider challenging behaviours?	
A	Tell me about the make-up of your program this year. For example: How many children do you have, what are their ages?
B	Children often engage in behaviours in daycare that childcare providers find challenging. Can you tell me what you personally see as challenging behaviours?
C	Why do you think children engage in these types of behaviours?
D	What do you do when a child engages in challenging behaviour in your childcare?
E	Have the strategies you have used with children who engage in challenging behaviours changed since you first started working in this field?
Research question 2 – What motivates the participants to change their practices to meet the needs of individual children?	
A	Describe a time when a strategy you used to stop a child from engaging in challenging behaviours did not work.
B	What did you do when the strategy did not work?
C	What might have happened if you could not find a strategy that worked to reduce or stop the challenging behaviour?
D	In my experience, children are blamed for the behaviour and the child is sometimes asked to leave the childcare program. What is your opinion about this?

E	On the other hand, I know many early childhood educators who continue to seek their own professional development to help support all children to be successful in their childcare program. What are your thoughts on this?

Research question 3 – How does the use of the principles and practices of the Teaching Pyramid support the participant's abilities to promote the success of children with challenging behaviours into their programs?

A	Describe your understanding of the Teaching Pyramid.
B	How have you and your colleagues used the Teaching Pyramid in your childcare program?
C	Can you describe for me if the use of the Teaching Pyramid has changed your practice when working with the children in your childcare program, what about the children who engage in challenging behaviours?
D	Please give me 2 examples of how you have used the principles and practices of the Teaching Pyramid in your program.
E	Have you noticed a difference in the behaviour of the children in your childcare program since you began to implement the Teaching Pyramid?

Research question 4 – What role does your supervisor play in this process?

A	How do you see the role of a supervisor the Teaching Pyramid?
B	Tell me how your supervisor W, has helped you and you colleagues to implement the Teaching Pyramid.
C	If you had the opportunity to ask for any additional supports or information from your supervisor what would it be?

Research question 5 – How does the support of an external coach support the process of implementing the Teaching Pyramid?	
A	I have been coming to your childcare program on and off for several years in the role of a Pyramid coach. How has this supported you and your colleagues to implement the principles and practices of the Teaching Pyramid?
B	One of my roles as a Pyramid coach has been to conduct the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool. (TPOT). The data gathered from using this evaluation tool is used by you and your colleagues to set goals. Tell me your thoughts on how going through this process has helped or hindered your skills as an early childhood educator in this childcare program.
C	Due to my work schedule, there were times I could not come into your program to do my coaching observations and share feedback. Can you tell me how this effected your momentum in the implementation of the Teaching Pyramid, if at all?
D	Please tell me two things that have been helpful to you with the coaching process.
Questions to lead Narratives for group interviews.	
A	In the years you have worked as an early childhood educator, please tell me about a child who has engaged in behaviours that has challenged you. What did the behaviour look like, why did you think the child engaged in this behaviour, and what did you do when the child engaged in this behaviour? Please add any other details you think are important for this narrative.
B	Tell me about a success story in your journey of implementing the Teaching Pyramid.

C	Describe for me what you would tell other early childhood educators about the use of the Teaching Pyramid in an early childhood education setting in the lower mainland of British Columbia.

Appendix E

Focus Group – Questions

1)	Why did you choose this story to share?
2)	What does this story mean to you as an early childhood educator?
3)	What did you learn through during the experience you described?
4)	How do you apply what you learn from situations like this to your day to day practice?

Appendix F

Written Narrative Request/Description

Pseudonym_____

Narrative (Short Story)

Please 2-3 short stories on your experience using the Teaching Pyramid within your child care program and or your experiences supporting children who engage in challenging behaviour in your current child care program.

Please bring these written stories to the group interview, they will be basis of the group interview.