

**TEACHING THE INTANGIBLE: HOW EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS “TEACH”
RELATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

by

Alexandera McCannell

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Abstract

This thesis set out with the research question, “How are relationships framed, valued, taught and assessed by early childhood educator program instructors in British Columbia?” I conducted six group interviews and five individual interviews with instructors and directors, respectively, at public and private institutions around British Columbia. Using narrative analysis, I constructed a composite instructor character and a composite student instructor character and, using Ollerenshaw and Creswell’s (2002) problem-solution strategy, analyzed the characters during a chronological school year to illustrate tensions that arose at specific points.

Overall, instructors frame relationships as foundational in the Early Childhood Educator Program. I draw parallels between the struggle to support adult students while being responsible to children and the balance between pedagogical and andragogical principles. Modeling and engaging in authentic professional relationships with students were the most effective tools for teaching relational development. Instructors engaged in an editing process to ensure that their actions reflected their beliefs, but were still professional. They noted that relational skills can be difficult to assess, and that they cannot assess a student’s willingness to use appropriate skills when needed.

In the discussion, I trace the findings back to the purpose and questions for the research. I draw lines between instructors’ discursive constructions of students and Langford’s (2007) Good ECE, and examine the small but distinct cluster of instructors

who spoke of the reconceptualising movement and its bearing on a teacher education program.

Preface

This research is an original and unpublished work by the author, Alexandra (Ali) McCannell. The Behavioural Research Ethics Board of British Columbia gave full board approval to this research in June 7, 2013 under the UBC BREB Certificate H13-01324

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Glossary

While reading this research, please reference the terms below.

Early Childhood Educator or Education (ECE) – An adult who has attended an ECEP, successfully registered for her/his license, and is now working with young children. Not mutually excluded from student or instructor, the terms may overlap when a student or instructor is also an educator. Early Childhood Education is the range of facilities that offer care for children aged 0-5. The context will tell the reader which term is inferred.

Early Childhood Educator Program (ECEP) – A program one enters to learn about early childhood education with the intent of working in an early childhood center. This program is different from a teacher education program in that it certifies one to work only in an early childhood center, not an elementary or high school. Upon completing this program, one can apply to the British Columbia Early Childhood Educator Registry and receive their license to practice. This program can offer one or all of the following options: a certificate, a diploma, or a degree.

Student – An adult who is enrolled in an ECEP.

Child/Children – Young people 0 to 6 years of age who attend daycares or preschools and are under the care of an ECE.

School – A physical or online location that offers an ECEP.

Instructor/Faculty – An adult who teaches the curriculum of an ECEP to adult students.

Director/Chair – An adult in a school who facilitates that school's ECEP.

Program – The curriculum that makes up the course content for an ECEP.

Center – A daycare, preschool, or early learning center that children attend.

Relationship Development and Relational Skills – Relationship Development is the term I chose during interviews. This term was meant to act as a broad brush stroke that included conflict management, reflection and self awareness, getting along with colleagues and building trust with parents and children (e.g., “how do you go about teaching relationship development?”) In retrospect, I would have chosen a different word such as relational ability. During this written research, when I discuss the set of skills that comprise how one develops and maintains relationships, I will use the term relational skills.

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Special thanks are owed to my family, whose have supported me throughout my years of education and for their unyielding faith in my abilities when my faith hit an all time low.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the women who come to daycare everyday with little money, little support, and a hunch that 'children deserve better. I deserve better'. Who watch their coworkers get sad and tired and angry and frustrated and bitter and bring us back to where we started. To the women on the frontline who, in tiny incremental ways each day, push up against the political and societal discourses that constrain children and the people who care for them. This thesis is part of my mission to make children and the people who care for them visible and acknowledge their importance.

Chapter One: Introduction

*We consider relationships to be the fundamental, organising strategy
of our educational system*

Loris Malaguzzi

In March of 2011, while immersed in my course work for my master's degree, I traveled to Italy to learn from the schools and educators of Reggio Emilia. On the last day of my course, I attended a session on children with special rights, their term for children with special needs¹. While viewing some video examples of their approach in their center, I was so struck by the behaviours of the other children; they acted as mentors and friends to disadvantaged students. They called one boy over and cleared a place for him at their table, helped him curl his hands around a monkey bar on the playground, and played with him in ways he found pleasurable. I was impressed with the social reciprocity of the children. Children and educators seemed to act in a respectful, collaborative way. The educators appeared to value differences of opinion by facilitating frequent discussions around disagreements. For example, during my visit to one center, two educators informed us they had been working together for the last 17 years. One of my course-mates remarked that they must have a wonderful working relationship, to which one of them replied that they had actually asked for separate teaching assignments next year. I felt uncomfortable, wondering if we had stumbled onto a personal quarrel when she went on: "...we just don't argue enough anymore." The

¹ Special rights disaffirms the deficit perspective that accompanies the more common term "special needs" and reflects a belief that care, for these children, is not a privilege but a right.

educational relationships I saw seemed different from the Canadian education system I had come from. Back in British Columbia, I began to think about what role relationships play in our education system. How are relationships formed in classrooms – among and between teachers, students, and parents? Do they shift and if so, how? How do relationships impact the lives of children and educators socially and academically? As I was wondering about this, in the center where I worked, a new colleague joined the team with a life history and culture quite different from my own. We had opposite pedagogical views and ways of navigating our differences. As a result, we struggled to agree on the daily schedule, discipline and guidance strategies, to establish mutual respect for each other, and to provide (in each of our individual opinions) high quality educational experiences for the children. Neither of us liked working together and we did not enjoy coming to work. Our relationship impacted not just ourselves, but the children, the families, and the owner of the center. The co-occurrence of my professional relational issue and my thoughts about relationships in education convinced me that an emphasis on relational skills such as communication, self-awareness, social-emotional intelligence and conflict management, was as important for educators as for children. I began to wonder how students in Early Childhood Educator Programs (ECEPs) were taught about relationships. Can one be taught relational skills? Is it fair to be evaluated on one's ability to form, maintain, and repair relationships? I decided to investigate how ECEPs approach relational abilities, and how they approach dissenting opinions, disagreements, acceptance, and understanding in adult professional relationships.

Purpose and Questions for the Study

This study investigated how ECEP instructors frame, value, teach, and observe/assess the relational skills of their students in British Columbia. British Columbia, on the west coast of Canada, is home to a diverse group of aboriginal peoples, immigrants, and transplants from other parts of Canada, and this diversity provides a good setting to observe how people learn to get along.

Other factors in education are also important—for example, class size (Angrist & Lavy, 1999), home environment (McLoyd, 1998) and proper diet (Glewwe, Jacoby, & King, 2001). I suggest that relationships are an important and often under-utilized educational tool that, beyond being free, can combat stressors and boost academic, social and emotional progress. For this reason, relational skills are an important component of any comprehensive ECEP.

Relational skills include conflict skills. Most of industrialized society is word literate as a result of their education but they are taught virtually nothing about conflict, so they are conflict illiterate (Gerzon, 2006). Individuals such as my colleague and me struggled to communicate across our differences, and children and adults alike need to learn the skills to successfully navigate and eventually model healthy conflict in order to create and maintain an engaged, democratic society. As I will show, conflict in relationships is a valuable tool to drive development and facilitate shared understanding. Even just between two individuals, interactions should mimic principles of the culture that is desirable. For example, to ensure a democratic future, it follows that interactions should be democratic between all individuals — including teachers and children (Petrie, 2011). Kleipoedszus echoes this idea, noting it is facile to avoid conflicts that exist in

social reality in order to pursue one's pedagogical goals with children: "Societal conflicts have to be reproduced in pedagogical settings and a realistic pedagogy has to make use of the educational meaning [that] these conflicts have (Kleipoedszus, 2011, p. 119).

Interpersonal communications as defined by Petrie (2011) include verbal, non-verbal, dialogue, conflict, and group communication. This definition will henceforth be known as 'interactions', and be used throughout this work to refer to the interactions that take place in educational relationships. Furthermore, when relationships are discussed in the following research questions and throughout this thesis, it is important to think of relationships holistically. Relationship development in education does not just encompass one's relationship with students, but also with parents, colleagues, and oneself. In addition, relationship refers to all aspects: positive, negative, perceived, public, and private. All aspects of how one relates to oneself and others are included in relationship. Therefore, the research question does not specifically address negative components of relationships; it is inferred by the term itself.

Rationale

In my workplace, my colleague and I learned to avoid discussing conflict to maintain a civil flow in the center. This caused the deterioration of our professional relationship and our professionalism. Stiehls-Glenn and Glenn (2008, cited in Kleipoedszus, 2011) noted that practitioners ignore or avoid conflicts because they are afraid of the emotions and aggressions involved. In the literature review, I explore studies that show how addressing and navigating conflict can net social and academic gains, as opposed to ignoring conflicts or leaving them unresolved.

Relational wellness has been positioned second only to basic needs like food, water, shelter, and freedom from harm (Maslow, 1954). Bronfenbrenner (Bronfenbrenner, 1977) argued that relationships are interrelated and impact one another. Yet, many ECEPs focus on content, lesson planning and behavioural guidance, and devote less time to building relationships (between adults), self-awareness, conflict management or acceptance of diverse opinions. Appropriate curriculum and lesson planning are important parts of ECEPs. In summary, under-instructing relational skills removes a powerful educational tool.

In the literature review I discuss how relationships affect children, socially and academically. Urie Bronfenbrenner (1989) in transforming Kurt Lewin's (1935) behavioural formula posited that as individuals, we are constantly becoming the sum of what has happened before. He posited this rationale as $D=f(PE)$, or development (rather than behaviour) is a joint function of the person and environment. Bronfenbrenner made this change in order to show that "the characteristics of the person at a given time in his or her life are a joint function of the characteristics of the person and of the environment over the course of that person's life up to that point" (p. 108). This statement is reinforced in research that investigates the impact of early relationships, inasmuch as children remember interactions and reactions and, over time, assimilate the associated emotions and behaviours into their personality (Pianta, 2012; Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2002, 2003; Wilcox-Herzog & Kontos, 1998)

Scope and Limitation

This study investigated how ECEP instructors approach relational skills in their program, both as individuals and as representatives of their institution. From the data, I

constructed a narrative about how relationships are framed, valued, taught and assessed in ECEPs in BC, focusing especially on characters encountering problems to be solved within the time and program constraints of a one year ECE Program. This research is not a critical look at ECEPs in BC, but rather, analyzes instructors' perceptions about their relational teaching methodology. Although this research provides part of a picture of the place relational skills have in these programs, the interview data reflect only the people interviewed and the questions asked because students were not interviewed. Therefore, this study should be viewed as a contextual investigation into instructor perceptions only.

Historical Context of Early Childhood Education in BC

A brief history of the context of early childhood in BC will frame where and why early childhood education is where it is today in BC. Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in BC was unheard of until the early to mid 19th century. The first infant classes and schools were all in Eastern Canada, and ECCE did not begin to sprout in British Columbia until the early 20th century (Prochner, 2004). Impetus for care across Canada was twofold: giving children education will benefit them and ultimately benefit society, and also keep children from 'less than ideal' home circumstances in the eyes of the policy makers, which speaks mainly to assimilation of indigenous children. Most centres taught children between the ages of four and twelve; little to no care was offered for younger children. This bias stems from the position dominant in the field of psychiatry in the 1940s that this time in a child's life was most important for emotional attachment between child and mother. World War II facilitated rapid development in ECCE. Canada saw a fivefold increase in women in the workforce, from 200,000 in

1939 to 1,000,000 in 1944 (Prochner, 2004, p. 51), which resulted in a (economic) valuing of child care and the opening of hundreds of daycares across the country, some open twenty-four hours. Due to this increase, in 1943 British Columbia introduced childcare licensing (Friendly, 1994) to regulate and standardize the childcare offered in the province.

ECCE remained stable until 1966 when the Canada Assistance Plan was introduced; the British Columbia Preschool Teacher's Association (BCPTA) was formed in 1969 (ECEBC, n.d.). The BCPTA has, from the beginning, advocated for free (or accessible) childcare in BC, and for competitive wages and comprehensive training for Early Childhood Educators. Early Childhood Education continues to evolve from a field that is not a charitable institution, but rather an essential service. At the time of this writing, moderate acceptance of child care as a public service is building, and alongside that, an appreciation for the value of ECCE in and of itself, as opposed to a lesser alternative to care inside the home (Beach, Bertrand, Forer, Michael, & Tougas, 2004).

Theoretical Framework

Relationships are integral to education, and the work of Lev Vygotsky (1978) and Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979), as well as conflict theory (Kleipoedszus, 2011) provide the fundamental conceptual tenets upon which I build my arguments. Vygotsky (1978) links relationships to education when he posits that higher psychological processes, necessary for academic success, begin as relations between individuals, as reflected in his well known statement: "Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice; first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 57). For Vygotsky, two interconnected constructs—the tool-like structure of the mind and the

mind's place in a social system consisting of other minds—form his theoretical foundation. The tool-like structure refers to how speech and physical acts externalise thoughts or instincts and make them visible, and thus communicable, to others. Speech and physical acts are tools that make visible internal thought processes (Rogoff, 1990). Once others perceive externalisation (such as an act or speech), they assign it meaning. In this social context, the mind develops and uses the mediums of speech and action to express, to communicate, and to interpret. Rogoff (1990) furthered this argument by asserting that children are raised in a particular cultural milieu, which values certain practices, languages, and paradigms over others. From infancy, children observe, express, and negotiate actions and roles with the aid of more experienced individuals, and mentally adjust according to each act and response. This assimilation continues throughout our lifespan; we learn from others as they learn from us. Everyone is at once a social actor and the audience, and this exchange of information takes place constantly. It is from this position that I assert the importance of all relationships, not just child-child or teacher-child, in an educational environment. The child observes and learns from the educator speaking, eating, negotiating, being angry, showing affection, or putting on a jacket. Likewise, the educator observes and learns from children or other adults doing these things. These observations and assimilations are constantly happening, a Newton's cradle of act and react. Newson and Newson (1975) echoed Vygotsky when they asserted that knowledge emerges from interaction. An infant gains knowledge as she observes interactions of individuals who already possess shared understandings with each other and build on those understandings to communicate further. These interactions and understandings carry with them information and tools

used by that specific culture, and as the infant grows she becomes adept at using those tools. For example, a toddler learns that saying “mom” has the effect of getting her mother’s attention. She grows that understanding when she learns that when she says “mom”, she, her mother, and all others know that she is referring to a specific person.

As Vygotsky’s work has been interpreted and advanced (Bruner, 1990; Edwards et al., 1998; Rogoff, 2003; Rogoff, 1990), educational theorists and researchers have come to forefront the social nature of learning and assert that thoughts, behaviours and development are constitutive of one’s physical and social surroundings. This is not exclusive to children; we know that relationship enhances learning. It is from this statement I present the basis of this framework: when early childhood educators emphasize a dynamic, reciprocal, and collaborative social surrounding, they privilege relationships. Children have constant repeated opportunities to observe, test, and internalize knowledge. Based on this line of reasoning, I suggest that conflict is integral to a discussion of relationships and to relational education.

There is a growing body of research to support the premise that conflict in relationships supports cognitive development (Corsaro & Eder, 1990; Fawcett & Garton, 2005; Kruger, 1993; Levine, Resnick, & Higgins, 1993; Miller, 1987; New, 1994). I define conflict as “differences between at least two interdependent parties who perceive or are experiencing incompatible goals or needs, different processes/routes to a goal, or interference in meeting their goals or needs”(Justice Institute of BC, 2007, p. 17). This definition resonates with the early childhood position that conflicts often stem from unmet need for validation, appreciation, or acknowledgement. From a cognitive perspective, when individuals engage in disagreements, they think about the problem

and its features, elaborate on their thinking, reorganize and clarify their thoughts, use new strategies to convince others, and repair mental models that were flawed (Bargh & Schul, 1980; Chi, 1998). My position is to view conflict as an opportunity for learning, growth, and valuing diversity. For example, in Reggio Emilia, educators value the process of coming to a shared understanding (New, 1998). They do not suppress conflict; they often create opportunities for conflict. I assert such opportunities allow individuals to challenge one another, to test their own hypotheses against others, and to continually review and revisit constructions of meaning. I use the term 'individuals' and not 'children' to convey the importance of valuing conflict throughout one's lifespan. Over time, this practice of challenging also becomes a practice of valuing diverse perspectives, which results in a complex negotiation and re-organization of thought that is indicative of Vygotsky's higher psychological processes taking place (1978).

Concomitantly, a modern democracy is based on acknowledging and engaging with conflicts, not denying or suppressing them (Kleipoedszus, 2011). When one begins the practice of navigating conflict, facilitation from a more mature individual can be an asset. However, as the communicator gains more skills, he or she begins to engage in conflict and communication without the help of a more experienced person. Cohn (1975, cited in Kleipoedszus, 2011) asserted that conflicts could be seen as a disturbance that, unless addressed, prevents growth and evolution. As conflict presents valuable opportunities for children, this practice of engaging in conflict, communication, and resolution must be modeled and demonstrated by educational practitioners. I argue that to engage in this practice is to change conflict from negative to transformative.

So far, I have positioned relationships as integral to learning and explained the potential beneficial nature of conflict for relationships to be enhanced. I now use Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1979, 2005) to explain the scope of impact of relationships in educational settings. Bronfenbrenner stated that individuals exist in a body, a family, a school, a city, a culture, a place and a time all at once. He supposed the existence of four interacting systems: the microsystem, or immediate surroundings of the child, such as one's body condition or ailments, family, school, and peer group; the mesosystem, or relations between those contexts; the exosystem, or social setting in which the child does not have an active role but which affects her (for example, the relationship between her teacher and the child's mother); and the macrosystem, or the culture in which the child lives. Bronfenbrenner noted cultures and subcultures that existed and *could exist*, in order to reflect the possibility and potential for societies to change based on the visions of political leaders, planners, and educators. In his later works (2005), he renamed his theory bioecological systems theory to recognise the biological and psychological systems that influence the person in her environment. The bioecological systems theory supports my position that, as educators, how one engages in relationship with colleagues, parents, and the community impacts the child. Beyond the impact on the child, however, I assert it is important for the educator to have healthy relationships in her professional life irrespective of the impact on the child. Therefore, one should acknowledge not only the importance of the systems, but also the interaction between them. For example, interactions in the child's mesosystem impact the child. Bronfenbrenner cautioned against separating the parts from the whole and viewing development outside of context and vice versa (2005). He argued that interactions were

more than a sum of their parts and as such could not be analysed in isolation. When communication breaks down between different levels, the system feels the impact throughout. In this thesis, Bronfenbrenner 's theory provides the broad lens when looking at the narrative of ECEPs, viewing relationships as impacting each other, co-existing and evolving.

These theoretical perspectives support a social constructivist framework. Constructivism is based on the premise that there is no objective reality, but rather each individual has a subjective reality mediated through life history, socio-demographic factors, social circles, and beliefs. Social constructivism advances that premise by asserting that reality is constructed between individuals as social actors. These actors share experiences and create narratives that form their reality. Social constructivism informs this research in that interview data is viewed as the subjective reality of each participant.

Taken together, this framework positions relationship as key for learning across the lifespan. Building on this, I use conflict theory to demonstrate how and why engaging in and modeling conflict resolution is beneficial for children and adults. Finally, Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory connects the parts with the whole by asserting that individuals feel the impact of relational stress in the macro, meso, and exosystems.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

To focus the literature review, I begin by defining and establishing the scope of the term 'interpersonal relations'. I explore the literature on three inter-related aspects of interpersonal interactions: (1) the impact of teacher-child relationships on student success; (2) how teacher-child relationships are impacted by the teachers' perceived workplace stress; and (3) teachers experienced workplace stress, including interpersonal stress. This review of the literature illustrates the need for a) the study and instruction of interpersonal skill development in ECEPs and b) the need for research determining how ECES and ECE instructors perceive the importance of such instruction.

The term 'interpersonal relations' refers to any skill set shown to build, maintain, or enhance the relationship between educators and their students, parents, colleagues and/or supervisors. Interpersonal relations therefore includes: emotional literacy/intelligence (Hayes, 2003), conflict management and resolution skills (Talvio, Lonka, Komulainen, Kuusela, & Lintunen, 2013), self-awareness (Harford & MacRuairc, 2008), communication (Patterson, 2012), and resilience (Beltman, Mansfield, & Price, 2011; Le Cornu, 2009).

Teacher-Child Relationships and Student Success

The impact of teacher-child relationships on student success has been studied extensively since the early nineties by a core group of researchers, primarily: Robert Pianta, Bridget Hamre, Margaret Burchinal, Diane Early, Andrew Mashburn, Carolee Howes, and Sara Rimm-Kaufman. Working both alone and in various combinations, they have examined how student-teacher relationships impact young children's

academic and school success in the United States. I will expand on many of these studies in the literature review. Foremost among these researchers is Robert Pianta, the primary developer of the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) for observing teacher-student interactions, with versions available from infant to grade 12 (La Paro, Pianta, Hamre, & Stuhlman, 2002) and the Student-Teacher Relationship Scale (Pianta, 2001), designed to test a teacher's perception of their relationship with a particular student. The CLASS scoring system links teacher behaviours to student academic gains. Many studies in this area are large scale and national in scope and attempt to control for effects of ethnicity, socio-economic status, and teacher education on student outcomes. Overall, these studies present a strong argument for the impact of teacher-child interactions on children's social and academic development.

Teacher-child relationships are formed by all of their interactions throughout the day, encompassing both instructional and social exchanges (Hamre et al., 2012). Teacher-child relationships can be positive, negative, or changing, such as negative relationships that become neutral or positive or vice versa, and all have manifest effects on children's social and academic performance. Positive student-teacher relationships are generally characterized by sensitive teacher-child interactions, defined in various ways (Arnett, 1989; Pianta, 1999; Stipek, Feiler, Daniels, Milburn, & Millburn, 1995). Positive teacher-student relationships are also characterised by the educator providing the calm, consistent and unconditional care that the student needs (Pianta, 1999).

The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) operationalizes sensitive teacher-child interactions as the degree to which caregivers appear to be child-centred and show appropriate, prompt responses to the child's social

gestures, signals, and expressions when the child is not displaying expressions of distress (2005). Educator sensitivity is crucial in developing a positive relationship (Gable & Hansen, 2001) and can produce more self-reliance, fewer negative behaviours and more time on task (Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2002). Rimm-Kaufman et al (2002) examined 97 students chosen from a sample of 253 in the southern US identified as either socially bold or socially wary at 15 months of age. Although sensitive caregiver interactions had no impact on the socially wary children, there were differences observed for socially bold children: sensitive caregiver responses resulted in positive classroom adjustments, compared to socially bold children in classrooms with non-sensitive caregiver interactions.

Although there is evidence that having positive relationships with one's parents usually results in students having more positive relationship with their educators (Cohn, 1990; Fagot & Pears, 1996; Moss, Parent, Gosselin, Rousseau, & St-Laurent, 1996; Ryan, Stiller, & Lynch, 1994; Speltz, DeKlyen, & Greenberg, 1999), the parent-child relationship is beyond the teacher's control. However, there is moderate evidence that teacher can act as a buffer for children identified as having "at risk" backgrounds (Burchinal, Peisner-Feinberg, Bryant, & Clifford, 2000; Hamre & Pianta, 2001; Hughes, Carvell, & Jackson, 1999). For example, Hamre and Pianta (2005) studied 910 first grade children from birth to first grade all over the United States. Some children were labelled at risk of school failure on some functional and demographic measures. When those children were placed in emotionally supportive classrooms, they had similar achievement scores and teacher-student relationships to their low-risk peers, whereas

the control group (in non-emotionally supportive classrooms) had lower achievement scores and more conflict with teachers.

In a study across 72 children and 24 teachers assessed on the Student-Teacher Relationship Scale, Pianta & Nimetz (1991) reported that children whose relationships with their teachers improved in kindergarten also had fewer conflicts with and more positive relationships with their first grade teachers using both the Student-Teacher Relationship Scale (Pianta, 2001) and the Teacher Child Rating Scale (Hightower et al., 1986). Sensitive, responsive interactions appear to produce cognitive and social gains in students, in some cases still observable years later (Early et al., 2007; Hamre & Pianta, 2001). For example, in a longitudinal study, Hamre and Pianta (2001) followed 179 children from kindergarten through eighth grade. In addition to math and language arts grades, standardized test scores, work-habit marks, and disciplinary records, teachers rated students using the sub-composite Behaviour Problems on the Teacher-Child Rating Scale. Results indicated that teacher reports of the teacher-child relationship predicted academic and behavioural outcomes in early elementary, with moderate effects visible through to eighth grade.

A study of 2800 children randomly selected from 700 state funded pre-kindergarten classrooms in 11 states employed the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (La Paro et al., 2002), ECERS-R (Harms, Clifford, & Cryer, 1998), the STRS (Pianta, 2001), the Emerging Academics Snapshot (Ritchie, Howes, Kraft-Sayre, & Weiser, 2001) and questionnaires to analyze the emotional climate in classrooms and student teacher. They found that children in classrooms with a positive instructional climate (e.g. sensitive and responsive interactions, respectful, encouraging atmosphere,

encouraged communication) had increased language skills, including pre-reading skills (Howes et al., 2008). One can conclude there is a link between positive teacher-child interactions and children's gains (Burchinal et al., 2008), and that positive, educator-child interactions are moderate predictors of children's development (Howes et al., 2008; Mashburn et al., 2008).

Mashburn and his colleagues showed that high quality interactions were the strongest association with five measures of academic or language skills compared against two other measures of quality: instructional design and classroom environment. In addition, when higher quality emotional interactions were present, educators rated students as more socially competent and with fewer behaviour problems. In fact, educators with more emotionally supportive classrooms perceived their classrooms and students as having less conflict and fewer behaviour problems (Mashburn et al., 2008). In a study of 183 preschoolers, educators who had optimal classroom climates and high quality educator behaviours, such as sharing leadership, encouraging autonomy, and good communication skills rated students as more socially competent, as did their parents. Children experiencing high stress seemed to be particularly affected by the emotional climate of the classroom. Children with high stress seemed to demonstrate lower social competencies when placed in classes with other children who displayed lower social competencies in a non-optimal classroom climate, but when they were placed in the optimal classroom climate, they were rated as equally socially competent by their peers (Brophy-Herb, Lee, Nievar, & Stollak, 2007). This suggests that classroom climate can provide a safe, warm and consistent environment that children experiencing high stress benefit from.

Childcare centers are shown to ameliorate effects of low-income homes on three outcomes (school readiness, receptive language, and expressive language) for children 6, 15, 24 and 36 months of age, even in centres of lower quality (McCartney, Dearing, Taylor, & Bub, 2007). Hamre and Pianta (2005) observed 910 children in their first school year. This study was unique in that besides student achievement scores, they also assessed teacher ratings of conflict with each student. The classroom climate and teacher competence was determined by the following measure: overcontrol, positive emotional climate, negative emotional climate, effective classroom management, literacy instruction, evaluative feedback, instructional conversation and encouragement. They determined children to be 'at risk' or 'not at risk' based on several demographic measures as well as functional behaviours such as time on task. Results showed positive classroom climates that offered both instructional and emotional support correlated with at-risk students performing equally as well on achievement tests as their typically developing peers. The same at-risk children were also reported to have less conflict with their teachers. It seems reasonable to conclude that sensitive teacher-child interactions and positive relationships are beneficial for students socially and academically.

The NICHD (2000) reported that approximately 60% of observed teaching practices in ECE classrooms are not sensitive or responsive, despite recommendations that the best caregiving environment should have a high level of caregiver sensitivity and language stimulation. There is moderate evidence to show that more academic oriented, and less child-centred caregiving can lead to more aggressive elementary school students, although the effect seems to decline in subsequent years (Haskins,

1985). A three-year study of 156 toddler-age children focused on insecure or secure attachment. This study examined three centers: one center received no intervention, one center (an in-home childcare center) received a caregiver training component, and the last received selective staff replacement and caregiver sensitivity training. Insecure children who experienced positive changes in caregiving were more likely to become emotionally secure (Howes, Angeles, & Galinsky, 1998). Not only that, children who were emotionally insecure upon entrance to childcare remained emotionally insecure if they were in the care of a less sensitive caregiver. Some children develop what researchers term problem behaviours, behaviours that could potentially persist. Problem behaviours include opposition, conduct problems, or aggression towards peers or educators. For example, measures of early problem behaviour at 18 months of age are significantly related to psychopathology at 36 months of age (Keenan, Shaw, Delliquadri, Giovannelli, & Walsh, 1998). If left unaddressed, problem behaviours can coalesce into chronic problems. As children with reported levels of conflict with peers and educators progress through school, this conflict usually remains steady, and can result in a significantly higher risk of developing various social and academic problems (Ladd & Burgess, 2007; Mashburn et al., 2008; Pianta & Stuhlman, 2004). It is more detrimental for children to have a negative relationship with their teachers than it is beneficial to have a positive one. A study of 283 children found that conflict in the teacher-child relationship accelerated externalizing behaviours through the kindergarten to third grade period (Silver, Measelle, Armstrong, & Essex, 2005). The effects of a negative relationship with one's teacher create a ripple effect, influencing the child's relationships for years to come. Hughes, Carvell and Jackson (1999) reported, for

example, that over three years, 61 second and third grader's and teacher's reports of negative teacher-student relationship quality predicted the next teacher's ratings of aggression for students the following year. Researchers followed children from kindergarten through eighth grade, and found significant correlations between relational negativity in kindergarten and academic and behavioural outcomes, particularly for children who struggled with their behaviour in kindergarten, and for boys in general (Hamre & Pianta, 2001).

One of the most commonly cited problem behaviours is aggression (hitting, kicking, arguing, or teasing). Aggression, as observed among 396 kindergartners with no intervention over two years, was found to be stable through at least the end of grade one with aggressive children experiencing increasingly low peer acceptance and conflictual teacher-child relationships (Ladd & Burgess, 1999) These children also participated less in class activities and discussion, which the researchers argue has the strongest correlation with scholastic achievement. Additionally, students who were retained for an extra year reported higher levels of conflict with their teachers than students who were at risk for retention but advanced to the next grade (Pianta et al., 1995), which lends credence to the assertion that social competency affects academic progress. Having a negative relationship with one's teacher seems to have consequences.

Although the research reviewed presents a bleak outlook for children who experience negative relationships, when relations improve, so does the student's quality of life, both socially and academically. Ladd, Birch, and Buhs (1999) found a significant interaction between teacher-closeness and the reduction of externalising behaviours

(i.e., aggression, oppositionality, conduct problems), particularly for children with high externalizing behaviours. Whereas a report of a negative student-teacher relationship predicted aggression in the next year, a positive teacher relationship with aggressive students predicted lower levels of aggression the following year (Hughes, Cavell, & Jackson, 1999). Howes, Galinsky and Kontos (Howes et al., 1998) found that when 162 emotionally insecure toddlers worked with a caregiver who had participated in an intervention to increase sensitivity, they emerged more emotionally secure on the same ranking scale. Specialized training can also have an impact. Rhodes and Hennessy (Rhodes & Hennessy, 2000) found that a 120 hour training course for 16 preschool caregivers produced increased complex social and cognitive play in the children in their care compared to the 17 comparison caregivers who did not participate in the training. The caregivers themselves improved significantly in positive relationship measures and decreased detachment measures.

In a four-year study of 733 children from preschool onwards, Peisner-Feinberg et al. (2001) found that classroom practices were related to language and academic skills and the degree of closeness between the educator and child had significant effects for both social and cognitive skills. They also noted these positive effects seemed to be stronger for students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds. When it comes to children labelled 'at risk', there is mounting evidence that a positive teacher-child relationship can have impact, with stronger effects for children of colour (Burchinal, Peisner-Feinberg, Pianta, & Howes, 2002; Meehan, Hughes, & Cavell, 2003; Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2003). Emotional support has been shown to act as a moderate mediating factor, both academically and emotionally, for children who are considered

high functional risk (difficulty with some or all of behavioural, attentional, social or academic expectations) or at risk (Burchinal et al., 2002; Hamre & Pianta, 2005). Although it is debatable whether positive relationships are the determining factor of a child's success, the research is unequivocal that a positive relationship never harms children and usually benefits them.

Teacher-Child Relationships and Teachers' Perceived Workplace Stress

A teacher's workplace includes the physical location, the individuals with whom the teacher works, and any regulatory framework(s) within which the teacher operates. For example, in British Columbia, the early childhood educator operates according to the Child Care Licensing Regulations (Community Care and Assisted Living Act, 2013) and is accountable to the Early Childhood Educator Registry under the governance of the Ministry for Children and Family Development. Workplace stress is defined here using the demand-control-support model, which asserts that high workplace demands, low perceived control and low perceived support may negatively impact one's physical and psychological ability to perform optimally at work (Karasek & Theorell, 1990). For early childhood educators, performing optimally involves more than teaching content:

“[T]o ensure positive teacher–child relationships, teachers must regulate their own emotions and model positive behaviours, such as having calm and predictable reactions, listening empathetically when children express negative emotions, and sharing feelings of joy when children express positive emotions” (Whitaker, Dearth-Wesley, & Gooze, 2015, p. 57).

The authors assert that when educators experience significant stress, maintaining such a disposition gets more difficult.

Using Bronfenbrenner's (1977) systems theory, teachers' experiences of workplace stress take place within the child's mesosystem and possibly their exosystem. For example, Curbow (1990) stated that when a childcare worker experienced depression, it not only impacted her interactions with the child, but the other workers and the parents of the children who would then experience more stress themselves, increasing the stress in the center in general. Childcare workers have primary responsibility for the wellbeing of children while in care, and more responsibility (or job demand) is positively correlated with stress (Verloff, Douvan, & Kulka, 1981). In addition, social support, thought to be one of the largest buffers against stress (Hobfoll, 1986), may not be present for many early childhood educators, isolated in their classrooms with no adult social interaction.

Research on how workplace stress impacts teacher-child relationships could provide direction for teacher education, policy, and government support. While there are limited research studies in the area of stress and teacher-child relationships, those that have been done suggest early childhood educators experience high workplace stress (Chung, Marvin, & Churchill, 2005; Curbow, 1990; Li Grining et al., 2010). Only two studies have investigated the interaction between workplace stress and the teacher-child relationship. One study examined the interaction between workplace stress and teacher-child relationship quality across 1001 educators in the US. There was a statistically significant relationship between self-reported workplace stress (high demands, low control, and low support) and self-reported conflicts in educator-child

relationships (Whitaker, Dearth-Wesley, & Gooze, 2015). The second study included 94 educators in 18 Head Start programs in Chicago and tested an intervention designed to improve educators' emotionally supportive classroom practices. The study also included mental health coaching to teach said practices and taught stress reduction techniques (Jones, Bub, & Raver, 2013). Positive impacts of the intervention on teacher-child relationship quality using the Student-Teacher Relationship Scale were observed (Pianta, 2001), and the emotional support climate improved based on the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) (La Paro et al., 2002).

There is also a lack of research investigating emotional labour in education, defined as “the silent work of evoking and suppressing feeling” (Hochschild, 1993, p. 333). For example, when a teacher who is disappointed or angry with a student suppresses those emotions or demonstrates opposite emotions, she expends emotional labour (Isenbarger & Zembylas, 2006). In other words, “When you drive a truck or swing a hammer for a living, you give the company your time and sweat. But you don't relinquish your way of seeing things” (Hochschild, 1993, p. 333). The emotional labour output of teachers is significant (Acton & Glasgow, 2015; Stanulis & Manning, 2002; Todd & Deery-Schmitt, 1996; Torquati, Raikes, & Huddleston-Casas, 2007; Whitebook & Sakai, 2003). However, emotional labour can also be rewarding. Some studies are taking care to differentiate Hochschild's (1993) emotional labour from the emotional labour done as an educator (Isenbarger & Zembylas, 2006; Winograd, 2003). Hochschild's emotional labour focuses more on the exploitative aspects while some researchers argue there are benefits for teachers, but there is no consensus. Researchers who argue for the benefits state that: “ethics of care is an important element...and caring also

reflects a teacher's professional competence, leading to emotional labour being intrinsically rewarding; a teacher may enjoy and even seek out emotional labour" (Yin, 2015, p. 5).

The emerging research on emotional labour and workplace stress indicates children feel the impact (Whitaker et al., 2015) when teachers experience workplace stress. The term "burn out" was proposed by Maslach and Jackson (1981), and defined as "as a state of emotional exhaustion, detachment from or depersonalization toward those being served (e.g., children and families), and a lack of a sense of personal accomplishment about one's work" (Manlove, 1993, p. 500). When educators are burnt out and quit their jobs, the turnover creates a lack of continuity for the children. However, if they stay, the quality of care they are capable of providing children decreases (Manlove, 1993).

While I have provided evidence for the positive impact of attending to the social, emotional, and interpersonal climate for students (see Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011), there is little evidence thus far on the impact of social emotional or interpersonal skills on pre-service teacher performance (Corcoran & Tormey, 2013). However, what the research does show is that social emotional training does improve resilience and wellbeing in teachers, which impacts children.

Teachers' Experience of Workplace Stress, Including Interpersonal Stress

It is well documented that teaching, including the teaching of young children, is considered a stressful profession (Dworkin, Haney, Dworkin, & Telschow, 1990; Hyson, 1982; Pines & Maslach, 1980; Schwab, Jackson, & Schuler, 1986). Jobs can be challenging in myriad ways; however, research shows that while some of these

challenges improve job performance and dedication, stressors related to social or emotional constructs (such as interpersonal conflict) are negatively related to job performance and dedication (Liu, Liu, Mills, & Fan, 2013). Interpersonal stress in the workplace predicts teacher burnout, even after controlling for personality factors typically thought to prevent burnout (like agreeableness and conscientiousness) and promote burnout (like neuroticism) (Sulea, Filipescu, Horga, Ortan, & Fischmann, 2012).

While research indicates interpersonal conflict is a job stressor in many occupations for both sexes (Narayanan, Menon, & Spector, 1999), this could be particularly true for the female-dominated field of early childhood. There is some indication women are more affected by interpersonal conflict than men (Narayanan et al., 1999). This is significant because interpersonal stress and lack of social support have been identified as a significant contributor to ECE burnout (Curbow, 1990; Goelman & Guo, 1998; Manlove & Guzell, Jacqueline, 1997; Manlove, 1993; Pines & Maslach, 1980). Furthermore, there is moderate statistical support for the claim that women base their self-esteem on their social relationships (Josephs, Markus, & Tafarodi, 1992), and that self-esteem is linked to job performance (Judge, Erez, & Bono, 1998). A significant source of job satisfaction for early childhood educators is their relationships with other adults (Manlove, 1993), and when adults experience workplace stress, a significant coping strategy involves soliciting support from others (Zomer, 2012). The isolation of many early childhood centers impedes this coping strategy, potentially leaving early childhood educators seeking other less effective ways to cope.

In British Columbia, early childhood education is systemically underfunded, further compounding stress by adding to the roles of early childhood educators as

janitors, administrators, and fundraisers (BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition, 2007). This is reflected in Spear's (1999) investigation into the motivations of teachers most associated with job satisfaction: the opportunity to work with children, relating to colleagues, and developing warm relationships with pupils. Relationships seem to play a prominent role in the motivations for, and satisfaction from teaching. Given this, paying attention to relationship management in adult education, such as conflict management and communication skills, might increase satisfaction for educators and produce gains for children, colleagues, and parents.

Conclusion

Following from the previous three sections, I conclude this literature review by noting the lack of research into the role of interpersonal skills in ECEPs and teacher education programs in general (Langford, 2007)(Langford, 2007). In establishing the importance of interpersonal skills for children and teachers alike, it follows that these skills should be taught in ECEPs. For example, in most professions where people work closely with other people, like such as social work, part of their education focuses on interpersonal skills and directly teaches them how to distinguish between transference and empathy, which better enables the necessary detachment from the strong emotions that regularly occur in the context of the job (Chang, 2009). ECEPs do not include this distinction; in fact, more emphasis is placed on the *obligation* to care about one's students (Goldstein & Lake, 2000; Kohl, 1984; Stanulis & Manning, 2002). The result is often emotional exhaustion (Chang, 2009). The professional element of emotional labour takes skill and therefore should be taught in ECEPs.

I have shown how teacher-child relationships impact children's social and academic success, that teacher-child relationships are impacted by the teacher's perceived workplace stress, and that teachers experience workplace stress, some of which is caused by interpersonal factors. It follows that if teachers are taught interpersonal skills and learn to identify and manage interpersonal and intrapersonal issues, they can reduce their workplace stress, resulting in net benefits for all involved.

Chapter Three: Research Design

This chapter is organized into six sections: 1) methodology, 2) site and participant selection, 3) procedures for recruitment and consent, 4) data collection methods, 5) shifts and corrections in data collection, and 6) data analysis.

Methodology

I used narrative analysis in this study, an approach defined as “the consequential linking of events or ideas. Narrative... entails imposing a meaningful pattern on what would otherwise be random and disconnected” (Riessman, 2008, p. 5). My aim was to investigate how relational skills (including conflict management/resolution skills) are taught in Early Childhood Education Programs (ECEPs) in British Columbia. I used narrative analysis for two reasons: 1) to provide a framework for examining the data from a relational perspective and; 2) to focus on time in investigating how instructor-student relationships form and shift during the program. Narrative methodology provoked me to wonder what unifies instructors, who they push against, and what moves the story forward. As narrative analysis can include an examination of characters encountering a predicament of some sort (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002), this fit with the data. Focusing on an instructor character also shed light on an understudied arena: instructors in ECEPs (see Bernhard, 1995; Nitecki, 2012). When research focuses on instructors, more attention is paid to what and how students learn from them. In addition, time and chronology are critical in narrative analysis and thus facilitated my investigation of how relationships are taught across the span of an ECEP. These story elements facilitated understanding what or whom ECEP instructors struggled against when

teaching about relational development. Finally, in narrative methodology, the narratives are viewed as social products produced in a certain political, social, cultural and historical context (Lawler, 2002). By viewing instructor narratives as social products, I framed their stories within the context of their specific institution and the discourse of early childhood education in Canada.

Narrative can take many forms. I made the choice to unite all the instructors into one character. While this may have undercut the diversity of perspectives, I think it also humanized the instructor character in the analysis. As this was a thesis about relationships, framing the analysis as a single relationship between an instructor and a student lived out in this process. It fit with the data and I found that specific examples were effective to illustrate the general, overarching principles and problems. So my analysis organized the small ways the instructors worked to form and use relationships for learning with her students them into an arc across the program length. The reader is brought along with the instructor as she struggles, supports, and ultimately decides. In using the problem solution approach, narrative methodology helped me to see that the problem cannot be solved in one grand gesture, but in small daily interactions with students. As one participant said “it is literally built step by step by step” (p. 15698, 15739).

Site Selection and Participants

To be considered for inclusion in the study, the school and ECEP program had to be recognized by the Ministry of Children and Family Development (Ministry of Children and Family Development, n.d.); students had to receive an Early Childhood Educator Certificate as a result of their education (without additional courses); and the school

agreed to my interview request. Preliminary data (location, program description, contact information, type and length of program) were gathered on schools approved by the Ministry. At the time I commenced the study, there were 28 programs that offered the option to receive a basic ECE certificate (typically a one year program with three practica that focus on three to five year old children), and these programs varied in five ways: (1) whether they were public or private; (2) whether the basic program was a certificate program or a longer program with or without exit points; (3) whether they offered ECE from an aboriginal perspective (program described as aboriginal stream); (4) whether they offered distance education to any extent; and (5) where they were physically located.

Online descriptions of the school and program mission statement, as well as any course content (relating to the ECE program) were reviewed. This information served to capture a snapshot of Early Childhood Education Programs (ECEP) in British Columbia. The course outlines for all schools provided the first broad brush strokes of ECEPs in British Columbia, while the in-depth interviews and analysis with five sites provided a more detailed picture. Interviewees were faculty members who taught early childhood education courses at each selected site and who both agreed to a group interview (and the director a private interview), and were available at the group interview time.

Recruitment and Obtaining Consent

To recruit schools, I employed random sampling to represent the breadth of variety of programs. Institutions were assigned a number (1-28), and put into an online randomizer program (Random.org, n.d.) to choose six schools. Using website contact pages, the directors of each of the six programs were contacted by email. All directors

received the same form email (Appendix A) with site specific details (e.g., school name) changed, and a separate ethics application was completed if required. It was most effective for the director to forward the interview request to the faculty, and responses came quickly; otherwise I often did not receive responses.

The recruitment process was lengthy, with the initial contact email and actual interview approximately six months apart, and required ten to twenty follow up emails and phone calls per school. Several schools declined; one school never answered emails or voicemails; and one school director agreed to participate and later declined due to a family emergency. Finding the sixth school was challenging; I went through three schools and when the last school expressed interest, they did not reply to follow-up emails for the following two months. Ultimately, five schools (one school with two delivery sites) were included in the research project. In that this was a thesis about relationships, it became starkly evident that my *lack* of relationship with any ECEPs hindered my progress in recruiting participants. Instructors at the sites I interviewed had multiple roles, so finding time together to meet some young student, with whom they had no relationship, for a two-hour research interview seemed to hold little appeal.

Pending their consent, faculty at each school picked a day and time that worked for them. With the exception of the first interview, they received the consent forms (see Appendix B) and interview questions (see Appendix C) in advance. I discuss this shift in protocol below. I offered complimentary refreshments for all on-site group interviews, but 1 interview was conducted by phone or videoconference and for 1 on-site interview I was unable to provide refreshments due to extenuating circumstances. While this was unintentional, it provided an informal control group to determine the impact of the

refreshments. All interviews lasted at least the allotted 2 hours and seemed to welcome the conversation. If there was a 'refreshment effect', so to speak, it was not apparent to me. When refreshments were present, faculty seemed to perceive it as I intended – a small “thank you” for taking the time to speak with me. I was concerned the group interview conducted via Google Hangout may have hindered the flow of the interview. As it happened, the institution was actually a distance education facility and the educators almost exclusively communicated with each other and their students via teleconference or videoconference, so it appeared normal and natural for them to use this platform together. At each interview, I had consent forms prepared for them to sign; in the event the interview took place over Skype or telephone, they signed and faxed or scanned the document to me. I had planned to interview the director before the group interviews, but in practice it was not always feasible, as appointments got cancelled and rescheduled. All of the director interviews took place over phone or email, although I met 4 of the directors at the group interviews.

At the interview, during the introduction, I informed each participant that I would maintain anonymity at the level of individuals and institutions. I intended to interview the director separate from the faculty, but it was often the case that the director taught many of the courses and was also part of the teaching team. Therefore, it seemed prudent to include the director. Although the presence of one's director in a discussion could cause participants to monitor what they say, I judged that a rich group discussion with various viewpoints was more important than what might have been a more candid interview. In practice, 2 interview sites did not include the director. The interview questions specifically asked about building relationships with adult students so my hypothesis was

that the absence or presence of one's director would not influence the answers. It is hard to determine what effect my decision had, but if any differences existed, I could not perceive them. Table 1 describes the final five research sites.

Table 1: Description of Research Sites

School	Type	Program Offerings	Aboriginal Stream	Distance Education	Location	Faculty Present (Group Interview)	% Faculty Present
A	Private	Certificate with diploma options	No	No	Multiple sites across lower mainland	8	91%
B	Public	Diploma with exit points	Yes	Yes	Mid/North BC	5	50%
C Site 1	Public	Certificate with diploma options	No	Yes	Vancouver Island (multiple locations)	3	75%
C Site 2	Public	Certificate with diploma options	No	Yes	Vancouver Island (multiple locations)	2	50%
D	Private	Certificate with diploma options	No	No	GRVD ¹	2	66%
E	Public	Degree with exit points	No	No	GRVD	2	30%

¹ Greater Regional Vancouver District

Data Collection Methods

I conducted group interviews with faculty at five schools, and individual interviews with the directors of each of the schools. The purpose of a group interview was threefold: to avoid over-privileging the views of one person as representing the views of an institution; secondly, to explore the agreements, disagreements and collaboration of the instructors; and finally, to maximize the number of individuals in the study.

Interviewing the director provided additional information such as: the historical context for the program (how long has it existed, how has it changed); information regarding the joys and difficulties of managing the faculty; demographic information for students and the attrition rates; the overall philosophy of the ECE program; and what she would change, if anything, about her school's program. I discuss the ramifications of group interviews in the limitations. The interview guides are included in Appendix C.

Lessons Learned and Adaptations in the Group Interviews

Conducting the interviews was a learning experience. In the first interview, I did not give faculty the questions before hand, but I provided ten minutes to read the questions at the beginning of the interview. This took time away from the interview itself and did not seem adequate for faculty to thoughtfully consider each question. Although I intended to be consistent across the interviews, I decided to send the questions beforehand, with the preface that I would also ask questions that arose from the discussion. Having time to look at the questions in advance allowed the faculty time to gather their thoughts, and some brought their interview questions printed out and covered in notes.

Some faculty in the second interview took issue with parts or some of the questions, questioning my terminology and framing of certain questions, for example: “I had a bit of a problem with the wording in the question about my role in reshaping and reconstructing, because I don’t see that as my role” (pstrn 57374, 57514) (see Appendix F for a discussion on my use of language). I incorporated criticisms by inviting instructors in subsequent interviews to raise questions, and if they chose they could revise the question. However, I did not initially change the questions for the sake of consistency. I used the questions and comments raised by interviewees to further understand their perspectives.

I took notes during interviews in order to incorporate follow-up questions at the most appropriate time in the interview. I planned to leave serendipitous questions for the end of the interview, but the interview flowed better by incorporating them where relevant. In each interview, I tried to seat everyone in a circle (as opposed to across from each other) to facilitate a more egalitarian ambiance, though it was not always possible. I began the interview with a factual, opening question (Krueger, 1994) pertaining to their education history and courses they have taught, which each individual answered. This gave each faculty member an opportunity to talk for a few minutes and share some non-sensitive information about herself, which was intended to make her feel more comfortable.

When moderating the interviews, I was mindful of the relationships among group members (Krueger, 1994; Morgan, Krueger, & King, 1998). The interview should not have caused emotional stress or physical pain to the participants; however, there was a possibility that differences in pedagogical opinion could result in heated discussion. I

reminded the instructors of this, and that, because it was a group interview, I could not guarantee confidentiality among the participants. I also reminded the participants at the start that they already know each other, and that they will continue to know each other when the interview is over, and to keep that in mind when making personal disclosures about themselves or others, or possibly hurtful statements about another individual in the interview (Morgan et al., 1998).

I was aware of the pre-existing relationships between faculty members and somewhat nervous about moderating heated conflicts that might arise; none happened, to my knowledge. However, during the first interview as I listened to faculty members recount how they taught students about relationship skills, I asked a follow-up question: “Has there ever been any conflict that arose between you as staff? If so, how did you handle it?” I was greeted with silence. After a 10 second pause, the staff said they do not see each other very often, and two volunteered that they only really spoke at lunch. It was unclear to me whether the length of time it took to reply was due to them trying to recall a conflict or conscientiously avoiding mentioning a conflict that did occur. Regardless, I felt a tension and it struck me as odd from a group that had quick answers to all other questions. I made the decision to ask the question in all subsequent interviews, but not include it in the question handout so that I could maintain consistency between interview sites. I wondered if the ability to openly discuss a conflict that occurred between oneself and one’s colleague who is present in the room reflected a healthy perspective on conflict as part of a critical and healthy working relationship.

After each interview, I debriefed with an ECE colleague who had no connection to the study sites. In this ‘think out loud’ with my colleague, I reflected on each interview,

discussed anomalies or emerging themes, and reflected on my researcher position (keeping names and locations anonymous). This was necessary for me; I struggled to write journal entries without having a discussion first. After each discussion, I was then ready to write reflections in a journal.

The Role Of The Researcher

Merriam (1998) characterizes a qualitative researcher as having an active role in the research process. I positioned myself as this actor in several ways: I began each interview with a short introduction of my education history and how I came to be interested in my research question. In sharing a story of frequent conflict with my colleague, I positioned myself in a situation that many individuals in a workplace can relate to and empathize with (trying to work with a person one does not get along with).

During the interview, I moved between the position of insider (an educator, a woman, a student, a facilitator) and an outsider (not employed at site, not a faculty member, do not teach adults) (Humphrey, 2007). Consequently, faculty moved between their respective insider/outsider positions in relation to me, for example 'exchanging stories with an insider' and 'telling the non-faculty member what it is like to teach ECE to adults', which potentially provided richer data. With further respect to the insider/outsider position, I was also twenty-nine years old, Caucasian, middle class, Canadian, female and hetero-normative with eight years teaching early childhood and no adult teaching experience. In some ways, my interviewees matched these characteristics; they were all hetero-normative women, all were childcare providers at one point, and all cleanly, neatly groomed and dressed in business casual clothing.

Although I did not collect detailed demographic data, I gathered several observations from the interviews. With the exception of 4 (of 25 interviewed in person) women, all appeared to be Caucasian, and I perceived only 2 women speaking with a non-North American accent. Judging from their educational biographies in the interviews, few, if any, interviewees were younger than me, with most having double-digit years of experience in the field. I will not go into further detail in my analysis on the impact of this overall 'insider effect', however it is notable that I was similar to these women on many physical and socio-demographic markers even as I walked into the room, which made it easier for me to establish rapport (Humphrey, 2007). Conversely, this insider effect may have had the effect of instructors whom I was dissimilar to more hesitant to share their experiences. I attempted to combat this by soliciting opinions equally, and I would suggest that my topic spans cultures and even if some instructors could not relate to me, they could relate to the challenges I was curious about.

During the interview, I originally aimed to talk little compared to the interviewees. My goal was to exercise "mild, unobtrusive control" (Krueger, 1994, p. 101) in the group. I revised this goal as I rethought my position on impartiality and myself as a neutral facilitator, recognizing my deep interest in these discussions and personal familiarity with the educators' experiences. I decided to frame my role in the interview process less as a neutral facilitator eliciting information from experts for the purposes of research, and more as a member of a group of female educators (Talmy, 2010), passionate about early childhood education, sharing experiences and lessons learned. My questions were designed to be personal, indirect, and with high emotional valence (Mathison, S., personal communication, 2012) in order to get the richest responses with the lowest

potential impact on the interviewees. From the answers I received, I often followed up with a clarification or deepening questions (for example, “by students do you mean children or your adult students?” and “tell me more about that”, respectively). This created an informal, dynamic discussion that provoked, in some cases, deeper discussion and new perspectives I had not anticipated. Interviews were co-constructed by interviewer and interviewee (Talmy, 2010), the interviews were an account of a place and time where data were co-constructed through discourse.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is an iterative process (Merriam, 1998), more cyclical than repetitive. During the data analysis phase, I used inductive and deductive reasoning to cycle through interview data and supplementary material, research questions, developing themes, and my theoretical framework (Merriam, 1998). The analysis was bound by the parameters of my research question. I looked for an overarching narrative across interviews and between participants while acknowledging that some themes were directly provoked by my interview questions (Roulston, 2001). For example, faculty members discussed conflict because I asked about conflict.

The analysis process began with transcribing the interview data with Dragon Naturally Speaking™ software. At the time of transcription, I was ignorant of formal transcript conventions and transcribed all interviews without any formal guideline, although I was consistent in my method. In fact, though, my transcriptions loosely resemble Schiffrin’s (1994) transcript conventions (see Appendix D for a list of conventions used).

Following the transcription I coded the data. Coding is a systematic way to condense extensive data sets into smaller analyzable units through the creation of categories and concepts derived from the data (Merriam, 1998). I read each interview coded them in HyperResearch™. I read interviews in the order they were conducted, and as I read the interviews, I developed codes, both according to my research question and arising from the data. Codes were words or phrases that either summarized segments of texts or referred to concepts mentioned in segments of text. They were detailed and specific to allow the possibility of observing small differences. For example, 'broadening perspective' had the sub-codes 'adults/others', 'parents', and 'children'. This example also shows how categories, a collection of similar codes that referred to the same phenomenon, emerged (See Appendix E.2). Overall, I developed 137 codes across 13 interviews: 6 group interviews, 6 interviews with directors, and 1 interview with a participant who was not able to attend the interview but still wanted to participate.

To think about the relationships between codes, I wrote each on a separate card, noting their respective frequencies. I rearranged the index cards and placed codes in different categories based on frequency and content. For example, I organized the codes by highest frequency, codes relating to educator identity or student identity, and codes relating to conflict. As a result of this iterative process, two overarching themes emerged: *Personal Mastery* and *Being in Community*. *Personal Mastery* included the categories of leadership, confidence, maturity, authenticity, reflexivity, and professionalism. *Being in Community* included the categories of conflict, mentorship, understanding or accepting diverse perspectives, creating a learning community, vulnerability, and working from strengths.

This preliminary analysis tested these themes with the data; however, several codes and tensions remained unaddressed (see Appendix E.3). Even keeping in mind that not all codes could or should be in the analysis or could be subsumed by these themes, the analysis was missing several key points I had noticed throughout the interviews. Interesting data unaccounted for by these themes included: the ways in which instructors balance building relationships with students while maintaining their own sense of professionalism; assessing or evaluating students on the intangible construct “relationship building skills;” the process of passing a student who is unfit in “un-assessable ways” — for example a student who is dramatic, immature and selfish with her peers but performs well on practicum assessments — and then releasing them into the workforce; and the tension between the personal and professional in ECE and how those constructs play out in particular ways in a traditional, woman-dominated field. In addition, I had done a thematic analysis and did not use narrative methodology.

To incorporate these themes into a more complex framework that would account for the data described above and operate within narrative analysis methodology, I discarded my preliminary analysis and instead modified Ollerenshaw and Creswell’s (2002) problem-solution narrative analysis strategy.

Problem-Solution Narrative Analysis Strategy

Problem-Solution

I used Ollerenshaw and Creswell's (2002) problem-solution as an analytic strategy. The problem-solution strategy was developed within the typology of holistic-content narrative analysis (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) as a way to re-story field texts using classic narrative elements such as the settings, characters, problem, solution, and

resolution. The previous analysis focused on themes and did not acknowledge there were problems to be solved. The problem solution-strategy directed me to examine what forces the instructors pushed against, and what collective strategies they employed to solve them. Thinking this way helped me to look at the data differently: to examine more than just what was commonly said. Rather, I considered what underlying assumptions caused instructors to perceive people or events as challenging.

Character

A key element of any narrative is 'character.' While my analysis could have looked at other or multiple story elements, what seemed most compelling to communicate the nature of relationships was character development. For my analysis, rather than thinking of each individual instructor I interviewed as a 'character,' I conceptualized instructors in the same way instructors described students: as members of a group with a shared identity. Following this conceptual frame, I constructed character 'composites' of both instructors and students asking: who are they? What functions do they perform? How do they align with or against each other? Answering these questions framed the understanding of how both instructors and students might change, and why.

Instructors described themselves and described the diversity of students who enter an ECEP. However, many instructors noted the preponderance of younger students (aged late teens to early twenties), and the unique challenges that accompany those students, such as a "sense of entitlement" (pstrn 53527, 53547) and their inability to see "dual perspectives" (pstrn 56135, 56150), that is to say, multiple sides of an issue. As many instructors described this type of student as challenging and spoke at length

about those challenges, the student composite character was borne of these descriptions. As interviews were conducted exclusively with instructors and directors, this composite character was created from instructors' discursive constructions of students. This happened less often relative to the amount of time instructors spoke in the first person, therefore the student composite character description tends to be shorter. The student composite character also represents only one type of student that instructors described. I chose the young, immature student to illustrate her growth over the school term and to represent the most challenging student as described by instructors. The instructor character composite was easier to compile: one hundred percent of the instructors were women, almost all of them started as early childhood educators, and almost all of them had been instructors for at least three years. Although their teaching philosophies differed to some extent, the problems they described were similar. This analytic strategy, the development of composite characters in tension over time, was better suited to accounting for all of the data, including the codes left unaddressed by the previous analysis (see Appendix E.4).

Time and Chronology

As with all narratives, time creates a dynamic of interaction and change. While there are many conceptions and uses of time, the interviews suggested that the chronology of the program could usefully frame the dynamics of how both instructors and students interacted around their developing notion of relationships. Most ECE programs in BC last one year, and so this provided the frame for the chronology within which to explore the identities and relationships of the student character and the instructor character.

As I returned to the tensions my previous analysis did not address, I observed how specific tensions presented in certain points in time. For example, instructors' struggles of passing mediocre students, happens at the end of the program, as the students are graduating. This suggested the possibility of different identities and behaviours of both instructors and students at other points in the program. To develop this relationship between character attributes, interactions, and time, I constructed a chronological school year, with parallel composite instructor and student characters. In this way, I was able to situate the typical problems described by instructors, how they addressed them, and how they saw their identity and behaviour change in relationship to the student and the point in time of the program.

A Note on Quoting Conventions

The two composite characters are introduced in the next chapter utilizing direct quotes from interviews across all sites and individuals. I employed several conventions to ensure readability, but to remain true to the interviewees' presumed intentions. To that end, I have sometimes changed the tense or pronoun or added a clarifying detail denoted by square brackets []. Furthermore, as interview locations and individuals are to be kept confidential, providing a reference (i.e., site 1, individual 2) adds little to, and possibly detracts from, the reader's experience of a composite character. In fact, including this information contradicts the intent to present a seamless composite character.

However, it is still important to illustrate how the analysis honours the original interview data. Therefore, quotes are referenced by their location in the HyperResearch file. HyperResearch gives each character (a letter, symbol or space) a progressive

number and proceeds in ascending order throughout the entire file, which includes all cases. In this way, quotes cannot be ascribed to a particular site or individual, but are still locatable within the HyperResearch data file. Quotes are referenced using the abbreviation 'pstrn' (position) followed by the starting numerical position, and the ending numerical position (e.g; pstrn 439231, 440132) in order to locate where the quote begins and ends. In addition, all quotes have been coded "Quote" within HyperResearch. Finally, the classic ellipse (...) indicates irrelevant, tangential or identifying information within the same sentence, whereas an extended ellipse (...) indicates the same across several sentences, but by the same speaker within the same answer.

Chapter Four: Results and Analysis

The Evolution of Teaching and Learning About Relationships

As described in the methodology chapter, from the analysis of interview data, I constructed an instructor composite character and a student composite character as they proceed through a chronological school year in an Early Childhood Education Program (ECEP). Table 2 summarizes the codes that facilitated the development of these characters in each phase of the program.

Within any narrative, there are many possible characters, and I focused on a simple protagonist-antagonist framing. Here, the instructor was the protagonist. This was for two reasons: the research question was framed around instructors, and data were collected only from instructors. The student composite character is constructed discursively during the interviews. Working within the problem-solution strategy also prompted me to realize that the student was not the antagonist. The instructor and student did not stand in opposition to one another in this narrative, but rather the antagonist was the academic, institutional, and societal system within which both instructor and student existed. The instructor character strove, throughout the ECEP, to support the student character and pushed her to succeed, so while the instructor and the student were not friends per se, they were certainly not enemies either. For the instructor, institutional policy and practice, budgets, ethics committees, large classroom sizes, and the state of the field of early childhood education challenged, in many ways, her ability to provide an optimal education.

I examined the composite characters at three points (Early program, Mid Program and End Program) within the chronological school year. Identities and relationships formed and evolved over the course of the year. The purpose of analyzing these characters at three different points was to show how the instructor-student relationship changed over time—for example, an instructor’s struggle with passing an adequate, but mediocre student happened only at the end of the program, as the students were graduating. See Table 2 for a list of the codes encompassed by the instructor and student composites in the Early, Mid, and End Program.

Table 2: Codes Attached to Composite Instructor and Student Over the Program

Early Program Student

- Entitlement/Ego
Centrism/Youth/Lack of Experience
- ECE is easy
- May come from field
- Variety of ages
- Assumptions
- Passive Aggressive/no tools to communicate openly

Mid Program Student

- Change or not change students
- Collaboration
- Comfort Zone
- Community of practice
- Communication
- Image of the child, parent, educator
- Broadening perspectives
- Vulnerability
- Conflict
- Pushing back
- Role Play/Practice
- Broadening perspective – parent
- Broadening Perspective - adults/others
- Broadening perspective - children

End Program Student

- Unfit students graduate
- Own four walls
- Personal mastery
- Gap between school and field
- Own four walls

Early Program Instructor

- All teacher quality (TQ) codes
- Build Relationship/Rapport
- Educate on professionalism of profession (other professions don't have to do that)
- Teach relationship by being in relationship
- Women's profession
- Empathy
- Create conditions - safe relationships/environment for people to talk
- Adult bullying
- Navigating/observing/facilitating classroom relationships
- Mentor
- Modeling
- Listening/Being heard

Mid Program Instructor

- Mentor
- Modeling
- Professionalism
- Pushing back
- Leadership/Personal Mastery/Confidence
- Relationships help learning
- Lens
- Theory to Practice
- Value relationships
- Values
- Vulnerability
- Facilitate conflict
- Ethics
- Conflict as opportunity
- Strengths Based
- Informal Assessment
- Teaching/facilitating conflict/challenging conversations
- Above and beyond
- Knowledge constructed together

End Program Instructor

- Only pass/fail students on practicum relationships
- Relationships cannot be taught
- Trust
- System set up to fail

Using the problem-solution strategy within a chronological narrative prompted the question “what happens when?” Instructors did not detail their struggles in chronological order; rather, I constructed order and a narrative arc from the data. In some cases, the instructor character made direct reference to a point in time, for example: “We sat on the playground together...their first week with us, and said ‘what do you see?’ and we had a list of questions that we’d come up with, you just you know started to build relationship right there” (pstrn 33090, 33258). Another example of a time reference was: “the students’ relational ability, I think, matters more in the [Early Program]. Just because of the courses and their practicums than it does in their [End Program]” (pstrn 67469, 67631).

The instructor composite sometimes made direct reference to particular times of the program year. Other times, the event itself provided an indication of its chronology: for example, speaking of failing a student implies being near the end of a course or a term. Interviewees’ use of grammatical tense sometimes contributed to my inference about time, for instance: “it [was] communicated to students that I’m not going to chase after [them]. There’s policies, procedures, content, guidelines, assignment due dates, weekly schedules, it’s all there. If you fall behind, you know, you know how to contact me.” (pstrn 54257, 54527). By speaking in the past tense, the instructor character suggested there was a period when those policies were communicated, presumably early in the program. The instructor also made reference to “falling behind” denoting the passage of time. Within the context then, this event of “falling behind” might reasonably occur in the middle of the school year or term.

Finally, at times the instructor character seemed to be speaking generally, for example “So wherever I am, I try to live my philosophy, and be respectful to people, and that includes children” (p. 33294, 33399). In these cases the instructor’s words conveyed a concept that could appear anywhere in the narrative. Even though the instructor composite’s relationship with her students evolved during the program, her identity was well developed already and remained relatively stable during the program and her struggles with her students.

Figure 1: Graphic Representation of Problem-Solution Analysis

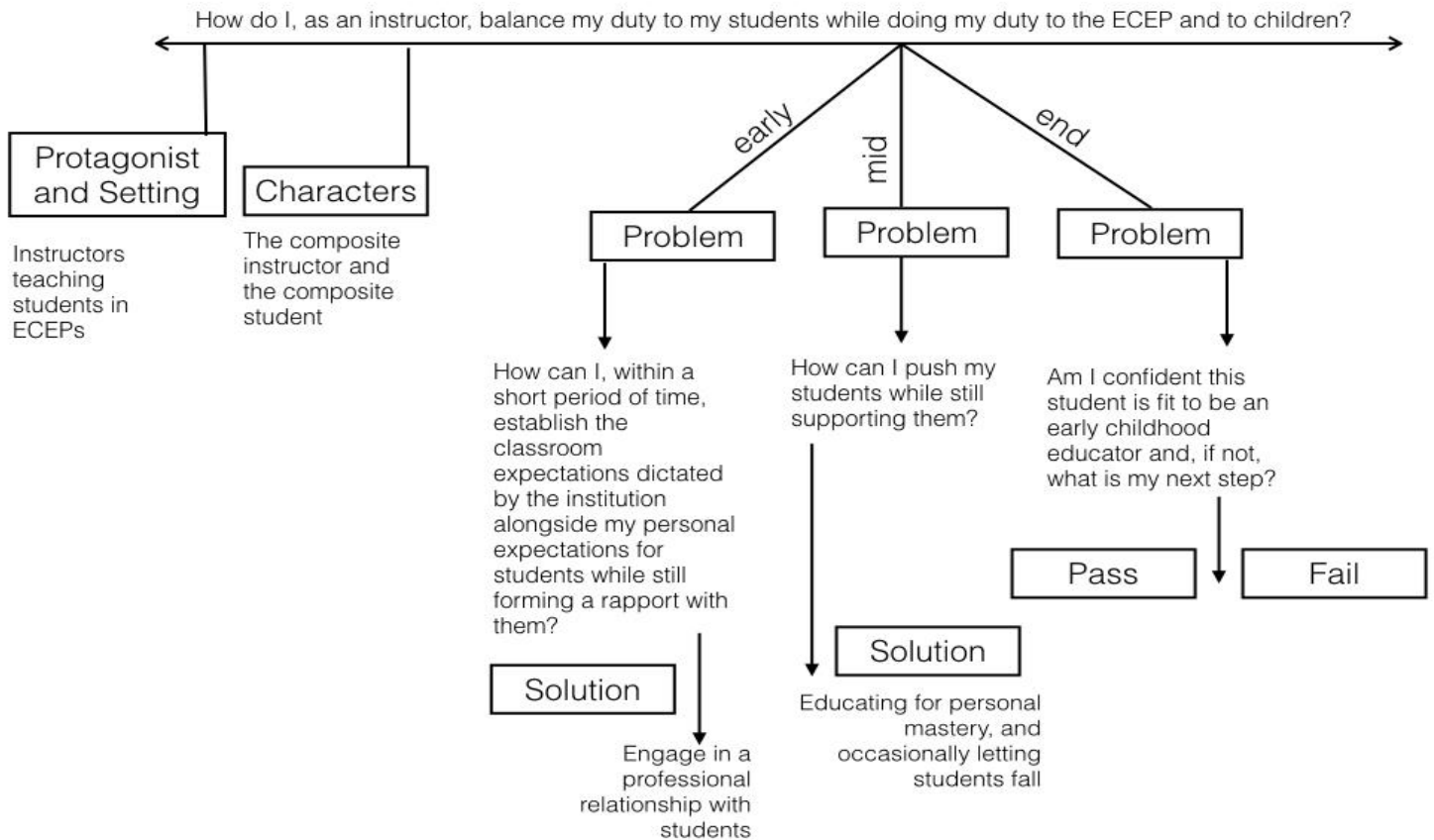


Figure 1 is a graphic representation of the problem-solution analysis strategy applied to this study and illustrates the overarching problem-solution in the narrative. The problem-solution strategy is founded on a logical or cognitive problem, i.e., “How do I get from A to B?” In cases like these, a solution is available. Within the context of this narrative, however, problems are solved by the instructor’s action with the hope that this will lead to the desirable student qualities and behaviours. By the end of the program, however, the instructor has only a simple binary solution: passing or failing the student.

The Overarching Problem

As Figure 1 shows, the time-specific struggles are unified around a fundamental problem that weaves throughout the whole ECEP. ECEP instructors straddle an uneasy axis; they have a duty to children, to the BC ECE Code of Ethics, and to the institution with whom they are employed to educate students how to be ethical, professional, knowledgeable, and meet the ECE competencies (Ministry of Children and Family Development, n.d.). However, the personal philosophy of these instructors also dictated that they support *their* students in the ECEP, work toward success for them, and look for growth. Herein lies the overarching problem: *instructors need to find the balance of doing their duty to their students while doing their duty to the program and to children.*

Often, these duties did not align with, and sometimes directly opposed, one another. The early childhood instructor, by necessity, also advocated a different philosophy of education than she practiced—her students had assignments, exams, codes of conduct, and practicum assessments to pass. This was a different milieu than that which exists in the early childhood classroom. Put another way, the ECEP is a unique adult education classroom in that the instructor had to advocate for certain educational practices while demonstrating contradictory ones. This problem cannot be solved at once, in one gesture. Therefore, the instructor faces three smaller problem-solutions in each time segment. The following three sections (Early, Mid, and End Program) begin with the problem-solution within that time segment, followed by descriptions of the composite instructor and composite student as they may appear at that time.

Early Program

Problem-Solution in the Early Program

In the Early Program, the problem for the instructor was: *How can I, within a short period of time, establish the classroom expectations dictated by the institution alongside my personal expectations for students while still forming a rapport with them?*

The Early Program (EP) instructor composite centered her teaching philosophy around relationships as tools for learning (Vygotsky, 1978) and she needed to form relationships with all her students in order to uncover and challenge their perceptions and practices within early childhood education (Knowles, 1970). The EP instructor composite solved the problem for this time segment “by having a relationship with them, a professional relationship with them” (p. 82330-82234). The EP instructor acknowledged her students’ experiences and opinions, and built relationships with them while she created a clearly structured classroom environment, delineated expectations and modeled appropriate professional behaviour.

The EP instructor was a de facto role model. The EP instructor asserted that to instruct effectively and engage in genuine professional relationships, she had to remain authentic while demonstrating and teaching about professionalism and her philosophy. Therefore, she engaged in a process of editing:

You’re over here, as the person that you are everything that you bring your history and your values and your culture etc., and then there’s this other piece of you now called the professional you, and that’s not going to be the same person always....It’s not okay to talk

about some aspects of your personal life in your professional life, it just doesn't fit, so how do you edit that? How do you figure out who you are as a person, and who you are as a professional? (pstrn 57099,57365)

ECEP students presumably confront the complexity of the teacher role as experienced by instructors, and as the student takes up the identity of a teacher, they have to suppress other parts of themselves (Britzman, 2003). So, the EP instructor continually refined herself so she is authentic, but omitted details from her personal life so she remained professional. In this way, she modeled for students what is appropriate and inappropriate in a professional environment.

However, it was difficult to convey to students what they do not see. The EP instructor was "very open and very honest and very approachable, and students connect with me, they connect with me and we have that good rapport, because I like my classroom to be welcoming and that students can talk to me" (pstrn 85291,85522). The instructor wanted students to connect with her to facilitate their learning; she could connect with them as well, but needed to monitor those connections in order to teach professionalism. So the EP instructor assumed a warm, giving demeanour and hoped students would see the classroom as a safe, fun space for learning, but

Sometimes that can be misconstrued, and people see that as what it's not. And so it's for me now I have to kind of make sure that I keep going back to professional, keep being professional.... maintaining that professionalism and not forgetting that line. (pstrn 85599,86203)

She thought educators “have to be real. But I’m not saying you come in here and you pour your absolute life out” (pstn 34357,34450). The EP instructor had to constantly preserve that line, while staying authentic.

Her modeling was simultaneously a conscious act, an exercise in living her philosophy, and an inevitable consequence of being an instructor and role model. The interaction between the instructor and the context of instructing (her environment) are inseparable and continuously created her perspective and actions around her philosophy and practice; they were mutually embedded contexts (Rogoff, 1990). Her professionalism was both informed and shaped by her position and her values. The composite instructor emphasized that modeling

Takes a lot of work sometimes, if I’m getting grumpy...I’m getting a barrage of things that happen where I think, “boy oh boy why haven’t you seen this before”... I have to take that time to think “I’m only hearing what I’m hearing and there might be more that that student doesn’t feel comfortable enough yet to share with me” so, I step back a minute and model the skills that I hope that students will be able to use out in the field.” (pstn 52314,52893)

The EP instructor did not just model ethics, her pedagogical philosophy and empathy to her students; she consciously pushed herself to embody those things. She engaged in emotional labour. The EP instructor knew that as “your relationships get that much stronger, you can impart information on them a lot easier” (pstn18634, 18743). Of course, the instructor has content knowledge, but maintained it was through relationships that learning takes place. For example, before one interview, an instructor

came in with a large box and explained she was about to do some planning. Her planning materials consisted of books with titles like: The Lost Art of Listening; The Empowerment Mindset; Learning in Relationship; Encouraging the Heart; Exploring Perspectives; The Messages Workbook; and Leading With Emotional Intelligence. The instructor's belief that learning takes place through relationships was encapsulated in her planning box.

The EP instructor formed professional relationships with her students in different ways. Perhaps she invited students “who wanted to work more on relationships, our relationships, and [the instructor's] ability to understand relationships, she took time out of her personal life to bring us together once a week...for a discussion group” (pstrn 20307, 20616). Or she began “a research project...we had three nights, we took them to Quadra Island to see the Reggio influenced center...and offered three nights of inquiry, and it was reflective nights. That was really powerful” (pstrn 62698, 63262). It may have been through sharing stories and mistakes: “we reflect on things that worked for us...and sometimes we'll bring forth something that didn't work and we'll say “before I tell you what I did...tell me what you think I could've done”” (pstrn 49075,49407). In these examples one can see how the EP instructor physically or metaphorically left the boundaries of her classroom by bringing them on a trip or sharing vulnerable stories of failure, but always remains grounded in authentic pedagogical discussion. Regardless of her method, the EP instructor found ways to form relationships with students that was personal, but still based around the curriculum content or pedagogical philosophy. In this way, she connected with them on a deep and highly professional platform.

Although never explicitly mentioned, the composite instructor appeared to align herself with a style of andragogy known as transformative learning, a way that individuals transform our perspectives or mind-sets, to make them more “inclusive, discriminating, open, emotionally capable of change, and reflective so that they may generate beliefs and opinions that will prove more true or justified to guide action” (Mezirow, 2001, p. 7). The instructor was adamant that “you have to know yourself” (pstrn 25688, 25713) and engaged in activities that were always

Linking... back to who you are and what you value, what’s your principles...that’s always your focus. And if you know your focus well enough, then you can relax in it, and see other people’s and not be threatened by it...and you’ve seen where it can complement and align and then where it doesn’t, that’s a learning opportunity. (pstrn 26792, 27248).

She reflected on how “it’s almost demanded that you have to have that relationship with the child, this free relationship with the family...how do you build that relationship if you never are allowed to be real and yourself, or bring yourself into your work?” (pstrn 36046,36340). The EP instructor immersed herself deeply into her practice to a point where she “lives her philosophy” (pstrn 33270, 33291); she needed only to exercise an occasional editing process to keep her personal life and her professional life separate.

As she established rapport with her students, the EP instructor also needed to establish classroom boundaries and expectations. However, she acknowledged her adult students by inviting them to co-construct a “classroom contract” (pstrn 17903, 17919). At the same time, the EP instructor “communicates to students that I’m not

going to chase after them. There's policies, procedures, content, guidelines, assignment due dates, weekly schedules—it's all there. If you fall behind, you know, you know how to contact me. In some ways, I step back." (p. 54271, 54543). She communicated that "life happens" (p. 18383, 18394), but when it does they need to handle it professionally:

It's not helpful, and it's not professional to come and give us a list of reasons why you're showing up for class today without your assignment that's due, so instead there is extensions available to everyone, and it's about planning. It's about the week before, or whatever, you're realizing you're not can make this deadline, then you-the extension is a form that allows them to come up with a plan: here's my plan....it's not about putting excuses on the form it's about "here's my plan, I'm not gonna have it in this day, but I am going to have it in." (p. 66625, 67283)

The EP instructor solved the problem of balancing her duty to her job and the field with her personal philosophy. She did this by creating rich, professional relationships with her students, modeling authenticity and professionalism, and clearly explaining the classroom expectations.

Early Program Character Sketches

The Early Program (EP) Student Character

The EP student, as constructed by instructors, was a young, naïve woman in her early twenties. Of course, students of different ages, ethnicities, experience levels, and dispositions entered ECE programs, but often a student who enters the program is

young, inexperienced, and immature. “Her parents pay for her to go. Okay this is a one year program, oh I like children enough” (pstrn 24409, 24502). She liked children, “but it’s not something that she’s been desiring to do for years and years” (pstrn 24567, 24678) She came into the program “egocentric” (pstrn 51962, 51972) and inexperienced, perhaps even a bit lazy: “Early childhood education, that’s easier, if I don’t want to work so hard this is where I go” (pstrn 62106, 62162).

The identity phase of an EP student does not last very long – one-year ECE programs can be intensive (5 to 8 hour days, 5 days a week with homework each evening), so the EP student becomes immersed in the program quickly. The EP student found ECE attractive for a variety of reasons. Perhaps she “can’t get into tourism” (pstrn 62485, 62527) so she “goes into ECE” (pstrn 62485, 62527) because she “thinks it is an easy route” (pstrn 62027, 62059). It’s possible the relative cost and length of the program to the number of job opportunities were attractants. Within the 5 research sites at the time of this writing, costs for the certificate program ranged from \$4,485 to \$12,000. Once ECEs have their license to practice, they need to accrue 400 hours (approximately 10 weeks) of related work experience and to participate in 40 hours of professional development every five years in order to maintain their license (Ministry of Children and Family Development, n.d.). Beyond low license-maintenance requirements, another factor may be that ECE jobs are generally plentiful: a survey of ECE job boards will return several available ECE jobs with new jobs added most days of the week.

The EP student was learning to teach. She was not just a receptacle for knowledge; the EP student composite arrived in the classroom having grown up in school and spent approximately 13000 hours observing and imitating their teachers, and

negotiating power dynamics in order to succeed (Britzman, 2007). The EP student composite understood teaching to be a straightforward profession from her years of observation. The student's sense of self and how that student navigated the world was inseparable from her lived experience growing up as a student, and the EP student still clung to childhood fantasies of school and playing teacher (Britzman, 2003, 2006, 2007). Britzman (2007), stated that the notion of development, rather than a "correction of childhood" (p.1), is more "composing and revising a history of learning to live with others" (p.1). She seems to suppose here that education's higher purpose is relational and peaceful, rather than academic and cognitive. However, the EP student entered the program with at least 13 years of education behind her, 3 years of her experience of students and teachers, and of what learning looked like, which more often looked like education towards academic and cognitive supremacy. The EP student's biggest challenge was allowing her instructor to uncover and deconstruct some of her assumptions about teaching and learning.

The Early Program Instructor Character

In the interviews, instructors spoke more of their function as an instructor than their identity per se. Whereas students experience the ECEP once, as learners, instructors experienced the ECEP repeatedly, as guides. Seen this way, it is logical that instructors spoke of their identity as "educator as functionary" (van Huizen, van Oers, & Wubbels, 2005, p. 269). The EP composite instructor character was an experienced female ECE who now instructs at the college level, and has been for several years. In the beginning of the program, the EP instructor's first function was to reach out to the student and help them feel welcome and valued. She recalled the things she respected

about her previous instructors when she was a student, such as the “blending of personal and professional” (pstrn 39603, 39639) and how they “truly listened to what their students were saying” (pstrn 11214, 11227) and strived to provide those experiences for her students. The EP instructor sat “on the playground... with one student... Their first week with me, and said “what do you see”, and we had a list of questions that we’d come up with, and just, you know started to build relationship right there, not only faculty-to-class, but in these one-to-one situations” (pstrn 32919, 33328).

She thought “one of the basic ways that we teach students how to have relationships is indirectly by having a relationship with them, a professional relationship with them” (pstrn 51824, 52016). She endeavoured to create relationships with her students that were warm and professional. In the beginning of the term, she asked her students “how do we want to be together?” (pstrn 70141, 70169) and from those answers created a “classroom contract” (17903, 17919) that, alongside the Code of Ethics (ECEBC, 2008), guided the decisions and interactions within the classroom. By co-constructing the guidelines for the classroom with her students, the EP instructor showed that she valued student input and expected students to be in ethical relationships with each other.

The EP instructor also had a duty to show students their connectedness to the world, that they were in a community: “I think that a lot of what I do... is really try to find ways to have students be aware that they’re connected to a group, a class. And to take that forward with them when they go out into their practicum or worksite” (pstrn 48814, 48926). The EP instructor noted that being in relationship inevitably invites conflict and “sometimes for early childhood educators that is a huge hurdle for a variety of reasons

for how they've come to their choice in fields” (pstrn 39557, 39876), so she took care to coach and mentor her students to view conflict more as simply “encountering something different and how to work through that, so it’s not fearful” (pstrn 39630, 39727).

The EP instructor emphasized that being an early childhood educator is a professional career choice. The instructor built student professionalism in a few ways; by “instilling values around...the professionalism of the student’s choice to be an early childhood educator” (pstrn 20072, 20159), and by “reshaping students’ professional identities” (pstrn 56720, 56847). The EP instructor began by instilling small habits.

We’re not calling them kids, they’re not baby goats. We refer to them as children (pstrn 37575, 37656);

Never refer to yourselves as a daycare worker. Refer to yourself as an early childhood educator, or preschool educator, because that’s what you are (30028, 30174);

[I’m teaching them] that children aren’t ‘cute’, they’re capable...and it’s changing that language piece (pstrn 67801, 68327);

We asked students to record how many times... they heard themselves using negative language, and they had no idea...how frequently this was happening in their lives. They were amazed at what they heard, they were amazed at what they said (pstrn 42232, 43084).

However small, these habits affected the way the student viewed herself and her field. Through language and behaviour, the EP instructors reinforced that ECE is a profession and that ECEs are professional. Eventually, through relationships with the instructor and classroom experiences, the EP instructor hoped the Early Program student would uncover and possibly reshape her thoughts around ECE as a profession.

As her final task, the EP instructor strove to create conditions in her classroom that promoted professional, honest dialogue by “creating a safe environment in the room” (pstrn 34513, 34559) for “people to speak their voice and have an opinion and not having that opinion immediately judged and people jumping on them” (pstrn 34907, 35041). She did this by herself being open to diverse perspectives and encouraging respectful debate in the classroom, for example “the first step is to praise somebody for [disagreeing]—acknowledging their judgment: “Well thank you for standing up and saying you disagree and why you disagree in a respectful manner” (pstrn 85320, 85533). In the Early Program, the instructor composite needed to establish boundaries for a respectful, professional classroom while still forming rapport with her students. She accomplished this by forming professional relationships with her students and creating a professional and safe classroom environment.

Summary of Early Program Characters

In the Early Program, the student and instructor’s relationship has just formed. The EP student entered for a variety of reasons, and the instructor’s job was to quickly establish that the student has made a professional choice to be an early childhood educator, and to communicate that the program is challenging. Together, they built the guidelines of the classroom, started to form the students’ concept of themselves as a professional, and proceeded together into the Mid Program.

Mid Program

Problem-Solution in Mid Program

Across the program, the fundamental problem was the balance between duty to one's job as an instructor and to one's personal philosophy when instructing adults. In the Mid Program (MP), the instructor transitioned from her warm, welcoming mentorship role into a provocative, challenging educator. She needed to balance this with students' needs while still acknowledging that some students may not be well suited to the ECEP. During the Mid Program, her problem was this: *How can I push my students while still supporting them?*

The MP instructor solved the problem for this program segment by educating for "personal mastery" (pstrn 28520, 28589), and also, when necessary "letting them fall...sometimes you just have to let them find their way a little bit" (pstrn 54634, 54827). The MP instructor also began laying the groundwork for learning assistance or dismissal if she perceived her students to be struggling. "Out of full classes of 24, I expect 2 or 3 students to be advised out by Christmas" (pstrn 3105, 3187). Some students may have come into the program thinking it is difficult to fail:

There's always that question in practicum because it's a pass/fail, [and the students say] 'Yeah but nobody fails'- I always look at them and say "yes actually! I failed one last semester, and the one before that...Wake up folks. We're not about to pass you if we don't feel comfortable that you're going to be alright with children. (pstrn 63367, 63708)

The MP instructor reasoned that early childhood educators “as a whole—very generalized statement here—don't see ourselves as leaders” (pstn 28701, 28778). So, the MP instructor worked to foster what she termed ‘personal mastery’ by building confidence, awareness and leadership in her students because she saw it “as a critical thing that we have to help students work through in order to understand themselves as educators and professionals is to really understand themselves first and the value they bring to the field as an educator” (pstn 39878, 40113).

As she only had one short year with her students, the instructor needed to employ her relationships with them and their relationships with each other to “make visible” their “assumptions” (pstn 30823, 31223) that constrained and controlled the relationships they would form with children, colleagues, and families. One key assumption the MP instructor worked on with her students was seeing conflict as “a negative thing” (pstn 39392, 39419): “we seem to be in a sector that has difficulty identifying when there’s conflict, or they identify when there’s conflict but they’re not sure how to handle it” (pstn 14137, 14309). The instructor’s goal was to reframe conflict and help students “step back from confrontation and instead, become curious. And how does that curiosity and wonder relate to the relationships they develop with those people” (pstn 15320, 15487). To this end, as part of practicum coursework, the MP student was asked to

initiate a challenging conversation with her practicum mentor in some way.... it can be small or large in nature, but in some way she has to look at a practice objectively that doesn’t seem to fit in some way for her with what she is learning or what she believes, and she have to

find a way to bring it up with her practicum instructor....just how to raise any conversation in ways that doesn't humiliate or defeat people, but rather just raises it as a topic of practice. (pstrn 38701, 39146)

The MP instructor continuously pushed her students to think about how the way they treat others reflects what they think about them:

I can recall a practicum...my colleagues and I had seen enough...that we said "okay" so we told them "we're gonna have dinner during this seminar". And so we set them all at a table, and we went around and put bibs on a couple of them, and we went behind...and we pushed their chairs into the table. And then we plopped the spaghetti onto the table in front of them with no plates, no whatever, you know: here's dinner. And we talked about them to each other you know "oh she won't eat that, she doesn't like spaghetti". And we went up behind a couple of the adults and we literally wiped their noses with Kleenex, and did all the things that we have seen being done to children. And watch their horror, like: "what are you doing!?" It allowed us to then have a conversation about relationships: "Well come on, if you're offended by this, why on earth do we feel we have the right to do this to children, they're not dolls!" You need to put yourself in those children's shoes, and you need to give them the respect that you would've expected.

The MP instructor composite asked: “How can I push my students while still supporting them?” By challenging them, providing experiences that uncovered assumptions, and building skills that support professionalism, ethics, and relationship building, the MP instructor found solutions to the fundamental problem at this program stage.

Mid Program Character Sketches

The Mid Program Student Character

The Mid Program student had been in the program a while. She learned theories of early childhood development. She had perhaps made some friends in the program, and preferred to do group work with them. She was learning how to value different perspectives and that it was “okay to have a difference of opinion, and what I have to learn to do is listen...and take some of this person’s point and the point of this person and blend it together” (pstrn 18642, 18782). The MP student existed in and co-created the cultural milieu dictated to some extent by her instructor who valued certain practices, language habits, and paradigms (Rogoff, 1990), and as the MP student had these experiences on the social level, they echoed on the individual level as information was assimilated and assumptions were uncovered (Vygotsky, 1978).

The MP student had a practicum; she was “intimidated because the center staff are not looking at me as a professional; I’m still a student” (pstrn 39083, 39184). As the MP student composite encountered the diversity of perspectives in the field and saw differences between “what I’m taught in class [versus] what’s actually being done” (pstrn 23916,24040). She was beginning to reflect on her own practice and engage in conflict, whether pedagogical or personal, with other members of her class. These conflicts were

not avoided and were even facilitated by her instructor who “will use it” (pstrn 40960, 40976) to reform and reframe the students’ perceptions of, and participation in, disagreements. The MP student was learning to perceive conflict as stepping into “curiosity as to how someone’s perspective is different from her own” (pstrn 14467, 14577). This grounded the student in an epistemology where “argumentation is the central form of social exchange that brings about shared thinking in a way that advances individuals’ knowledge and perspective” (Miller, 1987, p. 231). Via careful and deliberate instruction, the MP student composite was learning to say, “We are in this together, and sometimes it’s not just about my piece in it, it’s making space and saying “okay, I don’t necessarily agree with what you’re saying, but do I always have to agree to be in relationship with you”” (pstrn 100946, 101069). The student was learning that being understanding was not just about the children in her care, but “to go one more step, like to her coworkers and to her families that she serves, she has to be non-judgmental” (pstrn 63766, 63962).

The Mid Program Instructor Character

With the program well underway, the instructor shifted into a probing, challenging, mentoring role and monitored to ensure she did not “spoon feed” (pstrn 54108, 54126) her students. The MP instructor knew her students and continually assessed their development to see how or where students needed to grow to be successful. She was developing a professional, mentoring relationship with her students, and her hope was that as her students learned “from my example, and as it becomes part of them, and I would hope that they would then take that to children too” (pstrn 79928, 80131).

She tried to teach the strength of relationships by being “open-minded. And so when my students have different perspectives from me, I go “oh I hadn’t thought of that. Oh thanks for sharing, instead of thinking there’s only one right way and you must think my way” (pstrn 27507, 27702). In this example, the MP instructor switched from an external, modeling form of speech (i.e., “I go”, implying a performance) to narrating her internal thought process (i.e., “instead of *thinking* there’s only one right way”), indicating that although she was modeling, she was also aligning her actions with her internal beliefs. The MP instructor also reflected her modeling and valuing of relationship in her interactions with her colleagues.

I think because we communicate to each other fairly well, you know, in terms of finding opportunity in the conflicts, or differences of opinion that we experience, I think we may be—that might be one of the layers in which we teach our students about relationships (pstrn 56898, 57175).

Her valuing of relationships appeared in the way she reminds herself to view and treat her students: “sometimes in a caring field the instinct is to try and solve and fix the situations they approach us with” but if she believes “students are capable...then what kind of coaching can I do to help them go out and approach that situation and feel some success at working through it?” (pstrn 13219, 13601).

The MP instructor knew that to teach effectively she has to “be real” (pstrn 34370, 34376) and “live the philosophy” (pstrn 33270, 33291). For her, teaching was an intrapersonal process that was modeled: “my job is to listen to where they’re coming from, and maybe probe or challenge or add another thought to it. But certainly not to

change who they are, but I want them to think about, as I constantly do, “what am I missing, what am I not thinking about?” (pstrn 58096, 58387). Even in conflict with her own colleagues, “I try to step back from “I’m controlling this situation” and say “wait a minute, our instructors are capable people and they’re reasonable people so maybe I’ve missed something and how can they participate in this?” (pstrn 35752, 35997). In this way, the MP instructor pursued two aims: growing as an authentic educator who is critically reflective, and modeling that behaviour to her students. The MP instructor questioned her judgments of people as part of her reflective practice: “everybody is judgmental...If we are judgmental, why are we? What is bringing us to that? What is it about our value system that is making us feel this way? Again, looking at our filters, what is that filter?” (pstrn 64039, 64290).

The MP instructor knew that a large part of her job in nurturing students was reframing their perception that “everything is about the children. “There won’t be your work with children if you don’t understand yourself or others that you’re working with” (pstrn 42839, 42572). The instructor understood that for many nascent educators, conflict is “a negative thing” (pstrn 39392, 39419) that may heavily inform their “choice in fields” (pstrn 39557, 39876). The MP instructor viewed conflict resolution as a key leadership skill (Boardman, 2003), so when viewing and treating her students as leaders, she also needed not only to build up their ability to negotiate conflict, but also change their perception of conflict as something to be avoided but to “look in different layers of conflict and that it can be a positive thing as well” (pstrn 19177, 19282). She also knew that for her young, sometimes self-centered students, it could be a “developmental thing” (pstrn 49218, 49264) when they are “not able to get beyond their

own perspective” (pstrn 49825, 49868). As a part of their practicum, she also asked her students, “How do you see your mentor?” (or practicum sponsor) (pstrn 62579, 62600).

This translated into two things: one, asking

Them to have a conversation with their mentor about their mentor’s world, not [their] world...having the conversation that’s not about the student, but that’s about building a connection with why the mentor has chosen to work in the same field that the student has and.... were they intentional about when they chose to ask for help with assignments, when they handed things in...[did] they recognize their mentor’s time? It’s about recognizing yourself to be in relationship with that person, not giving your assignment to mark the second before it’s due, so those kinds of things are built into their practicum competencies as well” (pstrn 62835, 63215).

Summary of Mid Program Characters

In the Mid Program, the instructor composite deliberately challenged and pushed the student composite to reflect on her assumptions about children and learning, to practice the skills she was learning in class, and to reframe conflict as a necessary, even positive, part of life. Her challenge in this segment could be phrased thusly: *How can I push my students while still supporting them?* Supporting one’s students, for the MP instructor, translated into “believing students are capable” (pstrn 13381, 13415). If the instructor composite believed students were capable, then she was “not gonna chase after them” (pstrn 54314, 54344). She trusted them to manage themselves and communicate when they needed extra support or time. She challenged them by

provoking them: “sometimes we get the surface answers, and students think “well that’s the right answer” and I say to them “wow isn’t that a nice answer; so, that’s what I wanted to hear, how about some real truthful answers?”” (pstrn 36783, 37091). At this point, the Mid Program instructor moved into the final segment of the program, the end segment, where she bid goodbye to her students and prepared for the next cohort of ECE students.

End Program

Problem-Solution in End Program

Although I am using a problem-solution narrative strategy (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002), in this segment, it looks slightly different. The problem is more reflective; the End Program (EndP) instructor composite asked herself: *Am I confident this student is fit to be an early childhood educator and, if not, what is my next step?* In the End Program, the instructor composite and student composite came to a place where they parted ways. As the EndP instructor put it, “you have the Ds and the Bs and the Cs graduating; they’re not all the As walking through” (pstrn 68590, 68752). The EndP instructor knew she could not directly “teach relationships” (pstrn 57432, 57360), but she had invested time with her class building relationships and teaching “some of the skills that help build relationships” (pstrn 68525, 68796). She tried to reframe the students’ perceptions of “the value they bring to the field as educators” (pstrn 40070, 40114), of conflict, and to increase the student’s self-awareness and build leadership skills. At the end of the program, however, she could not assess the student’s willingness to use the skills she was taught: “Like, I can hand you a shovel and know

that you know how to dig a hole, but then...I don't know if you are ever going to dig another hole....I don't think that we actually can actually assess people's abilities to form relationships" (pstrn 68358, 68704).

Knowing that early childhood is a field that struggles to garner respect, the composite instructor understood that "our expectation is for students to succeed, right, that is our main goal, because it looks good for us, it looks good for the college, it looks good for the student" (pstrn 79891, 80055). The college as an institution may have had an expectation for the student to succeed for superficial reasons, but the EndP instructor translated this into viewing the student as capable of growth and success: similar to her image of the child (Edwards et al., 1998). She encouraged growth and change in students, but knew that she could only get them to a point: "I have high standards, and if I'm passing you it's because you've come close to meeting my standards" (pstrn 78607, 78706).

The composite instructor also spoke of looking at "the whole person" (pstrn 35337, 35348) and modeling empathy, understanding, and "providing opportunities for growth" (pstrn 84577, 84600). The composite instructor tried to encourage the EndP student in her strengths and build her skills where she needed support:

Oh wow you're right on the cusp—what can we do to help you – here's some opportunities, you know, let's extend the practicum, or go to a different site maybe for six weeks to see if the skills are different in a different place. Believe it or not, some people just do not get along, and that's alright. (pstrn 85717, 86040)

The composite instructor tried to identify students early in the term for academic or counselling support and provided students with chances to resubmit work, extend their practicum, move their practicum, or perhaps retake a course because “one of the core values I think that I see in our program, is that we will find—we will listen, and we will find ways for growth and see where the student is at in terms of growth” (pstrn 86691, 86879).

The student would graduate from her program and begin working in a center where “she’s in-between all of the discourses and messages and the policies and the materials and a curriculum guidelines that again script her back into comfortable positions” (pstrn 11375, 11572) where reflective practice was not habitual and it was easy to fall back into “teaching the way she thinks, whether she makes that up or not” (pstrn 10903, 11065). The EndP instructor therefore focused on building the strengths and leadership potential of the student with the understanding that a) the instructor could only assess that the student’s ability to use the skill but not her willingness to use it b) the instructor could not help students once they exited the program, and c) that in many cases she may pass a student who, in the EndP instructor’s view, was not completely prepared to be an early childhood educator. So the composite instructor educated to the best of her ability and sent students with what she perceived to be a crucial skill set, then the EndP instructor moved on and prepared for her next cohort of students.

End Program Character Sketches

The End Program Student Character

The EndP instructor discursively constructed the End Program student character as a good or a bad student.

Good student. The instructor composite infrequently discussed the good student; the good student composite exists therefore, in opposition to the bad student composite. The good student passed her courses and practicums, and maintained respectful relationships in her class. The instructor hoped for the student to have had also had one moment in her program where she reframed her perception of herself, of early childhood education, or the communication practices and principles she learned in class. However, the EndP instructor was cognizant of the “student’s journey” (pstrn 1308, 1330), and was at least satisfied with both the student’s academic performance and intrapersonal growth. This instructor knew that when the student composite gets out into the field she would “klutz along” (pstrn 47897, 47907) as she connected “her theory to her practice” (pstrn 19633, 19659) and hopefully deepen her understanding of how her teaching philosophy relates to her practice as an early childhood educator. Regardless of whether she did, however, was out of the instructor’s control.

I have students that are taught in the past do fantastic in the course, did exactly what they needed to do in the course, you can see the-oh yes, you're doing the right thing, they get out there, and they either get lazy and just don't go to the effort, or they're modelling somebody who doesn't have the same kind of level of training. (pstrn 26707, 26041)

The good student was merely satisfactory or one of the “students who come onboard were first timers and just, you know, take it and run with it, they’re really eager to hear and listen” (pstn 50576, 50722). However, ECEP graduates entered “a system of early childhood education in BC that is set up to fail” (pstn 27729, 27777): “We have systematic problems: we’re in three different ministries without leadership” (pstn 27038, 27122); “decision-makers are in jobs that require a bachelors degree” (pstn 27434, 27621); “we don’t have a system in place that values or supports early childhood education that will allow us to move forward” (pstn 27889, 28008); and face “a system of education where the focus is very much on the future child” (pstn 28503, 28561). The EndP instructor is commenting on the notion that “preschool” is just that: the preparation for ‘real’ school and without its own inherent value. This promotes a sort of education geared towards the purpose of creating citizens of and producers within a capitalistic economy, in which social and emotional literacy and relationships take a back seat to academic success and economic contributions to society. The graduate was sent out with “tools in her tool belt” (pstn 98044, 98066) that help build relationships and has demonstrated her ability to use those tools. However, her instructor could not assess “her willingness to use them in appropriate situations” (pstn 68210, 68280) and thus could only release the student into the field armed with the best tools the instructor can provide.

Bad student. There were two types of bad students: bad students who do graduate and those who do not graduate. This section only describes the bad students who graduate. During interviews, the composite instructor relayed how “you can have obnoxious people...you can’t fail them based on their personality” (pstn 68413, 68508).

The bad student “might be strong academically, but have problems with everybody in the room, and then what do you do? There is no basis to fail them...there will always be students who are difficult and who you know will have difficulty with colleague relationships...but there is no basis to fail a student...on that” (pstrn 67786, 68185). The instructor can try to employ the conflicts in meaningful ways in her classroom, but at the same time acknowledges some students seem to struggle with relational ability. The bad student character was a student who, like the good student, passed the academic courses and practicums (which were pass/fail), but the instructor felt was unfit in such a way that she could not officially assess.

The EndP instructor emphasized that students had to perform well with children, but “it's the relationship that we have with ourselves, with our coworkers that kind of moulds the environment that you're going to provide for the children” (pstrn 44383, 44538). There were students who “should have learning plans in place {from the beginning}...and the student is not demonstrating the skills to be an early childhood educator...But, they've passed through to a point....” (pstrn 107904, 108245). The EndP instructor saw that as students go farther into the program it “becomes harder to say “you can't progress”... early on, there are lots of ways to get that message to students” (pstrn 65711, 65888).

The bad student may look no different on paper from the good student; the inadequacy of the bad student rested with her relationships with her classmates, instructors, and perhaps mentors or colleagues at her practicum placements. This puts the EndP instructor composite in an awkward position – she did not feel she could “sign off on” (pstrn 108114, 108132) the bad student, but at the same time she was near

completion, “they have paid a lot of money for these courses” (pstn 79848, 79887), and “there is no [official] basis to fail them” (pstn 67891, 67913). When students passed their courses academically but caused many interpersonal problems, the EndP instructor had only unofficial ways to withhold approval: “There’s people I have passed and said quite plainly: “don’t ever come to me for a reference letter”” (pstn 68847, 68953).

The EndP instructor appeared to view the working conditions as an effective tool for revealing true passion for the field: “even if the student gets the certificate, it doesn’t matter—even if she gets a certificate and an ECE license, she gets the certificate, gets out there... How long are you going to last? You’re going to weed yourself out” (pstn 80150, 80367). The EndP instructor passed bad students when she had no tangible basis to fail them, and trusted that since early childhood is such an underpaid field fraught with problems, the bad student would burn out and eventually change professions. The instructor believed that the only way to last in the field, as it exists in British Columbia, is if “you truly love it” (pstn 48147, 48163). The EndP instructor seemed to view the working conditions in BC as a sort of last practicum that would weed out the good from the bad, and counted on that when she found herself passing a student whom she knew was not ready.

The End Program Instructor Character

The EndP instructor composite knew, “I’m not here to change anybody” (pstn 57652, 57684). She knew she was there to teach the material, hopefully “provide other pathways...multiple ways of knowing and being and thinking” (pstn 57722, 57836), and at the end of the program, she knew she did the best she could, and she tried to let go of her attachment to the student. She knew that what happened to the student after the

program was outside of her control and she could only control what goes on inside her class.

The EndP instructor believed in “seeing and treating students as leaders” (pstrn 28553, 28588) and “providing opportunities for growth” (pstrn 84569, 84600), so students would begin to see themselves in this way and act accordingly. Meanwhile, the instructor composite was also passionate about raising the respect for and “improving quality” (pstrn 26478, 26492) in the field of ECE in British Columbia. According to the EndP instructor, many women in the program do not “see themselves as leaders” (pstrn 28701, 28778). So, the EndP instructor projected what she hoped was an image of a thoughtful, passionate professional and treated her students like leaders with the hope that they would begin to follow her lead. The EndP instructor

...struggled with assessment a little bit, because sometimes I think “oh, she doesn’t really get it yet” or “they haven’t internalized this concept yet,” but on the other hand they know how to use the skill if they choose to use it. And so, I’ve had to focus in on them demonstrating their abilities-to use it. Like an I-message: can they use an I-message in conversation? And if they can, that’s the only assessment that I can give them, I cannot assess their willingness to use them in appropriate situations. I cannot assess whether they’re going to continue to use them (pstrn 67757, 68346).

The EndP instructor has come to a place of acceptance that she could only do so much with her students, and she trusted that the ECE field would either help students grow or weed them out. Although this may seem cold, I argue any instructor cultivates similar

detachment. The difference lies in that the student cares for a vulnerable population. Bound by the competencies and her accreditation board, the instructor can only ensure the student will keep children safe and cared for. She cannot assess anything else.

Summary of End Program Characters

At the end of the ECE program, students imagined their future and looked forward to their career with trepidation and excitement. The EndP instructor was looking past her students, out into the field, and hoping she prepared them as adequately as possible for a broken system. The instructor hoped that “[they] will be the face of change, [they] will be the ones who go out there and make a difference” (pstrn 80484, 80682) but she also wondered “how many of these students are actually competent by the time they are finished the course?” (pstrn 80986, 81096). “We try to put so much confidence in students that there’s going to be growth, and we would like to think that when they become practitioners they will grow, but we can only give them the starting point, and they’ve got to take it forward, and it doesn’t always happen. That’s the risk you take” (pstrn 82638, 82925). The EndP instructor could not “change anybody” (pstrn 57653, 57865) she could only “listen, challenge, and probe” (pstrn 57526, 57572) and understood that she sent them off with a shovel and has taught them to use it, but cannot ask anything of her students anymore. Although the EndP instructor taught tangible skills, she could not teach students to use them outside of the classroom.

Program Structure and Learning & Teaching About Relationships Through Instructor-Student Relationships

In this chapter, I described a composite instructor character and composite student character as they progressed through a hypothetical school year. At the beginning, middle, and end of the program I analyzed how their identities had formed or changed, and how they fit together at that moment in time. I positioned the instructor as the protagonist, working to solve the overarching problem: *How do I find the balance of doing my duty to my students while doing my duty to the program and to children?* The instructor did not solve this problem directly, but worked to accomplish the same goal by solving three smaller problem-solutions in the Early, Mid, and End Program. In the Early Program, the instructor composite's problem was to establish the classroom expectations dictated by the institution, alongside her personal expectations for students while still forming a rapport with them within a short period of time. The EP instructor composite solved the problem for this time segment having a professional relationship with her students and acknowledging the experience they bring into her classroom. In the Mid Program, the instructor composite's challenge was to balance pushing her students while still supporting them. The MP instructor solved the problem for this program segment by seeing and treating her students as capable leaders, which occasionally involved letting them fall without immediately rescuing them. In the End Program, the instructor's problem was reflective. She needed to decide if she was confident her student was fit to be an early childhood educator in assessable ways, and, if not, what her next step would be. In the End Program, her only action is to pass or fail

the student; she has done everything she could, and at this point she released her investment in the composite student and trusted that if the student was not adequate, the context of early childhood education in British Columbia would soon cause her to quit. Then, she looked ahead to her next cohort of students and began again.

Chapter Five: Discussion and Implications

I began this thesis asking, “How are relationships framed, valued, taught and assessed in ECEPs in British Columbia?” Asking the question, “How do you teach relationships,” while perhaps broad, was the core of what I wanted to investigate (see Appendix F for a discussion on my use of language).

Overall, instructors spoke of cultivating a “culture of valuing relationships” (pstrn 86088, 86170) in one—or both—of two ways: by “being in one with them” (pstrn 37642, 37663), and by “the way that we put students together, or the way we connect them, the expectations we have for them to work as a group, or in partnerships... [all] adds to their perception that we value relationships (pstrn 51095, 51412). Adult learners learn best when their experience and personhood is acknowledged (Terry, 2006), so as the ECE instructors proceeded through the year, they engaged in relationships with their students and facilitated students’ engagement in relationships with each other to make visible the power of relationships for learning.

The positive correlation between children’s academic success and a positive relationship with their educator is mirrored, although weaker, for adult or mature students (Terry, 2006). The composite instructor believed and affirmed that relationships drive learning. Andragogy supports this position by asserting a suitable climate for adult learning involves mutual respect, support, collaboration, openness, and fun (Knowles, 1972). Information-delivery teaching styles leave the student with their underlying assumptions intact (Taylor, Marienau, & Fiddler, 2000), and the composite instructor emphasized that effective instruction revolves around uncovering, and possibly

critiquing, assumptions: “students are coming in with this notion of what a teacher is and what a teacher does, and so for us it’s to re-tweak that in the very little time we have with them.... to give them ...another way of looking at things” (pstn 58226,58473). Although teaching relationships per se was not feasible, relationships were taught through the culture of the program:

I think that the advantage of [our] program is that some of these things aren’t necessarily taught, but there’s certainly— there’s a culture within [our program] that really values relationships, or that rationality of being open to ideas, embracing multiple perspectives.... Because the culture of the students and the way that the classes are, and the things that we value...I don’t know that it can be directly taught, but it certainly is lived out in a particular way (pstn 85943, 86646)

Although much of the research suggests socio-cognitive benefits of relationships for learning, this was not mentioned once during the interviews. Rather, instructors framed relationships as a situated practice of honouring, listening, and relating to others. This suggests relationships are intrinsically important to function successfully in society. The composite instructor emphasized:

That when we are working with children or with others, we’re always engaged in thinking “how are we honouring” — not in a relativist approach obviously, because there are things that are wrong — but “how are we being ethical and how are we listening to multiple perspectives?” (pstn 24615,25112)

Instructors were unhesitant in asserting that they do value relationships, they do frame them as essential to being an early childhood educator, and they do teach relationship skills. However, instructors were divided on the idea of assessing relationships. One instructor was adamant that she

[does not see]...relationship as something that, as a thing, you can look at itself. Like it's not this thing that I can—I don't even know how you would assess a relationship, but you can engage in a dialogue and be part of it....I don't know, [relationships are] not this thing that can be evaluated. I don't know that I could evaluate any kind of relationship. (pstrn 82827, 83378)

Other instructors found the concept of relationship assessment intriguing: “and what a tangible way to say we value this and here's how we can request some quality around that, or some consistency....Interesting...I'm thinking [about that].” (pstrn 75867, 76024). Instructors agreed that: “it's very difficult to think about assessment” (pstrn 19956, 20009), but that when one does assess it:

The core of that assessment should be helping and working with the students to be able to connect their practice—what they're doing—with the theories that are guiding them, so that they actually can look and see if there is some congruency happening there...people have the best intentions in terms of their relationships with families, with children, with each other, but what's missing is the congruency between theory and practice” (pstrn 20087, 20545).

Balancing Duty to ECE Students and Duty to the Program to Teach

About Teaching Children

Balancing the duties is at the core of the fundamental tension in this narrative, and can be understood by looking to the dynamics of pedagogy and andragogy (Knowles, 1980). Knowles positions pedagogy (the science of teaching children) over the set of classroom techniques that evolved throughout monastic Europe between the seventh and twelfth century, including such techniques as assigned readings, quizzes, dense lectures, exams, drills and rote memorization; these techniques were predicated on the assumption that the purpose of education was to transmit skills and knowledge that had “stood the test of time” (Knowles, 1980, p. 40). Knowles argued this may have been effective until only recently. It was “appropriate to define education as a process of transmittal of what is known only when the time-span of major cultural change was greater than the life-span of individuals” (p.40). He suggested that in the 20th century, for the first time in history, the individual’s life span has exceeded that of major cultural change. The new challenge was to educate individuals for unknown conditions, a challenge that proved fertile ground for the inception of a different way of thinking of teaching. At the same time, educators of adults were reporting that they had strayed from the pedagogical dogma, so to speak, with positive results. From this beginning point, it became clearer that a different set of principles were necessary when teaching adults.

Andragogy (the science of teaching adults) is underpinned by five assumptions about the learner: the learner has:

(1) An independent self-concept and who can direct his or her own learning, (2) has accumulated a reservoir of life experiences that is a rich resource for learning, (3) has learning needs closely related to changing social roles, (4) is problem-centered and interested in immediate application of knowledge, and (5) is motivated to learn by internal rather than external factors. (Merriam, 2001, p. 5)

The primary critique levied against Knowles' assumptions was that they are not characteristic of adult learners only. Over time, Knowles' thinking evolved and while he originally defined pedagogy as the art and science of teaching children and andragogy as the art and science of teaching adults, he now sees them on a spectrum, each useful and appropriate when a realistic assumption for a given situation falls within that philosophy's realm (Knowles, 1980).

Given these definitions, it is ironic that this formula is backwards in an ECEP. The ECEP instructor found herself in the unique position of advocating for andragogical principles working with young children (viewing children as capable of directing their own learning, acknowledging their experiences as resources for their learning, learning through problem solving and acknowledging their internal motivation to learn) using predominantly pedagogical methodology with her adult students (exams, standards, set learning criteria, memorization, and pre-determined objectives). To some extent, it must be so — there are things that ECEP students must know and display in order to graduate from an ECEP and those things need to be measured in a quantitative way. In this way, one can see the tension between andragogy and pedagogy; the principles are

not mutually exclusive from one another and vary based on the learning situation, the learning objectives, and the disposition of the learner.

While operating within this dynamic, the instructor strove to foster leadership and personal mastery within her students. Incorporating leadership training in ECEPs has been shown to have a net positive effect on perceived competence, quality of classroom teaching practices, and quality of work life (Bloom & Sheerer, 1992). Leadership in an early childhood context offers unique dimensions that offset leadership specifically in early childhood from other definitions (Kagan, 1994)(Kagan, 1994). Specifically, leadership in early childhood embodies collaboration and collective success, and, rather than focusing on traditional and arguably masculine qualities or behaviours of the strong charismatic leader who makes unilateral, inspired decisions on behalf of an organization, it necessitates shared leadership, intimacy, flexibility, and the individualization of organizing strategies (Rodd, 2013). In support of this distinction, I supply the following definition of leadership: “Leadership is understood as a shared process where effective leaders draw on a range of strategies to achieve positive and ethical outcomes for members of the group” (Rodd, 2013, p. 12). Effective leaders have a sense of timing, and can step back, step up, push or provide opportunity in order to foster leadership (Law & Glover, 2003)(Law & Glover, 2003). For example, one instructor described an episode where she invited her students to co-teach early childhood development theory to a nursing class with her because “we look at them as competent and confident but she didn’t see that in herself until that moment” (p. 45053, 43186). This instructor is referencing her image of the educator (expanding on the expression ‘image of the child’ from the educators of Reggio Emilia (Edwards et al.,

1998). The image of the child refers to how an educator views the child subject. This instructor knew that in order to convey that she saw her students as “competent and confident” she had to treat them in a way that inferred that, i.e. inviting them to co-teach a class. One’s treatment of others, especially children, “constructs and reconstructs community and economy, ensures continuity of tradition between generations, and makes innovation and transformation possible” (Woodhead, 1996, p. 12). As instructors built leadership in their students, they guided them in knowing themselves as leaders. In this way, instructors worked to change the culture and perception of early childhood education.

The program segments are useful in helping to understand how instructors enter into, and engage in, relationship with students to facilitate their growth and learning. In the theoretical framework, I discussed how relationships cultivate learning (Vygotsky, 1978). The ECEP instructor saw the value of relationships between children, children and educators, between educators, and between educators and parents and the greater community. She strived to foster relationships between her students within her classroom. Her hope was to create an awareness that “[...] they are connected to a group; a class, and to take that forward with them” (48814,48926). The ECEP instructor composite framed relationships not only as a key tool for learning in young children, but for her adult students as well. The instructor taught tangible skills that helped build relationships, such as active listening, diffusing conflict, exercises to consider diverse perspectives, and professional language. She assessed where her students were compared to their early term on tangible skills (like an “I” message) and intangible skills

(like their willingness to use an “I” message in appropriate situations) and evaluated her students only on the skills she could tangibly assess.

The program instructor had before her three tasks: she needed to teach her students the content knowledge of early childhood education; she needed to guide and assess their disposition in order to shape and determine their suitability in working with young children; and she needed to guide and assess their professional identities to ensure they will at least maintain, if not advance, the field of early childhood education rather than detract from it. These three tasks happened concurrently and must take place within the scope of the student’s program. The instructor balanced these tasks against her classroom dynamic, the outcomes for each course, and her intention to see students succeed.

Who is the Good ECE?

Children’s lives are lived through childhoods constructed for them by adult understandings of childhood and what children are and should be.

(Mayall, 1996, p. 1)

Throughout the Early, Mid, and End Program segments, the instructor obliquely made reference to characteristics of a “Good ECE” (Langford, 2007). In deconstructing the Good ECE, Langford analyzed static identity discourses in early childhood textbooks and ECEPs in Ontario and presented five qualities that textbook authors, students and instructors agreed constructed the Good ECE: “passion, happiness, inner strength, caring, and alertness to individual children’s needs” (p. 339). Consider this interaction in response to me asking “what do you think happens after students leave”:

Instructor 2: now that, you know, [students] are no longer at college, [they're] outside the classroom, there wasn't the passion, and when you don't have passion, you don't feel it. And if you don't feel it, because a lot of times when I'm teaching students, I say are you with me? Are you feeling this? Are you feeling this-I need you to feel this, the passion that I'm feeling, which has kept me in this profession for so many years, is the (Instructor 1: exactly). is the passion that-and you can't give people passion (Instructor 1: no)

Ali: so the question that comes out of what you're saying is why are those students in this program do you think?

Instructor 1: Well it's interesting, because I think you get a variety of reasons. One is, if you get a student—and sometimes I find students that have come from other cultures, their parents just want them to do something. So their parents pay for them to go: “okay this is a one year program, oh I like children enough”, and so their parents pay for them to come into the program, and they like children well enough, sure, but it's not something that they've been desiring to do for years and years. And I didn't even start taking the ECE program until I was twenty-four, something like that, and so up until twenty-four I babysat my whole life. Then, when I graduated high school I became a nanny, and I traveled with entertainers, and I was a nanny for entertainers for seven years. And it was great fun, and I was like a

mom to those children. And I knew right from thirteen that I wanted to be with children. And so, it took me no time at all to say “yes this is what I want”, because it had been building all those years, rather than someone saying, “okay you need to do something, you need to get out there and do something” (pstrn 23551, 25589).

In this passage, the instructor conveyed how it is undesirable for students to study early childhood if they are not passionate or if they only recently discovered they wanted to be an ECE. The instructor compared students who “like children well enough” to herself, who knew from the age of thirteen that she wanted to be an ECE. These qualities of the Good ECE reveal this invisible but hegemonic discourse in ECEPs. The early childhood field is a secondary labour market (Langford, 2006), so if one is not passionate when she enters the program, the instructor hopes she will be by the time she leaves. Once out in the field, new ECEs would experience “the fragility of our system, you know, we operate—we set early childhood educators up in isolation as opposed to setting them up with {Ali: community} consultants that are coming out” (pstrn 11685, 11861). The passion of a Good ECE is not a skill per se but a quality that can eclipse the low wages, low respect and “burnt out” women the graduate may face in the field.

The Good ECE is perhaps one type of woman who survives in a field that does not pay well and does not garner respect but still reiterates the rhetoric that teaching is not a nine-to-five job; passion and unpaid self-sacrifice is an unspoken line in the job description. ECEP students are 98% women, with a higher percentage than other professions being newcomers to Canada (Beach et al., 2004; Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, 2010). This is due to a number of possibilities: it may be

because only one course is required to apply for an Assistant's License and begin work immediately (Ministry of Children and Family Development, n.d.); it may be because most ECEPs are one year long; or it may be that jobs, generally, are plentiful. It may also be due to the fact that many think ECE "is easy" (pstrn 62039, 62059); it may be because ECE is still considered women's work.

ECE instructors have been in the field and know how difficult it can be to respect oneself and one's profession when, as one of them commented, "I started my first job as an ECE at \$10/hr and left the field at \$19.35/hr. This is not enough for ECEs to make ends meet. This is not enough to send the message that the Early Childhood Educator holds a crucial role in our society" (pstrn 6780, 7013). Once finished school, ECEs can expect to make a few dollars more than minimum wage—the 2015 median pay for ECE's in BC is \$17/hour, so 50% of ECEs earned at or below that rate (Beach et al., 2004). The living wage is at least \$17/hour throughout British Columbia and reaches \$20.10/hour in Vancouver (Living wage for families campaign, 2015). To increase the professional nature of the field, more ECEPs in British Columbia are moving away from one-year certificates towards two-year diplomas and four-year degrees, a step towards acknowledging early childhood as a career that requires extensive, specific education. Moreover "decision-makers [about early childhood policy] are in jobs that require a bachelors degree. So, there's a whole system of amazing thoughtful educators who will never be in a position to make decisions" (pstrn 27434, 27621) until more ECEPs offer degrees. However, the ECE registering body will need to evolve as well— at present, a one-year certificate from an accredited institution is all that is required (Ministry of Children and Family Development, n.d.).

The Reconceptualist Movement

The Reconceptualist movement (Shirley Kessler & Swadener, 1992; Pence & Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2010; Swadener & Cannella, 2007) was only discussed in one research interview, but it bears on the analysis. The Reconceptualist movement is a response to modernist, objectivist paradigms of education, such as the idea of a single 'best practice'; development as an ascending linear progression; and universal, de-contextualized indicators of quality (Pacini-Ketchabaw & Pence, 2005). The Reconceptualist movement is rooted in post-modern thought and "process, engagement, dialogue and co-construction take precedence over routines, prescribed best practices, exclusivity and the safe haven of predetermined outcomes" (Pacini-Ketchabaw & Pence, 2005, p. 6)(Pacini-Ketchabaw & Pence, 2005, p. 6).

The Reconceptualist movement addresses the interaction of relationships and education in a key way: proponents of the Reconceptualist movement argue against a reality that exists outside the individual, and the importance of acknowledging how both context and values inform decisions. In this way, the Reconceptualist movement promotes a paradigm that considers the intersections of gender, class, race, nationalism, sexuality, and age-sensitive place (Grieshaber & Cannella, 2001)(Grieshaber & Cannella, 2001).

Some instructors (not all) engaged in this line of thinking with regards to their own practice when they acknowledged the political, social, or economic context students operate within.

So, our students have a legislated responsibility to... Bring up practice issues, and, if they are abusive in nature, or neglectful in nature, by law they must report, and yet, why don't they? But then when you start thinking of the mechanics of it, small-town, small communities, somebody's fearful of their job being lost, or repercussions in the community, again, going back to maybe a lack of personal mastery or understanding, and understanding that they have something to contribute, so yes, they might be an educator within a system, or even if it's hierarchical, but they still bring value to the table. (p. 37805, 38415)

The Reconceptualist movement focuses on the content and function of early childhood education in a contextual, critical way. It remains to be seen how the education of future ECEs will incorporate Reconceptualist thought, both in the teaching *of* and teaching *in* that paradigm. The analysis here illustrates the problematic balance between students and instructor/institutional standards, and it is difficult to imagine what an ECEP that embraces Reconceptualist thought, while still adhering to standards and providing some type of structure, would look like. In the next section, I discuss the implications this study has for the practice of ECEP instructors.

Conclusion

The purpose of this research study was to investigate how instructors at Early Childhood Education Programs engage in teaching their students about relationships.

Implications and Recommendations for Practice

The findings for this study are not exclusive to ECEPs in British Columbia. Foregrounding relationships in education permits instructors and students, children and families to create a “pedagogical meeting place” (Moss, 2010, p. 8). Moss calls for a “fundamental review of the purposes and concept of education” (p. 8) and outlines four pandemic problems education needs to address in order for society to sustain itself: “democracy, diversity, justice and potential self-destruction” (p.9). Moss’ suggestions provide a framework for putting this research into practice.

By building personal mastery in students and sharing leadership in the classroom, instructors create a mini model of democracy. Gerzon (2006) emphasizes the need to practice the societal model that is desired for the future. Students experienced a distribution of power and felt the responsibility that accompanies it. The hope was that they take this forward into their classrooms with children.

In soliciting and acknowledging the funds of knowledge (Gupta, 2006) of her students, particularly minority and immigrant students, the instructor privileged a contextual and intersectional practice of diversity that honours difference not as standard deviations from normal, but “central to the human condition” (Moss, 2010)(P. Moss, 2010).

When she emphasized that “teaching is a political enterprise” (p. 2649, 2697), the composite instructors made visible how one’s “philosophy either maintains or disrupts current inequities and issues of social injustice” (p. 2846, 2933). As the composite instructor built leadership in her students and conveyed the value of being an

educator, she also built students' confidence in following through with their legislated responsibility of reporting licensing issues such as abuse, neglect, or practice issues.

Regarding Moss' last point about self-destruction. At the time of this writing, Syria is embroiled in a civil war seeing more than 250,000 citizens lose their lives and thousands leaving by the day to seek refuge in countries that don't want them (Gritten, Rodgers, & Macguire, 2014). Israel and Palestine are still engaged in a border war that some say will never end (Caplan, 2014). After 9/11, racism in Canada and the US towards Muslim individuals in Canada rose markedly—most recently as a campaign issue initiated by incumbent Prime Minister Stephen Harper to ban the niqab when Muslim women attend their own Canadian citizenship ceremony (Macdonald, 2015). Climate scientists state that humanity is beyond the point of avoiding human induced climate change; it can only be managed (Plumer, 2015). These current events provide evidence that we have cultivated a culture of self-destruction as asserted by Moss. I contend that through the aforementioned practices of fostering diversity, promoting social justice, and engaging in democracy through their educational practice, instructors, students and early childhood educators can foster, incrementally, a population that seeks to enhance the social and physical environment and sustain the future.

Possibilities for Future Research

Overall, there are five distinct possibilities for future research: an in-depth member check with the interviewees of this study, assessment of relational ability, investigations into the Good ECE in ECEPs, more in-depth comparisons across ECEPs, and student perceptions of relational instruction within and after their program.

By the time I first conceived of the final analysis, 15 months had passed since the research interviews. It seemed burdensome and inappropriate to return to the research participants with my analysis and ask for their thoughts. The thesis also morphed into something that could arguably be used as a teaching tool or a framework for approaching instruction in the classroom. To that end, a possibility for future research may include bringing narrative back to the research participants for their thoughts and perhaps to see the places it fits or does not fit for them in their pedagogy.

The results of this study suggest that assessment of relational ability in early childhood education bears further consideration. The current study examined how instructors facilitated the teaching of relational skills. Amongst all the research questions, instructors were most intrigued or resistant to questions concerning assessment of relational ability. Although assessment of relational skills need not be regimented, standardized or outcome based, research could investigate how one might assess relational abilities in a more formal way. Future research could examine how different ECEPs address relational ability in their curriculum and how they assess students in this domain..

The Good ECE emerged as a product of investigations into relational instruction, but this area is under-researched. Langford (2006, 2007)(Langford, 2006, 2007) has investigated constructions of the Good ECE and other researchers (e.g., Meiners, 2002) deconstruct the image of Lady Bountiful in teacher education classrooms. Meiners (2002) discussed how the image of white, heteronormative, colonial, feminine Lady Bountiful might appear in (and influence) teacher education classrooms. Given that ECEPs are largely attended by women—with at least 20% being immigrant women or

women of colour (Beach et al., 2004)—more research is necessary to investigate these discourses in ECEPs in British Columbia.

This study investigated the relational approaches of 5 ECEPs of a possible 28 in British Columbia. The study consisted of two-hour interviews with participants at each research site. Expanding the research to include all ECEPs and more data collection methods such as field observations, self-reports and reflections, and group dialogue between instructors and students at different points across the program and after the program would deepen and broaden the picture of how relational instruction develops within ECEPs in British Columbia.

Finally, student perceptions of the role and importance of relationships in early childhood upon entering, navigating and leaving their ECEP would add to our knowledge in this area. Comparing students' descriptions of instructors to instructors' descriptions of themselves could offer an interesting counterpart to instructors' constructions of them.

Strengths and Limitations

There are both strengths and limitations in this study. By framing my research study around adult relationships in early childhood education, I narrowed the literature available to draw on. By studying adult relationships in early childhood education, I add to that literature. Although I chose narrative methodology, I did not invite participants specifically to tell me any stories (see Appendix C for the interview questions). This decision provided strengths and weaknesses in the research. For example, the interview format provided freedom and allowed me to observe which questions prompted stories. While I did not operate within the traditional methodology of narrative interview

techniques, the lack of stories prompted me to look closer at the data and look for a narrative across the interviews, rather than focusing on the stories within them.

I chose to conduct group interviews and judged the interaction of instructors to provide rich conversation about relationships. However, it is possible that quieter instructors spoke less and more talkative instructors spoke more, shaping the data around their more frequent contributions. My impression of the interviews was that instructors seemed diplomatic and happy to listen to one another, but this is still a possibility. I worked to manage this by providing the questions in advance, allowing introverts and quieter individuals to gather their thoughts to they felt prepared to speak when the questions came up. I also made an effort to solicit opinions from all instructors during interviews.

By choosing a qualitative methodology, specifically narrative methodology, this study privileged the guided, informal conversations among instructors in ECEPs. By cultivating this atmosphere with coffee and snacks, sharing some of my research story, and structuring the interviews in groups, I helped instructors relax into the conversation and to speak candidly about their programs and how they approach relational instruction. In the analysis, I was first concerned about the lack of stories in my data. But, reading Ollerenshaw and Creswell (2002) framed narrative analysis in a way that I had not considered – looking at time and problems and solutions. Constructing the narrative arc across the interviews rather than within them made visible the commonalities between instructors, which became a unified story about the daily micro-challenges that arise when trying to balance institutional and ethical fealty with student support and guidance.

A major limitation of this study is its context. These findings may or may not be generalizable to a specific population (i.e. instructors at ECEPs in British Columbia). Although the ECEPs studied differed in marked ways, other ECEPs in British Columbia could have dissimilar experiences and stories to share. The study only investigated five out of twenty-eight possible sites, and did not include all program faculty in each interview. In crafting my initial email, I used the terminology 'relationship development'. I struggled to find a word that conveyed all the skills required to form and maintain relationships, and in this case I chose wrong; two instructors informed me that their other colleagues might not have attended due to my wording.

I also did not interview students. This is not a weakness per se; I was particularly interested in how instructors approached this topic. However, given the direction of the analysis, student interviews would have added breadth. The lack of research in this area makes it a promising direction for future studies.

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Appendices

Appendix A: First Contact Email

Good Morning,

My name is Ali McCannell, and I am interested in interviewing you as a part of my master's thesis in Early Childhood Education at the University of British Columbia. In the next paragraph I will explain a bit about myself and my background, and then I will explain how I would like you to take part if you and your instructors agree to participate.

My thesis centres primarily around relationships and conflict; specifically, how relationships and conflict are approached, taught, and assessed in ECE teacher education programs. Including [school name] I have selected 6 schools from the 28 that offer ECE teacher education programs in BC. What I hope to construct is a descriptive narrative analysis of how relationships are incorporated into early childhood teacher education programs.

What I would like to do is conduct two different interviews - one with you (one hour or less) who I have gathered from the website is the director of the program, and one with your ECE instructors (as many as possible; not all are necessary) as a group. From you, I hope to discuss the overall thrust of the program, the reasoning behind the courses offered, and your personal or professional perspective on relationships in education. With your instructors, I would like to conduct an interview less than two hours either in person or by skype conference. I would like to discuss the practical tasks of translating theory and ideology into assignments, lessons, and assessments. How they teach about relationship development, incorporate it into their lessons, how they assess relationship development, and how they approach conflict in their classrooms (both as a taught lesson or if it arises between students).

I would like to call you next week to discuss my thesis in more detail and perhaps schedule a phone or in person interview with you, whichever you prefer. I am happy to provide any documentation you are interested in (my thesis, ethics approval, or interview guidelines for example) to help make this decision as easy as possible for you.

Please feel free to contact me at this email address or at [number] if you have any additional questions. Otherwise, I will contact you next week to follow up.
Thank you for your time, Ali McCannell

Appendix B: Consent Forms

B. 1 Group Consent Form

*Printed on UBC Letterhead

Address: [individual address of school] **Date:** [insert date of interview]

Title: Interview Consent Form **Content:** Consent form

Study Title: Examining Relationships in Early Childhood Education Instruction

Who is conducting the study?

Principal Investigator: Sandra Mathison, ECPS, UBC – [number]

Co-investigators: Alexandra McCannell, a master's student in Early Childhood Education, is conducting this research project as a part of her master's degree. The resulting thesis will be publicly available to read.

Why are we doing this study?

You are being invited to take part in this research study because you are an instructor of early childhood education (ECE) at an accredited institution in British Columbia. We are doing this study to find out more about how relationships are valued, taught, and assessed in ECE training programs in BC.

How is the study done?

The study consists of a group interview lasting less than two hours with you and your coworkers that also agree to participate. Your director is interviewed separately. If you agree to participate, you and whichever of your coworkers in the same institution that agree to participate will arrange a time with the co-investigator to meet at your workplace. You will be asked questions and invited to discuss your opinion and

conceptions on relationships in early childhood education. There is a possibility the co-investigator will contact you for follow up. This is unlikely, but if it occurs, it will be a telephone conversation that you can expect to last less than thirty minutes.

Audio and Video Recording

The group interviews will be audio and video recorded. Please see the section "Confidentiality" below for more information about how these data will be stored, protected and eventually destroyed.

Study Results

The results of this study will be reported in a graduate thesis and may also be published in journal articles and books. If you wish to receive a copy of the thesis, please write your email in the space provided below.

Is there any way being in this study could be bad for you?

We do not think there is anything in this study that could harm you or be bad for you.

Some of the questions we ask might upset you or reveal a difference of opinion between yourself and your coworkers. Please let one of the study staff know if you have any concerns.

What are the benefits of participating?

There is no direct benefit to you personally, but the information you provide will help to form a complete picture of how relationships are taught in ECE programs in British Columbia, and help us to understand how more about relationship development in early childhood.

Confidentiality

Your confidentiality will be respected. Information that discloses your identity will not be released without your consent unless required by law. All documents will be identified only by code number and kept in a locked filing cabinet. Subjects will not be identified by name in any reports of the completed study. All data from the study will be kept on an encrypted hard disk (data must be kept for five years, after which point the hard disk will be reformatted).

This group interview will be conducted with you and your coworkers. We encourage you to consider carefully before sharing information about yourself or your coworkers that you consider too personal or revealing. Also, we encourage participants not to discuss the content of the group interview to people outside the group; however, we can't control what participants do with the information discussed.

Audio and Video Recording: The interviews will be audio recorded, and the video recordings will only be used in the instance that it is unclear who is speaking in the audio recordings. No images from the video recordings will be taken or used. These data will be stored on the hard disk mentioned above, and destroyed at the same time.

Compensation

There is no monetary compensation offered for participating in this interview.

Refreshments will be offered during the interview.

Who can you contact if you have questions about this study?

Please contact either Alexander (Ali) McCannell [contact information] or Sandra Mathison [contact information]

Contact information for complaints

If you have any concerns about your rights as a research subject and/or your experiences while participating in this study, you may contact the Research Subject Information Line in the UBC Office of Research Services at 604-822-8598 or if long distance e-mail RSIL@ors.ubc.ca or call toll free 1-877-822-8598.

Participation Consent and Signature

Taking part in this study is entirely up to you. You have the right to refuse to participate in this study. If you decide to take part, you may choose to pull out of the study at any time without giving a reason and without any negative impact on your relationship with the investigators or UBC.

Your signature below indicates that you have received a copy of this consent form for your own records.

Your signature indicates that you consent to participate in this study.

Participant Signature	Date
-----------------------	------

Printed Name of the Participant

B. 2 Director Consent Form

*Printed on UBC Letterhead

Address: [individual school address] Date: June 6, 2013 [or date of interview]

Title: Director Consent Form

Content: Consent form

Study Title: Examining Relationships in Early Childhood Education Instruction

Who is conducting the study? Principal Investigator: Sandra Mathison, ECPS, UBC – [phone number]

Co-investigators: Alexandra McCannell, a master's student in Early Childhood Education, is conducting this research project as a part of her master's degree. The resulting thesis will be publicly available to read.

Why are we doing this study?

You are being invited to take part in this research study because you are the director of an early childhood education (ECE) licensure program at an accredited institution in British Columbia. We are doing this study to find out more about how relationships are valued, taught, and assessed in ECE training programs in BC.

How is the study done?

The study consists of an interview lasting less than one and one half hours. If you agree to participate, you will arrange a time with the co-investigator to meet at your workplace (or a place convenient to you). You will be asked questions and invited to discuss your opinion and conceptions on relationships in early childhood education. There is a possibility the co-investigator will contact you for follow up. This is unlikely, but if it

occurs, it will be a telephone conversation that you can expect to last less than one hour.

Audio Recording

The interview will be audio recorded. Please see the section "Confidentiality" below for more information about how these data will be stored, protected and eventually destroyed.

Study Results

The results of this study will be reported in a graduate thesis and may also be published in journal articles and books. If you wish to receive a copy of the thesis, please write your email in the space provided below.

Is there any way being in this study could be bad for you?

We do not think there is anything in this study that could harm you or be bad for you.

Some of the questions we ask might upset you or ask you to think critically about your thoughts and philosophies surrounding childcare. Please let one of the study staff know if you have any concerns.

What are the benefits of participating?

There is no direct benefit to you personally, but the information you provide will help to form a complete picture of how relationships are taught in ECE programs in British Columbia, and help us to understand how more about relationship development in early childhood.

Confidentiality

Your confidentiality will be respected. Information that discloses your identity will not be released without your consent unless required by law. All documents will be identified only by code number and kept in a locked filing cabinet. Subjects will not be identified by name in any reports of the completed study. All data from the study will be kept on an encrypted hard disk (data must be kept for five years, after which point the hard disk will be reformatted).

Audio Recording: The interviews will be audio recorded. These data will be stored on the hard disk mentioned above, and destroyed at the same time.

Compensation

There is no monetary compensation for agreeing to participate in the interview.

Refreshments will be offered during the interview.

Who can you contact if you have questions about this study?

Please contact either Alexandra McCannell [contact information] or Sandra Mathison [contact information]

Contact information for complaints

If you have any concerns about your rights as a research subject and/or your experiences while participating in this study, you may contact the Research Subject Information Line in the UBC Office of Research Services at 604-822-8598 or if long distance e-mail RSIL@ors.ubc.ca or call toll free 1-877-822-8598.

Participation Consent and Signature

Taking part in this study is entirely up to you. You have the right to refuse to participate in this study. If you decide to take part, you may choose to pull out of the study at any time without giving a reason and without any negative impact on your relationship with

Appendix C: Interview Guides

C.1 Group Interview Guide

Interview Introduction

Hi! I'm Ali, a masters' student in early childhood education at UBC. I'd like to begin with why I'm here in order to help you understand my goals today. I've been interested in and practicing Early Childhood Education for about 7 years. In March of 2011 I went to Reggio Emilia to learn from the preschool centres. I learned a lot of things I had not thought about before, but I was really struck by their approach to relationships there. On the last day of my course, I attended a session on children with special rights. They showed a video of a boy named Fernando who had obvious physical and mental delays. They showed one video of him at three and another at five so we could see how he had progressed. As they talked about their goals for him, I was fascinated with his interactions with the other children. They acted as mentors and heroes, calling him over to sit upon his arrival in the morning, guiding him through difficult activities, showing him how to curl his hands around the monkey bars. I had never seen social reciprocity like that before, especially involving a child with special needs. I resolved at that point to get to that, to get to how those children and those relationships were so carefully crafted so as to allow for that sort of growth, acceptance and reciprocity.

Reggio educators have devoted considerable time talking about relationship development, conflict, social learning, and group dynamics. Fast forward two years later, and here I am in front of you today. What I thought was important about Fernando was his relationships. So I'm here to find out about how they are formed, how they are valued in teacher education programs, how relationship skills are taught and assessed. I have you here today so that I can pick your brains, as early childhood experts, about how you translate relationships curriculum into practice, how you educate these young students about how to teach very young children, how to navigate conflict, how to get along with parents and their colleagues. Before we begin, I would like to take a moment to ask if you have any questions about the consent form?

I would also like to remind you that you are welcome to leave at any time with no repercussions whatsoever. Your attendance is voluntary and I appreciate whatever time you can give me.

Finally, before we begin, I would like to remind you that your relationships with the people in this room will continue after the interview is over, and to please keep that in mind when thinking about disclosing sensitive or personal information about yourself or others.

Interview Questions:

- 1) (opening question) Briefly, describe your education history and the courses you have taught in early childhood education

- 2) (transition question 1) Think back to when you were a student - what were some of the qualities of the teachers you learned the most from?
- 3) (alternate transition question 2) What were you taught from your teachers about teaching, navigating, or assessing relationships?
 - How has your teaching experience differed from this?
- 4) (key question - integration) Describe to me how you go about teaching relationship development. (how they are integrated into your curriculum, applied question)
- 5) (key question - integration) Finish this sentence for me: A good way to teach a student how to develop relationships is by _____
- 6) (alternate key question - relationship values) What are some common errors you see your incoming ECE students making regarding their approach to relationships?
 - How do you try to guide or reshape these perceptions?
 Alternate version of this question: Are there any qualities in incoming ECE's that you hope to reconstruct or reshape by the time they have finished the program? In other words, what do you want your teachers not to be?
- 7) (key question - interrelation) How do you see teacher-teacher, teacher-parent, and teacher-student interactions relating to one another?
- 8) (key question - assessment) Describe how you assess your students' relationship development skills?
 - What is a good way to see how their relationship development skills have changed?
- 9) (key question - conflict, more specific) Imagine a student approached you with a problem: they had pedagogical differences with their co-teacher in their classroom. How would you respond?
- 10) (alternate key question - conflict, more open-ended) How do you approach conflict when you teach relationship development?
- 11) (closing question) Of all the things we discussed today, what do you think is the most important?
- 12) (alternate closing question) - moderator (Alexandera) to give a short summary of the discussion, 2-3 minutes, and then ask "is this an adequate summary?"

C.2 Director/Chair Interview Guide

1. Can you describe your background a bit and how you came to be in your current job position?
2. How long have you been there
3. What do you enjoy about guiding instructors? What frustrates you?
4. What would you say is the general thrust of your program, if you had to prioritize certain qualities over others?
5. Regarding working with your instructors, what would you say is the most difficult part of your job?
6. How many students fail each year? Are you comfortable with that number?
7. How has your program changed throughout its existence?
8. Is there anything you would still like to change about your program?
9. How do you think Early Childhood Education has changed in BC
10. Are there particular things you look for when hiring new instructors
11. Fill this in: the most rewarding part of my job is _____
12. What part of your ECE program are you most proud of?
13. What do you think needs to change about Early Childhood Teacher Education in BC?

Appendix D: Transcript Conventions

Table 3: Transcript Conventions Used

.	Falling intonation and noticeable pause
,	Continuing intonation and slight pause
!	Animated or loud tone
?	Rising intonation and noticeable pause
...	Elongated pause
a-a	Repetition, as in the case of stuttering and correcting false starts of phrases _ e.g. A: I-I-I was-I was tired.
{ }	Overlapping as when both speakers speak at the same time
_a	e.g. A: I was {shocked.} B: {Wow.}
a	Emphasis on word e.g. A: I was so happy
(unclear)	Inaudible word or phrase
[]	Researcher insertion for clarity or to maintain anonymity e.g. "Students at [name of institution] work hard

Appendix E: Code Maps and Coding Procedure

E.1 Step 1: List of All Codes

- Above and beyond
- Adult bullying
- Assistant's License
- Assumptions
- Authentic
- Broadening perspective - parent
- Broadening Perspective - adults/others
- Broadening perspective - children
- Build Relationship/Rapport
- Change or not change students
- Collaboration
- Comfort Zone
- Community of practice
- Communication Community/in a community
- Conflict as honouring differences
- Conflict between faculty
- Conflict has negative connotation
- Conflict/difference and progressing forward: what do we do with it?
- Conflict/difference as positive
- System not prepared for educators Empathy
- Entitlement/Ego Centrism/Youth/Lack of experience
- Ethics
- Ethics in relationships
- Examples
- Create conditions - safe relationships/environment for people to talk
- Critical Thinking
- Finding spaces
- Fly by the seat of your pants
- Focus on future not present child
- Gap between school and field
- Government
- High Turnover in ECE
- How does education maintain or disrupt
- Image of early childhood
- Image of the child
- Image of the parent
- Image of the educator
- Informal Assessment
- Instructors come from field
- Inter relation with family
- Iterative - becoming a educator
- Dialogue
- Don't need to put money into it
- Early learning framework
- Social Justice
- Strengths Based
- Mentor
- Modeling
- More education for leadership positions
- My language framing things
- Navigating/observing/facilitating classroom relationships
- No true one right perspective
- Number of students
- Only pass/fail students on practicum relationships
- Outcomes
- Own four walls
- Passive Aggressive/no tools to communicate openly
- Passive/no critical thinking
- Perceptions of conflict
- Power imbalance
- Practicum
- Producing a particular student
- Professionalism
- Pushing back
- Re-conceptualizing Education
- Reflective Practice
- Reflective practice does not equal change
- Relationships as foundational
- Relationships as messy
- Relationships cannot be

- taught
- Relationships help learning
- Respect
- Return to scripts
- Conflict as opportunity
- Confrontation
- Consistency
- Consultants
- Dance
- Teach relationship by being in relationships
- Educator facilitated

- experiences
- Educator Quality - critical thinking/question text or knowledge
- Educator Quality (TQ)- engage in relationship
- TQ- generous with knowledge

- TEACHER QUALITY - humour
- TEACHER QUALITY - Innovative
- TEACHER QUALITY - liked teaching
- TEACHER QUALITY - listening
- TEACHER QUALITY - live what you teach
- TEACHER QUALITY - not distributor of knowledge
- TEACHER QUALITY - Passionate
- TEACHER QUALITY –
- patience
- TEACHER QUALITY - personal and professional
- Role Play/Practice

- Safety
- Self awareness
- Small details of change/language habits of change
- TEACHER QUALITY - pushing farther
- TEACHER QUALITY - who you are/authentic
- Educator vs parent
- Educators empower
- Teaching/facilitating conflict/challenging conversations
- Territoriality/ownership
- Theory to Practice
- Tolerance
- Traditional
- Training vs. Education
- Trust
- Quote
- Underfunding

- Understanding the whole person/not just what you see
- Unfit students graduate
- Value relationships
- Values
- Vulnerability
- What's being done/What should be done
- Women's profession
- Knowledge constructed together
- Leadership/Personal Mastery/Confidence
- Learn through story
- Legal Ethics
- Lens
- Licensing
- Lifelong Learning
- Listening/Being heard
- Long term

E.2 Step 2: Code Categories

A code category refers to when instructors mention the same topic but speak about it in different ways

Table 4: Code Categories

Different ways conflict was framed	Teacher Qualities (TQ) instructors admire	
Conflict as honouring differences Conflict between faculty Conflict has negative connotation Conflict/difference and progressing forward: what do we do with it? Conflict/difference as positive Conflict as opportunity Confrontation	TQ- critical thinking/question text or knowledge TQ- engage in relationship TQ- generous with knowledge TQ- humour TQ- innovative TQ- liked teaching TQ- live what you teach TQ- listening	TQ- not distributor of knowledge TQ- passionate TQ- patience TQ- personal and professional TQ- pushing farther TQ- who you are/authentic
Broadening Perspective of whom	Image of _____	
Broadening perspective - parent Broadening Perspective - adults/others Broadening perspective - children Comfort Zone	Image of early childhood Image of the child Image of the parent Image of the educator	

E.3 Step 3: Problematic Codes and Unaddressed Codes

Table 5: All Codes Left Unaddressed by Themes “Personal Mastery” and “Being in Community”

- Above and beyond
- Adult bullying
- Assistant's License
- Build Relationship/Rapport
- Collaboration
- Comfort Zone
- Conflict as opportunity
- Confrontation
- Consistency
- Relationships as messy
- Respect
- Practicum
- Role Play/Practice
- Safety
- Theory to Practice
- TQ- not distributor of knowledge
- Pushing back
- Social Justice
- Trust
- Underfunding
- Relationships as foundational
- Create conditions - safe relationships/environment for people to talk
- Critical Thinking
- Finding spaces
- Fly by the seat of your pants
- Focus on future not present child
- Gap between school and field
- Government
- High Turnover in ECE
- How does education maintain or disrupt social inequity
- TQ- pushing farther
- Unfit students graduate
- Value relationships
- What's being done/What should be done
- Women's profession
- Teach relationship by being in relationships
- Educator facilitated experiences
- TQ- critical thinking/question text or knowledge
- TQ- engage in relationship
- Lifelong Learning
- Long term ECE
- Informal Assessment
- Instructors come from field
- Inter relation with family
- My language framing things
- Number of students
- Only pass/fail students on practicum relationships
- Outcomes
- Licensing
- Communication
- Relationships cannot be taught
- Relationships help learning
- Consultants
- Dance
- Dialogue
- Passive Aggressive/no tools to communicate openly
- Early Learning Framework
- TQ- generous with knowledge
- Educator vs parent

Table 6: Problematic Codes Left Unaddressed by Previous Themes

- Above and beyond
- Relationships cannot be taught
- Unfit students graduate
- Relationships help learning
- Only pass/fail students on practicum relationships
- Build Relationship/Rapport
- Pushing back
- Women's profession
- Gap between school and field
- Teach relationship by being in relationships
- Informal Assessment
- Conflict as opportunity

E.4 Step 4: Re-Analyzing Data

Table 7: New narrative with corresponding codes

Early Program Student

- Entitlement/Ego
Centrism/Youth/Lack of Experience
- ECE is easy
- May come from field
- Variety of ages
- Assumptions
- Passive Aggressive/no tools to communicate openly

Mid Program Student

- Change or not change students
- Collaboration
- Comfort Zone
- Community of practice
- Communication
- Image of the child, parent, educator
- Broadening perspectives
- Vulnerability
- Conflict
- Pushing back
- Role Play/Practice
- Broadening perspective – parent
- Broadening Perspective - adults/others
- Broadening perspective - children

End Program Student

- Unfit students graduate
- Own four walls
- Personal mastery
- Gap between school and field
- Own four walls

Early Program Instructor

- All teacher quality (TQ) codes
- Build Relationship/Rapport
- Educate on professionalism of profession (other professions don't have to do that)
- Teach relationship by being in relationship
- Women's profession
- Empathy
- Create conditions - safe relationships/environment for people to talk
- Adult bullying
- Navigating/observing/facilitating classroom relationships
- Mentor
- Modeling
- Listening/Being heard

Mid Program Instructor

- Mentor
- Modeling
- Professionalism
- Pushing back
- Leadership/Personal Mastery/Confidence
- Relationships help learning
- Lens
- Theory to Practice
- Value relationships
- Values
- Vulnerability
- Facilitate conflict
- Ethics
- Conflict as opportunity
- Strengths Based
- Informal Assessment
- Teaching/facilitating conflict/challenging conversations
- Above and beyond
- Knowledge constructed together

End Program Instructor

- Only pass/fail students on practicum relationships
- Relationships cannot be taught
- Trust
- System set up to fail

Appendix F: The Power of Language

But the words you use matter, it's important that you didn't change your words, that you're presenting the same thing to each faculty, and perhaps you are using generic terms because I don't think you're gonna get— you wouldn't have gotten the same response from us had you come in willing to talk about dialogue {Ali: yeah} perhaps your learning is that relationships are way more complicated or complex than the general public first sees.

The last interview in my research study was subjectively both the best and the worst for me. Only two instructors attended the interview, and I found out from them that it was likely the others did not want to attend because of the way I had framed my research study and the interview questions I had sent in advance. While preparing for my interviews I spent time thinking about using broader terms in order to capture more varied responses. In some cases, this worked against me. At this particular institution, instructors resisted nearly every question I asked them. When I moved into the interview section around conflict, I prefaced my question by explaining that I framed conflict as a positive construct in my literature review. I then asked them how they approached in their classroom, and they replied it had only ever happened once or twice. I followed up:

Instructor 1: I don't know that I've ever had conflict between students in a class. But disagreements of— they have different views on something, but it's still— it's not in the form of a conflict

Ali: so taking a step back from a conflict then and moving into just disagreements, do you sort of bring it to the whole classroom and have a group discussion?

Instructor 1: Yeah, because if you're having a discussion about a particular topic, and you have-but I guess it's all framed with this notion that there are many different lenses we look at something with. Like, there's no truth. There is just different views on things, so it's perhaps you welcome that into the room, so people are feeling comfortable that they can say "well actually I totally disagree with this piece and this is why" and somebody else brings in their notion and it's usually just a sharing of viewpoints as opposed to a disagreement. Yeah, they're not walking away mad at each other they're just walking away aware "oh actually there's more the one way to look at this" (pstrn 69915, 71180)

We discussed this for a while and I moved into my next question on conflict between staff:

Ali: can you recall a conflict or a disagreement or a professional disagreement among you as colleagues? And how you took steps to work through things together?

Instructor 2: I think there are frequent small differences all the time.

And, those are good things

Instructor 1: I was just gonna say that's a good thing

[she speaks about this for several paragraphs]

....yeah, but I don't know that there's been any—no, none that really come to mind. We've had heated meetings when we disagree with each other quite strongly, but we haven't walked away— I hope— (laughs) we haven't walked away from those thinking that “well that was awful” or “that person doesn't like me or they don't respect me”....I can remember a couple of them becoming uncomfortable... (pstn 76325, 77429)

Although this exchange is long, it goes to show how my language created a wall that these instructors pushed against. They resisted the idea of conflict in the classroom, preferring the terminology 'disagreement'. Although I tried to preface our conflict discussion with a conflict positive statement, the instructor resisted entirely, even after describing staff meetings where she had become physically uncomfortable with the level of tension in the room.

In retrospect, if I were to do the study again, it may serve me better to use the terms 'relational development', 'collaboration', or 'interpersonal skills'. I think the resistance to the word conflict is societal and reflects a collective knowing of conflict as negative and 'bad'. I would instead use the word disagreement and hope that instructors react positively to that word and describe instances where they managed or employed conflict for educational means.