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Teachers' Perceptions of Their Interactions with Shy Preschool Children: A Phenomenological Inquiry

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TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR INTERACTIONS

WITH SHY PRESCHOOL CHILDREN: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL INQUIRY

By

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This study explored preschool teachers' perceptions of their interactions with shy children in the classroom. A qualitative phenomenology was chosen to capture the experiences of the teachers and gain an understanding of the phenomena they experience in the classroom.

Shyness refers to an individual's feelings of uneasiness or hesitation when faced with a novel or unfamiliar situation (Coplan and Armer, 2007). With about 40% of children being shy (Caspi, Edler, & Bem, 1988; Lazarus, 1982; Zimbardo, 1977) and with increasing numbers of children enrolling in preschool, looking at how shy children are perceived is key to beginning to understand how to help shy children feel more comfortable and succeed both academically and socially.

The central research question for this study was: How do preschool teachers perceive their interactions with shy children? Ten teachers were interviewed, observed, and kept daily journals about their thoughts and feelings regarding their interactions with a shy child, whom they identified, in the classroom setting. From these data, four themes emerged. These themes included: teacher doubts and frustrations, teacher support, limited engagement, and teacher influence.

The essence of the study was that teachers perceived their interactions with shy children to be important for children's development. Teachers reported having difficulties reaching out to shy children and the interactions were often strained. Teachers also reported using specific strategies and had certain responsibilities to engage shy children. Overall, teachers felt that shy children are unique and need special attention in the classroom, although they had doubts about their abilities to engage them in classroom activities.

Currently, there is little research concerning the way that teachers perceive their interactions with shy preschool children. This exploratory study captured some of the experiences of preschool teachers as they work with shy children. This study also has implications for teacher training and learning better strategies for interacting with shy children. However, more research is needed to explore the unique experiences that teachers have with shy children in the classroom.

Dedication

To my mother and father who took their shy little girl to the library as a child and instilled a never-ending love of learning.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my advisor Dr. Kathy Rudasill and my teacher Dr. Wayne Babchuk for helping me along the way and providing the encouragement and direction that I needed to keep me moving towards my goal during this project.

I would like to thank my family for supporting me during this journey. My parents allowed me to bounce countless ideas off of them and proofread my writing over and over. Additionally, the encouraging text messages from my brother helped me to finish this thesis. My hope is that my finished thesis will encourage him to finish his as well. Also to my cat, Izzy, who spent many hours sleeping in my lap while I worked on this project.

Finally, I want to thank the participants who gave up their time to be interviewed and fill out the daily journals. This was a time consuming study and without the participants there would be no research study.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

As a shy child, I faced many challenges during the school day. Interacting in social situations was often scary, anxiety inducing, and uncomfortable. The social situations that a child engages in during the day occur with both peers and adults. The interactions that I had with teachers often defined how I felt about the teacher, the class, and myself. I often felt that I was left out of classroom activities or put on the spot by teachers who did not understand my unique needs as a child who was reluctant and scared to speak up or participate socially.

However, other teachers were more perceptive about my shyness and hesitancy to interact and participate in social ways. Those teachers were willing and able to make accommodations and make me feel comfortable. The interactions that teachers have with children are some of the most important and influential parts of schooling. There is no question that early experiences have the potential to shape the rest of our lives. For shy children, these interactions and experiences are extremely important.

1.1 The Problem Statement

There is a limited amount of quantitative research that has been done on teachers' perceptions of shy children in the classroom. These perceptions of shy children are often different from that of non-shy children (e.g. Coplan, Gavinski-Molina, Lagace-Seguin, & Wichmann, 2011; Evans, 2001; Martin & Holbrook, 1985). Teachers also tend to interact with shy children differently than their non-shy peers (e.g. Coplan & Prakash, 2003; Rudasill & Rimm-Kaufman, 2009). Because the teacher plays such an important role in a child's life, exploring this topic further is of critical importance. To date,

qualitative research directed at what or how teachers feel about their interactions with shy child has been lacking.

There is also a literature gap with regard to shy preschool children. Most work on shyness in school has been conducted with adolescents or elementary aged students. Exploring the perspectives of teachers as they interact with shy preschool children will help to bridge this gap and increase awareness of shyness in the preschool classroom.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions that teachers have of their interactions with shy preschool children. A phenomenological qualitative research design was employed to study ten preschool teachers' perceptions of one shy child (identified by the teacher) in each teacher's classroom. Using interviews, journals, and observations, information was collected about teachers' interactions in their classroom with a single shy three- or four-year-old student, as well as the teachers' thoughts and feelings about those interactions.

1.3 Research Questions

The primary research question guiding this study was, how do preschool teachers perceive their interactions with shy children? The subquestions were:

- How do preschool teachers define shyness?

- How do teachers describe their interactions with shy children?

- What support, if any, do teachers feel that they provide shy children?

- Do teachers feel that their interactions with shy children are of high quality?

- According to teachers, what challenges do shy children have in the classroom?

- Do preschool teachers feel that they know how to deal with shy children in the classroom?

1.4 Definitions of Terms

Shyness: An individual's feelings of uneasiness or hesitation when faced with a novel or unfamiliar situation (Coplan & Armer, 2007).

Perception: How the teacher interprets and understands the interactions that he or she has with the child (Birch & Ladd, 1998).

Teacher-Child Interaction: Any contact (verbal, non-verbal, and physical) that the teacher and child have together (Birch & Ladd, 1998).

1.5 Limitations and Delimitations

This research study has several limitations and delimitations that should be pointed out. Limitations are potential weaknesses of the study and are out of the researcher's control. Typically, limitations involve parameters on the methodology of the study (Simon, 2011; Joyner, Rouse, & Glatthorn, 2013). It first should be noted that the findings from this study are not generalizable. However, it is not typically the purpose of qualitative research to generalize to other populations (Creswell, 2013). This study is a snapshot of what ten teachers in Lincoln, NE feel about their interactions with shy children and generalizing the findings to other teachers or preschool locations was not the goal.

Although I employed purposeful, criterion sampling, attempts to select a broad sample (i.e., maximum variation sampling), were somewhat limited in that participants

only came from five different preschools. Two of the preschools had only one teacher who participated, while the other three schools had at least two teachers that participated in this study. Often times these teachers worked in the same classroom. The environments of the different preschools might have made a difference in how teachers interact or perceive the students. The curriculum, policies, teacher collegiality, and other environmental issues could potentially affect how students are perceived and how teachers interact with them.

Additionally, one of the preschools was a Montessori school, which by the nature of how Montessori education is designed might have made a difference in how the teachers perceived shy children or how teachers interacted with the shy children. Montessori education uses a child-centered approach that encourages independence, freedom, and a sense of order and organization. Children are responsible for making their own educational choices in terms of what activities they carry out throughout the school day, and teachers give support or guidance on an as-needed basis (American Montessori Society, 2015). Because teachers take a back-seat role in the child's education in Montessori schools, the interactions with children are limited and usually reserved for demonstrating how to do an activity or giving a short lesson. The child-centered approach and limited role that Montessori teachers have might affect how they perceive or interact with shy children because it is not their intention to control or engage the child in activities or conversation constantly throughout the day.

Another limitation was the degree to which participants chose to participate in this research study. Since all participation was voluntary, I sensed that some teachers were more vested in the research than others, a challenge often faced by researchers. As in

most or all studies of this nature, I feel there were some opportunities missed to fully develop this analysis due to the sometimes-limited interactions between the participants and myself. This limits the study because I was not able to get as much information as I had hoped and I cannot be completely sure that the teachers answered questions with the purpose of the study in mind.

There are several delimitations to this study that are important to understand as well. Delimitations are characteristics that limit the scope and define the boundaries of a study (Simon, 2011). In the current study, one delimitation includes the participant criteria. Participants needed to be preschool teachers who worked with three- and four-year-olds. The teachers also needed to have at least one shy child in their classroom. Another delimitation includes the geographical boundary of the study. Only non-public preschools in one medium-sized Midwestern city were included in the study.

1.6 Researcher Experience/Bias

As the primary investigator in this study, it should be noted that I identify myself as a shy person. I have struggled with shyness for my entire life. Because of my own experiences being a shy child and adult, there is the potential that my views of the findings in this study are biased. I am also a former preschool teacher and have worked with many different personality types and temperaments in children aged 6 weeks to 5 years of age. I have taught and played with many shy children as a preschool teacher and because of this, I might bring some bias into my analysis of the findings.   Creswell (2013) emphasized that researchers must take themselves out of the phenomenon being studied as much as possible to reduce bias, when conducting phenomenological research. This process is called bracketing. Throughout the process of data analysis, I have

bracketed my own experiences and feelings about preschool teachers and shy children as much as possible in order to eliminate any bias that I might have. Staying objective and keeping my own personal feelings or experiences out of the research process was done by strictly focusing on the data at hand and the situations that were presented to me through observations and interviews.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

2.1 What is Shyness?

Nearly everyone feels shy at some point in life. New situations, meeting someone new, traveling to a foreign land, or an unexpected event can cause anxiety, unease, and apprehension. The majority of people are able to cope effectively in moments eliciting shyness and move on. However, Swallow (2000) reported that approximately 40% of children are shy. Lazarus (1982) found that 38% of fifth-graders self-reported as shy, and 59% of those children said they wished they were less shy. Caspi, Edler, & Bem (1988) looked at gender differences in shyness and found that 28% of boys and 32% of girls aged 8-10 were rated as shy by their parents. Zimbardo (1977) and Zimbardo, Pilkonis, and Norwood (1974), found that 40 percent of college students reported themselves as being shy. Some develop shyness over time from their experiences and others are born shy. Shy children often feel shy in a variety of different kinds of situations and for long periods of time.

There are many ways to define shyness. There are other terms that describe similar feelings, but they can often mean slightly different things, such as social phobia, reticence, behavioral inhibition, social withdrawal, and active isolation (Rubin & Coplan, 2010). A term that is commonly confused with shyness is "introversion". Introversion refers to a preference for environments that are not socially stimulating. Introverts often need time alone to reflect or unwind but they are not afraid of social situations or of being embarrassed in public. While shyness and introversion can overlap, they refer to very different feelings and needs that the person has (Cain, 2012).

All of these terms refer to slightly different types of behavior or patterns of thinking. This research project will focus solely on shyness, which is defined here as an individual's feelings of uneasiness or hesitation when faced with a novel or unfamiliar situation (Coplan & Armer, 2007). A key facet of shyness is that it is a temperamental wariness that occurs in the face of novel social situations and that it can include self-conscious behavior that occurs in situations where there is a perceived level of social evaluation from peers or others (Rubin & Coplan, 2010).

2.2 Negative Effects

Being shy can have negative effects on children's relationships and academic outcomes. In terms of peer relationships, shy children are more likely to be rejected by their peers as well as have an increased level of peer victimization, or bullying. Both rejection and bullying seem to be part of a shyness cycle where increased bullying and rejection lead to increased social withdrawal, which then leads to more rejection and bullying (Erath, Flanagan, & Bierman, 2007; Hanish & Guerra, 2004; Hoglund & Leadbetter, 2007). However, research also shows that shy children are able to form friendships and that most have at least one stable, mutual best friend (Rubin, et al., 2006), which can be very protective against other negative effects.

Academically it seems that shy children are also at a disadvantage. When one is feeling shy, he or she may not speak very much and be hesitant to contribute to conversations for a variety of different reasons (Asendorpf & Meier, 1993; Crozier & Badawood, 2009; Evans, 1987). Thus, they are unlikely to contribute to class discussions. Shy children have also been found to have less developed language skills than non-shy children (e.g. Evans, 1987; Evans, 1993; Evans, 1996; Prior et al., 2008,

Rudasill et al., 2006). This might be because they talk less and have not had the opportunities to develop their language skills as other non-shy children do. Additional research suggests that shy children are less academically engaged than their less-shy peers, and this may stem, at least in part, from their reluctance to engage in classroom activities (Hughes & Coplan, 2010).

Some research suggests that shy students would be more academically inclined than non-shy peers (e.g. Traub, 1983). Since social situations are uncomfortable, shy children might throw themselves into schoolwork and focus on doing well and succeeding academically. However, most research has not supported this. It is thought that because learning often involves taking risks, collaborating with others, stepping out of your comfort zone, and often asking for help, shy children are not comfortable in academic settings (Levin & Hart, 2003; Spere, Evans, Mansell, & Hendry, 2007). Other studies have shown that shy children often perform worse on standardized tests than non-shy children (Ialongo et al. 1995; Nowakowski et al., 2009). In school there might also be an increased risk of social evaluation, which is one of the hallmarks of being shy. This could lead shy children to withdrawal from academics for fear of evaluation and becoming embarrassed (Miller, 1995). For example, being called on in class to answer a question, solving a problem on the blackboard, or making a speech all have the perceived risk of social evaluation. For a shy person, these tasks are often scary and can cause considerable anxiety.

2.3 Teacher/Child Interactions

In school it is necessary for each child to interact with his or her teacher at various points throughout the school day. For shy children, these interactions may look very

different than the interactions their non-shy peers have. Evans (1987) looked at teacher-child interactions during a show-and-tell activity and found that teachers asked shy children more questions, seemingly because the shy children were reluctant to speak. The short responses or even silence that children gave in response to questions only prompted further inquiries by the teacher, and this resulted in fewer utterances by shy children. Brophy and McCaslin (1992) and Evans (2001) investigated various strategies that teachers use while working with shy children and found that successful teachers reported that they try to minimize embarrassment and stress, support and encourage the child, explain that mistakes are acceptable, praise accomplishments, and reassure the child of his or her competence.

Children who have higher quality relationships with their teachers are more engaged in the classroom and have higher levels of academic achievement (Birch & Ladd, 1997; Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Ladd, Birch, & Buhs, 1999). The same seems to hold true for shy children. Chang (2003) found that in classrooms where the teacher is more perceptive to the child's needs, empathetic, and warm, shy children are more inclined to come out of their shell. They feel more socially competent and more positive about themselves in social interactions. However, shy children tend to form a dependent relationship with their teachers and struggle to form truly close relationships with them (Birch & Ladd, 1997; Rudasill, Rimm-Kaufman, Justice, & Pence, 2006).

Coplan and Prakash (2003) found that shy children received more initiations from teachers in preschool but did not initiate interactions with teachers on their own. Rudasill and Rimm-Kaufman (2009) additionally found that lower levels of shyness predicted more frequent child-initiated interactions. However, they found that teachers did not

interact with shy children more in first grade as Coplan and Prakash (2003) had found

with preschoolers. This shift from preschool to elementary school might indicate that

there is a shift in expectations or demands from teachers, as children get older. The

stronger emphasis on academics in first grade, compared to preschool, might help to

explain a shift in frequency or types of interactions that teachers have with shy children

as well.

2.4 Teacher Perceptions

In addition to having different types of interactions and relationships with shy

children than with non-shy children, teachers also perceive their shy students differently.

Research shows that teachers are more likely to not only underestimate the intelligence of

shy children but also to perceive them as less intelligent and less academically competent

(e.g. Martin & Holbrook, 1985; Coplan, Gavinski-Molina, Lagace-Seguin, & Wichmann,

2001). Evans (2001) posited that these negative perceptions of shy children might be

partially because the children do not talk as much or have impaired speech, which comes

off as being less intelligence. This attribution leads teachers to be less optimistic about

the child's academic performance and less likely to be enthusiastic and optimistic about

the child.

One study found that teachers who rated themselves as being shy were more

empathetic towards shy children and viewed them as being just as intelligent as their non-

shy peers. However, the shy teachers agreed with other teachers in saying that quiet

students would do less well academically (Coplan, Hughes, Bosacki, & Rose-Krasnor,

2011). Lao, Akseer, Bosacki, and Coplan (2013) found similar results. Here, outgoing

teachers viewed outgoing children more favorably and gave them additional jobs around

the classroom, such as being line leader or in charge of passing out papers.

Some teachers believe that children will grow out of their shyness and see it as a phase (HoganBruen, Clauss-Ehlers, Nelson, & Faenza, 2003). Other research shows that teachers show greater concern for shy children and have an increased desire to help them (Arbeau & Coplan, 2007). Teachers also claim to try to indirectly and gently pressure shy children to change their shyness. They try to lure them into social situations, while also trying to reduce the child's anxiety. This is typically done through small group activities, fantasy play, and specific classroom structures (Evans, 2001).

Spooner, Evans, and Santos (2005) found that about 1/3 of children who rate themselves as shy are labeled non-shy by teachers and parents. Rudasill, Prokasky, Tu, Frohn, Sirota, and Molfese (2014) found that teachers and parents of preschoolers had low levels of agreement in terms of children's shyness. They also found that teachers' ratings, but not parents' ratings, of children's shyness negatively predicted children's performance on various assessments of receptive and expressive language. If teachers are not able to identify some shy children and then when they do identify them correctly the teacher views them as not as competent, then shy children are being put at a disadvantage in the classroom before the teacher even interacts with the child.

2.5 Literature Gap

A literature gap exists in several areas. While there are several studies that have looked at the interactions between teachers and shy children, most have looked at adolescence and elementary aged children. Very few studies have looked at preschool aged children who are shy and how they interact with teachers (see Coplan & Prakash, 2003 for an exception). Additionally there is a large gap in the number of qualitative

research studies that have been done on shy children and their interactions with teachers. Creswell (2013) stated that when little research has been done in a particular area, qualitative research can be beneficial in order to explore the problem and obtain a detailed understanding of the issue. This can only be done by talking directly to the people involved and obtaining their stories. Qualitative research also allows for the identification of new variables that would not be found using quantitative methods.

While there has been work done on teacher perceptions and teacher interactions with shy children, I am not aware of any work on teacher's perceptions of the interactions that they have with their shy students. Because of this gap, studying the perceptions that preschool teachers have of their interactions with shy children is imperative. Using qualitative research methods allows for the deep exploration of the research problem and will help to add teachers' unique perceptions to the current literature. By increasing what we know about teachers' perceptions of their interactions with shy children, we are increasing awareness of the problems that shy children face, as well as the possible misconceptions that teachers hold of these children. This will not only help to foster further research but also teacher education and training.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to explore teachers' perceptions of their

interactions with shy preschool children.

3.2 Research Questions

The primary research question in guiding this research was, how do preschool

teachers perceive their interactions with shy children? The subquestions were:

- How do preschool teachers define shyness?

- How do teachers describe their interactions with shy children?

- What support, if any, do teachers feel that they provide shy children?

- Do teachers feel that their interactions with shy children are of high

  quality?

- According to teachers, what challenges do shy children have in the

  classroom?

- Do preschool teachers feel that they know how to deal with shy children in

  the classroom?

3.3 Rationale for Qualitative Research Design

In order to address these research questions, a qualitative research design was

selected. Qualitative inquiry allows participants to describe their experiences in depth.

Additionally, qualitative research allows the researcher to gain an understanding of the

meaning that people have constructed of their lives (Merriam, 2009). This research

method is unique in that it allows researchers to gather information in such a way that

would never be able to be done via questionnaire or in a laboratory setting. Getting into

the heart of the problem and gathering information about the participants' lived experiences is key to exploring teachers' perceptions of their interactions with shy preschool children because it has had very little research performed on it previously. A qualitative approach was chosen for this study because it allowed for an in-depth examination of the perceptions of teachers who teach shy preschool children.

3.4 Rationale for a Phenomenological Study

The current study is phenomenological in nature. Creswell (2013) described the purpose of phenomenology as discovering the meaning of a lived experience by several individuals. According to Bogdan and Biklen (2007), the practice of phenomenology is rooted in the idea that each of us constructs our own reality. We create meaning in our lives based on our experiences and our interactions with others. Through phenomenological studies we are able to discover and describe these experiences.

Phenomenology was appropriate for this research project because the goal was to identify and describe the perspectives of preschool teachers who work with shy children. Every teacher who works with a shy child has a story to tell about his or her experiences. Through a qualitative approach, specifically phenomenology, we can find what these common experiences entail and describe the interactions that teachers have with shy children, as well as describe the teacher's interpretations of those interactions.

3.5 Researcher Position

Creswell (2013) described two categories of phenomenological research that require a different approach in the research process. The first is the hermeneutical phenomenological study and the second is transcendental or psychological phenomenological study. The latter approach was utilized for the current project, as I felt

it was more methodologically congruent with my research question and design. This approach involves setting aside (bracketing) one's own judgments or bias and focusing on the way the participants understand and experience a particular phenomenon. As someone who is shy, I have experienced many interactions with teachers, both good and bad. I am also a university teaching assistant as well as a preschool teacher and I have worked with shy children myself. It has been important for me to bracket my own experiences and ideas about both being shy and interacting with shy children. My perceptions and potential bias may have influenced my ability to comprehend and understand the experiences of the preschool teachers as unique to my own. While I have bracketed myself from the findings of this study, the research project was subjective in nature.

3.6 Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Before beginning the research, I completed the Consortium for IRB Training Initiative in Human Subjects Protections (CITI) to obtain certification in research involving human subjects. Endorsement from the University of Nebraska's Institutional Review Board (IRB) was also received prior to initiating research and data collection.

3.7 Participants

Participants were recruited for this study by telephoning, emailing, or visiting preschools in one Midwestern city. In most cases, I was able to speak with the director of the preschool who introduced me to the teachers immediately and personally. In other cases, the director spoke to the teachers privately and contacted the researcher to inform her of the teachers who were willing to participate. Those teachers were then contacted

and meeting times were set up in order to explain the study and gain the teachers' consent to participate.

The selection of participants was accomplished through criterion, or purposeful, sampling. Creswell (2013) and Merriam (2009) explain that this type of sampling is used when each case (or participant) in the study meets a particular set of criteria. In the current study, preschool teachers were selected for participation if they spent the majority of their workday with three- and/or four-year-olds. Teachers also needed to have at least one shy child in their classroom.

A total of 20 teachers began the study and ten were able to complete the study. These ten teachers consisted of both part-time and full-time preschool teachers at five different preschools in the Midwestern city. Each teacher worked with three- and/or four-year-olds on a day-to-day basis and had at least one shy child in his or her classroom. Nine of the teachers were female and one teacher was male. There were eight children who were the focus of the teachers' attention; that is, two sets of two teachers identified the same child as shy. Six girls and two boys between the ages of three and four made up the group of identified shy children.

Table 1 shows each of the teacher's assigned pseudonyms along with the shy child's pseudonym that each individual teacher focused his or her attention on. As designated in the chart by a * or **, there were two shy children who each had two teachers focus on them.

Table 1: Participant Pseudonyms

Teacher's Pseudonym	Child's Pseudonym
Ms. Beth	Amy
Ms. Stephanie	Julie
Ms. Susan	George*
Ms. Karen	George*
Mr. John	Jimmy
Ms. Lucy	April**
Ms. Abby	April**
Ms. Sherry	Traci
Ms. Kayleigh	Gigi
Ms. Debbie	Julie

3.8 Research Sites

The sites for this research included five preschools in a Midwestern city. Two of the preschools were religiously affiliated and were part of a church. Two preschools were independent non-religion affiliated schools. One school was a certified Montessori preschool.

3.9 Data Collection Procedures

Data were collected between September 2014 and March 2015. The length of time that each participant took to finish the study varied from five days to six weeks. Each participant was required to complete several steps over the course of the study, as described below.

Upon receiving permission to conduct research from the director of the centers (Appendix B), the individual teachers permission was obtained (Appendix C). After permission forms were signed, instructions for the study were given and I conducted an initial interview with the teacher. This interview consisted of questions about the teachers' educational and work background and can be found in Appendix E. This interview took no more than ten minutes for each participant.

Teachers were then asked to complete a brief survey in order to gain information about their thoughts on what it means to be shy, their own shyness, and to nominate a shy child in their classroom in order to focus their attention on. This survey can be seen in Appendix F. Upon nominating the shy child, the teacher obtained permission from the child's parent (Appendix D) for their child to be observed in the classroom.

Next, teachers were asked to complete a journal for five days. In the journals, teachers documented their interactions with the shy child as well as their thoughts on those interactions. As part of the first journal entry, teachers described why they nominated that particular child as shy. The same six questions were posed to teachers each of the five days that documented their interactions. The journal questions can be seen in Appendix G.

While the teachers were working on their journals, I observed in the classroom for a period of about one hour. I focused on both the verbal and nonverbal interactions that the teacher and shy child had. I also took detailed field notes during the hour of observation.

After the teachers completed their journals, I conducted a second interview in order to obtain further information about the teachers thoughts on their interactions with

the shy child and to give me the opportunity to clarify information from the journals

and/or observations with the teachers. The interview questions from this second

interview can be found in Appendix H. The second interview was recorded using an

audio tape recorder per the teachers' permission and then transcribed verbatim. I also

made notes regarding key words or phrases that the teacher said, possible follow up

questions, and body language that emphasized certain key points. This interview took

between ten and forty minutes, depending on the participant.

As soon as each individual teacher had completed all of the steps of the study, he

or she was given a gift card to Starbucks in the amount of $10 and a thank you card

expressing gratitude and appreciation for participating in the research study.

3.10 Interview Protocol

I followed qualitative phenomenological steps for this study. A

phenomenological interview is informal with open-ended questions and comments. The

phenomenological interview may begin with social questions or discussion in order to get

the participant to feel comfortable and more willing to open up freely (Moustakas, 1994).

Interview questions were designed to allow the teachers to freely talk about their

experiences and interactions with the shy child. Probing questions were used as needed

to gather more detail, clarify, and keep the interview on track.

3.11 Data Analysis Procedures

Once the second interview was conducted for each teacher, the audiotape of the

interview was transcribed verbatim. Then, using all of the data collected, I used the

methods put forth by Moustakas (1994) and Saldaña (2013) for organizing, analyzing,

synthesizing, and coding the data. The steps in the data analysis process are described

below.

I first prepared the data for analysis by typing field notes from the observations

and organizing all of the data together for each teacher. Making an initial run through by

highlighting significant words or phrases that stood out was the second step in becoming

familiar with the data. I also made notes in the margins as to initial thoughts or potential

categories of data. Immediately following this, I began to "bracket chunks" of words and

terms that had similar meanings and categories. Creswell (2013) and Saldaña (2013)

describe this as a common protocol in the coding process and use the term "descriptive

coding" to explain this process. None of the codes were predetermined but emerged

directly from the data as I discovered reoccurring ideas.

During this process, 250 significant statements were identified from the data

collected. These significant statements were organized using 15 different codes.

Example statements along with their codes can be found in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Codes and Significant Statements

Code	Sample Significant Statement
Child is clingy	"He doesn't want to leave me at lunch." "I allow him to stay with me as much as he needs." "I said good morning and he looked down, teared up, and held his mom"
Child as a follower	"It's very rarely that I ever see her kind of go and grab someone else and say 'Let's go play this' or "Let's go play here'." "She depended on the other child to take the lead and she would then follow [the other child's] actions when playing."
Child follows directions well	"She likes to be explained to and shown what she can do." "[The child] is never going to cause ruckus."

Child follows directions well (cont.)	"She doesn't want to make a mistake or break the rules."
Teacher avoids interactions with child	"The kids who are more boisterous and outgoing, I have a lot more fun with them." "I don't interact with her because it's so one-sided."
Positive reinforcement	"I'll say things like 'I loved seeing you do that!' or you know it's a lot of positive reinforcement and trying to get her to interact with her friends more." "Even if it was just one word, like it was a big deal! And we made a big deal out of it."
Modeling	"I try to have her practice [conversations] with me there." "I'm like, 'Okay well what's a way that you can ask your friend for help?'"
Teacher doubts about their own abilities	"I'm not sure if I am supporting him too much or the right amount." "I struggle with whether or not to push her for more information or just let her be." "I'm totally out of my realm. Because as you can tell, I'm very extraverted!"
Child's academic abilities	"He has a hard time with transitions." "He's a bright kid!" "A group is not his thing."
Teachers' perceptions of their responsibilities toward the child	"I don't want to push too much." "Teachers need to help students overcome their shyness." "It's not for me to make her someone that she is not ready to be or personality wise is never going to be."
Time	"I wish I could have more one-on-one time with him." "I just wish the interactions could be longer or less distracted by other children."
Conversations	"Very one sided. All me." "She just looked at me." "When I tried to interact with him, he just shot me down"
Teacher interacts more with child	"I tend to bond with shy children better." "When we are choosing groups I'll always say 'oh I'll take [the child]'."
Teachers' confidence	"I feel like she's gotten more comfortable with me. So like when I first started [working here], I didn't get like the smiles,

Teachers' confidence (cont.)	just like a straight face." "He usually doesn't answer with words but today I took a softer, more persistent approach. It paid off." "She's not afraid to come up to me."
Other strategies used by teacher	"paraphrase reflection" "I smiled a lot when she came by." "team effort" among teachers "It gets very loud [in the classroom] so I have to make sure to get my ear down there [to her level]."

From these codes and significant statements, four themes were identified. These themes include: 1) teacher doubts and frustrations; 2) teachers' support; 3) limited engagement; and 4) teacher influence. These themes are described in more detail in Chapter 4.

3.12 Validation Strategies

Creswell (2013) recommends that at least two validation strategies be used for qualitative research studies. This phenomenological study used various forms of validation in order to assure that the information obtained and reported was credible. These forms of validation included triangulation, clarifying researcher bias, peer review, and thick rich descriptions. Triangulation refers to making use of multiple and different sources and methods for gathering information (Creswell, 2013). In this study, the data were collected using several different methods including journals, interviews, and observations. The data also came from two different sources: the researcher and the teacher participants.

Another validation strategy used was the clarification of researcher bias from the very beginning of the study (Creswell, 2013). I was able to recognize that I am both a shy person and a teacher with various experiences in both of these roles. These experiences have the potential to effect how I perceive and interpret the findings from

this study. However, bracketing oneself out of the research is an important part of understanding and eliminating potential bias as much as possible.

I have bracketed myself out of the research process as best I could by being reflexive during the data collection and data analysis process. I made a point to stop periodically throughout the research project and reflect back on my own experiences and opinions and be aware of my own unique ideas about what it means to be shy. I was then able to look at myself in comparison to the data that I was looking at and check to make sure that my own potential bias was not making its way into the current project. I am confident that I was able to bracket myself out of the data and stay as objective as I could.

In addition, I submitted my research process for peer review to one of my committee members who provided feedback on the design and findings at various stages of completion. This research project was based on a proposal, which I wrote for a course on qualitative research methods. That proposal is now used as one of the model projects in the teaching of this course. Lastly, thick rich descriptions were used in all stages of this research project, as recommended by Creswell (2013). Detailed descriptions were given to all of the themes and subthemes. Overall, I am confident that the study is valid because of the validation strategies that were employed.

Chapter 4: Findings

4.1 Description of Participants

All of the teachers reported that they had at least an associate's degree in early childhood education, one teacher had a PhD in history, and two teachers had master's degrees in education. Eight of the teachers described their current employment as full time and two worked part time. There was a wide range of length of employment that the teachers reported at their current jobs. One teacher had been working full time for 53 years, three teachers had worked at their current position for eight to twelve years, and six teachers reported that they had been at their current position for less than three years. Three of those teachers had held their teaching positions for less than three months. The previous work experience of the teachers also varied greatly with some teachers having been previous elementary school teachers, home daycare workers, a high school teacher, a chef, YMCA summer program employee, teachers at various preschools, and for a couple of teachers the current position that they held was their first job.

Six of the teachers self-reported as shy while four said that they were not shy. The reasons that teachers gave for their self-assessment differed from person to person but largely were in line with the definitions of shyness that they gave (see Table 3 below). For those who said that they were not shy, reasons included liking to be around other people, feeling comfortable, not quiet, open to new people, outgoing, and very chatty. Shy teachers reported that they preferred to be by themselves, are quiet, do not know how to act around new people, are nervous, and do not talk a lot. Several of the shy teachers reported that once they feel comfortable around a new person or are in a familiar situation they are much more outgoing.

Teachers were also asked to give their own definitions of what it means to be shy. All but one of the teachers gave detailed descriptions about what they think "shy" means, as seen in Table 3. One teacher gave a dictionary definition, which has not been included in the Table 3 below because it was not the teachers' own definition of shyness.

Table 3: Teachers' Definitions of Shyness

Teacher	Definition of Shyness
Ms. Debbie	"Someone who is quiet, seems uncomfortable or feels out of place, avoids conversations, [and] associating with other people."
Mr. John	"Someone who has a hard time being oneself in a group setting or is uncomfortable in a group setting. However, I also think that 'shyness' can just mean your quiet as well."
Ms. Susan	"A person that is withdrawn from the group. Doesn't raise hand or offer answers to ?'s esp. in group setting."
Ms. Karen	I define shy as a feeling. Everyone feels shy sometime in his or her life. I don't like shy as a label. I feel it is my responsibility as a teacher to help students overcome the feeling of being 'shy'."
Ms. Sherry	"I think 'shy' is someone who does not talk all the time, reserved, kind of sits back and watches."
Ms. Kayleigh	"Person who avoids eye contact, talks softly, hangs back in a group setting, avoids taking a turn, is often attached to one particular friend, is cautious or

Ms. Kayleigh (cont.)	anxious about change in routine."
Ms. Stephanie	"A child who is typically quiet. A child who is shy doesn't typically seek out other children or adults."
Ms. Abby	"A child who doesn't look scared but just won't talk to me or another adult. They may also be shy in [large] groups but is able to talk to his/her peers."
Ms. Lucy	"Quiet, keep to self, difficult to engage in conversation"

Additionally, teachers explained their reasons for choosing certain children as shy. These responses were also in line with the definitions of shyness that teachers reported. For example, Ms. Susan reported that she nominated George as being shy because "He doesn't talk much and is often looking down and not making eye contact." Ms. Karen stated that George had been "crying at points during the day and asking for his mom and dad." Ms. Kayleigh explained that Gigi's parents were anxious about her shyness "especially in comparison to her sister." Ms. Lucy emphasized the fact that April tends to be quiet with teachers and peers. "She rarely speaks or asks questions. She doesn't answer questions during group time. When asked a question, she gives very short answers." Ms. Sherry described Traci as being very reserved although "she does open up more as she feels comfortable and gets to know you. However, she chooses to play by herself most of the time and she is very content with that." Overall, the teachers seemed to have nominated their chosen child as shy because they were quiet, reserved, anxious, unresponsive to questions, and avoided social interactions with others.

It is interesting to note that Mr. John told me that Jimmy's mother was surprised when he approached her to sign the parental informed consent because she did not think her child was shy. Additionally, Ms. Kayleigh wrote in a journal entry that she thought that perhaps Gigi was not shy after all but was more "timid" instead. There was also a discrepancy between the viewpoints that co-teachers Ms. Lucy and Ms. Abby held about the child they focused on, April. Ms. Abby felt that April was only shy around her teachers and that she had many classroom friends and was not hesitant to talk to her peers. However, Ms. Lucy felt that while April was shy around teachers, she was also shy around peers. Ms. Lucy held that April had a couple of close classroom friends but displayed shy characteristics when around her peers. My observations confirm what Ms. Lucy believed.

4.2 Overview of Themes and Subthemes

The data that were collected for this study revealed four themes. Several subthemes also emerged from those four themes. The themes and subthemes reflect the experiences that the preschool teachers described with regard to their interactions with the shy children in their classrooms. The four themes are briefly summarized in Table 4.

Table 4: Themes and Subthemes

Theme I: Teacher doubts and frustrations	This describes the feelings that teachers expressed regarding their doubts about their ability to help the shy child or the confidence that they had in themselves in knowing how to help. Teachers expressed frustration both with themselves and with the shy child.
Theme II: Teachers' support Subtheme: Teacher Strategies	Teachers described giving the shy child social support in many different ways. Teachers had specific strategies that they used when engaging with the shy child including: staying positive, getting down to

Theme II: Teachers' support (cont.) Subtheme: Teacher Responsibilities	the child's level, time, physical contact, and modeling. Teachers also felt that they had certain responsibilities with regard to the shy child including: "fixing" the shyness, supporting the child, and not having a responsibility at all
Theme III: Limited Engagement	Overall, there were limited interactions between the shy child and the teacher. This was both observed by the researcher and reported by teachers. Interactions provided little engagement, were short, and quiet.
Theme IV: Teacher Influence Subtheme: Teacher Personality	This theme describes the teachers' preconceived ideas about shy children and how those ideas influenced their interactions and perceptions of the children. Teachers who described themselves as not being shy tended to be unsure of how to interact with the shy child. Shy teachers seemed more empathetic and willing to help the shy child.

4.3 Theme I: Teacher Doubts and Frustrations

When teachers spoke of their interactions with the shy child in their classroom, they expressed doubts in their abilities or knowledge about how to talk to a shy child and to help them to feel more comfortable in the classroom. Teachers were frustrated following their attempts to approach shy children or engage them in conversation and not having their efforts result in the desired outcome or behavior by the children. Many teachers expressed the need for help in learning new ways of approaching the children that were non-threatening or help in using conversation starters that would lead to the children being able to contribute to the conversation.

Ms. Susan depicted this theme by saying, "I wish there was an easier way to [talk to him] and I guess I'm not on that level to figure it out yet." Ms. Susan felt that she did not have the capabilities as a teacher to talk to George in a way that made him

comfortable and willing to engage. However, she had been teaching preschool for 14 years. Ms. Beth described with exasperation, "There's nothing that I do that has motivated Amy to talk to me." Ms. Abby expressed her struggle with figuring out "whether or not to push April for more information or just let her be." Many of the teachers expressed the same thought of being unsure of how much to push the child to talk to them or to peers.

Some teachers even declared that they had given up on the shy children and felt that they had exhausted their resources with regard to engaging with the children. Ms. Debbie said, "Because she's so quiet there's nothing that we can do to help her." Ms. Beth said, "I don't interact with her because it's so one-sided." These feelings of defeat and having given up depict the frustration that teachers feel when the conversations that they try to have with the shy children are one-sided and the child does not reciprocate conversationally.

4.4 Theme II: Teachers' Support

Despite the overall frustration that teachers felt about their interactions with the shy children, teachers also reported that they had special ways of engaging with the shy children and supporting them through difficult situations. These strategies seemed to be working, according to many teachers, despite the fact that the same teachers reported being unsure of how to engage with the shy children. Teachers also reported that they had a certain set of responsibilities as the teacher to help shy children.

In terms of strategies, teachers reported that they tried to stay positive when interacting with the shy children. "I smiled a lot when she came by," explained Ms. Kayleigh. It is likely that teachers feel that smiling and staying upbeat will help the child

feel more relaxed. "Staying positive" is important, said Ms. Stephanie, "I wanted to keep all interactions positive and let her know that she is welcome in our room."

Several of the teachers found it helpful to get down to the children's level in order to engage them better. Some of the shy children were very soft spoken and it was difficult for teachers to hear them without kneeling down. "It gets very loud [in the classroom] so I have to make sure to get my ear down there," said Ms. Sherry. Another teacher, Ms. Stephanie, said that she felt it was important to kneel down to the child's level so that the child knew she was interested in what the child had to say.

Waiting for the children to respond to questions or to speak up when they needed something was something that teachers felt was important. Ms. Lucy explained, "If I ask her something I leave like a *substantial* amount of time to give her a chance to respond." Ms. Lucy emphasized "substantial" here to indicate that she waits a longer than normal amount of time for April to respond to her questions. Referring to the same child, Ms. Abby said, "She just looked at me with 'help' on her expression but did not ask." Ms. Abby went on to explain that she waited as long as she could for a response but other children needed her attention as well.

Ms. Debbie explained that it is important to "give them time before you jump in to help them come out of their shell" when interacting with shy children. During the interview, Ms. Susan talked about being careful not to just do things for George but to allow him some independence and time to figure things out on his own. Ms. Stephanie spoke of this as well saying "I give her time to get comfortable on her own time rather than forcing her to join a situation in which she is not ready."

Having physical contact with the shy children and making them feel comfortable is something that several of teachers mentioned as being an important strategy in the classroom. I observed that many of the shy children were clingy with certain teachers in the room, but many teachers also encouraged the children to stay next to them during different activities or to sit in their lap. "I allow him to stay with me as much as he needs," declared Lisa. It seemed important to the teachers that the children stay comfortable, and letting the children follow them around the room is one way that the teachers said helped the children. "During story time she wanted to sit close to me, which made her feel more comfortable in the group setting," said Ms. Beth. Also illustrating this, Ms. Sherry said, "I usually take her hand or let her sit in my lap. She likes to sit in my lap. And I just kinda, I always talk very quietly to her."

Ms. Susan explained that George was quite heavily attached to another teacher in the room and said, "He usually just follows [the other teacher] but I've noticed lately he has been treading some water, which is shallow, but he's treading. Then he'll go right back to [the teacher]. She's his safe place." Apparently George had begun to feel more comfortable in the room and was warming up to some other people but was still using the other teacher in the room as a safe place where he felt comfortable. Ms. Beth described a situation where Amy was crying for her mother but was soothed by physical contact with the teacher. Ms. Beth said, "She got settled down [after crying] and ended up happy again after some cuddles and talking."

Another strategy that teachers reported using was also one that nearly every teacher talked about. Modeling conversations and actions for the shy children was something that teachers overwhelmingly felt was helpful and necessary in order to make

the children feel more comfortable as well as give them the confidence they needed in social situations. Ms. Beth said, "It's kind of like a copycat thing. Like do what I do. And the kids usually [do] which gets her to do it too when she sees all the other kids doing it." Ms. Beth used a "copycat" method with all of her students and then once Amy saw her peers and the teacher doing the action, she felt more comfortable about doing it on her own.

Other teachers used conversation starters or prompts to help the shy children, which can also be considered modeling. "Giving her strategies for approaching others by demonstrating and giving her appropriate language" is helpful, explained Kayleigh. Ms. Stephanie expressed a similar idea in saying "For Julie, modeling how to approach people and giving her the language is important." When describing how she models conversations for Julie, Ms. Stephanie said, "I'm like, 'okay well what's a way that you can ask your friend for help?'" Ms. Beth said, "I took her to join another little boy and helped by starting a conversation." Because the teachers recognized that shy children often struggled with finding the words to say to their peers, teachers felt that modeling what to say or being a third person in a conversation would help the child.

Ms. Kayleigh described a situation in saying that, Gigi "really wanted somebody to have snack with her so I modeled for her how to go over to another child to ask. And I said 'Billy, Gigi would like to have snack with you. Gigi, would you like to ask Billy?' And Billy said 'no'." After a second child declined having lunch with Gigi, the third child that the teacher asked said yes. While this situation would be incredibly difficult for a child to go through, it shows the shy child that perseverance pays off.

Other strategies that teachers mentioned were positive reinforcement and paraphrase reflections. Ms. Stephanie said, "I'll say things like 'I loved seeing you do that!' or you know it's a lot of positive reinforcement and trying to get her to interact with her friends more." Ms. Stephanie explained that if Julie experienced reinforcement for talking to her friends or interacting with her friends, then she might continue to do it more in the future. Ms. Lucy also explained that when April spoke, "Even if it was just one word, like it was a big deal! And we made a big deal out of it." Ms. Beth explained that in her classroom, "We have a stamp. [The children] like to pick the scent that they like for the day." Getting a stamp on your hand was used for all of the children in her classroom when they did something positive. Ms. Stephanie exclaimed, "I use a lot of paraphrase reflections. If she says something to me I think that's really important because she's you know, voicing something to me so I try to paraphrase what she's saying and telling her what she's doing."

Additionally, seeking out every opportunity during the day to engage with the children was something that several teachers mentioned. Ms. Stephanie said,

I just think that any interaction that they can have, with anybody, is super important and we need to acknowledge that interaction and make sure that it's really positive and that they feel comfortable doing that. Because if they feel like, if they feel uncomfortable talking to someone and we don't really help them through that interaction it's just inhibiting them even more. So just making any interaction that they have a positive one and making sure that we recognize what they're doing is good.

This attitude shows a deep commitment to making sure that the shy child's day is pleasant and that every interaction that you have with a shy child is significant.

Overall, teachers felt that they had a special responsibility toward the shy children. Some said that it was their job as the teacher to make the shy children feel comfortable in the classroom, other teachers said they needed to help them overcome their shyness, yet other teachers said that helping them overcome their shyness was not the teachers' responsibility.

Ms. Susan explained that she and other teachers in the classroom had "gone above and beyond what we would have done for just the average student." Ms. Susan also said, "I feel like my job right now is to encourage him to make connections with other teachers and students so he doesn't rely on me as much." Ms. Karen said that it was a "team effort" in the classroom with the teachers to help the shy child feel more comfortable. She explained that having all of the teachers, as well as the parents, on board and on the same page is key.

Two of the teachers explained that they felt that shyness was something temporary that children experienced. "Teachers need to help students overcome their shyness," explained Karen. She felt that her responsibility was to "fix" the child and make the child more outgoing. Ms. Abby said, "I think some of them grow out of it and some of them don't." Again, this points to the perception that shyness is something that is temporary and that it can go away.

Three of the teachers expressed that it was not their responsibility to interfere or help the children overcome their shyness. Ms. Kayleigh said,

It's not for me to make her someone that she is not ready to be or personality wise

is never going to be. So what my job is, what I see my job is to follow the child.

You take your cues from that person and you respond to that person in a way that

will meet that persons needs.

Mr. John exclaimed, "It's just who he is!" This exclamation shows that Mr. John

felt that shyness was part of Jimmy's personality and was not something that was going

to change or something that should be changed. Ms. Debbie said that her job was to "try

not to interfere. Allow her time and an environment which allows her to grow, to reach

out rather than putting her on the spot."

A few of the teachers expressed in the daily journals that they did not know what

they would do differently if they found themselves in the same situations again. Others

said that they would do nothing different, despite having reported that they had

interactions that were short and of little quality. Ms. Kayleigh replied "Nothing" for each

of the five journal days when asked what she would do differently. Ms. Susan wrote, "I

think I need to speak softer and wait for response." Debbie explained that she would give

Julie more lessons and "not ask if she wanted one but simply direct her to the work."

4.5 Theme III: Limited Engagement

I noted a limited amount and quality of engagement with regard to interactions

between teachers and shy children; teachers noted this as well. In addition, during the

majority of observations, only a couple of interactions occurred between the teachers and

shy children. The majority of the hour that I observed was spent simply watching the shy

child carry out various activities with little to no interaction with the teacher. On the

other hand, louder children who were often misbehaving received the attention of the teachers during the majority of the observations.

Teachers confirmed these observations in their journals and interviews. Mr. John said, "I found that some days I didn't have that many interactions with Jimmy." Other teachers reported the same feeling and expressed the desire to have more one-on-one time with the shy children because other children in the classroom consumed a lot of the teacher's time. While describing that shy children often get left behind, Ms. Susan said,

> I wish I had more time. But you know with 20 other little bodies in here…It's terrible but the loud bird always gets the worm. Kinda sometimes, that's what happens. If you have the squeaky one over here you're gonna take care of the squeaky one.

Ms. Stephanie explained "I have to fight [the other students] off, cause they will [butt in]. If they keep butting in, [Julie] will shut down."

Conversations with the shy children were typically short and quiet, as well as infrequent. While describing the difficultness of getting the child to talk to her, Ms. Lucy said, "As the day goes on my conversations with her get shorter and shorter" and

> So I feel like I usually start pretty vague because I think maybe she'll just start talking. And then I get no answer so I like really narrow it down. And all of a sudden I'm asking yes/no questions, where she can just nod her head or smile and that's how I get answers from her.

Another teacher expressed the same sentiment about conversations being short in nature. "I spoke with him, he would only speak back with a few words," said George. Views such as, she gave "no verbal response," (Ms. Abby) and "She gives very short answers"

(Ms. Lucy), and "Julie stared at me and did not answer" (Ms. Debbie) were also given by several of the teachers.

Some of the teachers exclaimed that they did most of the talking during conversations and that the shy child had difficulties in initiating conversation with them. "I have to initiate the contact," wrote Ms. Sherry, explaining that Traci rarely approached her with something to say. "I feel like I'm talking to myself," explained Ms. Lucy, interactions are "very one sided. I would say they're more like forced interactions."

4.6 Theme IV: Teacher Influence

The fourth theme involves how the teachers' preconceived ideas about shy children and the teachers' own personality seemed to influence the interactions that they have with shy children. It was apparent from the data that teachers generally perceived being shy was a negative child attribute. While some teachers did acknowledge that shyness is not something that can be changed, they still spoke of shyness as something that inhibited the child and was not a good trait to have.

For example, Ms. Karen said, "Teachers need to help students overcome their shyness." This statement does not hide the fact that Ms. Karen feels that shyness is negative and that shy children need to be more outgoing. Ms. Beth declared, "The kids who are more boisterous and outgoing, I have a lot more fun with them." It is clear from this statement that shy children are not fun to be around for Ms. Beth and that she prefers children that are more outgoing. Additionally, the statements above in Section 4.5 describing how some of the teachers avoided interacting with the shy children point to the idea that those teachers did not care for someone who is shy and felt it to be a negative trait to have.

Teachers also reported to me many things that they wished the shy children would do differently. Ms. Beth said that she wished Amy was not as much of a follower and "start talking…voice her opinions…tell the class how she's feeling." Mr. John expressed that he wished Jimmy would "start more conversations" with him. These changes that they wish to see in the child point to the idea that they wish the child were more outgoing.

The teachers' personalities also made a difference in how they perceived and interacted with the shy children. As stated above, six teachers self-identified as shy and four teachers said that they were not shy. During many of the interviews and throughout the journals, shy teachers mentioned that they understood how the child felt and seemed more empathetic towards them. Ms. Sherry said, "I feel like I [can] really listen to Traci and am able to reply back appropriately and ask valuable questions in response to her." Ms. Sherry also said that she wished Traci was able to jump into activities better in the classroom and explained, "I'm the same way, and I think you miss some things by not just jumping in and doing that." In describing her shyness, Ms. Stephanie said, "I feel like I'm a little bit softer than the other teacher in the room…so Julie feels a little more comfortable with me."

Some of the more outgoing teachers declared that they had no way of identifying with the shy children because they did not know what it was like to be shy or scared in social situations. Ms. Susan exclaimed, "I'm totally out of my realm. Because as you can tell I'm very extraverted!" It is also interesting to note that the non-shy teachers were largely the ones who had reporting having "giving up" in trying to engage or interact with

the shy child because it was just too frustrating. However, there were a few shy teachers who reporting having giving up as well.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusions

This chapter will focus on answering the research questions, discussion of the findings, limitations of the study, future research, and conclusions.

5.1 Discussion of Findings

The findings in this study shed light on the way that teachers interact with and perceive the shy children that they work with on a day-to-day basis. Each of the research questions is discussed in more detail below.

How do preschool teachers perceive their interactions with shy children?

The central research question in this study was quite broad and asked how preschool teachers perceive their interactions with shy children. This question was answered in many different ways by the different preschool teachers but had overall similar themes that ran throughout the data that was collected.

The way that teachers perceived shy children did not stray far from what previous research has shown. Teachers generally viewed shy children negatively and some felt that shyness was something that needed to be "fixed." In terms of how the interactions were perceived, teachers reported that the interactions were short, quiet, infrequent, one-sided, and often strained. These findings are not surprising as shy children are typically quiet and do not initiate interactions with teachers very often (Coplan & Prakash, 2003; Rudasill & Rimm-Kaufman, 2009). Because teachers held a rather negative view of their interactions with shy children, the long-term effects that having a teacher with a negative attitude towards a child are potentially damaging.

How do preschool teachers define shyness?

The way that teachers defined shyness can be referred to in Table 3. The definitions that teachers gave varied greatly and were often not in accordance with what researchers typically consider to be "shy." For example, one teacher said that shy was simply "being attached to one friend." Another teacher said that shyness meant not raising your hand to answer questions. This behavior can certainly be one that shy children might exhibit, but does not in itself define what it means to be shy. Coplan and Armer (2007) define shyness as an individual's feelings of uneasiness or hesitation when faced with a novel or unfamiliar situation. Only one teacher in this study mentioned new situations in their definitions of shyness. This incongruity points to a possible incorrect perception on the teachers' part. It could also mean that teachers are more concerned with specific classroom actions, such as a child not wanting to volunteer answers during group time rather than the uneasiness the child feels in unfamiliar settings.

Additionally, I observed that three of the teachers nominated a child as shy in their classroom that did not exhibit shy characteristics while I was observing. During one observation, for example, I witnessed the child playing joyfully with friends and readily initiating contact with the teacher to show her what she was building with Legos. With friends, the child seemed relaxed and playful. There was also a parent who was surprised that the teacher thought their child was shy. Spooner, Evans, and Santos (2005) found that of children who rated themselves as shy, 1/3 were labeled as non-shy by teachers and parents. This has consequences in the classroom if teachers are not identifying children properly. Shy children have many difficulties in the classroom and if teachers are not

able to identify them accurately, then their special needs characteristics cannot be addressed.

O'Connor, Cappella, McCormick, and McClowry (2014) tested the efficacy of INSIGHTS, a temperament-based intervention used in early elementary grades that teaches children and teachers about temperament, for shy children and their teachers. During the INSIGHTS intervention, teachers, parents, and children learn about different types of temperament through the use of puppets and vignettes. For example, one puppet "Coretta the Cautious" is shy. Teachers and parents are taught about what it means to be shy and how to support shy children effectively through watching Coretta in different situations. Researchers found that the INSIGHTS intervention enhanced the critical thinking and math skills of shy children over the transition between kindergarten and first grade. From this we can gather that teachers' awareness of shy children's temperaments and effective strategies to support them help the child to grow academically.

How do teachers describe their interactions with shy children?

In general, teachers described their interactions with shy children as short, quiet, infrequent, one-sided, and strained. Such interactions are not productive or positive. Many teachers had simply given up on trying to engage the child in conversation or activities. This suggests that teacher do not know how to effectively communicate with shy children and need help in coming up with strategies to do so.

Similar studies have found the interactions between teachers and shy children to be strained. Coplan & Prakash (2003) found that shy children received more initiations from teachers in preschool but did not initiate interactions with teachers on their own. Rudasill and Rimm-Kaufman (2009) reported that children who were rated as lower in

shyness were more likely to initiate interactions with teachers, and more child-initiated interactions were related to more teacher-child closeness. From these two studies, and the current study, we can conclude that shy children may have difficulties with initiating contact with teachers but that teachers try to make up for that by initiating contact with them more frequently. However, child-initiated interactions are important for the teacher-child relationship. In the current study, we can describe the teacher-child relationship as not very close because the interactions that the teachers had with the shy children were usually teacher initiated, one-sided, and strained. Researchers have also found that children who have higher quality relationships with their teachers have both higher levels of engagement in the classroom and higher levels of academic achievement (Birch & Ladd, 1997; Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Ladd, Birch, & Buhs, 1999). Teacher training programs might be a good avenue for pre-service teachers to learn about different personalities and temperaments that they might encounter in children and how to deal with them effectively in the classroom.

Having available time to meet the shy child's needs was something that many of the teachers mentioned as being a problem. Teachers wished that they had more one-on-one time with the child. With the nature of the preschool classroom however, this is nearly impossible. It seems there are several roadblocks here that are hindering teachers' abilities to be able to reach out effectively to shy children.

What support, if any, do teachers feel that they provide shy children?

Teachers reported giving shy children a lot of support in the classroom. Even the teachers who said they had given up still described different things that they do in the classroom in order to try to pull the shy child out of his or her shell. This is an interesting

finding because although teachers reported having given up it is apparent that they still felt that as the teacher in the classroom they had a responsibility to engage each and every child. Different methods of support that teachers gave included positive reinforcement, modeling, physical contact, and others. The findings suggest that the methods that teachers chose to implement largely depended on what each individual child responded to the best.

Previous research on teacher strategies and support have reported similar findings. Brophy and McCaslin (1992) and Evans (2001) found that successful teachers reported that they try to minimize embarrassment and stress, support and encourage the child, explain that mistakes are acceptable, praise accomplishments, and reassure the child of his or her competence. Evans (2001) also reported that teachers claimed to try to indirectly and gently pressure shy children to change their shyness. Luring shy children into social situations while also trying to reduce their anxiety by using small group activities and fantasy play were other strategies that Evans reported.

I noted in several observations that some children were very clingy and dependent on one or more of the teachers in the room, while others did not feel comfortable at all in the presence of the teachers. These teachers seemed to accept that physical contact or being near the teacher was what the child needed and allowed them this interaction. I did not see any of the teachers forcing the child into something that they did not want to do, which is the appropriate approach. From this we can conclude that some teachers are somewhat perceptive to the child's individual needs and do what they can to make them comfortable.

Do teachers feel that their interactions with shy children are of high quality?

Almost half of the teachers consistently reported that their interactions with the shy children were not of high quality. Others reported that any interaction they had with shy children was high quality because interactions were so few and far between. Teachers also were extremely enthusiastic when a child stepped out of his or her comfort zone. For example, if the child approached the teacher with a question, teachers expressed pride and excitement.

This shows that when interactions were short, quiet, and one-sided teachers were not happy with the quality of the interactions. However, they showed increased enthusiasm for the quality of the interactions if verbal or physical contact was initiated by the children or for conversations that were longer in length. Teachers appear to value a child who is more outspoken and is easy to talk to and engage in. Interactions that are quiet and short, like those with shy children, are typically viewed more negatively.

This is similar to what other researchers have found. Lao, Akseer, Bosacki, and Coplan (2013) found that outgoing teachers viewed outgoing children more favorably and gave them additional jobs around the classroom, such as being line leader. Many studies have also shown that teachers are more likely to not only underestimate the intelligence of shy children but also to perceive them as less intelligent and less academically competent (e.g. Martin & Holbrook, 1985; Coplan, Gavinski-Molina, Lagace-Seguin, & Wichmann, 2001). Evans (2001) explained that these negative perceptions of shy children might be partially because the children do not talk as much or have impaired speech, which comes off as being less intelligence.

According to teachers, what challenges do shy children have in the classroom?

Teachers reported that shy children have challenges when it comes to initiating contact with teachers, and sometimes peers, as well as difficulties participating during group time. Several of the teachers did comment on how bright or smart the child was, which contradicts research which shows that teachers tend to view shy children as less intelligent or less competent (e.g. Martin & Holbrook, 1985; Coplan, Gavinski-Molina, Lagace-Seguin, & Wichmann, 2001). It seems that most of the challenges lay with social contact with other people. Interestingly, some teachers said that the children were only shy with teachers and not with peers, or visa versa. Several of the teachers mentioned in their daily journals the struggles that the children had with regard to playing with peers. For example, the shy children were bossed around by friends or had difficulties initiating play and could not find the words to ask a friend to share a toy. Previous research has found that shy children are more likely to be rejected by their peers as well as have an increased level of peer victimization, or bullying (Erath, Flanagan, & Bierman, 2007; Hanish & Guerra, 2004; Hoglund & Leadbetter, 2007).

Other teachers focused on the teacher/child interactions and mentioned that the children did not respond to questions or refused to participate during group time activities. These social challenges are typical and teachers were generally able to pick up on the fact that shy children are apprehensive or scared to engage with others. Arbeau & Coplan (2007) found that teachers show greater concern for shy children and generally have a great desire to help them. Other research has found that shy teachers tend to be more empathetic towards shy children (Coplan, Hughes, Bosacki, & Rose-Krasnor,

2011). It seems that when teachers recognize a child as being shy, they know that the child has different needs and requires help to feel comfortable in social situations.

Do preschool teachers feel that they know how to deal with shy children in the classroom?

Teachers had doubts about their abilities to help the shy children, yet also felt that what they were doing was helping the child to feel more comfortable and come out of their shell. This contradiction in teachers' thoughts was interesting to discover. Many of the teachers wished that they had help in dealing with shy children. The more outgoing teachers were especially unsure of what to do and had given up trying to engage the children in conversation. These teachers' confidence had been shaken when strategies they tried to use to interact with the children had not worked the way that they had envisioned. A few of the shy teachers seemed more confident in their abilities to engage the shy children in conversation or activities because they were shy themselves.

This finding is not surprising, as past research has found that shy teachers were more empathetic towards shy children. Chang (2003) found that shy children were able to come out of their shell when their teachers were empathetic, warm, and more perceptive to the child's needs. There can be huge repercussions for children who have a teacher who is not empathetic towards them or less perceptive to the shy children's needs. If teachers are not able to put themselves in the child's shoes and understand what it's like to be shy, then the teacher is likely to push the child too far out of his or her comfort zone and make them feel even more uncomfortable in the classroom.

5.2 Limitations

After the completion of this research project, some limitations were noted in addition to ones mentioned earlier. First, it should be explained that the majority of the participants in this study had a difficult time following the guidelines and proposed timeline of the study. Many of the journal questions and interview questions were misinterpreted by participants and not answered with information that I was seeking to obtain. For example, the last interview question that was asked of all of the teachers was: "What else would you like to tell me about working with shy children that I haven't asked?" About half of the teachers took this question as an opportunity to tell me what they disliked about the study instead of adding their concluding thoughts on working with shy children. Several teachers expressed the desire to talk about peer relationships instead of their own interactions. Two teachers said that they wished I had talked to them in the beginning of the school year instead of during the spring. Another teacher expressed her frustration with me several times for not being allowed to pick a five year old for the study instead of a three- or four-year-old.

In the journals, many teachers described the interactions between shy children and peers rather than focusing on the teacher/child interactions. I am unsure why there was confusion with the focus of the journal questions. However, the focus on peer interactions by the teachers does shed light on the importance that the peer interactions have in the classroom and the strong feelings that teachers have about their impact. Almost every teacher reported that their child faced "no challenges" during the days that they filled out the journal. Teachers were not diligent in filling the journals out and did not appear to understand the importance of giving thorough and detailed responses.

Additionally, if the child or teacher happened to be absent one day during the journal portion of the data collection process the teacher simply did not fill out a journal for that day and left all of the questions blank. For three teachers I had only four days worth of journal entries. In the future, these issues can be addressed by conducting a pilot study in order to identify questions that are not clear or that can be misinterpreted. This allows for revision of the questions posed to participants before the data collection process starts. Another way to address these issues is to be clearer about the purpose of the study and the parameters to participants before they agree to participate. In the current research project, I was not as clear as I should have been and have learned a great deal about how to conduct my next research endeavor.

Additionally, I found a lot of contradictory evidence in this study. I would personally not have labeled three of the preschoolers as shy based off of my observations in the classroom. In fact, there were often other children in the classroom who displayed shy characteristics more prominently than the focus child. Many of the children were only quiet and reserved with teachers, but not with peers. To me, this displays not shyness, but being intimidated by adults or authority figures.

There were also some problems with teachers identifying shy children. Ms. Kayleigh decided halfway through the journal entries that the child that she focused on was not shy after all, but instead "timid." Mr. John told me in passing that Jimmy's mother was quite surprised when he asked her to sign the parental informed consent form because she did not think her child was shy. Additionally, there were two teachers who disagreed about a child's level of shyness. One of those teachers participated in the study and the one who did not think the target child was shy declined in participating.

Another possible limitation is that some of the teachers clearly changed their behavior for the study in order to appear to be more involved with the child. For example, Ms. Lucy spent much of the hour that I observed calling on April, talking to her during group time, and asking for her help around the classroom. I felt as if that was for my benefit and did not accurately portray a regular day for April. Additionally, I got the impression that some teachers changed their behaviors in the middle of the time period that they kept their journals in order to try new strategies or test out different ways of talking to the child in order to have more to write about. For example, when asked what she might do differently in the future, Ms. Susan said, "speak softer and wait for a response" in the journal, the next day she reported taking a "soft, persistent approach and it paid off." This does not show a typical interaction with George if she is changing her behavior based on what she has "learned" as a result of participating in the study.

5.3 Recommendations for Future Research

The current research project has the potential to bring about several other studies because of the additional questions that were raised and the findings that warrant additional attention. First, it was interesting to see how personalities of the teachers seemed to affect their perceptions of the shy children. The outgoing teachers seemed to have more of a negative view towards the shy child and expressed more doubts and frustrations than those of the teachers who reported themselves as being shy. This is consistent with what Hughes and Coplan (2010) and Coplan, Hughes, Bosacki, and Rose-Krasnor (2011) have found as well. Additional studies that explore the connection between teacher personality and perceptions of shy children or self-efficacy with regard to interacting with shy children would be noteworthy.

Another research topic that could come out of this study is exploring the way that teachers define shyness and how they identify shy children in the classroom. The teachers in this research project had varying viewpoints on what it means to be shy and oftentimes their definitions were not in line with what researchers typically consider as shy. As discussed earlier in Section 4.3, one child's parent did not consider him shy while signing the parental consent form, one teacher changed her mind on the child being shy in the middle of the study, and two teachers had differing opinions on which people the child was shy around. These descriptions point to some confusion or perhaps even incorrect ideas about what it means to be shy. A qualitative inquiry that explores what teachers perceive as shy behaviors or feelings would be beneficial because based on this study there seems to be some confusion about what shyness actually is.

5.4 Implications

This research project provides many contributions to the field of education. We can learn from the findings of this study about how these teachers perceive their interactions with shy preschool children and how to better prepare our teachers for working with different personality styles in the classroom. Teacher training programs may greatly benefit from giving pre-service teachers instruction and practice in working with shy children. The current study tells us what strategies some teachers are using but teachers still expressed desire for more teacher support. Additionally, preparing lessons and activity instructions may be improved when teachers understand shy children better and are able to make them feel comfortable in the classroom. Enabling the understanding of shy children can start in teacher training programs and continue in the classroom setting. This study helps to inform what is currently happening in classroom and further

research can help to expand on what teachers need to be trained to do while working with and interacting with shy children.

5.5 Summary

In conclusion, in this research project, I was able to uncover interesting insights into how some preschool teachers perceive their interactions with shy children in their classrooms. Themes included teacher doubts and frustrations, teachers' support, limited engagement, and teacher influence. These themes describe the unique experiences that teachers have with shy children and help to explain some of the difficulties that both teachers and shy children have in the classroom. Although there were several limitations to this study, the findings were able to answer many questions that we have about the experiences of preschool teachers with their shy students. Further research is needed to explore some of the lingering questions that exist and additional questions that came to light from the findings of this study.

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Appendix A

IRB Approval Letter

University of Nebraska–Lincoln

April 15, 2015

Sara Swenson
Department of Educational Psychology
4415 N. 1st St Lincoln, NE 68521

Kathleen Rudasill
Department of Educational Psychology
221 TEAC, UNL, 68588-0345

IRB Number:
Project ID: 14439
Project Title: Teachers' Perceptions of their Interactions with Shy Preschool Children

Dear Sara:

The Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects has completed its review of the Request for Change in Protocol submitted to the IRB.

1. It has been approved to extend the end date of this project to August 31, 2015.

We wish to remind you that the principal investigator is responsible for reporting to this Board any of the following events within 48 hours of the event:
* Any serious event (including on-site and off-site adverse events, injuries, side effects, deaths, or other problems) which in the opinion of the local investigator was unanticipated, involved risk to subjects or others, and was possibly related to the research procedures;
* Any serious accidental or unintentional change to the IRB-approved protocol that involves risk or has the potential to recur;
* Any publication in the literature, safety monitoring report, interim result or other finding that indicates an unexpected change to the risk/benefit ratio of the research;
* Any breach in confidentiality or compromise in data privacy related to the subject or others; or
* Any complaint of a subject that indicates an unanticipated risk or that cannot be resolved by the research staff.

This letter constitutes official notification of the approval of the protocol change. You are therefore authorized to implement this change accordingly.

If you have any questions, please contact the IRB office at 472-6965.

Sincerely,

Becky R. Freeman, CIP

Appendix B

Preschool Approval Letter

UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska
Lincoln

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing to request permission to conduct a research study at your institution. I am currently a graduate student in educational psychology at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln and am in the process of writing my Master's Thesis. This project is entitled Teachers' Perceptions of their Interactions with Shy Preschoolers.

I hope that you will allow me to recruit teachers from the school to participate in the research project. Teachers will be required to undergo two interviews, fill out a brief survey, be observed in their classroom, as well as keep a journal of their interactions with a shy child in their class for a period of five school days. Interested teachers will be given a consent form to sign. Additionally, the shy child in the teachers' class will be given a consent form to be signed by their parent or guardian in agreement to be observed in the classroom. These consent forms will be returned to the primary researcher at the beginning of the study.

If approval is granted, teacher participants will have an initial interview, which should take no more than 30 minutes. Teachers will then be given a survey to complete at their leisure and instructions will be given to complete the journals. Observations will then be conducted in the classroom of the teacher interacting with a shy child. These observations should take no more than two hours total, but may involve coming at multiple points in time. A second interview will then be done after the journals, observation, and survey are completed. This second interview should take no more than one hour. Teachers will be compensated with a gift card to Starbucks for their participation.

Should this study be published, only pseudonyms will be used in order to protect the privacy of the teachers, students, and preschool. Additionally, no costs will be incurred by either your center or the individual participants.

Your approval to conduct this study will be greatly appreciated. You may contact me at my email address: sara.swenson12@gmail.com or by telephone: (224) 305-3364.

If you agree to allow me to conduct research at your center, kindly sign below and return the signed form in the enclosed self-addressed envelope.

Sincerely,

Sara Swenson
University of Nebraska- Lincoln

Approved by:

_____   _____   _____
Print your name and title here   Signature   Date

Appendix C

Teacher Informed Consent

Nebraska UNIVERSITY OF
Lincoln

Teacher Informed Consent Form

Teachers' Perceptions of their Interactions with Shy Preschool Children

Purpose of the Research:
The purpose of this research is to examine teachers' perceptions of their interactions with shy preschool children.

Procedures:
If you consent, you will provide information via survey, interview, observation, and journal. You will first be asked to provide background information about yourself and your experiences in the preschool classroom on a survey. This will be done at the initial interview time, which should last approximately 30 minutes. At this time you will also be asked to nominate a shy child in your classroom whom we will focus on for the duration of the study. The researcher will ask you to keep a journal for five (5) days. You will answer several questions regarding your experiences working with the shy child that you nominated. Each journal entry should take no more than one hour to complete. The researcher will then observe you in the classroom for a period of approximately two hours while you interact with the shy child. A second interview will then be completed which will take approximately one hours time.

Risks and/or Discomforts:
There are no known or anticipated risks associated with this research.

Benefits of Participation:
The researchers hope to learn more about how teachers perceive their interactions with shy children in the preschool classroom.

Compensation:
You will be compensated with a $10 Starbucks gift card upon the completion of your participation in this study.

Confidentiality:
Any information obtained during this study that could identify you will be kept strictly confidential. Your name and information will be identified with a pseudonym. Only the researchers will have access to the original names and assigned pseudonyms. All information will be stored in a secure storage area accessible only to the researchers. Information gathered from the study will be reported using only the pseudonym that is assigned to you and no identifying information will be used in summaries, reports, or publications.

Opportunity to ask Questions:
Your rights as a research participant have been explained to you. If you have any additional questions about the study, please contact Sara Swenson (224-305-3364) or Dr. Kathy Rudasill (402-472-2455). If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant that have not been answered by the investigator, or to report any concerns about the study you may contact the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Institutional Review Board (UNL IRB) at (402) 472-6965.

Freedom to Withdraw:
Participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to decide not to participate in this study or to withdraw at any time without adversely affecting your relationship with the researchers, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, or your employer.

Documentation of Informed Consent:
You are voluntarily making a decision whether or not to participate in the research study. Your signature certifies that you have decided to participate having read and understood the information presented. You will be given a copy of this form to keep.

☐ By checking this box I agree to be audiotaped during the interview portion of this research project.

_____
Your Name (Please Print)

_____   _____
Signature   Date

IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS
Primary Investigator: Sara Swenson, Ed. M. Cell: 224-305-3364
Secondary Investigator: Kathleen Rudasill, Ph.D. Office: 472-2355

Appendix D

Parental Informed Consent

Nebraska
Lincoln

Parental Informed Consent Form

Teachers' Perceptions of their Interactions with Shy Preschool Children

Purpose of the Research:
The purpose of this research is to examine teachers' perceptions of their interactions with shy preschool children.

Procedures:
If you consent, your child will be observed in his or her preschool classroom for approximately two hours. During this observation, the interactions that your child has with his/her teacher will be recorded. This may include verbal exchanges, tone of voice, physical proximity or touching, facial expressions, positioning of participants, eye contact, etc.

Risks and/or Discomforts:
There are no known or anticipated risks associated with this research.

Benefits:
There will be no personal benefit for participating in this study. However, we hope to learn more about how teachers perceive their interactions with shy children in the preschool classroom.

Confidentiality:
Any information obtained during this study that could identify you or your child will be kept strictly confidential. Your child's name and information will be identified with a pseudonym. Only the researchers will have access to the original names and assigned pseudonyms. All information will be stored in a secure storage area accessible only to the researchers. Information gathered from the study will be reported using only the pseudonym that is assigned to your child and no identifying information will be used in summaries, reports, or publications.

Opportunity to ask Questions:
Your and your child's rights as a research participant have been explained to you. If you have any additional questions about the study, please contact Sara Swenson (224-305-3364) or Dr. Kathy Rudasill (402-472-2455). If you have any questions about you and your child's rights as a research participant that have not been answered by the investigator, or to report any concerns about the study you may contact the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Institutional Review Board (UNL IRB) at (402) 472-6965.

Freedom to Withdraw:

Participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to decide not to enroll your child in this study or to withdraw your child at any time without adversely affecting their or your relationship with the researchers or the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, or with your child's preschool center.

Documentation of Informed Consent:
You are voluntarily making a decision whether or not to allow your child to participate in the research study. Your signature certifies that you have decided to allow your child to participate having read and understood the information presented. You will be given a copy of this form to keep.

_____
Child's Name (Please Print)

_____   _____
Signature of Parent   Date

IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS
Primary Investigator: Sara Swenson, Ed. M. Cell: 224-305-3364
Secondary Investigator: Kathleen Rudasill, Ph.D. Office: 472-2355

Appendix E

First Interview Questions for Teacher

Date: _____

Name: _____

1) How much time per day do you spend with 3-4 year olds?

2) How long have you worked in this classroom?

3) How long have you worked at this preschool?

4) What experience with preschoolers did you have before this current job?

5) What is your highest level of education?

6) What was your highest degree in?

Appendix F

Teacher Survey Questions

Date: _____

Name: _____ Sex: _____ Age: _____

1) How do you define "shy"?

2) Do/did you consider yourself shy? Why or why not?

3) Do you have at least one shy child in your classroom?

4) Nominate one shy child in your classroom that you would be willing to write

about and document the interactions that you have with him/her. The child must

be aged 3 or 4. (Write first name only)

Appendix G

Teacher Journal Questions

Date: _____   Teacher's Name: _____

Child's Name:_____ Child's Age: _____

(Questions 1 through 3 will be answered in the first journal entry only. Questions 4-9

will be answered each of the five days)

1) How long have you known the child?

2) How long has the child been in your classroom?

3) Why did you nominate this child as "shy"?

_____

4) Describe in an as much detail as possible any and all interactions you had with

the child today.

5) What was significant about these interactions to you?

6) Do you feel that these interactions were of high quality? Why or why not?

7) What challenges did the child face today?

8) How did you support the child through these challenges? What strategies did you

use?

9) Looking back on your interactions, what, if anything, would you have done

differently?

Appendix H

Second Interview Questions

Date:_____

Teacher's Name:_____

Shy Child's Name:_____

1) How would you describe your interactions with the shy child?

2) Describe a typical interaction that you might have with him/her.

3) How do you feel this interaction differs from the interactions you have with other non-shy children?

4) What challenges does he/she have in the classroom?

5) What strategies do you use when you talk to or interact with the shy child?

6) How do you provide support to the child?

7) Do you feel these strategies or support help the child? Why or why not?

8) What else would you like to tell me about working with shy children that I haven't asked?