

Running head: THE CONTRIBUTION OF VIDEOTAPED DOCUMENTATION

Exploring the Contribution of Videotaped Documentation to Children's Symbolic Play

by

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(Abstract)

This study explored how documentation contributed to children's symbolic play. The naturally occurring symbolic play of two children, five-years-old, was videotaped in their classroom for four weeks. Edited segments of their symbolic play were then given to the children to revisit and reflect on with the researcher through questions on themes, roles and object substitutions. Each child participated in three interview sessions. The children's thoughts on themes, roles, object substitutions, pretense and play negotiation were described. The children's symbolic play in the classroom and during the interviews was described in relation to the claims of documentation. The role of documentation in children's symbolic play was discussed. Recommendations for future use of documentation and children's symbolic play were made.

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose of Study

Previous research on children's symbolic play has relied almost exclusively on adult's (parents, teachers, researchers) interpretations of children's play. The purpose of this study is to expand our understanding of symbolic play through the eyes and words of children.

Brief Review of the Literature and Justification

The inspiration for this study comes from various sources. First, in their comprehensive review of the research on play, Rubin, Fein, and Vandenberg (1983) noted the lack of knowledge about children's interpretations of symbolic play. In identifying questions concerning both content and methodology needed to advance our understanding of play, they suggested providing children with videotaped samples of children engaged in "make-believe" play to determine their "conceptions" of pretense. They speculated that children's ability to differentiate non-literal from literal behavior might be related to the children's popularity and their ability to engage in productive social interactions. This form of methodology provides a different and insightful way to examine children's play.

Second, understanding play as an important learning process is of central concern to early childhood educators. Fantuzzo, Coolahan, Mendez, McDermott, and Sutton-Smith (1998) recently developed the Penn Interactive Peer Play-Scale in response to the need to "identify quality practices that are informed by valid assessment of the developmental needs and capabilities of young children" (p. 411) noted by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. This scale assesses the positive and negative social interactions during play to identify children that may need more help in creating positive play interactions with their peers.

Fantuzzo's et al. (1998) process of developing the scale included an inductive approach to describing children's behavior in natural contexts for the study of children's play. They not only used observations of the children's play, but also involved teachers and parents of Head Start children to identify any important cultural issues needed to understand the children's play. This follows procedures of other researchers concerned

with the development of a contextually-relevant understanding of children's behaviors (Pelligrini, 1992 as cited in Fantuzzo et al., 1998). The concept of a contextually-relevant understanding is another focuses of this study.

Third, documentation which is used in the widely acclaimed Reggio Emilia Approach to early childhood education follows the contextually-relevant approach to describing children's behaviors. Edwards, Gandini and Forman (1998) identify three major purposes for documentation. Documentation provides

children with a concrete and visible "memory" of what they said and did in order to serve as a jumping-off point for next steps in learning; educators with a tool for research and a key to continuous improvement and renewal; parents and the public with detailed information about what happens in the schools, as means of eliciting their reactions and support.
(p. 10)

According to these authors, documentation is accomplished through photographs, panels with descriptions of events, audiotape recordings and transcriptions of children's conversations, displays of drawings, slides and video recordings. These tools capture important moments in the children's experiences. For example, the documentation may show photographs of the beginning and ending of a construction project and also key events that changed the course of other events. When used with children, the teacher shows the children the documentation of the children's work or an event in which the children participated (termed "experience") to create discussion focused on finding a deeper understanding for the children and teacher.

Documentation enhances children's learning through revisiting and reflection (Katz & Chard, 1996). Revisiting is reviewing an experience (either children's work or an event) with the intent of learning more about the experience and the process of reviewing. Revisiting is not just the retelling of events, but recreating the experience by asking questions about why children did a certain event, how the children felt during the experience, and how the children can follow up on the experience (Forman & Fyfe, 1998). During revisiting, the teacher may focus on events that were not completed to encourage the children to reflect on the events.

Reflection is a process in which, through the guidance of a teacher's questions and the documentation, the children interpret the experience. The intent of the interpretation is for the children to use the experience and their present understanding of the experience to reconstruct a more in-depth understanding of the experience. Reflection can be used to scaffold children to a higher level of thinking (New, 1998). From reflection the children are able to not only reexamine an experience, but also plan new experiences.

After using documentation to revisit and reflect, Malaguzzi (1998) claims that children become more curious about the experience. This may lead to children to reengage in the experience to try out new concepts learned from reflecting on the experience. Documentation is also thought to help children create confidence and pride in their experiences through an adult showing interest in not only the children's experience, but also in the children's interpretation of the experience (Malaguzzi, 1998). The revisiting and reflection process in documentation as practiced in the Reggio Emilia Approach offers an interesting strategy to gain a better understanding of children's interpretations of their symbolic play.

Finally, direction for this study comes from the research generated by the interest of researchers and educators in symbolic play and sociodramatic play. Symbolic play is the acting "as if" a behavior or object were something else (Bretherton, 1989), while sociodramatic play is the coordination of symbolic play between two or more children. Researchers and educators have had a sustained interest in symbolic play because of the array of social, emotional and cognitive skills used and or developed by children in their symbolic play. This study suspends the debate on whether play is assimilation, a reflection of their developmental level (Piaget, 1962), or a scaffold to help children develop social and cognitive skills (Vygotsky, 1978), and identifies symbolic play as an important activity for children.

Symbolic play begins when a child is able to perform a behavior out of the normal context of that behavior. Piaget (1962) gave the example of the child pretending to sleep when it was not time to sleep. At around two-years-of-age, children are only able to decontextualize familiar events or those events related to themselves, like sleeping or eating (Bretherton, 1989). These acts of pretense are self-directed in that the child is the

recipient of the pretended behavior (drinking from an empty cup). Around two-and-a-half-years-of-age, children expand the recipient of their decontextualization acts to include others and parents (Miller & Garvey, 1984). For example, feeding a parent or doll. From this point, children pretend to take on the role of someone else, usually a “caregiver” (Stockinger Forsys & McCune-Nicolich, 1984).

Sociodramatic play begins when children are able to incorporate other people into symbolic play. Sociodramatic play results in play episodes where children enact roles, themes, and use objects in coordination with each other. With development in perspective-taking skills (Creasey, Jarvis, & Berk, 1998; Rubin & Pepler, 1980) and decentration (Fein, 1981), children are able to negotiate changes in the type of themes and roles enacted from familiar and domestic to more fictional ones (Fein, 1981). Children also develop the ability to use objects that less closely resemble the pretend object in reference (Vygotsky, 1978). An underlying factor that enables children to increase their use of symbolism and negotiation of symbolism with others is an increase in communication skills (Garvey, 1977). For an in-depth review of the development of symbolic and sociodramatic play, (see Appendix A).

This study focuses on the symbolic play of children between four-and five-years-of-age. It is during these ages that symbolic play is at its peak (Fein, 1981). Children younger than the four-years-of-age engage in only a few sequential combinations of symbolic play (Rubin, Fein, & Vandenberg, 1983). For example, a child can pretend to “prepare food” and “feed a doll”, but not “prepare food”, “feed a doll” and then “take the doll on a walk”. Children older than five-years-of-age slowly lose interest in symbolic play and engage in more games-with-rules (Piaget, 1962). Therefore since four- and five-year-old children are able to enact several sequential combinations of symbolic play, and show interest in engaging in symbolic play, they were judged most suitable for this study.

Research Questions

In summary, this study’s purpose was to expand our understanding of symbolic play through children’s interpretation of their play. Specifically, it addressed two major research questions. The first question was: “How and what do the children think or feel about their symbolic play as reflected in their comments and reactions to a videotaped

segment of their symbolic play?” The second question was: “How does videotaped documentation, specifically revisiting and reflecting, contribute to an increase in interest, reengagement and extension of the children’s symbolic play?” This study was based on the concept of examining children’s play through contextually-relevant methods (Fantuzzo et al., 1998) to include naturally occurring observations and children’s descriptions of play. This study also combined the methodological suggestions of Rubin, Fein, and Vandenberg (1983) and Edwards, Gandini, and Forman (1998) to create a new methodology to explore children’s play.

METHODOLOGY

Setting

This study was conducted in a university laboratory preschool in Virginia. The school was using documentation as a standard part of practice and assessment in the midst of an educational reform inspired by the Reggio Emilia Approach. Procedures for preparing and using documentation in the school have been developed. Reflection sheets describing classroom activities are filled out by the head teacher. Student assistant teachers reflect on the experiences of the children described on the sheets. These sheets are filed in the “Listening to the Children” notebooks. Notebooks are reviewed by all teachers for updates, and typed up at the end of each week. Samples of the observations are put into the children’s portfolios for individual assessment. New plans and visions for curriculum are based on reflections of the experiences. Some activities, like classroom projects or special events, are displayed in the form of panels, providing a form of group assessment. Documentation panels are large pieces of foam board with pictures/illustrations and text representing the children’s activity. Panels are introduced to the children in a group setting to allow them to recreate the event or activity with the help of the teacher. Prior to this study, the lab school had not used videotaping as a form of documentation.

The selected children were in a morning program which operates for three-and-a-half-hours, five days a week. There were sixteen children in the classroom, one lead teacher, two co-teachers, and five undergraduate assistant teachers who attended on rotating schedules. The daily activities include free play in different centers, one group time and free play on the playground. The centers are separated into manipulative, science, art, blocks, a media table and a loft. Most of the activities available for the children are based on art or construction, including painting, drawing, writing stories, building with blocks or other materials and puzzles. There was no dramatic play center and limited dramatic play props.

The school was equipped with video cameras in each classroom. The cameras, mounted on the walls, are operated from a location outside the classrooms. This placement of the cameras allowed me to see, record and follow the selected children as they moved about the classroom in a non-intrusive manner.

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Selection of Participants

Teachers of the four-and five-year-old children enrolled in one classroom of the school were asked to nominate children who in their observation frequently engaged in symbolic play and who had the verbal skills and propensity to respond to questions about their play (see Appendix B). This classroom was chosen over two other potential classrooms because the chosen classroom was in session for five days a week while the other two classrooms were only in session three days a week. Letters were sent to the parents of the nominated children inviting them to participate in the study (see Appendix C). The families of four children responded. After conducting informal observations I chose two children. I decided to include Hannah (pseudonym) because she engaged frequently in symbolic play. Also, she and I already knew each other and she was comfortable with me. I chose Sceeter (chose his own pseudonym at the completion of the study) because he was able to express himself to the teachers, and spent most of his time engaged in symbolic play. A decision was made to limit the number of participants to two to allow for a more in-depth understanding of children's play and a new methodology.

Since it was anticipated that Hannah and Sceeter would engage in play with their classmates, letters explaining the study were sent to parents of all of the children in the classroom (see Appendix D). A more detailed letter and consent form was sent to the parents of the target children (see Appendix E).

Participants

Hannah, a loquacious 61 month old girl, frequently engaged in symbolic play with her friends, or by herself with stuffed animals she brought from home. She was a dominant figure in her group of friends, but not overly directive. She was able to initiate and follow different symbolic play episodes. Her play revolved around nurturing themes of play, including taking care of dolls, building homes for stuffed animals and pretending to be mother or baby with her friends.

Sceeter was an active five-and-a-half-year-old boy who appeared to prefer symbolic play to all other activities in the classroom. Sceeter has a large vocabulary and is very articulate. He rarely engaged in the art based activities. He used the constructive play activities like making an airport out of blocks to support his symbolic play. He was observed playing different themes with a diverse group of children. The two most

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frequent themes were an emergency/recovery play and play involving “chemicals” and a “laboratory”.

Pilot Study

Given the exploratory nature of the study and the well documented difficulty in interviewing/observing young children (Grave & Walsh, 1998), a pilot study was conducted. I selected a child, Janet, (female, 5 years 3 months) with whom I knew through babysitting. I taped our symbolic play together in her home. I told Janet that we would be watching the videotape together later, and I would have questions for her to answer. Two days later, I invited her to watch a portion of the videotape showing us engaging in symbolic play in her home. I interviewed her with questions related to her play. This session was videotaped.

The pilot experience led to several changes in the proposed methodology. The original plan was to have the child twice watch the videotape with me, answering questions the second time through. I found that even during the second viewing, the child was unable to focus on the questions. Therefore I decided to give the videotapes to the children a day before the scheduled interview and tape viewing so they would be familiar with the videotape. The plan to interview the child at school was changed to do the interviews in the child's home. Second, I planned on videotaping the interview sessions, however during the pilot interview, the child appeared to be distracted by the video camera. I decided to audiotape the interviews with the children. Third, I found my original questions about symbolic play were too abstract, and so Janet had difficulty responding. I reworked some of the questions, making them easier to understand, and limited the number asked in any one interview.

Procedures

Videotaping

I spent one week in the classroom of the target children interacting with all the children. This allowed time for me to build rapport with the Hannah and Sceeter prior to videotaping their play. I believed this rapport was necessary so that they would feel comfortable with me during the interview/reflection sessions.

The naturally occurring symbolic play of both Hannah and Sceeter was videotaped daily for four weeks. Since the interview/reflection sessions were planned for

Fridays, I had to give the videotapes to the parents on Thursday so that the children could watch them before the interview. This meant that after the first three days of the week, excerpts of each child's symbolic play during that week were edited onto another videotape and given to the parents of each child. Edited segments ranged from one to three different episodes of symbolic play (see Appendix F). They included either the child enacting a theme, taking on a role, or making an object substitution, important structural properties of symbolic play identified in the research literature on symbolic play (Rubin, Fein, Vandenberg 1983). Segments were edited to last no longer than ten minutes. For the most part, the decision of what to include in the excerpts was not a difficult choice. However, in one incidence, I debated over including a segment of Sceeter's play due to the content. In the play episode, Sceeter and a friend were pretending to be the babies of two other children. All the children were pretending that the babies were bad and the child pretending to be the father spanked Sceeter. Sceeter did not appear to be upset by this and continued playing. This episode was rich in symbolic play aspects (role play and theme), however I did not know how Sceeter or his parents would react to viewing it. Thus, I chose not to show him that episode.

Immediately following each child's interview/reflection session, the next series of videotaping commenced, repeating the above procedure (see Table 1 for schedule of events). After the first week of videotaping I was unable to interview Sceeter, therefore he had a final interview at the end of the fourth week. Unfortunately, I was not able to film his play after that week.

Table 1

Schedule of Events

<u>Date</u>	<u>Activity</u>
February 1-5	Classroom Building Rapport
February 8-12	Film Classroom
Friday, February 12	Interview H
February 15-19	Film Classroom
Friday, February 19	Interview H and S
February 22-26	Film Classroom
Thursday, February 25	Interview H and S
March 1-5	Film Classroom
Friday, March 5	Interview S

Reviewing the Documentation with the Child

The edited videotapes were given to the parents the day before the interview/reflection session took place, so that the child would be familiar with the segment before the interview/reflection session. I asked the parents to have the child watch the videotape at least once before the interview/reflection session. I did not specify whether the parents were to watch it with the children or when to watch it. Greta, Hannah's mother, reported watching the first one with Hannah and not the others, while Alice, Sceeter's mother, said she watched all three with Sceeter.

Based on the procedures described for documentation (Edwards, Gandini, Forman, 1998; Katz & Chard, 1996), and consistent with current documentation procedures practiced in the school, I invited each target child to revisit and reflect on the edited videotape. To make the child feel most comfortable, the interview/reflection sessions took place in the child's home. Each child participated in one interview/reflection session at the end of the week for three consecutive weeks. In the interview/reflection session with me, each child was told what he/she would be doing and

his/her consent to participate was audiotaped (see Appendix G). I emphasized that each child could stop the interview whenever he/she chose, and that he/she did not have to answer a question if he/she did not want to.

The interview/reflection sessions were slightly different for Hannah and Sceeter. Hannah and I watched the edited segments once together without interruption and then watched them again while I asked questions. When I asked Sceeter if he wanted to watch them once and then again, he said he only wanted to watch it once. I went with his request. Greta asked Hannah if she wanted her to be present during the sessions with me, and Hannah said she did not want her mother there. Alice came in and out of the room during the interviews. The interview/reflection sessions each lasted between thirty to forty minutes. I audiotaped and transcribed each interview.

The interview/reflection sessions were semi-structured interviews. This allowed me to ask questions that would invoke the children's reflection, while also allowing the opportunity to follow up on individual comments of the children. The interview questions (see Appendix H) were drawn from the research literature on symbolic play, theories of play and questions described by practitioners who report using documentation to revisit and reflect with children. After each interview/reflection session, I read over the transcription of the noting any questions to follow up on at the next interview/reflection session.

Teacher Interview

My interview with the teachers ended up being more like two interviews. Due to time constraints the lead teacher, Bette, had to leave after about half an hour. The two co-teachers, Sayuri and Mameha, were present for the full hour. The interview occurred at the completion of videotaping and all the interview/reflection sessions with the children. This allowed me the opportunity to discuss emerging findings. Other questions were designed to gather background information on the documentation that occurs in the classroom, how the classroom and teachers support symbolic play, and each child's symbolic play (see Appendix I). I audiotaped and transcribed the interview. The teachers' written documentation was obtained for analysis. This included teacher's reflections on the children's activities and plans for curriculum during the duration of the study.

Parent Interview

Although both parents of each child were invited for an interview at the completion of all videotaping and interview/reflection sessions, only the mothers were able to participate. I interviewed Greta at the lab school and Alice at home, both for approximately 30 minutes. Questions revolved around the children's exposure to watching videotapes of themselves, the children's symbolic play, and any reaction their child had to watching the edited videotapes of their play (see Appendix J). I also asked the parent's for their interpretations of some of my findings. I audiotaped and transcribed the interviews.

Data Analysis

As previously described two major research questions were explored:

1. How and what do the children think and feel about their symbolic play as reflected in their comments and reactions to a videotaped segment of their symbolic play?
2. How does videotaped documentation, including revisiting and reflection, contribute to an increase in interest, reengagement and extension of the children's symbolic play?

The sources of data to answer the first question were the child interview/reflection sessions, parent and teachers interviews, and teachers' documentation of the children. The data was analyzed using Creswell's (1994) procedure of analysis. I first viewed the data to obtain a general understanding. I then took notes on the data in relation to answering the research question. I grouped the notes into common themes. (The term theme here is not used the same way as with themes of symbolic play.) I also tied those themes to previous research literature on symbolic play. The themes from the notes formed the basis for the interpretation related to the research question.

The source of data to answer the second question were the unedited videotapes of the children's symbolic play, parent and teacher interviews, and teachers' documentation of the children. The interviews and teacher documentation were analyzed using the same procedure described for first research question. I analyzed the videotapes by watching the videotapes daily to get a general feel for each child's symbolic play. Then after the four weeks of videotaping was completed, I re-watched the videotapes in succession with each child's transcriptions of interviews looking for any changes in their symbolic play.

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Changes in symbolic play included any reengagement or extension of themes, roles and object substitutions during the symbolic play before and after the child interview/reflection sessions. Changes were based on developmental trends researched in the symbolic play literature. Reengagement is the repeating of sequence of events, roles enacted and objects substitution (Rubin, Fein, & Vandenberg, 1983). Extension is a repetition of symbolic play with any addition of sequence of events, roles, or object substitutions (Snow, Shonkoff, Lee, & Levin, 1986).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to address two research questions. The questions were how and what do children think or feel about their symbolic play; and how does documentation, specifically revisiting and reflecting contribute to an increase in interest, reengagement and extension of the children's symbolic play? I will describe the findings for each question.

Children's Initial Reactions to Videotapes

Hannah and Sceeter were both excited to have me come to their homes, and eager to show me their toys. They moved from one toy to the next as if they knew they had a set amount of time with me and wanted to show me everything. We began each session by playing with their toys and then when I found their initial excitement had settled, I asked if they were ready to watch the videotape.

The initial reaction to watching the tape was different for the children. Hannah bounced in her chair and laughed after every time someone spoke on the videotape. She was also interested in the tape recorder I brought with me to record the session. She asked if we could listen to it after the interview, "can we hear what we said now?" Before explaining my intended procedures for watching the videotape, she suggested we watch it once, rewind it and then watch it again for my questions. She was interested in how I made the movie, and asked if I had stood behind the counter in the classroom with a camera so that she could not see me. Sceeter appeared less excited about watching the videotape than showing me his toys. When I asked if we could watch the videotape once then watch it again with questions, he quickly replied "naaa", that "once would be enough". At the start of the first interview, his answers were short, and he repeatedly looked to his mother while answering them. He gradually became more comfortable with me and gave more detailed answers. He made no references to the tape recorder or to how I had made the movie of him. He acted as if making a movie of him was completely normal. Later in the parent interview, Sceeter's mom reported that Sceeter was very interested in how I made the movie and he wanted me to show him where I was when I taped it.

While watching the videotape, Hannah pointed out many details about the physical surroundings in the segment of play. She noticed that her dress had come out a different color on the videotape, that she could see her teacher, that she could see herself in the mirror on the classroom wall, and also that she and her friends did not ever look up at the cameras while playing. Sceeter's comments revolved more around answering my questions, and he did not seem to step back from watching the videotape the way Hannah did. Both children, however, appeared to have memorized the scenes and eagerly told me what was going to happen before it happened.

Many of the children's behaviors might be attributed to their previous exposure to watching videotapes of themselves. Hannah's mom, Greta, explained that she and her husband only film the children a few times a year, mostly for special occasions. Sceeter's parents, Alice and Jack, reported filming more regularly for both special and everyday occasions since Sceeter was eighteen months-old. Sceeter used to watch the videotapes of himself regularly also, but now only watches them a few times a month. His family refers to the tapes as "The Sceeter Show". The concept of watching herself may still be a novelty for Hannah, therefore, she focused more on the details of the actual videotape (details of surrounding and placement of cameras) than Sceeter. When asked if Sceeter takes notice of his surroundings while watching the videotapes, Alice explained that he is more involved in the content of the videotapes. Since he began watching the videotapes when he was a toddler, it is not clear if he ever pointed out his surroundings.

The children's reactions to the videotapes changed over time. With each session, they appeared to be less interested in watching the videotapes and more interested in engaging me in symbolic play. This will be discussed in greater detail later.

Children's Thoughts and Feelings about Symbolic Play

The children's responses to the interview questions are separated into the three main categories of symbolic play; themes, roles and object substitution. I also included their preferences in symbolic play, and their explanations of reality versus pretense and play negotiation.

Both children were receptive to most of the questions about their symbolic play. However, when the questions became too repetitive, Hannah (H) was quick to let me (N) know.

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N: What's going on at the sand table now?

H: Well, we are doing the same thing.

N: Still making cookies?

H: Yes, do you want me to answer your questions all over again the same thing?

Likes and Dislikes in Symbolic Play

I asked the children what were their favorite and least favorite things to pretend. Hannah said she liked to pretend to be a mermaid and bride, while Sceeter (S) said his favorite pretend play was being an inventor, chemist and pilot.

H: Like, I have a wedding dress and pretend to be a wedding girl and get married with Ricky (Hannah's brother) (laughs)

N: Oh, you marry Ricky in your pretend?

H: Yes and he pretends to be a silly prince. And I pretend I'm a mermaid (gets off of couch and shows me how to be a mermaid by hopping around)

N: What's your most most most favorite thing to pretend?

S: Being an inventor (said very excitedly)

N: Being an inventor, you like to pretend to be that?

S: And that's where my lab is (He points behind a chair where he has different materials).

When I asked the children what their least favorite pretend play was, Hannah answered pretending to be a tree and Sceeter answered being a fire fighter.

N: Are there things that you don't like to pretend? (Silence) There's got to be something that you don't like to pretend.

H: There's one thing in the whole world that I don't like to pretend.

N: What?

H: A tree. Because I have to stand still and hold my nose and mouth (stands up and stretches out her arms to show me what a tree is like).

N: (laughs) You can't move when you are a tree.

H: And I can't even breathe.

N: Nothing, that would be very hard to pretend wouldn't it?

N: What is the thing that you do not like to pretend to be. What is the one that you don't like at all.

S: Um (silence) I think a fire fighter.

N: A fire fighter? You don't like to pretend to be a fire fighter?

S: No.

N: Why not.

S: I'm not sure.

N: Is it scary?

S: Not exactly but (silence).

“Cup Or A Cone”: How Themes Are Explained

The children elaborated more in answering questions about the theme of their play through the Script Theory (Shank & Abelson, 1977) perspective than Emotive Theory (Fein, 1986, 1987, 1989, 1991) perspective. Script Theorists claim that children imitate the world around them in their play, while Emotive Theory sees play as more of an emotional expression (see Appendix A for a review).

Script Theory. During one of the sessions, Hannah watched an episode of herself playing “ice cream”. This play included herself and her friends at the media table filled with sand. In the play she would ask a friend or teacher if the person wanted some ice cream by saying “do you want some ice cream, in a cup or a cone.” During the session I asked her what she was doing in the play episode. She described her play as an imitation of what actual people do who work in ice cream stores.

H: Well we were saying ‘cups and cones’ because we had these little ... things for the cups. And we were pretending like we said for real stuff, we said ‘in a cup or a cone’ and like real people say, and all the people say cup and cone and that stuff.

N: You mean when you go to an ice cream shop that’s what they say?

H: Yeah, they usually say ‘do you want a cup or a cone’ and I say cup, or cone.

N: So you were pretending to say just what the people say in the store.

H: Yeah.

To show me, she then enacted this same script while watching the videotape to better explain her “ice cream” play. She walked to the cabinet next to the television and pulled out different puzzle boxes. Each puzzle box represented the different flavors of ice cream.

Sceeter watched an episode of his play at the media table filled with shaving cream where he pretended to play “ice cream”. He explained the play as an imitation of the events in one of his books from home that discusses ice cream. He got the book to show me, and we read it together. The book showed cartoon illustrations of the progression of manufacturing ice cream with cartoon people at each stage of the

manufacturing process. While watching this episode of his play, Sceeter indicated which parts the children playing with him were enacting.

N: So you in your play are pretending to be someone in a test lab (what the book calls where a person examines the ice cream).

S: Yeah

N: And Rachel (teacher) is pretending to be someone at the taste lab (what the book calls where a person tastes the ice cream.)

S: And, Hannah is, works right here (points at book) because she puts the chunks in to make sure they are really stinky chunks.

Since Sceeter was imitating a book from home that he did not bring to school, the other children in the classroom were not playing with the same knowledge base as Sceeter that is reportedly needed for playing out a script (Corasaro, 1983). However, the children did not act in a way that violated Sceeter's interpretation of the script, so the play continued. One reason may be that the script of "every child makes a different part of the ice cream" is general enough to allow for variations. For example, Hannah was making the ice cream "stinky" which is not in the ice cream book, but it was an acceptable procedure to the children for making ice cream in their play. This appears to support Fein's (1991) idea that children are not as concerned with the details of play as the Script Theory literature claims. This slot filler (Nelson & Gruendel, 1979) of making ice cream "stinky" was appealing to the children because they liked the idea of people eating stinky ice cream.

Both children made references to having "parts" to their play as if following a script. Hannah described how she negotiates the play with a friend.

H: Me and Suzy we each have different parts and Suzy gives out the cakes because we have agreed which part is what. And Suzy agrees, see I say she makes cakes and she jumps up and down and says "I want to make cakes" and I jump up and down and say "I'll make the ice cream" and so we both agree on it and then we do it.

Sceeter explained what each child's part is in his "laboratory" play at the sink area.

N: What about Hannah and Emily (in tape they are playing at the classroom sink on the other side of the sink from Sceeter, and are not pretending the same thing as Sceeter)?

S: Well they are down there because the part is when they are down there they're aren't making something bad like us so usually the fire starts over on the sand table.

Sceeter spoke of what "usually" is done in a play episode of laboratory, even though he had only played it once.

S: Well what we usually do if we don't is we don't come down, we watch there in the lab to know when

S: Well he usually does, what I usually do is I tap on him (Kenny) like this and if I can, hear his heart beating.

Hannah and Sceeter's use of the word "part" and Sceeter's use of the word "usually" made their play appear to follow a set flow of events similar to a script (Shank & Abelson, 1977). By following a script, the children were able to predict events and know how to act (Nelson & Gruendel, 1979). For example, Hannah knew that by imitating the people at the ice cream store, she could convey the intent of her play (serving ice cream), her role (employee) and friend's role (customers). Since the other players knew what to do, this resulted in one of her longest episodes of sociodramatic play.

Emotive Theory. The children's symbolic play in the videotapes was filled with emotions. Fein (1989) categorizes five types of themes, "connectedness", "physical well-being", "empowerment", "social regulation" and "respect for property". Hannah engaged in what would be "connectedness" and "physical well being" types of play. These themes dealt with emotions based on attachment and security. Sceeter's play of emergency and putting out fires are categorized as "physical well-being", "respect for property" and "empowerment" themes. These themes include the feeling of mastery and competence of battling an emergency, including fires and exploding laboratories. There is a difference between Hannah and Sceeter's "physical well being" themes. Fein (1989) identifies there being two poles, positive and negative, to each theme of play. Hannah's "physical well being" would be considered on the positive pole because she engaged in

feeding herself and animals and making homes for the animals. Sceeter's play is more on the negative pole because there was a threat to his safety, for example harmful tornadoes.

During the interviews, I asked the children questions to explore their understanding of the emotional side of their play. Generally their responses were short and occasionally the children did not respond at all. Hannah was able to express her favorite and least favorite roles (mermaid; tree), what a sad theme would be (the prince that she marries drowns) and why she liked to enact the role of mother (capable of changing diapers) and baby (can ask to have diapers changed and take a nap). However, when I asked her what is a scary theme to play, she stared at me and was silent for the only time in all the sessions. When I told her that a scary theme I play is going to the doctor to get a shot, she seemed curious at first, but then switched the subject. Even though Hannah answered all but one question describing the emotional side of her play, she did not elaborate on the answers the way she did with other questions.

Sceeter's responses to what would be a happy or scary play were concrete. He said that a happy type of play would be when a fellow classmate who tends to hit other children apologizes for hitting children. A scary type of play would be playing hide-and-go-seek because someone must say "boo". My questions for those answers may not have been worded to elicit the answers I anticipated. When asked why he does not like to play a father role, he said "I don't know". After further probing to find an answer, he was silent. He was able to tell me that his favorite pretend play is being an inventor.

While watching the scene of him pretending to be a baby and play fighting with David, I asked him what he was doing in the scene. He quickly replied "fighting", but then later when I asked him if he was fighting, he lowered his voice and said no. He kept looking to the other room where his parent's were present. He appeared to have been embarrassed that he was "fighting" even though he knew he was only pretending. He then tried to justify his fighting by saying that the children playing with him knew he was pretending.

N: What are you two doing there?

S: We're fighting there. (giggling)

N: You're fighting? (giggling)

N: So Suzy is the mom. So when you were playing with David, what were you doing? You were on the couch?

S: Uh huh

N: Were you fighting?

S: No. (Voice was lower pitched. He looked into the kitchen.)

N: Were you just playing pretend fighting?

S: Uh huh. They (other children) know because of what we were doing.

N: Yeah, it looked like you were smiling. Like you were just pretending.

He looked to the room where his parents were another time I asked him a question about emotions. During his play in the classroom, he pretended to be a baby a few times. When I asked “and you like to play the baby”, he responded “sorta, yeah” while looking in the other room. I suspect that this may be due to the arrival of a baby sister two months prior. He may be working through emotions regarding his new sibling that he does not yet understand, so he was uncomfortable with my question.

The children’s inability to elaborate or even answer the questions regarding emotions supports Fein’s (1989) explanation that there is a subconscious aspect to symbolic play. Fein explains that as children develop their ability to create symbols, the tie between that which is signified and that which signifies becomes looser and even unclear. Children may not always understand why the emotional arousal is present in pretense, but it still exists and can be very strong for children. Sceeter had associated emotions to enacting the role of baby, but he did not have the emotional or cognitive developmental ability to retrace the steps of why he associates good feelings to playing baby. Hannah was able to say she liked playing baby because she can have her diapers changed, but this response was still very concrete. Changing diapers has associations with emotions she did not describe (being taking care of).

“To Tell the Truth, I’m a Real Chemist”: Distinctions in Pretense of Role Play

While watching the videotapes, I repeatedly asked the question, “Who are you pretending to be here?” or “Are you pretending to be someone?” Surprisingly, the children most often replied that they were not pretending to be someone. For example, when Sceeter and I watched the segment of videotape where he is playing “ice cream” with shaving cream, I asked him to tell me when he was pretending to be someone. His response was very quick that he was not pretending to be somebody. The quickness in

his reply and the directive tone in his voice made me believe he was shocked I would ask him such a question.

N: Let me know when you are pretending to be somebody.

S: Well I'm not pretending to be somebody at all.

N: The whole time you are not?

S: Uh huh

N: So then who are you here?

S: Sceeter (said very quickly)

After listing when the children said they were pretending and not pretending to be someone, I found a distinction between the types of roles being enacted.

The roles enacted on videotape that the children said they were not pretending to be someone were Hannah making cookies, Hannah caring for a doll, Sceeter making experiments in the laboratory, and both Hannah and Sceeter playing "ice cream". These types of roles are defined by Garvey (1977) as functional roles. A functional role is a role that is used to enact the script, like a server of food. Interestingly, the children did not think they had to pretend to be someone to enact these roles. On the other hand the roles enacted on videotape that did require the children to pretend to be someone else were both Hannah and Sceeter being babies. This role is, according to Garvey (1977), a relational role. The children believed that while playing babies they were pretending to be babies. Also, when I asked the children what were some roles they could pretend to be, even though they were not those roles on the videotape, they responded an airplane pilot, spy, chef, fire fighter, nurse, mermaid, and inventor. These are what Garvey (1977) defines as character roles, either stereotypic or fictional.

One explanation for the children's distinction may be the children's understanding of what a pretend role is and how you take on a role. During the first session, I asked Hannah if she ever pretended to be someone, and she immediately made reference to the dress up clothes in her closet.

N: You don't ever pretend to be somebody else?

H: Well I have a dressing stuff in my room and I pretend to be somebody.
(later in conversation)

H: And sometimes we pretend to be other things too.

N: Like what?

H: Like, all sorts of things, I can't explain every single thing cause my dresser is filled to the top.

N: Oh, so much

H: Yes

In the last session, after Hannah said that she was not pretending to be a mother to her doll, I asked her if she could give me an example of when she was pretending to be someone with her doll. She first described going to the hospital with a big belly and giving birth, and then being a nurse to the baby.

N: So let's say you took Shelline (doll) to the, at the hospital still, let's say she was sick. Could you pretend something then, could you pretend to be someone then?

H: I could well I could pretend she had an invisible mom, there was someone else her mom and I was the hospital girl, and the baby would lay down and I would ...(does pretend motion like fixing the doll).

N: So that's pretending?

H: Yeah that's pretending.

Hannah did say that when her friend Suzy plays with the same doll that Suzy is pretending to be someone while playing with the doll.

N: I have a question, if Shelline is your baby, so when Suzy holds it and takes care of it, does she pretend to be somebody?

H: She pretends.

Sceeter explained to me that if I wanted to be a detective, I had to acquire certain props (credit card, license plate and jet fuel). This entire conversation is described in a later section.

It appears that for the children to see a role as pretend, there must be a change in the appearance or action of the person, including costumes, props or doing something that is not possible (giving birth or being a nurse). When the children were making cookies or an experiment, they did not have to change themselves to engage in the play. They conceive themselves as Hannah and Sceeter playing, not Hannah and Sceeter, a baker or chemist, playing. They were not playing 'as if' they were someone else (Bretherton, 1989). When they were babies, there was a change in their behavior. They cried and sucked their thumbs. They were acting 'as if' they were babies. They also referred to

themselves as other people. Here are their descriptions while watching themselves playing “babies”.

H: I was so mad at her (other friend playing with her).

N: You were mad at her? Why?

H: Cause she hit Hannah the baby.

N: She hit Hannah the baby?

H: Yes.

N: Emily the baby hit Hannah the baby?

H: Yes

N: So here you are still playing babies. Oh did you see who came by. Who is that? (referring to a child dressed as a tiger going by to where Sceeter, Randy, Suzy and David were on the couch)

S: That’s the tiger. Randy has to go after that because we pretend that that scares the babies so the dad has to go fight it off.

N: Oh the dad went to go fight off the tiger. So to protect the babies.

S: Uh huh while the mom stays with us the babies.

The idea that the children must change themselves to pretend may be the reason why Hannah said she was not pretending to be the mother to her doll. When I asked her if she was pretending to be a mom to her doll, she responded “no, no, no way”. Garvey (1977) stated that some functional roles, like mother, can also be relational roles. Hannah treated being a “mother” as if it was a functional role. Hannah may not think she is pretending to be the mother because she does not have to change herself to be a mother. She only needs to carry out the function of caring for baby. Perhaps this is also due to the type of doll Hannah was caring for. This doll is highly realistic, it cries, eats and even urinates. Hannah may not feel the need to pretend with this doll because it is highly realistic of a baby. Hannah did say that Suzy was pretending to be someone to the doll because the doll does not belong to Suzy. Suzy has to somehow change herself to have ownership of the doll.

Interestingly, even though Hannah admitted to trying to imitate the people at the ice cream store, she still did not say she was pretending to be them. Sceeter also denied pretending to be someone while engaging in his ice cream play. However, after showing me the ice cream book that was the inspiration of the play and the pictures of the cartoon characters making the ice cream, he said he was pretending to be those specific people

(cartoon characters). Without a concrete example of there being some other person that he could pretend to be, he believed he was himself playing manufacturing ice cream. It may be interesting to see if Hannah would have a similar reaction to seeing a picture of someone serving ice cream.

Sceeter's experimenting play demonstrates the functional role well. At first I assumed Sceeter was pretending to be a chemist or experimenter. This assumption came from the first play episode of the laboratory play in the classroom where Sceeter pretended the laboratory was blowing up. Even though he did not engage in anymore symbolic play during the laboratory play after that episode, I still assumed he was pretending to take a role. However, after reviewing more data, I changed my hypothesis. Sceeter's claim to being an actual chemist occurred during the interview.

N: Oh you want to be an experimenter so you must have liked the woman who came in today (the chemist who came to their classroom).

S: Yeah

N: Now was she pretending?

S: No, she's a real chemist.

N: Oh she's a real chemist. So when you are playing are you pretending?

S: Not exactly.

N: Why not?

S: What I'm doing is I am pretending there but to tell the truth, I'm a real chemist.

N: But you're pretending here what we are watching, here (I point to video).

S: But to tell the truth I'm a real chemist.

N: Oh Ok.

Alice, Sceeter's mother, believes Sceeter sees himself as a chemist or experimenter. She herself also believes that he is a chemist or experimenter, he is just a five-year-old's version of a chemist or experimenter. When I asked Sceeter's lead teacher her opinion of his play, she first said that he was pretending in the role, but then rethought her answer and said it was difficult to really know what he is doing. She then said that since he is using materials the way adult chemists use them, mixing and exploring, and even using similar materials like vinegar and baking soda, then he is a five-year-old chemist. Therefore, perhaps since Sceeter is actually making his idea of experiments, he considers himself to be a chemist or experimenter. I agree with his

teacher that it is difficult to know if Sceeter sees himself as an actual chemist or a child pretending to be a chemist.

When I asked both mothers their interpretation of why the children did not think they were pretending, they offered more information on the children. Greta reported that by trying to encourage Hannah's self-esteem, she tells Hannah to only be herself. Greta questioned if this may effect Hannah's role play.

N: ...maybe she's just not interested in taking on a role of someone else and she's more interested in making the cookies, and more interested in scooping the ice cream.

G: Well we have dialogues all the time, and this is something I've always told the children to is that, just be yourself, it's so important that you just be you and it doesn't, you don't have to look at other people and wish that you could be who they are. I don't know, maybe it's part of that.

Greta also stated that Hannah does most of her play in her room with her brother, so Greta did not exactly know what kind of play she engages in. Greta did report that she has never heard Hannah say she was someone else.

Alice also said that Sceeter does not say he pretends to be someone when playing. When in his laboratory at home (behind a chair and under a table), Sceeter pretends there are people there with him (Charles Lindbergh), but that Sceeter never pretends to be someone else. She said that when Sceeter is alone, he does not engage in the type of symbolic play where he takes on a role, like an animal or other person. Occasionally when playing with a younger female neighbor, Sceeter will be the father in the play at the neighbor's request.

Alice believes that Sceeter is still in a phase of his development where he blurs pretend with reality. He tries to pay for dinner at restaurants with play money and credit cards. Alice said he becomes very offended if the clerks/waiters do not accept his money. During an interview, I questioned the reality of his experiments.

N: But when you are playing here, is that a real experiment or just a pretend experiment?

S: Actually they can be real if you put enough bad stuff in.

This response supports Alice's belief that Sceeter may be blurring pretend with reality. Perhaps his confusion factors into why he believed he was not pretending in functional roles.

"Only Boys Can be Pilots and Only Girls Can be Flight Attendants": How Gender Effects Role Play

Both Hannah and Sceeter agreed that females could not pretend to take on male roles and vice versa. However, children could take on adult and baby roles. Their ability to cross the generation line but not the gender line follows Garvey's (1977) and Miller and Garvey's (1984) results. Sceeter explained that a girl could take on a male role if she was not imitating reality. Sceeter's response that girls could not be pilots is interesting because his mother said that Sceeter says Amelia Earheart lives in their house. Although he has extensive knowledge of a female pilot, he still said that girls could not be pilots.

S: Yeah, but only boys can be pilots only girls can be flight attendants.

N: Oh ok. So if I wanted to pretend to play airplane with you...

S: You would be a flight attendant.

N: And you would be...

S: A pilot.

N: A pilot I see.

S: Or the co-pilot. Of course I think co-pilots can be a girl.

N: Oh co-pilots can be a girl. I wonder why we (girls) can be a co-pilot and not a pilot, hmm. That's interesting, so even if it's just for pretend they can't be it.

S: Well you know what, you can but if you want to play like real life, that's how it goes.

During the second session I asked Hannah if Sceeter could be the mother in their play, and she quickly laughed in disapproval. At the end of the third session she brought up without my prompting that Sceeter had asked in the classroom to be the mother in their play, and that she now thought he could be the mother.

H: ...do you remember that question one time you said "can Sceeter be a mom?" and Sceeter said "can I be a mom" in class one time. (laughs like she's amazed)

N: Oh, and what happened?

H: And one time he wanted to be a sister and one time he wanted to be the baby girl baby.

N: And what did you do?

H: Well we didn't do anything (said like I should know that).

N: Was he the mom, did he pretend to be the mom?

H: Yes, and the baby and the sister.

N: That's so interesting.

H: Baby girl and a girl baby and a girl sister and the mom.

N: So he could be all those things (said like a realization).

H: Yeah if he wanted to, and Suzy could be the brother or the dad or the baby boy.

N: So she could be also. Neat.

Ants, Scorpions, And Dolls: Descriptions of Object Substitutions

During the sessions, I asked questions that would evoke what the child thought about each level of object substitution (Fein, 1977; Matthews, 1977). Most questions were "could you use a (blank) for a (blank)" or "if you did not have that (blank) object, what else could you use". However, the most intriguing remarks came spontaneously. The children demonstrated many levels of object substitution in their symbolic play on the videotapes, however, these questions were designed to understand what they thought about object substitution. Young children are only able to substitute realistic objects during pretense (a plastic telephone for a telephone). As children develop, the object the children use does not have to resemble the object they are substitution (a pencil for a telephone). Eventually children do not require any object when pretending, and can use gestures to indicate the object (moving hand up to ear for a telephone).

One result was that Hannah did not consider objects that had a functional level of substitution (a plastic cup as a cup) to require pretense (Matthews, 1977). Hannah said that the buckets being used for her ice cream play did not require pretend to indicate the flavor of the ice cream because there really are labels on the buckets.

H: Buckets really have labels on it so you don't have to pretend, you can look at them, they just don't say the same thing.

Hannah also does not have to pretend with her baby doll because it is so highly realistic (eats and cries), and has accessories that are real life-like.

H: I don't pretend, she's real, cause she's like a real baby because she goes, does all the stuff that real babies do.

I do not believe that Hannah thinks the baby is actually real, she was only trying to stress the point that the baby doll is like a real baby.

This observation provides interesting support for Olszewski and Fuson's (1982) findings that highly prototypical objects can limit five-year-old children's play. If Hannah does not think that she has to pretend with functional objects, then she may not then extend her play in pretense. Actually during the time that Hannah played with this doll in the classroom, she did not extend past caring for the baby. When I suggested that she could make play dough food for the doll, she replied that she did not have to because the doll already had real packaged food.

When asked what other objects the children could use in substitution for the objects they had used in their play, they both suggested low level substitution objects. Hannah said a rolled up piece of paper could become an ice cream cone, and Sceeter said the loft area could be used for a house. Hannah did not think a pencil could be used to represent an ice cream cone because it would not be able to hold the ice cream, in this case, sand. Her inability to accept a high level substitution is not typical of her age, since five-year-old children are known to use high level substitution (Cole & La Voie, 1985; Fein, 1981). However, her description in the following section of high level substitutions shows that she is indeed capable of describing the substitution.

I wanted to see if the children could describe an insubstantial substitution (Matthews, 1977). In play, this is when the child either gestures or says that something is there when it is not. I asked if they were in an empty room, what could they do if they wanted to pretend a certain object was there. Hannah was not able to say that she could just pretend the cone was there. Instead, she gave the following examples of what she could use.

H: If we were bored, and we had extra shirts on, just take our shirts off and use it as games. (motions rolling up the shirts) (laughs)

N: What happens if you didn't even have that on?

H: We would be naked.

N: And what happens then if you wanted to play ice cream?

H: Take our nose off to pretend they were cups and we would take, actually our ears off to pretend they were cups and we would take our hands off to pretend they were cones.

Even though Hannah could not describe an insubstantial substitution, she continually made them while talking. She moved her hands to suggest rolling up a shirt, and even holding an ice cream cone. She needed what Vygotsky (1978) called a pivot in object substitution. She had to describe an actual object for the substitution, almost as a reference point for her understanding of the substitution. Vygotsky claims that with age, children lessen this reliance on pivots during object substitution and eventually can make substitutions where the object used in pretense does not at all resemble the represented object.

She demonstrated this again when discussing her ice cream play in the classroom. On the videotape her teacher asked for Chunky Monkey flavor ice cream, and Hannah scooped up sand and gave it to her. Another child later asked for bug and scorpion ice cream, and Hannah scooped the same sand and gave it to him. I asked her to explain how she knew which flavor was which in a table with such a large amount of sand. Her response is a description of what the flavor looks like.

H: For the bugs (bug ice cream) it's chocolate chips cause it's called bug ice cream because there are ants in it and it's really crazy cause there's ants like ice cream they eat and we call it bug ice cream cause ants are black and chocolate chips are black so we call it.

There really are no chocolate chips in the sand, but instead of saying that she just pretends there are ants in the ice cream, she had to describe an in between object that looks like ants, chocolate chips. Interestingly, by saying there were chocolate chips, she has made an insubstantial substitution. However, it may be too foreign for her to make a substitution for "ant ice cream", so she needed the chocolate chips as a reference point.

In the next description, she explains how Sceeter knows that the sand is scorpion ice cream. Again she uses a pivot to describe the scorpions. This time it is the "red kind of bubble gum" to represent the scorpion ice cream.

H: And like the chocolate ants are chocolate chips, well scorpion, do you know why we call it scorpion ice cream, they have these red kind of bubble gum in it and you chew all it up and it looks like scorpion. They are shaped like scorpion and the chocolate chips are shaped like ants.

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N: Oh, so that's why he (Sceeter), he's pretending that those little red things are scorpions.

H: Yeah.

N: But are there little red things in the sand box?

H: Well no we are just pretending.

N: So Hannah you are pretending that there are red things in the ice cream and Sceeter is pretending that the red things are scorpions. I get it.

During the last session, I asked Hannah again to substitute an object she had previously used, and she once again suggested a low level substitution. This time I asked if she could pretend there was nothing there for the object, and she agreed that it was possible. This response combined with her demonstration of insubstantial substitutions suggests that she understands the substitution, however it is difficult for her to verbally explain that level of substitution. In this example, Hannah has just informed me that sometimes she puts cotton balls in her doll's diaper to represent "poop".

N: Do you always put cotton balls in there?

H: No, sometimes.

N: If you don't have cotton balls what can you pretend is her poop?

H: Sometimes I roll up toilet paper and put it in her diaper. Or I find like a ball and put it in her diaper.

N: Do you ever use nothing at all?

H: Yes sometimes I use nothing at all and sometimes I don't even play baby.

When I asked Sceeter how he could play "ice cream" if there was nothing there, he simply said he would get a bucket and pretend there was ice cream inside it.

N: If you are playing in a room and you wanted to play ice cream like you were at school that day, and you didn't have those toys to play with, what else do you think you could pretend to be ice cream? What kinds of things could you use to be ice cream?

S: Well I'd just imagine there was ice cream.

N: Just imagine, like what.

S: Take a box full of nothing and then just pretend fill it with stuff and stir it (gestures it with hands).

N: So you can just take a bucket and pretend there's ice cream in it?

S: Uh huh.

N: And what could you use for the cone?

S: Pretend you go (gestures holding a cone and eating from it).

This difference between Hannah and Sceeter may be due to their age. Sceeter is six months older than Hannah. Since children's ability to make object substitutions develops with age (Fein, 1981), it is not surprising that Hannah was unable to describe an insubstantial substitution. It may also stem from Hannah's interpretation of my question. She may have thought I wanted her to actually tell me another object she could use.

For Real Real?: Fantasy versus Reality

I asked both children questions to elicit their thoughts on the distinction between fantasy and reality. As stated earlier, Alice believed that Sceeter was still confusing reality with fantasy. She recounted a time when she questioned the reality of his pretend play and he became very angry with her for asking him if his pretend was real. From Sceeter's responses to my questions, I did not see a confusion in the distinction between reality and fantasy as much as a desire to believe and act imaginatively.

N: Now can I ask you something, is it really going to burn you those experiments?

S: Particularly at least if you put alot alot of mixture, yes.

N: But when you are playing here, is that a real experiment or just a pretend experiment?

S: Actually they can be real if you put enough bad stuff in.

N: Then you really have to put your gloves on.

S: And then the more and more you experiment with the same experiment it will turn into in to a real explosion.

Here while watching the videotape of Sceeter and Kenny playing in the laboratory, Sceeter told me that Kenny died because the chemicals (sand, water and soap) he was mixing together killed him. I then asked him if his chemical was real.

N: ... is it a real chemical?

S: I try not to breathe mine (chemical) because I try to make mine real. I try not to breathe it.

N: You try not to breathe it or else you'll end up like Kenny.

It appears that Sceeter wants to believe his pretend scenarios of chemicals and deaths of his friend are real. This desire to believe in fantasy was also present in Hannah's answers. She spoke as if she wanted to keep the illusion of fantasy present

(Giffin, 1984). In the following example she spoke in a quiet voice when admitting that the oven she had made to cook play dough cookies was real.

N: Hannah, can I ask you something? Is it a real oven?

H: (in a quiet, soft voice) it's a pretend oven.

N: (normal voice) It's a pretend oven.

When Hannah wanted to demonstrate the "ice cream" episode she had played in the classroom in our interview at her home she took out puzzle boxes to represent the ice cream flavors. When I said the word "box" in reference to the pretend ice cream flavors, she was upset that I had broken the illusion of fantasy.

H: I'll show what we are doing (goes to cabinet). Say this is the ice cream (takes out puzzle box).

N: The box is the ice cream.

H: Well, don't say the box.

In Hannah's explanations of pretend and reality, there appeared to be a world of reality set into the world of fantasy. For example within the world of pretend, actions and object can be real. Perhaps this stems from Hannah's definition of "real". She may think "real" refers to tangible. This example is the continuation of the conversation Hannah started in a quiet voice regarding the oven she had drawn.

H: Well, no it's a real oven.

N: It's a real oven.

H: Yeah for us, we're just pretending.

N: So it's real when you pretend.

H: Yes, well the cookies are not pretend either.

N: The cookies are not pretend?

H: No.

N: Can you eat those cookies.

H: (nods yes)

N: You can eat those cookies right there that we are looking at right now.

H: (strange voice) yes

N: All the time.

H: (nods no)

N: Just for pretend you can eat them. I get it.

People may also act “for real” during pretend. Hannah described her teacher pretending to eat ice cream made out of sand as being real within the terms of pretend.

N: So here she (teacher) is eating (ice cream).

H: Yes

N: Is she really eating it?

H: No, just for pretend.

N: She’s pretend eating it.

H: But for pretend she’s really eating it.

N: For pretend she really eats it, there’s a difference.

Within the world of reality in pretend, there also appears to be a set of rules governing the players engaged in the fantasy that is different than non-players. Hannah said that I would burn myself if I touched the play dough cookies she had made, but that the people playing would not be burned.

H: Yeah, cause you (referring to me) can’t touch the hot ones (cookies) either cause you’ll burn yourself for real.

N: For real I’ll burn myself?

H: For real.

N: For real real or for pretend real

H: For real real (loud voice)

N: For real real?

H: Yes

N: Like if I touch it I’ll burn myself?

H: Yeah only we can touch them.

N: Only you can.

H: (soft voice showing me with fingers her pinch) Just a little pinch.

N: Just a little pinch. Like you, the people who were playing?

H: Yeah, cause we’re the makers.

N: Oh, cause you’re making it, so you can do it.

H: But it’s really hot for real. You can’t touch it.

N: I won’t touch it. So how do you eat them?

H: Well, we have to let them dry first.

Here Hannah makes the distinction that since I was not playing with her during her episode of “ice cream” at the media table filled with sand, I would not be able to see the

”bugs” in the sand. Of course there are no real bugs in the sand, but Hannah had been pretending to serve “bug ice cream”, therefore she was pretending the sand had bugs in it.

N: So when I look at it and I was not playing with you ice cream shop, I see sand.

H: Yeah.

N: So I’m supposed to pretend that there are bugs on it?

H: No, there are real bugs you just can’t see them cause we (Suzy and teacher) only can see them.

N: Oh, but can you see them?

H: Yeah, but nobody else.

N: Only the people playing can see them?

H: Yes

Rubin, Fein and Vandenberg’s (1983) idea that children who can distinguish between fantasy and reality were more likely to be popular amongst other children can be seen with both Hannah and Sceeter. Hannah and Sceeter were able to quickly move from reality to fantasy and vice versa. This allowed the children to incorporate themselves to other children’s play or incorporate other children into their play. This may be why both children appeared to be well liked by their peers. They were never isolated from playing with their peers, and even initiated most of their play.

Listening to Others: Play Negotiation

I attempted to have the children explain how they negotiate play amongst their friends. During Hannah’s play in the classroom with Emily, Emily had put a play dough cookie on a tray. Hannah told her that she had put it on the wrong tray, and Emily pulled her hands back quickly and said “sorry”. I asked Hannah to describe how she and the other children decide on events of their play (during making cookies).

N: So how do you, when you are playing like that with your friends, how do you tell them and how do you decide where things go and which cookies are cooked..?

H: Well, we don’t cause these trays are separate (walked up to the TV where the scene was paused) these trays are separate and they are in the places that they should be, cause we don’t “which one should go on what”, these are the ones that are the ones that are good ones and we don’t need to cook them over and these are the ones that we can’t cook them over still but they both have to be in separate trays cause they were sort of separated the diet and the chocolate chips on one tray because we don’t cause half on each tray because we don’t want both of them to over flow (said in an explanation voice).

N: So who decided that?

H: Well, we sort of just do it, we just thinking what should go on what tray and stuff.

N: Then how do you, if you are playing with Lauren, how do tell Lauren that that's how it should be.

H: Well, we go we sort of just tell, all of these are just.

N: So you just tell her.

Sceeter's "laboratory" play at the sink area in the classroom provides another example. Hannah and Suzy were playing next to him, but they were not pretending that the laboratory was exploding. I asked Sceeter how he knew what the girls were playing.

N: What about Hannah and Emily? (They are playing at the classroom sink on the other side of the sink from Sceeter but not pretending the same thing as Sceeter.)

S: Well they are down there because the part is when they are down there they're aren't making something bad like us so usually the fire starts over on the sand table.

N: Oh so it doesn't get them.

S: But we have to be careful because we are not experimenting what they are doing, but we are making poison.

N: So that's not what they are making. So they are pretending something else.

S: Yes.

N: So it's ok when you are playing with your friends to pretend different things like that?

S: Uh huh.

N: So how would you know that they are pretending that game and you are pretending your game?

S: Well when they are talking to each other I hear what they are saying.

N: So you know that they are doing their pretend and you are doing your experiment. So that's how you figure it out.

S: Yeah.

Conclusions

After reviewing the children's descriptions of their symbolic play, I rethought the assumptions I had made of symbolic play by reading the literature on play. First, my impressions of incidences of pretense proved to be different than the children's views on pretense. I had assumed that all role play is pretense. According to the children, functional roles are not considered to be pretense. Also I believed that children used pretense with all objects used during symbolic play. Hannah claimed that she did not need to pretend with functional objects like her doll or the buckets used in her ice cream play. Second, I did not realize that children engaged in symbolic play had different "rights" than people who were not engaged in the play. Hannah hinted at this when she

said that she and her friend making cookies would not be burned by the cookies, but I would because I was not involved in the play.

The videotapes and interview/reflection sessions served as a wonderful catalyst to spark conversation with the children about their symbolic play. The children were excited to view the tapes and discuss their symbolic play. The videotapes also assisted both the children and me in explaining our questions and answers. We had tangible examples of their play, which would otherwise have been too abstract a concept for a child to answer questions. Interviewing the children while watching videotaped segments of their play provided a contextually-relevant understanding of how these children interpret their symbolic play (Fantuzzo et al., 1998).

The following section addresses the second research question “How does videotaped documentation, specifically revisiting and reflecting, contribute to an increase in interest, reengagement and extension of the children’s symbolic play?” I will first describe the time I spent playing with Hannah and Sceeter, and then the children’s symbolic play in the classroom. Afterwards, I will discuss documentation and symbolic play in relation to the classroom and the interview/reflection sessions.

Description of My Play with Children

Before videotaping began, I spent one week in the children’s classroom to build rapport with them. Due to my previous acquaintance with Hannah, she quickly incorporated me into her play. I did not know Sceeter before this time, so I approached him much more subtly. I spent the first day playing primarily with Hannah and her friends and not Sceeter, in hopes that Sceeter would see that the other children felt at ease around me. Hannah and I played at the media table filled with sand. Hannah suggested we make a sandcastle. We worked on it with Suzy, Janet and Sylvia. The girls made two castles, a sugar and a sleeping castle. I gestured like I was eating the sugar castle and we began a game of pretending to eat the castles and grow large. I drew a window in the sand and said I could see children inside the castle. Hannah quickly took to this and made up a story of a baby that lived inside the castle with its mother. Later, Hannah got her action figure (a picture of her mounted on a foam board) and put it on the castle, and the other children followed her lead. Our play ended when it was time to go outside.

The second day I sat near Sceeter while he played, and played with similar objects. After he overheard a suggestion I had made about an object substitution, he began to focus more of his attention on me. I listened to what he was playing, and offered him more suggestions using within frame communication (Giffin, 1984). We began playing a pretend game of firemen with Janet. When Sceeter announced a fire, I used the computer keyboard to find the fire's location. Sceeter suggested we put the "jet packs" (two cardboard cylinders held together with string) on our back. I suggested the extra string could be the hose to spray the water. Sceeter used an airplane to fly to the fire and Janet and I pretended to fly by walking with our hands out. After putting out the fire, Sceeter said we needed to sleep, so we laid down next to each other. An alarm clock, which was represented by Sceeter making noise, woke us and we were off to find the next fire. This play continued for approximately an hour.

We continued this play for three days, and extended the play by incorporating other play partners, events, roles and object substitutions. I noticed the children had not labeled where the fires were, so I suggested there was a fire in the elementary school, which was the other classroom of children. We stood in front of the windows to the other classroom and pretended to put out the fire and rescue the children. Later Sceeter looked at a Lego table that has a design of trees and roads on it, and said there was a fire in the forest. Sceeter accidentally fell while playing and he pretended he was hurt. I suggested he had inhaled too much smoke from the fire, and David came to put a mask on him (a miniature bathroom plastic plunger). Later the masks (plungers) became protection for the firemen against smoke. The children would put them up to their faces before putting out a fire. Another day, Randy imitated Sceeter's fall and pretended to die. Kenny lifted Randy's shirt to listen to his heart, and used the plunger to push on Randy's chest to restart his heart. When I suggested giving Randy medicine to bring him back to life, the children did not respond, but David suggested getting the first aide kit. Randy quickly came back to life anyway before David could get the kit.

By the end of the week, I felt I had made a bond with Hannah and Sceeter. I believe that the time I had spent playing with the children made them feel comfortable with me during the interview/reflection sessions. Going into the sessions, the children

knew that I enjoyed play and would support their symbolic play. These children quickly took to an adult who encouraged symbolic play.

Classroom Environment

Hannah and Sceeter's classroom did not have a dramatic play area. In the beginning of the school year, the children were allowed to walk into the adjoining classroom that has a housekeeping area and dress up clothes. However, due to discipline issues, the children are no longer allowed to enter the other classroom. Dramatic play props were limited to plastic figures and dinosaurs, a few trucks, dollhouse furniture, and a large airplane with wheels. In the interview with the teachers they indicated they brought in prop boxes filled with items that promote symbolic play from outside the classroom as well as props from the other classroom. However, during the four weeks that I filmed the classroom, only once did I observe a teacher bring in a prop box. On two occasions I saw a teacher bring props from the other classroom. The teachers also reported incorporating symbolic play into their curriculum by setting up the block area with structures and plastic figures. I saw this occur a few times a week. Once during group time, the lead teacher organized the children to perform in a play based on a story "The Paper Bag Princess". The teacher read the story while five children, including Hannah, enacted the different roles of the story. Teachers reported that most of the dramatic play occurred on the playground, which was not easily accessible for unobtrusive videotaping.

While filming the classroom, I noticed that rarely did teachers engage in symbolic play with the children. The few times the lead teacher engaged in symbolic play with Hannah was when Hannah initiated it. She offered the teacher a piece of pretend food (made from play dough or sand), the teacher would pretend to eat it, say it was good, then walk away. I did not see any interaction in symbolic play between the lead teacher and Sceeter. The teachers spent more time interacting with children engaged in art or constructive activities. Adults in the classroom continually used the word 'work' when referring to the children's activities. Rarely did I hear the word "play".

During the teachers' interview, I found a large difference between the teacher's theories on symbolic play. When asked what their thoughts are on the teacher's role in children's symbolic play, Bette and Mameha had opposing answers. Bette believed that

teachers should facilitate play by providing materials, and that children did not want adults in their play. Mameha found that she could enrich the children's play by becoming a player and guiding children when they are stuck in a play episode. For example, she noticed that Sceeter and Kenny were repeating the same fireman play, so she became an injured person and asked for medical attention. This allowed Sceeter to extend the fireman play and become a doctor performing surgery on Mameha. Mameha had done previous research on the importance of symbolic play and children's literacy skills. Although Mameha's theory of symbolic play may help support play in the classroom, she is not a dominant figure in the classroom due to her scheduling.

The overriding impression I created about the classroom was that symbolic play is not well supported. The teachers set up the classroom to include mostly product oriented activities including art and constructive play materials. For example there was an art center with a tall shelf filled with different materials for the children to use. Daily there were painting, drawing or sculpting activities where the teachers sat and spoke to the children about their art. The teachers took many pictures of the children's art, and photocopied their drawings to be displayed on documentation panels. The manipulative center and block center had many different materials (large and hollow block units, and plastic shapes and Legos) with which the children could build. Again, the teachers took photographs of the children's structures and even helped them build. Symbolic play did not receive this attention. As said before, there was no dramatic play area and limited props. The teachers rarely engaged in symbolic play with the children. Both co-teachers agreed that symbolic play was not a high priority in the classroom.

This lack of support for symbolic play set a tone in the classroom that the children do not have permission to engage in symbolic play. According to Rubin, Fein and Vandenberg (1983), children need this permission from the adult to engage in play. Katz (1998) also states that children take notice of what adults find important. Therefore, if symbolic play is not important to the teachers, the children will not be likely to engage in it. This may be a link to the results of this study that will be discussed after the description of both children's play over the four week filming period.

Even with all of these obstacles, Hannah, Sceeter and other children were able to engage in symbolic play. The objects in their play, however, were occasionally unusual.

Since there were limited props for the children to use, they compensated by using the materials around them not intended for symbolic play. For example, I observed Sceeter repeatedly sneaking to the art shelf to take materials (paintbrushes, clay tools, plastic squares). He would then bring them up to the loft area, but due to the set up of the classroom and the video cameras, I was not able to film exactly what he did with them. I suspect, since he mainly engaged in symbolic play, that he used the materials in different object substitutions. Also since he knew he was not allowed to use these materials in that fashion, he did not announce them to other people. Once he took plastic squares and paintbrushes to the porch area to be used as tickets to arrest people. Hannah also demonstrated this behavior when she used a documentation panel as a slide for her doll.

Description of Children's Play

Dolls, Shelter, Play Dough, and Bunnies: Hannah's Symbolic Play. During the four weeks of filming, Hannah's symbolic play revolved mostly around nurturing themes including caring for babies, making food, building homes, and playing mother or baby with her friends. Often she brought a stuffed animal or doll to school. She ranged from leaving the object in her cubby all day to focusing most of her attention to caring for it. Hannah predominately played in different combinations of a group of four female friends, but was also observed to play alone. Her main group of friends included Suzy, Emily, Janet and Sylvia. There was not a noticeable difference in her play due to play partner. While playing, Hannah was often the leader of her friends and guided the play, however she was also able to incorporate other children's ideas into the events of the play.

A good example of Hannah being able to incorporate other people's ideas into her play occurred during her "ice cream" play. During this play, she was at the media table filled with sand. She and her friend were asking people around them if anyone wanted some ice cream. Bette, the lead teacher, was at the table reading a book about bugs to another child. Bette answered Hannah and said she wanted Chunky Monkey ice cream. Hannah scooped some sand and gave it to Bette. Bette then looked at the bug book and asked Hannah for "bug ice cream". Hannah quickly incorporated this unusual request and scooped out some more sand for Bette. Hannah was not reading the book about bugs

at the time, but she could still go along with Bette's request for ice cream that Hannah probably did not anticipate.

During the first week of filming, Hannah spent three days at the art table playing with play dough. There were cookie cutters, rolling pins, and plastic cutters available. She began making small cookies that later she drew on and labeled them chocolate chip, cinnamon buns and diet cookies. She drew an oven (stove top) on paper where she cooked the cookies, and then placed them on trays. Never did she or any of her playmates make reference to being bakers or cooks. On the third day, the teachers extended the play by setting the media table to look like a table for eating. There was a table cloth, plastic plates, cups, and utensils. The tray of previously made cookies was present, along with a bucket of play dough. Hannah continued to make more cookies, and once said she was making a plate of cookies for her stuffed animal, but she never fed the animal. She did not use the table setting props for any "dinner" type script or pretend to drink from the cups. The following two days, the table setting props were not available and the play dough cookies were on a shelf. Hannah did not play with them again. The only other time she engaged in symbolic play after then was when she pretended the loft was her house and she needed to clean it because firemen had made it messy. She used paintbrushes as cleaning props.

I gave Greta a videotape of Hannah Thursday February 12, and Hannah watched it that night. We had an interview/reflection session the following day after school (Friday, February 13). The tape showed Hannah making the play dough cookies, placing them on the paper oven, negotiating with a friend about which cookies belonged on which tray, and Hannah playing with the cookies at the table with the plates and cups. During the interview, I asked Hannah questions about what she was doing, whom she was pretending to be, how the oven worked, how she negotiates play, and about her understanding of pretend and reality. I also asked if she were to play with the cookies again, would she pretend to be someone. She replied no. She did report making plans to repeat the play of making cookies over again.

H: ...we just started a couple of days and we are going to work on them everyday with the clay, back and forth, back and forth, back and forth.

During the interview, she talked about how she and the other people who were making cookies would not get burned by the cookies, but I would because I was not playing with them. We talked about if the oven and cookies were real or pretend. She told me what her favorite and least favorite things were to pretend.

The following week, neither the play dough cookies nor play dough were available. Hannah did not make any requests to get the play dough cookies. The first day of the week, she played in the media table that was filled with sand, buckets and funnels. After her friend, Suzy, mentioned Baskin Robbins, Hannah began asking teachers if they wanted any ice cream. After the teachers would respond yes, she would ask “a cup or a cone”. The small buckets were used for cups, and two differently shaped funnels were used for waffle or plain cones. The teacher next to Hannah was looking at a book about bugs and asked Hannah if she could have “bug ice cream”. Hannah swiftly said yes and scooped out the ice cream. This play continued for quite some time. Other children around her got engaged in requesting “bug ice cream”, including Sceeter. When the children became more interested in another activity near by, Hannah abandoned the “ice cream” play and began feeding her stuffed bunny the sand. She asked the bunny questions and cried in his voice. She lost interest in the play when the teacher turned Hannah’s attention to reading the names of other children on a piece of paper.

The next day there was sand in the media table, however the area was being used by other children pretending it was a laboratory, so Hannah did not return to play “ice cream”. In the loft, Hannah and Emily pretended to be babies, and Suzy pretended to be the mother. Suzy put Hannah and Emily to sleep and pretended to change their diapers. Hannah and Emily cried and refused to go to sleep. This was the first time Hannah announced a pretend role. Sceeter, working in the laboratory (sink area with experiments) under the loft, suggested that he would be their father, but that he needed to stay at work in the laboratory. The rest of the week, Hannah played with the dollhouse props in the block area with Sylvia. These props including miniature windows, doors, bathroom tubs, tables and small blocks. On the first day, a teacher distracted Hannah by asking Hannah questions that did not relate the dollhouse play. Hannah stopped her play and answered the teacher’s questions, and then did not reengage in the play. The second day Hannah made a home for the stuffed animals she had brought in from home. Hannah and Sylvia

used other blocks to resemble a train track, and made the animals move along the track before entering the house. After making the home, Hannah looked for a babysitter to watch her animals. She did this by typing on the computer keyboard, and then letting the animal type on the keyboard. Emily offered to be the babysitter, which freed Hannah to go work on the experiments at the sink. These involved mixing sand, water and paint.

I gave Greta the second videotape on Thursday February 18, and Hannah watched it that night. On Friday, February 19, I interviewed Hannah. The videotape included scenes of her playing with teachers and friends in the “ice cream” play, asking “cup or a cone”, feeding her stuffed bunny, and in the loft playing baby with Emily and Suzy. During the interview, Hannah and I talked about her attempt at imitating the people at an ice cream store, which other props she could use for a cone. She imitated her play on the videotape by getting out different puzzle boxes from a cabinet and pretending the boxes were flavors of ice cream. She explained that she knows what her bunny wants because he speaks to her in a nonsense language. She described how she distinguishes the different flavors of ice cream in the sand table. We also talked about her role as a baby with her friends and any gender issues associated with enacting a role. While talking about different object substitutions for ice cream, she said the next day at school she would ask Bette for some paper to make ice cream cones.

During the third week of filming, Hannah focused most of her play around a baby doll she brought from home. Her mother explained that Hannah got the doll for Christmas, but had never paid much attention to it until now. The doll has its own backpack, diapers, food and baby monitor (monitor makes crying noise to tell child the baby is awake). Hannah brought all the accessories to school, and played almost exclusively with the doll for four consecutive days. She walked around with the doll, fed it, changed its diapers about three times a day, and showed it to almost everyone. When playing with the doll, she did not engage in as much interaction with her friends as before. Much of her play with the doll was solitary. Her friends appeared fascinated by the doll and wanted to play with it, but they engaged in more observation of Hannah caring for the doll. She allowed other people to hold the doll, but not to change its diapers. Hannah used a documentation panel a teacher had instructed the children to draw on as a slide for the doll. On the fourth day of bringing the doll to school, Hannah brought in four

additional dolls. Janet and Emily apparently influenced by Hannah, brought in their dolls. On that day, according to the teacher's documentation, Mameha suggested Hannah build a playhouse for the dolls out of large blocks. Hannah, Janet and Suzy built a one level house in which they could sit, have play rooms for the dolls, and places to sleep. The teachers had them put the blocks away at the end of the day.

During the four days that Hannah was not directly caring for the doll, she engaged in only a few other play episodes. She used the computer keyboard in solitary play, made a sculpture out of play dough for the doll, and played what appeared to be a "school" type theme. I suspect it was a "school" because Sayuri told me that Hannah and some friends were playing school on the playground. In the school play, she and her friends gathered books, pencils and markers, and sat in a circle. After gathering the props, the play never developed into organized play. Hannah moved to the media table, filled with water, where she alluded to making "pies" with Suzy. She did not speak much during the play. Sceeter came over and threatened to poison her baby. The poison made out of water. She announced she would poison him back, but then focused on pouring water in a bucket.

The third week I gave Greta the videotape on Wednesday, February 25, and interviewed Hannah on Thursday. The videotape contained clips of Hannah holding the doll at the art table with play dough, Hannah changing the dolls diapers, Hannah and Suzy holding and singing to the baby, and Hannah typing on the computer keyboard with the doll next to her. During the interview, Hannah and I talked about if she was pretending to be someone in relation to her doll, and possible pretend roles she could enact. Hannah said she was not pretending to be anyone when playing mother to her doll, but that she could pretend to be a nurse if the doll were in the hospital. We also talked about the doll's accessories, and Hannah appeared proud that the doll is so realistic because the doll could talk, eat etc. She repeatedly explained to me that she does not have to pretend while playing with the doll. I asked Hannah about any scary themes she enjoyed playing, but she did not respond. Since this session took place on a Thursday, it was the first time her play could be seen the following day.

Surprisingly, Hannah did not bring the doll to school the day after the interview/reflection session. Later, Greta explained that she had left the dolls in the trunk of her car, and when she asked Hannah what toy she wanted to bring to school, Hannah

did not have any of the dolls in her direct view. Greta believes that is why Hannah did not ask for the doll. Greta also explained that Hannah has never been fixed on one favorite play object. She is able to transfer her nurturance to any stuffed animal or doll. That day she brought in a stuffed dog. Her main play that day was pretending to be either the baby or mother to her friends, Suzy, Emily and Janet. At first Hannah asked for a stroller from the other classroom, Emily sat in it, and Hannah pushed her around the classroom. Hannah asked Janet to be her sister and Emily to be her baby. Emily played the part of “bad baby” and knocked objects over. Hannah used the prop fish of a fishing game to feed Emily. Hannah later asked to be the baby, and Emily pushed her in the stroller. Hannah, still as baby, repeatedly attempted to play with the computer keyboard but Emily would not allow her. Also on this day, Hannah played with the fishing game in the water table by herself. She showed signs of beginning to play school again by gathering notebooks, however, it never developed as she was distracted by snack.

Week four began with Hannah engaged in making food with play dough. At the table were the same props as when she made the play dough cookies, however this time Hannah made “roll ups”. Throughout the weeks before, the teachers had asked the children to bring in recipes from their family backgrounds. While playing with play dough, Hannah said she was making “roll ups” similar to the ones her teacher had made for her recipe. She used a flat piece of plastic for a stove. The following day, there was new red and yellow play dough. There was also plastic circle lids. Hannah and her friends made donuts and strawberry pancakes. Hannah asked her friends to look for the paper oven they had used for the play dough cookies, but they could not find it. No one attempted to make a new one. They only played with the play dough for a short time before Hannah decided she needed to make a gift for her grandmother out of fabric. The next day, the teachers brought out recipe books, metal mixing bowls, plastic lids, and plastic knives and forks. Hannah was interested in looking through the book and decided to make a fish dinner from a picture she had seen in the book. She later fed her stuffed animal bunny and bear play dough.

During the later part of the week, Hannah engaged in a long play episode of “ice cream” at the media table filled with shaving cream. She and five other friends made “ice cream”, but did not serve it to anyone. They focused on the process of making the

ice cream, and every child had a different job. Hannah announced she was in charge of making the ice cream “stinky”. During the week, she also made a slide for her stuffed animal bunny, and typed the bunny’s name on the computer keyboard.

Emergency! Emergency!: Sceeter’s Symbolic Play. Sceeter’s symbolic play had a variety of dimensions. As stated by his mother, Sceeter is driven to play. This drive became evident through Sceeter’s ability to initiate play, and incorporate friends or other people’s ideas into his play. For example when a teacher told Sceeter that a friend wanted to play with him, Sceeter quickly walked over holding out a bowl of chemicals to the child, and showed the child the chemicals. Sceeter then told the friend to “go get a lab coat” which was actually a smock. On another day, Sceeter’s friend was upset, so to console him, Sceeter initiated playing “babies” which he knew to be a favorite of his friend. Sceeter was also able to incorporate himself into other children’s play while not stopping his own. He did this by announcing he would be the father to children playing a family script, but that he had to stay at work where he was playing. Sceeter showed a preference for symbolic play over art oriented activities.

Sceeter’s mother told me that Sceeter is a very imaginative child. He has many imaginary friends (Peter, Craig, Bob, Winnifred Plumpy, and Cornstarch) that he speaks to repeatedly during the day. Each imaginary friend is a different age. Sceeter also announced to Alice and Jack, his parents, that Charles Lindbergh and Amelia Earhart live in their house. Charles Lindbergh works with Sceeter in Sceeter’s laboratory (area behind a chair) in his house.

Sceeter’s strong interest in play was reflected in the many themes of his play. His symbolic play included experimenter, airplane pilot, baby, father, detective, dinosaur and rescuer. One common element to his play was an underlining sense of “emergency”. Typically during a play episode, either Sceeter or his friend Kenny would announce “emergency”, and the play would then be shaped to battling the emergency. The emergencies included roaring fires, threatening tornadoes, explosive chemicals in the laboratory, attack dinosaurs and the dramatic deaths of Kenny. Through much negotiation with play partners, most emergencies were resolved.

During the first week of filming Sceeter, the class was preparing for a field trip to the airport. Twice during the week, once in the beginning and once on the day of the field trip, Sceeter made an airport out of large blocks. On the day of the field trip, his airport had a control tower with a computer and an area to park a large airplane with wheels (large enough for a child to sit on). He proudly invited friends to take tours of the airport. Kenny announced “tornado”, and Sceeter flew over on his airplane to rescue the plastic dinosaurs. Kenny, Sceeter and David proceeded to use the computer keyboard to track the tornado, and shot it down with metal pipes used for construction. The theme of “emergency” came through in another episode of play that week. While Sceeter and Bobby were devising a plan to attack the imaginary police “so that we could be kings” (Sceeter), Kenny interrupted to summon their help for an emergency at the other end of the classroom. Sceeter used his “detainer” watch, made of plastic wire, to call for Bobby’s help. Before the emergency could be resolved, their play was ended by a teacher asking the children to clean up.

The theme of fire was played twice that week. First, Sceeter announced a fire while riding on the fire truck with Bobby. Sceeter used the plastic hose head on the fire truck to spray water, and made spraying noises to put out the fire on the overhead projector. The second episode of fire occurred in the loft where tragically the Declaration of Independence (brown paper towel) was burned. Sceeter and Kenny used paintbrushes to put out the fire. Interestingly, this play episode coincided with Hannah’s play of cleaning house. Each time Sceeter and Kenny came down from the loft, Hannah would enter the loft saying the firemen had made a mess and she had to clean it up. Also that week, Sceeter became a pirate for a short amount of time while playing in the loft. He announced being a pirate to another child, but only enacted it by making the stereotypical “arrrr” pirate noise.

Since the children were going to the airport that week, I expected to see either toy airplanes or teachers initiating play related to the airport. Before the trip to the airport, the teachers put out a table in the block area with paper, cutting tools and gluing materials to make airplanes. The day after their trip to the airport, the teachers set up a Lego board with painted roads in the block area in hopes that the children would be inspired to make an airport runway. I expected Sceeter would pick up on his airplane play, instead he spent

most of the day playing with the plastic dinosaurs and play dough at the art table. He enacted the role of baby dinosaur to Kenny's father dinosaur by speaking in a baby's voice and saying he needed to go to school. Later that day, the teachers brought in the "space prop box", and the children walked around wearing space headsets. Sceeter used the headsets to tie together two trucks for riding. Play ended when the teacher asked the children to clean up.

Due to scheduling restrictions, I was not able to interview Sceeter that week. Therefore I will continue to describe his play of the next week.

Sceeter's second week of play was marked by a focus on experimenting with soap, paint, water and sand. Sceeter described these materials as "my chemicals". Sceeter identified the sink area under the loft as the "laboratory". This play of "laboratory" began with Sceeter drifting from the sink to the media table where Hannah was making "bug ice cream". The teacher made reference to an adult chemist who would be visiting the class the following week to show the children experiments. Sceeter's attention then slowly became focused to the sink area where small bowls and cups of watercolor paints had been left out to be washed. He added sand to the colors and a weeklong interest in "experimenting" was born.

Sceeter and Kenny were the main players in the laboratory on the first day. They mixed materials and reported many explosions. They used the eyedroppers left to be washed, water, sand, paint and a magnifying glass. After approximately 30 minutes of minor chemical explosions, the materials overflowing from the bowl, Sceeter announced that the laboratory was going to explode. This immediately triggered Kenny's excitement, and the two boys ran into the loft above to escape the explosion. On their return to the laboratory, Kenny died on two occasions. Once Sceeter joined him, but quickly jumped back up when another child asked him a question. The play was ended by clean up time.

The following day, the teachers had added baking soda and plastic gloves to the sink area. Sceeter continued to mix the materials, but did not respond to Kenny's suggestions of the laboratory exploding. I suspect that the addition of a new material, baking soda, Sceeter was more interested in exploring the material than engaging in dramatic play. He did tell the children playing in the loft above him, that he would be

their father, but that he had to stay at work in the laboratory. The following two days Sceeter played at the laboratory, but not as long and with no indications of any dramatic play. He simply mixed the materials together. The last day of the week he did not use any of the materials related to chemicals.

Sceeter's decline in interest in the laboratory play may stem from two factors. First, Sceeter's play is strongly influenced by a specific friend, Randy. Randy has a forceful personality and often directs Sceeter's play to fit Randy's desires. On the first day of laboratory play, Randy was not in school, therefore on his return the next day, he was not familiar with the play. Randy busied himself with other activities that day, but for the rest of the week, he persuaded Sceeter to leave the laboratory area. Another factor is the repetition of materials and lack of extension. After the addition of baking soda, the materials and set up of the area remained the same. Sceeter may have needed help in extending his play with the introduction of new materials, a book about chemistry, or the help of an adult.

When not playing in the laboratory, Sceeter engaged in another emergency play episode with Kenny, David and Randy. While assembling metal pipes, Kenny noticed an oncoming tornado. Sceeter responded by saying his imaginary compass pointed to the south. The children shot the tornado with the pipes, but it was not enough to save Kenny. He fell to the floor and died.

Later that day, Sceeter spent a few minutes making a mask out of paper put out by the teachers. This activity was related to a project of making "Dangerous Creatures" that has been initiated earlier in the semester before the study began. Sceeter only spent a few minutes making the mask and then went outside to play.

I gave Jack, Sceeter's father, the tape of Sceeter's symbolic play on Thursday February 18, and Sceeter watched it the morning of Friday February 19. The videotape included scenes from the laboratory play where Sceeter announces that the laboratory will explode, he and Kenny going into the loft, and both children pretending to die. During the interview, Sceeter and I talked about any emotions concerning the play, if he was pretending to be someone, distinction between pretend and reality, and negotiation play. Sceeter demonstrated a vast knowledge about science and showed me his own laboratory in his house.

Even though Sceeter had watched the tape Friday before going to school, he did not play with the laboratory materials. The materials were put on a shelf near the sink area, but he did not make any attempts at bringing them down. Instead, he explored the pulleys brought into the classroom that day. A teacher explained that the day before, the children spoke of pulleys before the end of school, so the teacher had brought them in. After using the pulleys most of the morning, Sceeter went into the loft with Bobby. They decided to decorate their house for the Chinese New Year. They repeated a cycle of pretending to sleep, waking up and decorating the house with string and then sleeping again. The pulleys became their alarm clocks.

During the third week of videotaping, Sceeter picked up on a new play theme of “babies. Although the media table was equipped for more experimenting (styrofoam peanuts melting in water), Sceeter did not spend much time there. Randy, Sceeter, Suzy and David played in the loft, and Randy announced he was the father, Suzy was the mother, and Sceeter and David were the babies. Sceeter and David immediately cried like babies and sucked their thumbs. They moved their play from the loft to a couch, which was to be their house, and began the play of “bad babies”. This play consisted of Randy scolding the babies for either not napping or play fighting. Later in the play, Ben, dressed up in a tiger costume, walked up to the children on the couch. Randy announced that the tiger would hurt the babies, so Randy chased the tiger away. “Babies”, as the children termed it, reappeared twice in the week, however Emily replaced David. Once Randy repeated the theme of “bad babies”, and the second time the play never develop past assembling the characters. As mentioned earlier, Sceeter used this play to console Randy when he was upset over something else. The boys spent almost an entire morning trying to convince Suzy to play with them.

Since Sceeter and Randy had the “babies” play in common, they reestablished their partnership in play that was not as dominant the week before. Due to Randy’s forceful influence on Sceeter, Sceeter’s play was rougher than previous. On one out of the two occasions that the experimenting type play was repeated, it took on a different tone. While Randy, Hannah and Suzy were at the water table, Sceeter attempted to poison Hannah’s baby, and made a bomb out of water in a small container and threw it at the people in the loft. The second time that week that Sceeter engaged in experimenting

at the media table it was with Kenny and not Randy. When Sceeter made reference to the laboratory exploding, both boys ran to the loft. Before running into the loft, Kenny threw an object, and a teacher abruptly ended their play to discipline Kenny.

Also that week, Sceeter engaged in other themes of play. Sceeter began a three-day play of detective. He wrote “field notes” on brown paper towels with a secret marker, and looked for clues with a magnifying glass. While playing with plastic blocks that can be assembled into cars, Sceeter pretended his car was on fire. He looked on his imaginary radar screen before putting out the fire with a hose made from other plastic blocks.

On the Thursday of that week, an adult chemist, referred to by the teachers and children as a “real chemist”, came to the school to show experiments to the children. The chemist was a friend of the lead teacher, and was accustomed to showing children different experiments, like freezing tennis balls, making fog, and changing the color of water. The children were extremely excited for her to come, and were amazed by the experiments. When she finished the children went outside to play, so they did not have the opportunity to do any experiments themselves. The following day there were no materials available for them to experiment with.

I gave Sceeter’s dad the videotape on Wednesday February 24, and Sceeter watched it that evening. The videotape showed Sceeter on the couch playing “babies” with Randy, Suzy and David, Randy protecting Sceeter and David from a child dressed as a tiger, and Sceeter and Kenny initiating the repetition of the laboratory exploding. During the interview, I asked Sceeter questions referring to roles, why he liked to enact the baby role, and other possible pretend roles and themes. We also talked about the detective play he had done that day, and he showed me his “field notes”.

Since our interview/reflection session was on Thursday afternoon, I was able to film his play the day directly after the session. On that Friday, Sceeter did not repeat any of the play on the videotape. He did not play “babies”, but he did suggest being the father to Janet who was playing in another area of the class. He told her he could be the father, but had to be at work. He spent the day as a detective still writing on the brown paper towels. That morning, the teachers had put out a plastic fishing game in the water

table. Sceeter pretended he was a pirate in the loft who needed to buy fish. He also engaged in a short play episode with firemen figures.

During the final week of filming, Sceeter and I were both absent on separate days. The main play of this week was an “ice cream” play in the media table filled with shaving cream. There were also buckets, gloves and food coloring. At first he used the shaving cream as experiments, but that did not last long. He returned to the media table later in the morning when there were many other children. Sceeter suggested they make ice cream. The five children, including Hannah and Sceeter, proceeded to take on different roles to make the ice cream. Sceeter announced he would be the tester that ensures the health safety of the ice cream. Sceeter and Hannah remained the longest at the table filling buckets with water and shaving cream. The following day he repeated this play with David, but did not elaborate on it any further. The play ended relatively quickly, I suspect because there were not many children playing with them.

On the day before the “ice cream” play began, the teachers had put out plastic bottles, vinegar, baking soda and balloons with which the children could experiment. Sceeter focused much attention on this experiment by exploring the different properties of the elements, but never added any symbolic play to the experiments. Three other themes of play that week were “fire” in the porch area, making space shuttles out of magnets, and sleeping in the loft. In the fire play for the first time, Sceeter was the character trapped in the fire and David had to rescue him. Sceeter coughed to show that he had smoke in his lungs, and David came with a plunger as a mask. They repeated this sequence twice. He also used materials from the art area, paintbrushes and plastic squares, to arrest people. At the manipulative table, Sceeter made a space shuttle with large flat magnets. He built the shuttle, and then lifted it in the air as if the shuttle was taking off. In the loft, Sceeter repeated his play of sleeping and waking up to an alarm with Bobby and also Ben. This time Sceeter used a whisk for an alarm clock. He declared he could see the Empire State Building, so the boys came down to the ground and pretended to ride a bus. To show riding a bus, the boys sat next to each other and moved their hands as if steering the bus.

I gave the last videotape to Jack on Thursday, March 4 and Sceeter watched it that evening. The videotape showed Sceeter making ice cream with the other children at the

media table, and being rescued from the fire by David. During the interview, I asked Sceeter about his ice cream play, and he explained that he was imitating a book from home about ice cream. He also described the parts that the other children were imitating. I asked him about other possible object substitutions for ice cream and cones. We talked about how the ice cream play at school was an imitation of the procedure for making ice cream in an ice cream book, roles, and possible object substitutions. Unfortunately filming ended that week, so I was unable to observe his play after the final interview/reflection session.

Documentation and Symbolic Play

As discussed previously, advocates of the use of documentation in early childhood education programs theorize benefits for children, teachers and parents. I was particularly interested in the benefits of documentation to children. Through the processes of revisiting and reflecting on an activity, children recreate the experience, which can lead to an increase in interest, reengagement or extension of the activity (Edwards, Gandini, & Forman, 1998; Forman & Fyfe, 1998; Katz & Chard, 1996). Since documentation is theoretically useful with a variety of activities, there are few specifics on what would constitute evidence of these benefits for symbolic play. Therefore, I drew on the literature on play theories and research in forming my expectations and guiding my analysis with regard to symbolic play. Based on the play literature in general, I expected to see more role play, addition of events to a play episode, and higher levels of object substitution.

In the initial stages of the study, I anticipated seeing the benefits of documenting Hannah and Sceeter's play primarily in the classroom. However, I quickly found that during the interview/reflection sessions the children not only engaged in symbolic play, but expressed a preference for pretending over answering questions about pretense. Since this unanticipated play emerged during the interview/reflection sessions, I decided to include it in analysis. I then noticed a sharp contrast in the amount of increase in interested, reengagement and extension of play between the classroom and the interview/reflection sessions.

These observations led me to compare the two settings, the classroom and interview/reflection sessions, within the framework of Rubin, Fein and Vandenberg's

(1983) findings related to the context for play. Based on their review of hundreds of studies, they concluded that there are five components necessary to provide a context for play. First, there must be familiar peers and toys available that the children will find interesting. Second, the children must feel there is permission to engage in play from an agreement between the adult and children through words or gestures. Third, adults must act with minimal intrusion. Fourth, the children must feel comfortable and safe in the environment. Finally, the children must not feel sick, tired or hungry. The first three components are of major importance for this study, therefore I will use them in discussing the classroom and interview/reflection session environments.

Familiar Props and Peers

Classroom. As mentioned earlier in the description of the classroom, there was no dramatic play area available for the children and limited dramatic play materials. Props help guide children's symbolic play (Carasaro, 1983; Fein, 1981; Short-Meyerson & Abbeduto, 1997). For example, the two times play dough with cookie cutters and rolling pins were available, Hannah engaged in food preparation. When play dough was presented with dinosaurs, Sceeter used the play dough to make an elevator for a dinosaur. In the classroom, the teachers set out mostly art or construction type materials. Hannah and Sceeter were able to compensate for this by turning the art or construction type materials (play dough) into symbolic play.

The children did have a constant peer group with whom to engage in play. The choice of playmate was a heavy influence in Sceeter's play, and not as much in Hannah's play. One reason may be that Hannah's circle of friends were all interested in nurturing type play, therefore she did not have to change her play to continue playing with her friends. Sceeter was more influenced by his play partner because he was willing to play with a wide range of children that had different interests. His play with Kenny revolved around "emergency" and "rescue" themes, while his play with Randy had a different tone. The following is a good example, taken from the teacher's documentation in the classroom, of Sceeter's flexibility in his play. Here, Sceeter and Bobby (B) had a small argument during play and a teacher (T) intervened.

B: He's not letting me do what I want.

T: Tell him what you want (to Sceeter).

S: I want to play with you Bobby, so we can do whatever you want.

Interview/Reflection Sessions. During the interview/reflection sessions, the children did not have the same props as seen on the videotape segments of play. However, as with the classroom, this did not appear to inhibit their play. They simply used the objects or props around them to engage in play. In one incidence of Hannah's play during the interview/reflection session, not having the same props available forced her to use a higher level of object substitution. While watching herself serving ice cream on the videotape, she took puzzle boxes and had them represent the ice cream flavors. The children did not have their play partners present during the sessions. This did not stifle their play because they incorporated me into their play. Since I had spent a week in the classroom playing with them, they were familiar with me as a play partner. They trusted that I would support their symbolic play.

Permission to Play

Classroom. To see if the children would feel permission to play within the two environments, I found many differences. From the data presented earlier, I formed the impression that symbolic play was not well supported in the classroom. There was no dramatic play area, the teachers set up the classroom with more art or constructive materials, the teachers rarely engaged in symbolic play with the children, and the children's activities were referred to as "work" and not "play".

Interview/Reflection Sessions. The interview/reflection sessions had a much different tone to them. First, as mentioned previously, the children had experience playing with me. They knew I enjoyed play and specifically playing with them. Second, the combination of watching the videotapes and asking questions about their play created an environment where the children and I could express our interest in symbolic play. The children were comfortable enough with me to feel secure about incorporating other materials and myself into their play. The videotape helped set the stage that symbolic play was acceptable and even encouraged.

Minimal Intrusion of Adults

Classroom. From my observations of the classroom and the lead teacher's response that she does not think children want adults in their play, I assumed that there was little intrusion of adults in the children's play. However, I observed another occurrence that I interpret as an intrusion to play.

While filming the children, I observed that the teachers (both lead and assistants) were spending a large amount of their time sitting next to the children documenting what the children were doing. While observing the teachers, I realized that documentation is a long and time-consuming process. In order to document, the teacher must first observe the dynamics of the activity. Then the teacher must step back away from the children and write down the events of the activity, what the children said (actual quotes) and usually take a photograph of the activity. Later the teacher reflects on the activity, and figures out how to display the activity in an esthetically pleasing and attractive fashion.

In Hannah and Sceeter's classroom, the teachers spent a large amount of their time either writing down what the children said, or waiting for the children to say something. Writing down the events of an activity and what the children say takes focus and time that otherwise could be spent interacting with the children.

In one example an assistant teacher was playing for awhile with Suzy and Emily with their play dough cookies. The lead teacher walked by, heard the children saying interesting comments about their cookies, and handed the assistant teacher a notebook to write down the girls' comments. This immediately stopped the play between the assistant teacher and the children. Suzy and Emily continued to play, however the assistant teacher missed an opportunity to interact with the children and possibly give them suggestions for their play. Another occurrence I observed was a few teachers in the classroom interrupting the children's play to ask what the children were doing so that they could write it down. To answer the teachers, the children had to stop their play. This may be due partly to the assistant teachers' inexperience with documentation and working with children, however the children in the classroom were still being affected by it.

Interview/Reflection Sessions. During the interview/reflection sessions, I followed the lead of the children during their play by framing my questions around their

interests. When I saw that the children were beginning to play as opposed to answering questions, I changed gears and became a player with them. I found my role during the interview/reflection sessions as a tool to help extend their play during the sessions. As an adult in their play, I was able to offer suggestions to enrich their play. Consideration for the role of the adult in children's play is not new.

Smilansky's (1968) studied the difference in three types of interventions on the sociodramatic play of disadvantaged kindergartens. She found that the combination of exposure to outside experiences to serve as content for sociodramatic play and adult interaction to support play skill training was the most effective way to increase the level of sociodramatic play, as opposed to either intervention separately. This study opened the way for many researchers to investigate the effects of play training (for an overview see Rubin, Fein, & Vandenberg, 1983).

Smith (1983, 1994) and Smith and Syddell (1978) question the methodological procedure of play training studies. Smith purports that many of the positive results in play training studies are due to more adult interaction in the play tutoring group than in the skills tutoring or control group. Smith and Syddall (1978) attempted to eliminate the discrepancy of adult interaction by controlling for the same amount of adult interaction for both the play tutored and skills tutored groups. With this control, they found that the children scored similarly on pre and post tests assessing language, basic concept skills, and creativity, and the children in the play tutored group scored higher on the post test for role taking. The authors concluded that adult interaction may be the key, and not play per se, in children's performance in play training studies.

The role of the adult is evident as a factor in helping children engage in symbolic play. Many researchers advocate for the involvement of the adult in children's symbolic play (Bruner, 1970; Christie, 1985; Rogers & Sawyers, 1988). The adult can initiate play, suggest new ideas for children who are stuck in a repetitive play, and become the recipient of symbolic interactions providing role taking for children (Johnson, Christie, Yawkey, 1987).

Keeping in mind the context of play in each environment, Hannah and Sceeter's symbolic play will be described through the claimed outcomes of documentation, increase in interest, reengagement, extension and a deeper understanding (Katz & Chard,

1996). In describing the children's symbolic play in the classroom, I will focus on comparing the symbolic play watched on the videotape to the symbolic play in which the children engaged after watching the videotape. It is important to note that typically the props and materials seen in the scenes of play on videotape were not available in the classroom on the days following the sessions.

Interest

There are two ways to look at an increase in interest for the children in symbolic play. First, the children may show an increase in interest for symbolic play in general. That is the child may engage in more or longer episodes of symbolic play. Second, the child may increase interest in specific play episodes. If this were the case, the child would continue either the theme of play or the roles enacted in another way. For example, a child feeds a doll. If, after playing this theme of nurturing there is an increase in interest for the nurturing theme, the child may then take the same doll and instead of feeding her, put her to sleep.

When I asked the teachers if they noticed an increase in interest to an activity due to documentation, Bette explained that it is difficult to determine due to the nature of documentation. Documentation exists because there is already an interest in the subject, therefore it is unclear if an interest afterwards would have occurred if the documentation did not occur. I agree with her. Since I videotaped the children's naturally occurring symbolic play, the videotaped segments of symbolic play I showed the children were segments of play in which the children were already interested. Watching play they were already interested in may have created a circulatory effect of encouraging interest in that type of play. This encouragement was evident with both children.

Hannah's symbolic play throughout the four weeks remained focused on nurturing themes. Greta reported that this has always been Hannah's main focus of play. Watching the videotapes of herself in nurturing play may have added to her predisposition for nurturing type play. Sceeter was interested in experimenting throughout the four weeks of videotaping. His mother said that he regularly engaged in this type of play at home. Seeing a videotape of himself experimenting may have supported his interest in experimenting.

Classroom. To look for changes in Hannah's symbolic play in general, I reviewed the differences between Hannah's first week of play and the second. I noticed that during the second week, there appeared to be an increase in the amount of different symbolic play episodes in which she engaged. The first week she concentrated on making play dough cookies, and the second week she pretended to be a baby, made a house for her animals, served ice cream and looked for a babysitter. I hypothesized that she had increased her interest in symbolic play after the first interview/reflection session. However after seeing the focus on caring for her doll in the third week with little variation in other symbolic play episodes, I rethought my hypothesis. The increase in the amount of different play episodes may have occurred because she was not as interested in any one specific type of play and did not focus on a specific type of play. In the first and third weeks, she was very interested in a specific symbolic type of play, making cookies and caring for baby, therefore she did not vary her play. During the second week, there was no focus on one specific type of symbolic play.

I then looked for an increase in interest for specific play episodes. Hannah demonstrated an increase in interest by continuing two different themes that she had previously played. First after watching herself making cookies, she used the theme of food preparation again the next time play dough was available, but did not make cookies again. Instead, she made "roll ups" that was talked about in the classroom. During this play, Hannah made reference to finding the paper oven that she had used when making play dough cookies, but it was not found. Second, after watching herself serving ice cream made of sand at the media table, she later engaged in making ice cream at the media table with shaving cream. It appeared that during the second time she played "ice cream", she was following the suggestions of the other children to make ice cream. She went from being a server of ice cream to being a manufacturer of ice cream.

The most predominant evidence of an increase in interest occurred after Hannah watched herself feeding her stuffed bunny. The next day she brought in a doll and focused her attention to caring for the doll almost exclusively for four days. Before that interview/reflection session, the nurturing aspect to her play was general. She had not shown a preference for any specific type of nurturing, and engaged in themes of food preparation, playing baby, and building homes for animals. She also brought in several

other dolls, and with the suggestion of Mameha, made a play house for the dolls out of blocks.

Sceeter showed a continued interest in his laboratory play after watching the videotape. Each time he reengaged in the play it was played differently. The play ranged from first exploring the materials and pretending the laboratory was exploding (which is what he watched on videotape) to exploring different materials, creating poison for a doll and making a bomb. How the play was enacted depended on which props and play partners were present. For example, when new materials such as baking soda and cornstarch were introduced, Sceeter's play was more exploratory. When he played with Randy, the play took on a different tone, and Sceeter tried to poison Hannah's doll and made a bomb. Watching the videotape of himself in the laboratory gave him a new opportunity to talk about his experiments, and may have sustained his interest in experimenting.

However, the only increase in interest in symbolic play in general was when during the third week, he introduced a new type of play, detective. After the first day of this play, we had an interview/reflection session and spoke about it. It was not on the videotaped segment, but Sceeter replied that it was something that he liked to pretend to be. He continued to play detective for the next two days.

Interview/Reflection Sessions. During the interview/reflection sessions, the children were very interested in explaining their symbolic play to me, even to an unexpected degree. While watching the videos, the children began to engage in symbolic play. Interestingly, the enthusiasm toward watching the videotapes decreased over sessions, and was replaced by a preference in engaging in symbolic play with me. Throughout the second and third interview/reflection sessions, the children increased the amount of objects used around them to explain their play (puzzle boxes for ice cream flavors, microscopes, books, detective props). Hannah discussed more pretense situations about times when she was pretending with her friends, and possible symbolic substitutions of objects (play dough as food for baby doll). Sceeter was more excited to talk about a book on ice cream that was the basis for the ice cream play in the video, and the 'field notes' he had written on a paper towel at school as a detective than watching the videotapes. During the third session as I was asking Sceeter a question, he walked away and came

back wearing a vampire costume, and we played vampires. He had lost interest in the videotape.

I expected the children to give me short answers to my questions about their play, however they used materials in the environment to explain their symbolic play. During one interview/reflection session, Alice stayed in the room with Sceeter and me. At the time, Sceeter was pacing around the couch getting objects to explain being a “detective”. She asked if the moving around behavior was typical of Hannah too because when Sceeter’s mom and Sceeter watched the videotapes together, he sat and watched it. She added that she did not ask as many questions as I did during the session. I see this as more support that watching the videotapes and asking questions created the environment where the children increased their interest in continuing their symbolic play. They showed many incidences of continuing their symbolic play.

When I asked Hannah what was her favorite and least favorite role to enact, I expected her to simply reply to my question. Instead, she showed me that her favorite role was a mermaid by getting on the floor and moving around like a fish. When she responded that her least favorite role was being a tree, she stood with her arms outstretched very still for a few minutes.

Sceeter also showed an increase in interest by continuing on his laboratory play. When Sceeter watched himself playing in the laboratory episode where he announced the existence of “air particles” in the experiment, he elaborated on this by getting out his magnifying glass and showing me where in the room there were air particles. Later in this same play episode Sceeter and Kenny pretended to die. To help explain how they die, he gathered together pretend dollar bills. He said that Kenny was like a one dollar bill so he died one percent and Sceeter was like a five dollar bill so he died five percent.

To better understand Sceeter’s idea of what is a pretend role, I asked him if I could be a detective. He answered yes, but that I needed to follow the rules. He then proceeded to walk around the room finding objects that I needed to possess to be a detective.

N: What do you have to do to be a detective? I would like to be a detective.

S: Well, first of all you need a credit card (gets a toy credit card).

N: I have one in my wallet.

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S: Ok, first of all, you need to know the rules.
N: I have to know the rules, what are the rules?
S: Well, keep track and taking notes and staying with other detectives.
N: So you have to stay together?
S: Uh huh but first (comes back with a blue small license plate that says "Sceeter")
N: What is that, oh that says "Sceeter" on it.
S: License plate.
N: You need a license plate.
S: And for one (goes into other room and comes back with a camera film case) you need to know how to make jet fuel. So then in case you have to fly somewhere.
N: You I have to know how to make jet fuel, have a credit card, license plate and follow all the other detectives.
S: And one more thing (goes to other room and comes back with a half cut plastic bottle with string in it and a paper clip on it) always carry a spare jet engine.
N: Yeah just incase you have to fly somewhere.

The jet engine sparked his attention and he continued his explanation by showing me another jet engine. Needless to say, his mother does not pull strings when he flies so that fire can shoot out, as he described here.

S: I have another jet engine (goes and gets another plastic jet). See how it works. Turn this on and then press this and then when my mom comes back um when I'm flying in the air she pulls this and fire will come out from the back. Because she pours water on it when she does that because that will make it you know.

This final example is not one of continuation of symbolic play, however it illustrates how Hannah believed watching the videotapes would increase her interest in another activity. At the end of the first session Hannah suggested the videotape could give us ideas to make a project together. She then gathered materials for us to use.

N: Can we work on the project when we are done watching?
H: Well, it might remind us of things.
N: Working on the project might remind us of some things?
H: This tape might remind us of something that we want to do and we could get a good idea.
N: Oh so this tape might give us some good ideas.

Comparing the Increase in Interest of Symbolic Play in the Classroom and Interview Sessions

There was a difference in the increase of interest for symbolic play for each child in the classroom and during the interview/reflection sessions. Hannah appeared to have an increase in interest for specific play episodes in the classroom, and an increase in interest for engaging in symbolic play during the sessions. Sceeter did not show a large increase in interest in the classroom, but he did in the sessions.

To understand the difference in the two environments, it is important to look at what the level of interest was before the introduction of the documentation. At the beginning of videotaping and throughout the entire duration, Sceeter spent most of his time in the classroom engaged in symbolic play. Since he already had such a high interest in symbolic play, he may not have had the opportunity to show an increase in interest. Hannah spent a good amount of time engaged in symbolic play, but not to the extent as Sceeter.

Looking at the level of interest can also be applied to the interview/reflection sessions. When the sessions first began, the children were not accustomed to the procedure of the sessions. For Hannah, even watching a videotape of herself was still novel. Sceeter had more exposure to watching videotapes of himself, however as his mother stated, he was not watching as many videos at that time as in the past. Since the sessions were new to the children, they did not engage in symbolic play from the beginning. They played more during the second and third sessions.

The increase in play is similar to Hutt's conceptions of exploration and play (as cited in Rubin, Fein, & Vandenberg, 1983). Hutt said that when a child is first introduced to an object, the child explores it. During exploration, the child is asking himself, "What is this object and what can it do?" The child manipulates and examines the object to make sense of its properties. Once the child feels he has a sense of the object, he asks himself "What can I do with this object?" It is at this time that symbolic play is expected to begin. The child can then take the object and use it in an object substitution. Within the total amount of time a child interacts with an object, the child can move from exploration to play and vice versa.

When the children were first introduced to the videotapes, they were interested in what the videotapes were and what was the procedure of watching the videotapes. For example, Hannah picked out details about the surroundings of her play on the videotape (color of dress). After the first session, the children knew what to expect from the videotapes and the procedures of watching the videotapes, therefore they engaged in more symbolic play than during the first session.

Parallels can also be drawn between these sessions and the effects of peer familiarity on play. Research shows that the amount of play increases with an increase in peer familiarity (Matthews, 1977; Miller & Garvey, 1984; Rubin, Bukowski, & Parker, 1997). With each session, the children became more familiar with me. They knew I would ask them questions and even engage in play with them. Therefore, they were more inclined to engage in symbolic play as the sessions progressed.

Hutt's conceptions of exploration and play are noticable in Sceeter's play. Looking around Sceeter's house and listening to him talk, I noticed that Sceeter had a strong desire to find out "how things work". While building a space shuttle together with Legos, Sceeter referred back to a book on airplanes to show me how the space shuttle takes off. He also showed me a book about the Declaration of Independence that was the inspiration for his version called the Declaration of Reality. This declaration included his predictions that "jet fuel" will be used for almost anything in our world. Sceeter's desire to learn about different things may also be why he enjoys experimenting with his chemicals. Experimenting offers Sceeter the opportunity to mix materials and see how they interact. This interest was supported by his parents and in the classroom. His parents allow him to have a laboratory in their house and both parents and teachers offer materials to mix together.

Sceeter looked to outside information, like the books on the space shuttle and the Declaration of Independence, to learn more about each subject. This is Sceeter's exploration of an object. He wanted to know more about the objects. He then took what he learned and incorporated it into his symbolic play. For example, after reading about how the space shuttle takes off, he then returned to his Legos and made the appropriate parts of the airplane necessary to have the airplane take off. He looked up the Declaration of Independence and then wrote the Declaration of Reality. He moved back

and forth between exploration and play. This was also evident when he experimented with the chemicals at school. When the teacher introduced new materials (baking soda) he stopped the symbolic play and engaged in more exploration of the materials. When he made sense of the materials, he reengaged in symbolic play.

Extension

Although the literature on documentation speaks of reengagement, extension and a deeper understanding as three separate concepts, I have collapsed them together into one section due to the nature of the concepts. For there to be extension, there must be a form of reengagement, therefore I will combine any evidence of reengagement with extension. Also with extension comes a deeper understanding of the activity.

Extending play means the child engages in a richer version of the previous play, by either adding new events to the play sequence, adding or changing roles enacted by the children, or using new objects or previous objects in new substitutions. An example of an extension for the child who puts the doll to sleep would be for her to pretend the baby is crying, sing a song to the doll, and hold the doll to console it. Another good example of extension can be found in Snow, Shonkoff, Lee, and Levin's (1986) study of the difference in symbolic play of "hospital" theme of children before and after surgery. After surgery, children playing the role of "doctor" or "parent" elaborated their answers to questions asked by the researcher playing the "baby" role.

When I asked Bette about the children's reaction to documentation, she immediately responded that when the documentation is available, it can "help to move their play to the next level". From this response and the literature on documentation (Malaguzzi, 1998), I was expecting to find strong evidence of extension in the children's play. I anticipated seeing more role play, addition of events to a play episode, or higher levels of object substitution. I saw only a few incidences of extension.

Classroom. Hannah repeated one play episode that she had watched on videotape, however it was in another setting. Two weeks after watching herself feeding her bunny sand at the media table, Hannah fed the same bunny and stuffed bear pieces of play dough at the art table. She put the animals away after feeding them, and did not repeat it again. She also showed a preference for using the computer keyboard whenever possible.

Hannah showed an addition of role play the day after a interview/reflection session. Before watching the videotape segment of herself caring for her doll, the only role Hannah had enacted was that of the baby to Suzy. The day after watching the segment of herself caring for her doll, she took on the role of mother to her friends. On this day also, Hannah had forgotten the doll. As Greta reported, Hannah is capable of transferring her nurturing behavior to any object, doll or animal. After the interview/reflection session, she transferred this nurturing behavior from object to direct interaction with other children. Before her nurturing interactions were with dolls or animals. Also after watching this segment of videotape, she made a request for a play stroller from another room. She used this stroller to push her friend who was a baby, and then her friend pushed her in it. She also used a plastic fish to feed her friend.

While making play dough cookies, Hannah used an oven she had drawn on paper. Two weeks after watching the videotape segment of herself using the oven to bake the cookies, she again engaged in food preparation. This time she used a plastic square with rigid edges, intended to cut the pieces of play dough, for her oven. She went from a very low level of substitution, a picture of an oven that resembles an oven exactly, to a higher level of substitution, a square that had little resemblance to an oven.

Most of the expansion in her play was due to the introduction of either props or ideas in her immediate environment. In her first episode of ice cream play with sand, the teacher's request for "bug ice cream" opened a new avenue of play for Hannah. In both incidences of playing with play dough, an extension in play came from the addition of plastic table props.

Sceeter showed one incidence of repetition but not extension when he began to repeat the episode of the laboratory blowing up with Kenny, however the teacher interrupted them for discipline issues before they could go up into the loft to escape the explosion. Interestingly, the play of "babies" that was so popular did not reappear after Sceeter watched the videotape of himself playing "babies". Since this specific play was usually organized and initiated by Randy, I do not think watching the videotape made Sceeter not want to play it again. The play depended more on Randy's support.

I could not find any evidence of an extension in Sceeter's play from watching the videotapes. There was, however, a good example of extension that Sceeter did not see on

videotape or was not spoken about with me in the interview/reflection session. The first time Bobby and Sceeter were in the loft together, they pretended they were asleep and had to decorate their house. The second time they repeated this, there was the addition of a new play partner, Ben. Teachers report that Ben has a vivid imagination. With Ben, the children extended the play to then riding a pretend bus. Surprisingly, Sceeter and Ben did not frequently play together.

Interview/Reflection Sessions. Even though the children did not repeat their symbolic play exactly as seen on the videotape, they did extend on the play episodes that they watched. Hannah shows a good example of extending her symbolic play of “ice cream” seen in the videotape. I asked her what she was doing in the play episode on videotape, and to explain herself, Hannah pulled out puzzle boxes from the cabinet and pretended they were different ice cream flavors. She then repeated the events of the “ice cream” play on videotape, but this time she used higher levels of object substitution. In the videotape she used sand for ice cream, and funnels for cups and cones. During the interview session, she used puzzle boxes and paper.

H: And say this was the scupper (rolled up paper). And say this was the cup you wanted. And you ordered some ice cream and we said we have all different kinds. You picked which one, we had rocky road, chocolate chip spicy kind, and we had chocolate, and triple chocolate. (she takes out a puzzle box for each flavor)

N: Now what do I do?

H: Well, you order what ice cream you want. And whatever one we have you can have it.

N: Well I would like the chocolate one please.

H: chocolate triple or chocolate plain?

N: Chocolate plain.

H: chocolate plain (pretends to scoop up ice cream. She makes a noise for the scooping and then says, I mean, and then makes another noise) (walks over to me). And here's your ice cream.

During the scene on videotape of Hannah feeding her stuffed bunny, I asked her how she knew when her bunny was hungry. She took the same bunny that was next to her on the couch, and demonstrated her response by speaking to the bunny, making it move its head and using nonsense language in the bunny's voice.

The Contribution of Videotaped Documentation

N: How do you know that the bunny likes to eat berries on her carrots?

H: She tells me.

N: She does? How does she tell you?

H: (takes bunny and speaks to it) You want berries on your carrots? (makes nonsense language for bunny while shaking bunnies head no) See she says (nonsense noise) for no and (nonsense noise) for yes. For real, do you like berries on her carrots (makes her say yes in nonsense).

Both children spoke of events that did not take place during the play episode on the videotape. I interpreted this as another form of extension. By talking about the play, they were recreating it and reexperiencing it to a degree, therefore any additions to that recreation of the play was considered an extension.

While watching the scene where she holds her doll and Suzy puts a play dough structure in front of the doll, Hannah said that Suzy was singing a song to the doll. Suzy did not sing the song, but Hannah sang it to me in another voice as if being Suzy.

H: And then I was holding the baby and Suzy was holding it up (a play dough teddy bear) and said 'I'm little teddy bear how do you like me, I'm little teddy bear' (C sang it like a song in Suzy's voice) just like a puppet.

I asked Hannah to explain what the function of the buttons on the paper oven she drew and used during making play dough cookies. While making the play dough cookies in the classroom, she did in fact push the buttons of the oven, however she did not verbalize at that time what was the function of the buttons. There is a chance she thought of these functions while actually playing, but from the detailed account of what each buttons does, I doubt she had spent the time in the classroom to decide the functions.

N: What do the buttons do? (Scene of video is paused and H walks to it.)

H: Well, they just change it back and forth. Well see, there are these little buttons we push, and see the biggest one is right there (showing the button on the right) see that's the one we push to start and the littlest one, that's for stopping (on the left). And this one if we want it hot and this one if we want it cold and this one if we want it medium.

This following example of Hannah describing how her teacher knew which ice cream flavors were available to order in the media table supports two concepts. First it

shows an extension in play because while actually playing this “ice cream” game, Hannah did not speak of buckets and the labels on the buckets. Second, it shows her need for a pivot when describing object substitution discussed in the previous research question.

N: Oh. She (the teacher) knows that there are bugs on there because she asked for bug ice cream.

H: Yeah because she could read the sign in front of it that would say what kind it was cause when I go to Baskin Robbins, they have the kind that says the kind and she knows it’s bug because she’s looking at the

N: the label (interrupting)?

H: she’s looking at the label.

N: But is there a label there?

H: Yes

N: Where.

H: Ha, (walks to television) I need to see the ice cream can you rewind it to see the ice cream. Ok now stop. They can see because the label is right back there (points to the upper side of the sand box).

N: So she knew that you had bug ice cream.

H: Yeah. And she picked that kind and she also picked Chunky Monkey so we gave her that.

As Sceeter watched the scene of him pretending that the lab under the loft area was exploding he talked about steam. The steam actually neither existed nor was mentioned in his play in the classroom. At the end of his description, he explained how a fire began at the sand box. There was no talk of fires during the play videotaped in the classroom.

S: To get in the loft you have to stay in the laboratory because the loft is in the lab but there is a solid floor in the loft that when everything comes up to explode the loft it, when it hits it it will come through but on the other side all that comes through is the steam.

N: Can the steam hurt you?

S: Well usually it comes through right where that experiment was, where you are looking, so you are not supposed to stay where most of the experiments are.

S: See that steam (scene is paused and he points to the corner of the loft), put it back on I can show you better (the fuzz from when the screen was on pause was too much to see the picture). The steam right there will evaporate right into the corner see that right there, sucking up in the loft, so but then you don’t see that up into the loft because this is hard protection. So next time you are there bang on the loft, your hand will really hurt because it is protecting the loft. Actually (shows by banging on something else)

(later in the conversation)

N: So now it's safe to come down. Oh. What about Hannah and Emily (in tape they are playing at the sink on the other side not pretending the same thing)

S: Well they are down there because the part is when they are down there they're aren't making something bad like us so usually the fire starts over on the sand table.

Later in the play episode just described, Kenny pretended to die. During the play, Sceeter pulled Kenny across the floor, but never checked his heart beat as he described in this conversation during the session.

S: Yes but for a second I dragged him to see if he was ok, on the floor, but he didn't really move so I checked his heart but it was beating so I just left him alone.

During the final interview/reflection session with Hannah, she demonstrated how she used the documentation and the interview/reflection sessions as a tool to extend her of role play. In the second session I asked Hannah if Sceeter could be the mother in their play, and she quickly laughed in disapproval. At the end of the third session she brought up without my prompting that Sceeter had asked to be the mother in their play in the classroom, and that she now thought he could take the role of the mother.

H: ...do you remember that question one time you said "can Sceeter be a mom?" and Sceeter said "can I be a mom" in class one time. (laughs like she's amazed)

N: Oh, and what happened?

H: And one time he wanted to be a sister and one time he wanted to be the baby girl baby.

N: And what did you do?

H: Well we did do anything (like I should know that).

N: Was he the mom, did he pretend to be the mom?

H: Yes, and the baby and the sister.

N: That's so interesting.

H: Baby girl and a girl baby and a girl sister and the mom.

N: So he could be all those things (said like a realization).

H: Yeah if he wanted to, and Suzy could be the brother or the dad or the baby boy.

N: So she could be also. Neat.

Comparing Extension in the Classroom with the Interview/reflection Sessions

The children showed different amounts of extension of their play in the classroom than in the interview/reflection sessions. At first I assumed the children did not extend their play in the classroom from the play they watched on the videotapes because there

were not the same props available in the classroom as seen in the videotapes after the interview/reflections sessions. However, after finding an unexpected large amount of extension during the interview/reflection sessions, I looked deeper at what was going on during the interview/reflection sessions that was not present in the classroom.

First, the lack of extension for Sceeter in the classroom may be due to the environment of the classroom. Sceeter may have reached the highest level of symbolic play possible for him in that classroom environment. The combination of low support from the environment and teachers for symbolic play, and the fact that his play was influenced by younger play partners may have caused Sceeter to be stuck in a level of play. Watching the videotapes may have given him the chance to extend his play while watching the videotapes, however it was not enough for him to extend his play in the classroom. Sceeter may need more immediate support in his play environment to extend his play, including a larger variety of props, more advanced players, and adult participation. During the interview/reflection sessions, Sceeter had an adult to incorporate into his play.

Second, I looked at the dynamics of documentation. What is documentation, really? Documentation itself is only a physical representation of the child's activity. The teachers, Mameha (M) and Sayuri (S), explained that documentation is not meaningful without the support and encouragement of the teacher.

M: I think that the teacher's initiation and encouragement is needed to do this (enrich an activity through documentation). What I found is children do not pay attention to the panel that much, but the teachers need to introduce it.

S: They just look at it and if we don't say something, they just leave. They just look at the pictures and that's it.

During the documentation process, the teacher and child spend time together so that the teacher can ask the child questions and have a dialogue about the activity. These questions help in thinking beyond the present state, therefore questions are tools for the teacher to use with the child. The child, with the interaction of the teacher, may then find new interests or understanding of the activity. It becomes apparent, then, that the adult interaction and the questioning are at the heart of documentation.

With this understanding on documentation, I rethought why the children extended their play more in the interview/reflection sessions than in the classroom. During the interview/reflection sessions, I had one-on-one time to spend with the children, asking questions, becoming a player with the children, and even making suggestions for other possible play experiences. In the classroom, the children rarely had adults in their play. As stated before, I only observed a few times that the lead teacher engaged in symbolic play with the children. On the other hand, Mameha offered an example of when she became an injured person in the fire fighter play to extend the play.

My experience with Hannah and Sceeter also supports the importance of the adult in children's symbolic play. The week spent prior to videotaping in the classroom, I was able to become a player in the children's symbolic play. By wearing props, speaking in within frame communication (Giffin, 1984), suggesting new object substitutions, I was able to extend their symbolic play. I then became a tool for the children in their play. Throughout the four weeks of videotaping, I observed traces of some of the extensions the children and I created during that week. For example, the children continued to wear the plungers as masks during fire play, use the computer keyboard to track tornadoes or fires, and Sceeter said during an interview that water sprayed out of the "jet packs" to put out fires.

Combining the above information about play and documentation makes me question if any extension during the interview/sessions was more influenced by the documentation or me as the adult in the children's play. As seen in the week playing with the children, I was able to extend their play by direct interaction with them. Could I have extended their play during the interview/reflection sessions even without the documentation? This raises questions to the importance of documentation when considering the time required of the teacher to document. As described earlier, the process of documentation may take time away from direct interaction with the children. Since this study is based on understanding the children's perspective of their play, I raise the question of would a child rather a teacher document their play or actually play with them?

Documentation as a Methodology for Studying Play

Documentation in the form of videotaping provided an effective way to discuss symbolic play with the children. It also triggered their desire to engage in symbolic play while watching the videotapes. The interview/reflection sessions provided contextually-relevant understanding of the children's symbolic play (Fantuzzo et. al., 1998).

The parents of the children also benefited from watching the videotapes. The videotapes helped keep the parents informed of what the children were doing in school. Both mothers commented on how they enjoyed watching the videotapes because they were able to actually see how their children acted around other children. Alice remarked that she would never have known that Sceeter had enacted the script from the ice cream book they read together if she had not seen the videotape. The videotapes of play may also help in trying to adapt the Reggio Emilia approach from the Italian culture to the American culture. Many American parents do not have or do not take the time to read the display panels. Parents may be more receptive to watching the tape with their children in the own home and at their own convenience.

Using videotapes instead of written documentation may be more beneficial to the children and teachers. Videotaping frees the teacher from having to stop interaction with the children to write down the events of the play. The teacher can continue to be a player with the children and help extend their play.

Recommendations for Documentation as a Methodology to Studying Play

I have a few recommendations for future use of videotaping for studying symbolic play. The first recommendation depends on the intent of the study. If the intent of the videotapes is to spark conversations about play, I recommend having the interview/reflection sessions at a location where the child feels most comfortable, like their home. If the intent of the videotapes is aide in extending the child's play, having the interview/reflection session in the classroom would provide the children the chance to immediately reengage in the symbolic play. Second, since play partners influence play, watching the videotapes with all the children in the play episode may help influence all of the play partners. That way, they may all have an increase in interest in the activity. Finally, conducting the sessions in an environment that does not have the same props as seen in the videotape may force the child to use higher levels of object substitution during

play. This was seen when Hannah used the puzzle boxes to represent flavors of ice cream.

Recommendations for Using Documentation

Throughout this study, I came upon new observations and questions in regards to the procedure of documentation. The following recommendations are useful for educators and researchers to remember when using documentation with children.

From the different reactions of the child in the pilot study, Janet, Hannah and Sceeter, I found that is important to remember individual differences in children when using documentation. Janet's mother explained that Janet shies away from situations where someone asks her too many questions. Therefore she may not be as receptive to documentation as Hannah or Sceeter who appeared to enjoy answering questions. How does documentation take into account children's individual differences? Second, the literature on documentation does not address the question of how much documentation children can tolerate. As I saw with the videotapes, the children's interest in watching the videotapes declined. As explained before, this may be due to their interest in playing over watching the tapes, but it may also be due to the large amount of documentation the children were exposed to within a short amount of time. Can children get to a saturation point where documentation is no longer effective? Third, adults must take into consideration the stage of the child before the process of documentation begins. As seen with Sceeter, his interest in symbolic play may not have increased because he was already extremely interested in play. Fourth, how does the timing of when the documentation is introduced to the child relate to the child's reaction? Perhaps the children extended their play more during the interview/reflection sessions because the documentation was more salient to them than the days that followed in the classroom.

Conclusions

Documentation, including watching videotapes with children of their play, provided a rich opportunity to learn about children's understanding of their symbolic play. I found it was easier for the children to answer questions about the content of their play, what they were doing, than any emotions related to the play, how they felt about the play. The children said they were pretending while enacting relational and character roles (babies and nurse) (Garvey, 1977), but not functional roles (making cookies).

Realistic props also did not require pretense (realistic doll). The children described the existence of rules for pretense that were different for players and non-players.

Throughout the sessions, the children showed a preference for acting imaginatively rather than realistically. Videotaped documentation is a promising methodology for understanding play from the child's perspective.

Videotaped documentation contributed differently to the children's play than anticipated. There was more increase in interest, reengagement and extension during the interview/reflection sessions where there was direct adult interaction in play than in the classroom where there was not direct adult interaction in play. This raises the issue that documentation may not be as effective a tool in extending symbolic play as an adult becoming a player in the play. With suggestions for play and modeling of different substitutions, an adult can extend a child's play beyond the child's present state.

Documentation, however, has its place in early childhood education programs. It keeps parents informed of the process of children's activities and creates discussion amongst teachers for future planning (Rinaldi, 1998). Since other form of documentation, including taking notes of children's activities, require the teacher to take time away from interacting with children, videotaping becomes a wonderful method to allow more interaction between teacher and children while still documenting children's activities.

Appendix A

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Overview of Literature on Symbolic Play

Symbolic play is the acting “as if” a behavior or object were something else (Bretherton, 1989), while sociodramatic play is “a state of engagement in which the successive, nonliteral behaviours of one partner are contingent on the nonliteral behaviours of the other partner” (Garvey, 1974, p. 170). A sociodramatic play episode involves play partners negotiating the sequence of events, characters portrayed and objects used to reach a common goal of enacting a pretend scenario. The following review of literature describes how the sociodramatic play of young children develops. Included in this review are descriptions of research on the themes, roles, props and language used while enacting a sociodramatic play episode. This study will use the existing research as a basis for answering the research questions.

Piaget’s Theory of Symbolic Play

Piaget (1962) categorized the play of young children into three types: practice games, symbolic games, and games with rules. Practice games are also described as sensory-motor play that involves the child repeating an action for the pleasure of repeating the action. In the latter stages of sensory-motor play (stage IV & V) the child ritualizes a series of behaviors associated with an event. For example, the child has an exact routine of what to do before going to bed. Piaget suggested that this ritualization will later bring about symbolization. In the last stage of sensory-motor play (stage VI), the child performs the same ritualized actions, however not at the time or in the same context which the child usually performs the behaviors. For example, Piaget explained that upon seeing her pillow, his child closed her eyes, sucked her thumb and pretended to sleep, even though it was not bedtime and she was not tired (observation 64). Piaget did not yet call this symbolism because the child was using the original object of the event, the pillow. This, instead, was called symbolic schema. It was the beginnings of symbolism.

Symbolic games do not begin until the child pretends with inappropriate object, like pretending to sleep on a sweater. Within symbolic games, Piaget identifies three stages that reflect the child is increasing ability to use symbolization. The child begins by pretending her own actions onto herself (pretending to feed herself with a shell), pretending her action on someone else (feeding her mother with a shell), role taking (identifying with another person), and collective symbolism. Collective symbolism is when a child can take on complimentary roles to pretend a scene. Piaget did not describe at this stage how children are also able to share their symbolism. It is from this point that this paper will attempt to describe the elements of joint symbolism.

Themes used in Symbolic Play

Definition

A theme is the general topic of the symbolic play. The theme of the play is defined by the events of the play, including children's actions and what they announce the play to be. For example the theme of two children pretending to cook may be "meal preparation". Within the theme of the play is a script. A script is the action plan for the theme (Garvey, 1977).

There are two theories that explain scripts, Script theory and Emotive theory. Script theory is the thought that children's intentions during pretend play are to imitate events they have experienced. Emotive theory claims that during pretend play, children focus more on enacting events that allow them to express emotions. The following comparison of Script and Emotive theory will aid in explaining how children chose a theme, which themes they chose, and how development affects themes.

Uses of Scripts

Nelson and Gruendel (1979) defined four uses of the script in sociodramatic play. First, scripts predict the sequence of routines. The child knows that the fire truck must get to the fire before putting it out. Second, with a script, a child can anticipate who will act and how. The child will know that the fireman will be the one to put out the fire. Third, the child can recognize alternative slot fillers. For example in the script of putting out a fire, the child may decide the fire is in a park. Finally, while adhering to a script, a child operates as an expert to the scene. Efficient scripts remain general enough so that

the children may add any necessary information that makes the play episode appealing to the children, but specific enough that the children still know what to expect of the play.

Script Theory. Script theory (Shank & Abelson, 1977) evolved from research on how adults use scripts and ways to program this information through artificial intelligence. Their findings allow for fundamental understanding of both adult and children's scripts. First, "a script is a structure that describes appropriate sequences of events in a particular context" (p. 41). Therefore when an actor uses a script, she is referring to a connected chain of events. This chain of events can make up larger units. For example, ordering food, eating, then paying is a chain of events that make up a larger restaurant script. Shank and Abelson (1977) use this chain of events to describe how to plan and use scripts. When planning out a script, the actor must make a sketch of the sequence of events while leaving out the smaller details that occur during a script. This process refers to Nelson and Gruendel's (1979) explanation of slot fillers and a child deciding to buy noodles in the shopping script. Then when the actor uses the script, she must be able to return to the omitted details and incorporate them properly into the script. These details are called script applicers. This means that when a child plans a shopping script, she thinks 'store, put food in cart, give money, go home', but when acting the script, she thinks 'drive to store, choose noodles and milk, put food in cart, decide to buy one more item, pay two dollars, drive home'.

This description of scripts describes one person playing out a script. Shank and Abelson (1977) explain that while playing out a script, a person comes into contact with other people. This may create a threat to the script if all participants do not act properly. They identified two threats to scripts that either causes it to change or terminate; interferences and distractions. There are two kinds of interferences. An obstacle prohibits the next action from happening. For example in the shopping script, when the actor arrives, there are no carts. An attempt to rectify this is called a prescription. The actor may decide to carry a basket instead. The other type of interference is an error which is an unexpected or inappropriate action. For instance, in the shopping script, when the actor goes to pay for the food, the cashier will not allow the actor to buy anything. The actor tries to correct this by using loops. Loops are when the actor repeats the action until it is correct.

The second threat to scripts, distractions, are unexpected actions that create new temporary scripts. If when playing out a shopping script the actor encounters a friend, then they will play out a greeting script. The shopping script can be played out afterward. Adults deal with interferences and distractions constantly in daily activities, but it may not be as easy for a child during sociodramatic play. Interferences and distractions probably constitute the majority of reasons why children end a play episode. They do not have the negotiation skills, like language and perspective taking, necessary to handle interferences and distractions.

Emotive Theory. Script theory makes pretend play seem almost mechanical. A child plays out exactly what she has experienced in her life in the same sequence. She is able to add some personally meaningful details to the script, but those details still need to be in context to the script.

. Fein (1986, 1987, 1989, 1991) believes that Script theory (Shank & Abelson, 1977) can only describe a portion of what actually occurs during pretend play. What happens when children enact scripts that they have never experienced, or add details to the script that seem outrageous? A girl prepares a meal by placing the pots on the stove and plates on the table, but instead of cooking food, she puts a doll in the pot (Fein, 1991). This child has never seen someone cook a baby, so why does she make this choice? Fein's Emotive theory suggests that children know that pretend play is not real, therefore they are allowed to enact events that either have occurred but become distorted or are simply imagined. Children enact these events because there is a strong affective power to them. Consequently, in play the child is able to play with the emotion of the event without actually feeling the emotion directly. The child can then adjust the amount of stimulation of the emotion by either playing the event longer and in more detail or ending the play. Fein defined the play of non-experienced events as denotative license. Children have denotative license during pretend play because they are allowed to enact any event, imagined or real.

Fein claims that the events played out during emotionally driven play, like cooking a baby, are not represented by children the same way as more realistic events, like shopping. Children make emotive representations that are connections between events and the emotions attached to the event. These events may have either actually

occurred, been imagined, been seen on television or heard from a book. The child is more focused on playing out the emotion of the event than on the actual event. Therefore the details of the play episode (which doll is used, what kind of monster is being chased) are not as important as which emotion is portrayed or experienced.

Conditions

Script theory. Nelson and Gruendel (1979) use Shank and Abelson's (1977) concept that there must be a common knowledge of a sequence of events to properly enact a script. They analyzed preschool children's sociodramatic play in a natural setting for the amount of egocentric speech in relation to the shared knowledge of the script. Egocentric speech is characterized by non-reciprocal statements that do not need or allow for another person's response. The authors predicted that when there was a shared knowledge base of a topic and understanding of conversation skills, children would engage in more dialogue with one another and less collective monologue (Piaget as cited in Nelson & Gruendel, 1979). The authors describe three play episodes where the children had a shared knowledge (telephone conversation, food, and school day) and then a fourth episode without a shared knowledge (driving to Sherrah's). As predicted, the children successfully engaged in dialogue for the first three episodes, with varying degrees, but were not able to engage in dialogue in the last episode. One reason was because the children did not have a shared script for "driving to Sherrah's". The children could share the knowledge of transportation (driving there), but not of the sequence of events. The authors conclude that if a script is not shared among children, then the children will probably act out their own scripts without dialogue.

Corasaro (1983) built on the work of Nelson and Gruendel (1979) by reviewing their work through the Cicourel's interactive model (1978). Cicourel's model states that players use abductive reasoning to select which script to use. This means the player states then reflects on the scripts of choice, followed by any modifications necessary. Corasaro used this model to ensure the question of how children know which script is appropriate to enact in a given situation. He analyzed three play episodes for their script appropriateness. He stated that before engaging in a script, children take note of the local features including physical environmental cues, characteristics of participants, and the nature of ongoing interactions. The children then make links from the immediate

surroundings to past experiences. For example a child may walk into a housekeeping area of the classroom, and see another child who repeatedly plays in that area. The first child may then remember that he has played “dinner” with this other child before, and will initiate play with the child.

Corasaro concluded that ecological factors influenced the choice in script. In one example, two children participated in a family script of husband and wife in an area of the classroom that was shaped as a two-level apartment. When the children heard two other children pretending to be cats, the first two children incorporated the cats into their play. In another example, Corasaro shows how trying to fill the script with very personal information that is not shared by other players will effect the play. Here girls pretended to watch television. One girl consistently tried to incorporate her brother by saying, ‘let’s watch J on TV’. This disrupted the play because the other girls did not share the connection of watching a sibling on television.

The studies of Nelson and Gruendel (1979) and Corasaro (1983) verify the need for shared context to ensure dialogue. There is still the question, however, of how children establish the shared context. Nelson and Seidman (1984) claim that children establish and maintain a context with shared fantasy through two means. First the children can talk about the “here-and-now”. This usually occurs when children are engaged in play that revolves around objects, like construction or using clay. Most of the conversation involves requests for materials, so the discourse appears more egocentric, non-reciprocal. The second way to establish a shared context is when both children bring their own representations of experiences to the play. Here the representations must match so that they can coordinate pretense play around the representations. The authors believe that the representations may come from fictional characters, but usually are grounded in the children’s own experiences. The authors abstracted the presence of object, shared topic and script knowledge to be key in sustaining a play episode. To test this, they analyzed the length and content of discourse of four-year-old children in three different settings (housekeeping with play dough and cooking props, sandbox with buckets, and housekeeping with two telephones).

Nelson and Seidman (1984) separated the different types of discourse (conversations) into either scripted or non-scripted. A scripted discourse incorporates an invitation to

play a certain theme, 'let's make cookies', while a non-scripted discourse did not have a play theme. These authors' prediction that there would be longer conversation during scripted episodes was confirmed. They explained that to maintain cohesion within a scripted play episode, the children must make either implicit or explicit references to their own or partner's prior announcements and to the theme of the script. Many of the themes children used were related to the props available. For example, children played 'cooking' in the housekeeping center and making birthday cake in the sandbox.

As recently stated, shared context and experience are key in the establishment and development of a script. Snow, Shonkoff, Lee, and Levin (1986) tested this idea to see if exposure to an event would effect the script and roles pertaining to the event. This study examined the "hospital play" of a sample of four to nine year old children before they entered the hospital for elective surgery and after their stay at the hospital. During the target play episode, the examiner took the role of "child" in a miniature toy hospital setting, and the child took the role of "doctor", "nurse", "mother" or "father". After their surgery, children were able to elaborate more on the script of hospital by responding in greater length to fictional questions asked by the 'child'. For example, the pretend "child" would ask the "doctor" if the shot would hurt. Before the surgery children responded with more yes/no answers, while after surgery they had more elaborate explanations. Their findings lead the researchers to question if the actual exposure to the hospital increased the children's expansion on script or if the exposure made the children more interested in the theme of hospitals.

Recently, Short-Meyerson and Abbeduto (1997) continued research on scripts and the importance of a shared knowledge base. In this study children with a knowledge base about a script (taking an airplane trip, going to the dentist) were matched with either other children with knowledge of the script or children without knowledge of the script. The play of the dyads was analyzed for communicative effectiveness, ranging from number of turns to proportion of requests for clarification. They found that matching dyads for script knowledge promoted topic maintenance and decreased the amount of clarification requests by the children. The mismatched dyads spent more time establishing mutual knowledge indicating these children were making attempts to either create or remain in a script. The authors concluded that when examining children's use of scripts, it is

important to not only take into account shared knowledge between children but also individual children's social-cognitive skills. Social-cognitive skills are the ability to consider another person's thought or knowledge. Good social-cognitive skills will help sustain conversations amongst children.

Emotive Theory. It appears that if children engage in emotive representations during play, then it would be difficult to find a shared knowledge base that was so critical to sociodramatic play in the script literature (Nelson & Gruendle, 1979; Coraso, 1983). Since emotions are very personal then representations of emotions should also be very personal. Fein confronts this issue by explaining that during emotive representational play with another player, children are more tolerant of personal details included by the other player (like cooking a baby) to allow for the emotion of the play to appear. Children can recognize the emotions the other child is using in play.

Fein believes that during play, children are thinking out loud and construct the play as they move through it. This allows for any regulation of emotions. Interestingly, Fein found the child did not always provide an outcome to the event being played. For example, the children may pretend to fend off a monster, but the monster never actually dies. This allows the children to reenact a scene to work through the emotion again and again or add a new emotion. Fein found that, indeed, children did repeat episodes of play with different expansions, depending on the emotion they wanted to represent. Garvey (1982) also found repetition in play. For example, in a relational role play of husband and wife, the wife repeatedly announced the appearance of a fire and the husband repeatedly put out the fire.

Types of Themes

Script Theory. Research documents well that children need a shared knowledge base to engage in successful scripts. Since scripts stem from themes, it is important to know which themes children play. Most research confirms that the kinds of themes used by children are developmentally determined (Garvey & Kramer, 1989; Rubin, Fein, & Vandenberg, 1983; Schwartz, 1991). Younger children, around three years of age, play out the scripts for domestic or family themes, including care of baby and preparing meals (Bretherton, 1989; Stockinger Forys and McCune-Nicolich, 1984). Older children

expand their scripts to include more occupational or fantasy themes, including doctor or slaying monsters.

Emotive Theory. Fein (1989) found through extended observations of free play that children played out five different types of themes reflecting different emotions: connectedness, physical well-being, empowerment, social regulation, and respect for property. Within each theme there is a positive and negative pole referring to the kind of emotion portrayed. “Connectedness” includes emotions referring to interpersonal relationships. The positive pole includes attachment, caregiving, friendship, or joint involvement in a common task. The negative pole includes rejection, isolation and separation. This includes episodes where children pretended to not invite another child to a party. The “physical well-being” themes is when a conditions affects the body’s well-being. Positive episodes represent eating, sleeping, gaining shelter or recovery from illness. Threats to the body’s well-being were negative episodes, including attacks from animals. “Empowerment” themes were competence and mastery (positive pole), and helplessness, dependency or failure (negative pole). An example of negative empowerment is when a child was locked in jail and could not feed herself. “Social regulation” themes include the expressions of social expectations, rules, or moral values. On the positive side are obedience to adults and affirmations about social rules. The negative expressions are violations to rules like stealing. “Respect for property” themes revolve around concerns for protecting, constructing or destroying materials. The positive episodes include putting out a fire or fixing a broken toy, while the negative episodes include plane crashes.

Development

Script Theory. Stockinger Forsys and McCune-Nicolich (1984) used the analogy of background and foreground to help understand the development of scripts. Scripts, created by a shared context, create a background for the children to extend upon through transformations. When the script is the background, the roles the children play and objects they use move to the foreground. Scripts, however, can only be in the background if there is a shared understanding of the script. If not, then the children focus much of their time in establishing the context. Younger children do not have the cognitive maturity for extended negotiation of scripts, so they rely on more familiar

scripts. The script of 'baby' is familiar to many children, so it does not need much negotiation. As children develop and have more experience with play and the environment, they are able to put common scripts in the background and explore more fictional scripts in the foreground. As discussed later, older children's communication also improves to allow for more negotiation.

Emotive Theory. Fein (1989) suggests that a child has two symbol systems at work simultaneously when a child encounters an event. The first symbol system is concerned with the intellectual aspects of the event, while the second system is concerned with emotional aspects of the event. The first symbol system results in literal meaning and the second results in enriched meaning. For example, when a child sees a cup, the first symbol system will register – object, round, while the second symbol system will register – thirsty, desire to drink.

Fein claims that children begin associating emotional meanings to objects or events at the same time that pretense begins. The development of the emotional meanings will depend on the emotions felt by the child. The emotions of younger children, two years old, may revolve around more physical emotions (sleeping or eating) than older children who use a wider variety of emotions (empowerment, social regulation).

Conclusion

A combination of understanding Script theories (Shank & Abelson, 1977) and Emotive theory (Fein, 1989, 1991) gives a good basis for understanding what and how children enact play episodes. First, it becomes apparent that children engage in two different types of sociodramatic play: representations of real life experiences and emotive representations. Second children make tentative plans for the play episode in first general terms and then add details while playing. In the real life experiences, they use a general script to guide the play, like the sequence of events in shopping. They then may add which food to buy. In emotive representations, they pick which emotion they want to portray, like separation. They then decide how to enact it, like having the baby stay with the babysitter. When comparing which themes children use, Fein's categories appear to encompass those claimed by Script theory.

Roles

Definition

During the enactment of a theme, children engage in role play. Roles are defined as a “behavior in which the child simulates the identity or characteristics of another person” (Fein, 1981 p.1101). In sociodramatic play, children choose roles for themselves and also roles for their play partners. For there to be sociodramatic play, the roles must be coordinated around a common theme (Garvey, 1982).

Types

Garvey’s (1977) identified four types of role-play: functional, relational, stereotype, and fictional. “Functional”, the first type, is determined by the script. The player performs the given function like serving food or driving a car. The second type is the “relational” role representing members of a family, a friend or a pet. Garvey labeled the third type, “stereotype” because it is highly predictable and based on an occupation (cowboy or policeman). Roles taken from a story or television are labeled “fictional”. The third and fourth roles are both character roles. Garvey also noted an additional role that the children did not enact, but rather talked about. She called this the “absent” role (imaginary person on the phone).

Development

Role play begins with the interaction between caregiver and young child (Garvey, 1982). Adults encourage children to take on adult roles accepted by the culture. Through this interaction, children create a repertoire of roles that they can then play out with a peer. Miller and Garvey (1984) claim that mother’s interactions with their child affect the child’s pretend play. They found that during pretense play with dolls mothers provide instruction and models for appropriate ways to care for a baby (doll). They also found that mothers interacted differently with their children depending on the age of the child. Mothers of the two-year-old children gave direct instructions of care and explained the use of props relating to the play. For example, they identified a bottle and told the child what to do with it. The mothers of the two-and-a-half year olds gave fewer

instructions and spent more time teaching additional scripts like preparing meals. These interactions with mother provided their children repertoires of playing 'baby' to share with other children.

From this early point in role play development, children then move on to incorporate other children into their play. Through the observations over a five-month period of three dyads of children two years of age, Garvey (1982) was able to break down the development of social role play into three phases.

In phase one, both children use functional characters, like server or driver. The children may either be playing out different themes (making dinner and driving), or taking turns in a similar theme (one child watching the other drive a car and then pretending to drive the car). In phase two, the children use relational roles (parents, siblings, friends) in two ways. Either one child engages in the play and the other watches, or both children are involved, but they do not identify themselves as the role character. For example, two girls took care of their babies, but they did not say they were the mothers. In phase three, children use reciprocal relational, which is when children are joined in sociodramatic play. Garvey adds, that to accomplish this phase, the children must be able to recognize the other child's pretend plan in order to follow it.

She noted that communication is the basis for successful development. Children must be able to announce a beginning or transformation of a role so that the other player may interpret it. Conversely, the other child must interpret the announcement and react accordingly. The phases involve the types of roles previous defined by Garvey (1977).

The production of roles during phase three has a few rules. As mentioned earlier, for sociodramatic play to exist, the children must jointly play out a scenario. Garvey (1982) defined this as the 'I be/you be' rule. Here the children identify their own roles and that of the other person in relation to the first role. For example in the functional roles, there must be a diner for the server, and in the relational role, there must be a mommy for the baby. Children often use a doll as the complement of their role, but for sociodramatic play, the children must then assume compatible roles acting on the doll. For example, two children pretend to both be mothers to a doll.

Stockinger Forsys and McCune-Nicolich (1984) used Garvey's (1977) types of roles (functional, relational, stereotype and fictional) to further explore the dynamics of

sociodramatic play, especially the social role-structure. They defined Social role structure as the “simultaneous consideration of the children’s pretend roles and the forms of realistic social interaction taking place while one or both members are pretending” (p.178). They observed the play of three unacquainted dyads aged three for two consecutive days. The social role structure was first assessed by categorizing the role play using one of Garvey’s types (functional, relational...). The social role structure was then determined by comparing the specific content of the roles of the two children and their social interaction. The following is a description of the results.

They identified two broad categories, Solo and Interaction, with subcategories for each. Solo Role Play occurred when one child enacted a pretend role. Within Solo Role Play are three subcategories: Solo Alone, Solo with Audience, and Solo with Advisor. Solo Alone is when one child is enacting and the other is not aware of the first child’s pretense. Two or more children can be in Solo Alone at once. Solo with Audience is when one child enacts a role while another child watches. When one child is in role play and the other child asks questions or gives suggestions, Solo with Advisor occurs. The last two categories appear to be similar to Garvey’s (1982) phase two of pretend play. Interactive Role Play was described as two children enacting a role both involved in pretense interaction. This had two subcategories. Shared Role Play happens when both children adopt the same specific role. For example, two children preparing a meal next to each other. In Differentiated Role Play, the children play the complement of the other role. For example, one child plays the husband and the other plays the wife.

There were two trends that the children followed. First, two of the three dyads decreased the amount of Solo Role Play from one day to the next. This supports literature that children engage in more social play with familiarity of the other play partner (Rubin, Bukowski, & Parker 1997; Rubin, Fein, Vanderberg, 1983). Second, there was a low frequency of Differentiated Role Play. Shared Role Play was longer in length and included more interactions than Differentiated Role Play. The authors concluded that due to the age of the children and the higher amount of Shared Role Play, Shared Role Play is an early form of social pretending. The roles portrayed correlated with Garvey’s (1977) types of roles. Most roles were relational (mothers, husband/wife). The few fantasy roles enacted fell into the Solo Role Play category. This means that the

fantasy roles were acted out individually with no interaction amongst the children. This may show that children at the age of three are not yet able to negotiate a compliment for a fantasy role. This supports the claims of script theory literature that younger children do not play scripts of a fantasy theme because they do not have much experience with the topic. The few Differentiated Role Plays were mostly functional, driver and passenger. Also, similar to Garvey's (1982) phase two, the children often did not claim a name to a role. In one dyad, the two girls took care of a baby, but did not say they were the 'mommies'. This research supports the evidence of a developmental difference in children's role play.

After the age of three, the complexity of the roles increases (Bretherton, 1989). While two year olds engage in mostly functional and relational roles (Garvey, 1982; Stockinger Forsys & McCune-Nicolich, 1984), three year olds take on more stereotypic roles (Garvey, 1977). These roles include fireman, policeman or teacher. The type of relational roles at the age of three also changes. Children enact more diverse relations like husband and wife instead of simply mother and child (Miller & Garvey, 1984). Four and five year olds are better able to enact fantastic or fictional roles (Bretherton, 1989; Garvey, 1977). One explanation for the transgression from reality based roles is an increase in communication skills (Halliday-Scher, Unger, & Kaplan-Estrin, 1995). Older children are better able to negotiate roles and describe their own roles, so they can move towards more fictional characters. The relationship of the roles also changes. Stockinger Forsys and McCune-Nicolich (1984) mentioned the children beginning to be able to differentiate their roles. Since older children are better able to take the perspective of another person (Pelligrini, 1998), they can take on a differentiated role. Interestingly, children of all ages tend not to cross the stereotypic gender of a role (Miller & Garvey, 1984; Snow et al, 1986). For example, girls act out the mother role and boys act out the father role. However, children will transcend the generational status of a role. For example, a three-year-old will play daddy.

Conclusion

Research indicates that with development, children change the types of roles used during play. The relationship of the roles to each other also changes. This means that

children can either share the type of role (both children are mothers) or differentiate them (one mother and one child).

Object Substitution

Development of object substitution

One of the leading theorists concerned with understanding the development of object substitution is Vygotsky. Vygotsky (1978) explains how children come to use objects during play by explaining children's understanding of object and meaning. During everyday reality, children are constrained by their environment because objects dominate action. Vygotsky uses the example that a door implies it must be shut. Action comes from external conditions. In play, the opposite occurs. The child is able to see an object and reconstruct it internally to create a new meaning for the object. For example, the child sees a stick, but no longer has to act as if it is only a stick. The child can now project meaning onto the stick and give it a new meaning, a horse. The child is able to sever the original meaning of the stick and add a new meaning. The object no longer dominates the meaning. Vygotsky explains that children are able to transform the meaning of objects because there is a "divergence in the fields of meaning and vision" (p.97). The child can understand different meanings for what she sees.

Vygotsky (1978) explains that the first object substitutions are pivots for the child to understand more abstract thought. However, this is a long process for the child. The child begins these pivots with realistic objects and events. Vygotsky says that the first use of pretense occurs from imitation. A child may feed her doll the same way her mother feeds her. The child then slowly moves onto performing less realistic transformations. However, even in the first substitutions like the stick and the horse, the child is not yet creating a symbol of the horse onto the stick. Here the child sees "the horse in the stick" (p.98). That is why a child is not yet able to make a complete transformation, for example, from a horse to a cup. The child still needs to see some properties of the imagined object in the real object. It is not till later that the child will be able to use complete symbolization. Vygotsky claims that children do not make object transformations until three years of age. This age range does not correspond with other research on children's development of object transformation. The following studies show

that children are capable of transformations at an earlier age. However, the explanations used by Vygotsky to describe how children develop coincide with the following research.

Object substitution follows a developmental sequence (Coppie, Cocking, & Matthews, 1984; Lilliard, 1993; Trawick-Smith, 1990; Ungerer, Zelazo, Kearsely & O'Leary, 1981). By twelve months of age, children can symbolically transform an object from its original purpose to a pretend purpose. At this age, children need an object that highly resembles the object of pretense. For example they can pretend to drink from a real cup. Around 18 months of age, children are able to transfer this symbolic action from themselves as recipient to another person. A child here can pretend to feed her mother instead of only herself. Children at twenty to twenty six months of age are able to take symbolism further and give animate characteristics to inanimate objects (a doll cries). After the age of three, children begin to decrease their reliance on the realism of the object for pretense. By school age, children are able to represent an object through gestures (Fein, 1975, 1981; Lilliard, 1993).

Type of substitution

Fein (1975) used a controlled environment to examine the performance of children aged twenty-two to twenty-seven-months on object substitution with highly prototypical and less prototypical objects. A highly prototypical object is one that closely resembles the intended pretense object (a cup to represent a cup for feeding and a stuffed horse to represent a horse). A less prototypical object loosely or does not at all resemble the pretense object (a shell to represent a cup and a metal horse shape for a horse). Fein tested children's ability to use one or two substitutions depending on the prototypicality of the object during pretend play. She modeled three substitutions (stuffed horse, shell; metal horse, plastic cup; and metal horse, shell) and examined if the children could imitate her substitutions. She found that 93% of the children were able to follow the first two conditions that only involved one substitution, while only 33% of the children pretended when there were two substitutions. Fein concluded that since the children were able to pretend with one highly and one less prototypical objects but not two less prototypical objects, then young children need one realistic object to anchor the pretense with a less realistic object. The children at that age did not have the cognitive capacity for the double substitution.

Further research shows that five-year-olds may even be restricted in their play if there are too many highly prototypical objects present (Olszewsk & Fuson, 1982). The authors conclude this because the five year olds limited their play to domestic themes in the presence of highly prototypical dolls, when normally children at that age use more fantasy themes (Garvey, 1977). Older children appear to benefit from more abstract objects that require using higher levels of object substitution.

Matthews (1977) proposed that the child's play environment may be preorganized, but the child is proactive during their fantasy play and initiates the transformations of objects or self. To examine how children transform their environment into their pretense, she observed the fantasy play of four-year-old dyads over a three day period in a playroom. She found that children used six types of transformations. The types are substitution (giving a new identity to an object), attribution of function (giving functional property to an object), animation (giving animate characteristics to inanimate objects), insubstantial material attribution (referring to objects that do not exist in environment; magic), insubstantial situation attribution (referring to situations that do not exist in environment; watching fireworks), and finally character attribution (role play). She separated the first three transformations into the material category because they involved using an object and the last three into the ideational category because they referred to intangible events.

The four-year-old children in Matthew's (1977) study used an equal amount of material and ideational transformations. This means that they did not have to rely on the presence of an object for their pretense. Interestingly, the children used increasing ideational transformation with in the play session and from one play session to the next. Matthews links this to the children's increasing familiarity with the play partner. Matthew's findings fall in line with Fein's (1975) results. The two-year-olds in Fein's study were reliant on the realism of the object, even when it was modeled for them. The older children in Matthew's study were less dependent on the object and could even pretend without the presence of an object. This developmental sequence was tested by Cole and La Voie (1985) using Matthew's (1977) categories who found that five year olds engaged in all categories, however, the six year olds only engaged in insubstantial situation and character attribution.

Conclusion

By combining Fein's (1975) and Matthew's (1977) research on object substitution, it appears that there are five levels of substitution: functional, low, medium, high, and insubstantial. Functional is when the child uses the object in the way the object is intended (a stick as a stick). Low level is when the real object very similarly resembles the pretend object (a stick as a spoon). Medium level is when the real object slightly resembles the pretend object (a stick as a car). A high level is when the real object does not at all resemble the pretend object (a stick as a baby). Insubstantial is when there is no object present, but the child pretends there is something there (announces that there is a stick or moves hand to represent a stick). The use of these levels will increase with age. However, once a new level has been attained, the lower levels may still be present. This study will use these five types of substitution to as guidelines for assessing sociodramatic play.

Language/Communication

Use

After reviewing the previous literature on the elements of sociodramatic play, scripts, roles and object substitutions, two crucial points become apparent. First, there are rules to sociodramatic play. Vygotsky (1978) explained that these rules might not be predetermined, but arise during the play. Children conform to rules about adhering to the theme of the script, keeping reciprocity in the script, appointing complimentary relationship of roles, and transforming the meaning of objects. Some of these rules are based in developmental issues, like which objects can be transformed into another object, but there is still an agreement of children to follow the rules (Garvey, 1974). The second issue in sociodramatic play stems from understanding how children comply to rules. Children use a variety of language skills to guide their own and their partner's behavior during play (Garvey, 1977, 1982). Language and communication skills are paramount for a child to succeed in sociodramatic play. Children use communication to announce their intent and negotiate events with their partner.

During play, children understand that their actions are not real (Bateson, 1955/1972). They act under the assumption that "this is play" (p.189). Therefore children create two frameworks of play to distinguish between the actions in pretense play and the

actions out of pretend play. They also adjust their language to accommodate the two frames of play (within frame and out of frame) through metacommunication. Within frame metacommunication is speech used to enact the pretend event. For example, a child speaks in character role with the appropriate voice. Out of frame metacommunication is speech used to organize the pretend play. For example, a child suggests “let’s play doctor”.

From Bateson’s statement, “this is play”, there has been increasing amounts of research focused on describing the language of pretense play. One study forms a basis for the following work by demonstrating that the language used during social pretend play is more sophisticated than language used in non-social pretend play. Here, Garvey and Kramer (1989) grouped the sentence structure of children according to age (three-four-and five-year olds). She found that while controlling for the natural development of increased language performance in children, the language used during social pretense play was significantly complex. There was also an increase in the elaboration of a pretense scenario due to age. From this work, more detailed analysis of communication during sociodramatic play occurred (Black, 1989; Wanska, Pohlman, & Bedrosian, 1989). The following descriptions are limited to studies that focus on how children use communication to sustain their social pretend play.

Types

Göncü and Kessel (1984) categorized the language used in the play of three-and four-year old children into seven types of metacommunication. These are invitations (requests for play), plans (statements to orient self or other into event), object statements (indicate possession of objects), transformations (label what object/event has become), acceptance statements (approval of transformation), negations (refusal of transformation) and termination statements (signal end of episode). These categories give a reference to what kinds of utterances children use, but it does not explain how children sustain pretense play.

The author’s then reanalyzed the data to create four categories that describe responses children use that either maintain or end play. “Turnabouts” are the most cohesive method of sustaining play. “Turnabouts” respond to the previous player’s utterance and add a new element to the discourse that is in line with the general theme of the play. For

example when a girl asks who is going to marry her, the other girl says ‘nobody is going to marry you, you are just on a dance’ (p. 14). The second girl responded to the first girl’s question and also added a new dimension to the play. The second type is “responses”. These are acknowledgements or refusals of the previous player’s statement, “yes/no”. The third is “mands”. These are similar to turnabouts but they do not directly refer to the previous player’s utterance. “Mands” do, though, keep in lines with the theme of the play. For example one child asks “what are those hats for?”, and the other child says, “I am wearing the funny hat” (p. 13). The final category is “unlinked utterances”. Here the statements are not related to the previous player’s statements or to the theme. For example, a child says “this is my bed”, and the other child says “I ate ice cream yesterday”.

As Göncü and Kessel predicted, there was a developmental trend in the use of response mechanisms. Older children made more turnabouts and fewer unlinked utterances to express plans, transformations and object statements. The authors explain that older children have more knowledge about the way play episodes work, and also are more capable of reciprocity. Due to this knowledge and developing understanding of language, older children’s play becomes more cohesive and structured. This supports earlier statements that older children are able to enact more fantasy roles and scripts. Since they have better response mechanisms, they can move on from the reenactments of domestic themes to more complicated ones. The following study reveals similar findings in the way children maintain pretense.

After observing the naturally occurring play of preschool children, Giffin (1984) found that children communicated through either within frame, partially within frame, and out of frame language to keep the nature of pretend as constant as possible. The following types of metacommunication are as follows. Enactment, within frame, is when the child speaks through the character. Here the child does not request any transformations of role or object. Ulterior Conversation, within frame, is similar to enactment, in that it is spoken through the character, but it is used to construct a meaning to a transformation. For example, if a child wants to transform another player into a character role without saying, ‘you be the mom’, she can use ulterior conversation and say, ‘mom, can I go to the party’. Underscoring, partially within frame, is used when a

child wants to emphasize a part of the play, but does not want to disrupt the pretend illusion. For example, a girl begins to cry and says “I’m crying”. Storytelling, partially within frame, is when a child states the events through short phrases connected by ‘and’. This allows the play to be sped up so the child can enact a preferred part. Prompting, mostly out of frame, is when a child leaves the play frame and quickly tells another child what to do. This usually is done in a low voice so not to completely abandon the play illusion. Implicit pretend structuring, out of frame, is used to overtly negotiate the script, roles or object substitutions. However, when using this, the children do not directly refer to the act of pretending. For example, one child says “you are the dad”. In overt proposal, out of frame, the child openly say, “let’s pretend...”.

She believes that children’s use of partially within frame language shows that children may need to step out of frame to make adjustments, but that they still try and maintain the pretense. From this discovery, Giffin created the Illusion Conservation Rule. This rule states that ‘when [players] constructed make-believe play, players should negotiate transformations with the least possible acknowledgement of the play frame” (p. 88). This idea of negotiating transformations brought about the Implicit Pretend Rule, (all requests for transformations should be interpreted as pretense and responded to within frame), Script Adherence Rule, (requests for transformations must be consistent with script), and Incorporation Rule (requests for transformations must be incorporated by child’s definition of pretend situation and be confirmed accordingly). Giffin claims that excessive violations of these rules makes the play less appealing to children, and may terminate the episode. To compensate, children use partially within frame language.

Fein (1989, 1991) grouped children’s language during emotive representation in a different way. She does not define the language as either out-of-frame or within frame, but acknowledges that this occurs within her three components of language. The first component, the evocative component, states that a pretend situation exists. For example, a child says “there is a spider in the boat” (Fein, 1991, p.149). The child may then elaborate on the statement by adding what the spider looks like or what the spider is doing. If the child does not elaborate, either because he is unsure or wants to keep the play open to interpretation, there will be a pass. A pass is a pause, question or glance that tells the other child she can add to first statement, which also adds to the affective power

of the play. Before the children react to the situation, they may go through looping. Looping is when the children jointly decide the level of stimulation of the emotion. For example after the child declare the spider is in the boat, the other child may decide it is a large spider. The first child finds this to be too scary, so announces it is a medium spider. When the children agree on a degree of emotion, there is a reaction component. This is a statement announcing the response to the evocative component. Here again may be a pass to allow for any additions or modifications. In the previous example, the reaction component was when the children decided to get a sword and kill the spider. The final component is the outcome component. This statement decides the end of the play by either stating victory (“we killed it”), termination (“it crawled away”) or reassurance (“it won’t get us”). There may be many cycles of evocative and reaction components before an outcome component is reached. Also as stated in the first description of emotive representation, children do not always give an outcome to the play. This way they can return to the play episode at a later time.

Development

If language is linked to social pretend play, then it too must change with development. The language components used in Fein’s (1989, 1991) research has not been empirically tested, however there is research on the use of metacommunication. Research shows an increase in the structure and use of out-of-frame communication (Halliday-Scher et al. 1995; McLoyd, Thomas & Warren, 1984). This may appear to contradict Giffin’s claim that children should use more within frame language, but many studies incorporate partially within frame into the out of frame category, so the results still do support Giffin’s claim. This increase in out of frame language is linked to the elaboration of scripts and roles used by older children. Since their play is more fantasy oriented (like superheroes) as opposed to familiar (like housekeeping) it takes more explanation to negotiate a common script. Language, then, becomes the child’s vehicle for expression during social pretense play.

Conditions for Play

The previous descriptions of sociodramatic play exist only when the conditions for play are met. Rubin, Fein and Vandenberg (1983) identify five conditions necessary for play to exist. First, there should be familiar peers and toys to engage children’s

interest. Peer familiarity has been shown to increase dramatic play (Garvey, 1977; Matthews, 1977; Rubin, Bukowski, & Parker 1997). Second, children must feel they have the freedom to choose what they want to do within the limits of the environment. Third, adults act with minimum intrusion or direction. Children with teachers who asked more open ended questions engaged in more creative play than children with teachers that asked close ended questions or gave directions (Wilcox-Herzog & Kontos, 1998). Fourth, the children must feel safe and comfortable in the environment. Children with positive attachments to their teachers were found to explore more in the classroom (Howes & Smith, 1995). Teachers can promote a safe environment for play by acting playfully themselves (Rogers & Sawyers, 1988). Fifth, children must be free from bodily stress, including hunger and illness. In addition to this list, the layout of classrooms has been found to affect play, including an increase in onlooker behavior with an increase in crowdedness (Phyfe-Perkins, 1980).

Conclusion

Putting the pieces together of themes, roles, and object substitutions shows the developmental characteristics of sociodramatic play. In early stages, symbolic play is restricted to self and one other (doll or adult) with realistic props and domestic themes and roles. It moves to incorporate other children, but the interactions are sporadic. When there is more control of language, there may be the beginnings of joining common scripts with other children. Once experience with play and play partners increases, the themes and roles may extend to include more fictional themes. The increasing independence from realistic objects and improved language skills also enable children to extend their play. This study will look at the symbolic play of five-year-old children.

Appendix B

The Contribution of Videotaped Documentation

Teacher Nomination

Please nominate a child in your classroom that fits the following description.
Please return this form to Nathalie Carrick.

The children must:

- Be between the ages of four and five
- Engage frequently in symbolic play (at least once a day)
- Be able to answer questions about his/her symbolic play

Child's Name _____

Parent's Names _____

Classroom Name _____

Child's Name _____

Parent's Names _____

Classroom Name _____

Appendix C

The Contribution of Videotaped Documentation

Dear Parents,

I am a graduate student in the Department of Family and Child Development at Virginia Tech. I am interested in learning more about children's pretend play. I would like to find out what children think and feel about pretend play and how watching a videotape of the children's pretend play will contribute to their pretend play. I am asking you and your child if you would like to participate in this study.

In general, the study will involve similar procedures to "documentation" that is being used at the Lab School, including videotaping the children's pretend play, showing it to the children and interviewing the children. If granted permission to conduct the study, involvement of your child would entail:

- Videotaping. I would like to videotape your child's pretend play in his/her classroom for approximately four weeks.
- Interview. I would like to show your child a ten-minute videotape segment of his/her pretend play and ask him/her how he/she feels about the pretend play. This is similar to the reflection process done in "documentation".
- Permission to talk to your child's teacher about his/her pretend play and obtain any documentation regarding his/her pretend play.

If you are willing for your child to participate in this study, please contact your child's teacher. I will then contact you in order to have you sign the appropriate consent forms. Once I have completed the study, I will be happy to share the results with you.

If you have any questions, or would like more information, please feel free to contact me at (540) 557-1288 or my committee chair, Dr. Janet Sawyers at (540) 231-3194. I appreciate your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Nathalie Carrick

Appendix D

The Contribution of Videotaped Documentation

Consent Form

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

Informed Consent for Participants of Investigation Projects

Parent's Form

Title of Project: Children's Interpretation of Pretend Play

Investigator: Nathalie Carrick

I. The Purpose of this Research

I am interested in studying what children think and feel about pretend play, and also how watching a videotape of their own play will contribute to their pretend play. I have already chosen two target children, but in accordance with the Virginia Tech Child Development Laboratories' procedure on conducting research, I am informing you of the research being conducted in your child's classroom. Since your child is enrolled in the target children's classroom, he/she has the possibility of being videotaped during play interactions with the target children.

II. Procedures

I will first spend one week in your child's classroom so that the target children will feel comfortable around me. I will then use the video cameras mounted on the walls of your child's classroom to videotape the target children's pretend play for four weeks. I will also ask your child's teacher permission to look at any written notes (documentation) about the target children's pretend play.

III. Risks

I do not anticipate any risks to your child for participation in this study.

IV. Benefits of this Project

This study may help educators have a better understanding of what children think about pretend play so that they can improve their curriculum.

V. Extent of Anonymity and Confidentiality

Your child will be assigned a pseudonym to support confidentiality. I will be the only person who views the videotapes, and I will be the only person to transcribe the interviews. While the videotapes are not being viewed, I will keep the videotapes in a locked room under Dr. Janet Sawyers's supervision. After the study is completed, the videotapes will be destroyed. At no time will I release the videotapes or audiotape to anyone other than individuals working on the project without your written consent.

VI. Compensation

Other than my sincere appreciation, there is no compensation for your child.

VII. Freedom to Withdraw

Not Applicable

VIII. Approval of Research

This research project has been approved, as required, by the Institutional Review Board for Research Involving Human Subjects at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, by the Department of Family and Child Development and the Virginia Tech Child Development Laboratory.

IX. Subject's Responsibilities

I am informed of the research being conducted in my child's classroom.

X. Subject's Permission

I have read and understand the Informed Consent and conditions of this project. I have had all my questions answered. I hereby acknowledge the above and give my acknowledgment of the research being conducted in my child's classroom.

Signature

Date

Should I have any questions about this research or its conduct, I may contact:

Nathalie Carrick

557-1288

Investigator

Phone

Dr. Janet Sawyers

231-3194

The Contribution of Videotaped Documentation

Faculty Advisor

H.T. Hurd

Chair, IRB

Research Division

Phone

231-9359

Phone

Appendix E

The Contribution of Videotaped Documentation

Consent Form

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

Informed Consent for Participants of Investigation Projects

Parent's Form

Title of Project: Children's Interpretation of Pretend Play

Investigator: Nathalie Carrick

I. The Purpose of this Research

Your child is invited to participate in a study about children's pretend play. I am interested in talking to your child about what she/he thinks and feels about pretend play, and also how watching a videotape her/his own play will contribute to her/his pretend play. This procedure is similar to the "documentation" process being used in the Virginia Tech Child Development Laboratories. Your child will be one of two participants in the study.

II. Procedures

I will first spend one week in your child's classroom so that your child may feel comfortable around me. I will then use the video cameras on the walls of your child's classroom to videotape your child's pretend play for a total of four weeks. Your child will be invited to watch the video of her/his play with me in another room at your child's school, or another location of your preference. This session will be audiotaped. I will ask your child to talk about what she/he thinks and feels about pretend play, and what she/he likes and does not like about pretend play. This interview will last no more than thirty minutes. I will then videotape your child's play for one more week. There will be a total of three interviews. I will also ask your child's teacher permission to look at any written notes about your child's pretend play for the entire time of videotaping. I will also ask your child's teacher to tell me anything about your child's pretend play that may not have been on the written notes. I would also like to interview you to obtain a better understanding of your child's pretend play.

III. Risks

I do not anticipate any risks to your child for participation in this study.

IV. Benefits of this Project

A benefit for participation in this study is your child will be able to watch her/his pretend play and talk about her/his thoughts and feeling about pretend play. Potentially, your child's teacher may be able to include materials for pretend play that your child finds appealing. Also, this study may help educators have a better understanding of what children think about pretend play so that they can improve their curriculum. Upon your request, you may review your child's videotaped play to have a better understanding of your child's pretend play.

V. Extent of Anonymity and Confidentiality

Since your child will be one of two children in this study, I will make every attempt at maintaining confidentiality, including assigning a pseudonym, however, I can not guarantee it. I will be the only person who views the videotapes, and I will transcribe the interview. While the videotapes are not being viewed, I will keep the videotapes in a locked room under Dr. Janet Sawyers's supervision. After the study is completed, the videotapes will be destroyed. At no time will I release the videotapes or audiotape to anyone other than individuals working on the project without your written consent.

VI. Compensation

For participation in this study, I will share the description of your child's thoughts and feeling about her/his pretend play.

VII. Freedom to Withdraw

You and your child are free to withdraw from this study at any time without penalty. Your child is free to not answer all the questions.

VIII. Approval of Research

This research project has been approved, as required, by the Institutional Review Board for Research Involving Human Subjects at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, by the Department of Family and Child Development and the Virginia Tech Child Development Laboratory.

IX. Subject's Responsibilities

I voluntarily agree to permit my child to participate in this study.

X. Subject's Permission

I have read and understand the Informed Consent and conditions of this project. I have had all my questions answered. I hereby acknowledge the above and give my voluntary consent for my child's participation in this project.

I may withdraw my child's participation at any time without penalty. I agree to abide by the rules of this project.

Signature

Date

Should I have any questions about this research or its conduct, I may contact:

Nathalie Carrick

557-1288

Investigator

Phone

Dr. Janet Sawyers

231-3194

Faculty Advisor

Phone

H.T. Hurd

231-9359

Chair, IRB

Phone

Research Division

Appendix F

Content of Videotaped Segments of Children's Symbolic Play

Hannah

Videotape 1

This videotape segment showed Hannah at the art table using the play dough to make play dough cookies. She is seen cutting the play dough and shaping it into small flattened balls. At the table are cutting tools, rolling pins, two cooking trays with play dough cookies on them, and Emily. The next scene is Emily putting a cookie on a tray and Hannah announcing that Emily had put the cookie on the wrong tray. Hannah then places a play dough cookie on a piece of paper where she has drawn an oven. The oven looks like the range of an oven, with the burners and buttons. Hannah pushes the buttons, makes sounds to indicate the beep of the buttons, and then puts the play dough cookie on a tray. The next scene is Hannah at the media table that has been covered with a table cloth, plastic cups and plates, utensils, and a bucket of play dough. Hannah is rolling the play dough and making cookies as before.

Videotape 2

In this videotape, Hannah is seen at the media table filled with sand playing "ice cream". She asks the teacher if the teacher wants "a cup or a cone", and then scoops the sand into a funnel. The teacher asks for "bug ice cream", and Hannah offers it to her. She asks other children what they want. In the next scene, Hannah is holding a stuffed bunny and feeds it sand on a piece of paper. She makes the bunny cry, and feeds it again. In the next scene, she is in the loft with Suzy and Emily playing "babies". Suzy is the mother to Emily and Hannah. Suzy holds them like babies and asks them to go to sleep. Suzy pretends to sleep also, and then wakes up to change their diapers. She does this by gestures above Emily and Hannah who are lying down.

Videotape 3

Hannah is seen first at the art table where there is play dough. She is holding a doll and touching the play dough. Next she is standing with Suzy and holding the doll. Suzy is putting a piece of play dough in front of the doll as if showing it to the doll. Hannah is making the doll move as if the doll were laughing. In the next scene, Hannah

is changing the dolls diapers while Suzy, Emily and Janet watch. In the final scene, Hannah is by herself typing on the computer keyboard while the doll is next to her.

Sceeter

Videotape 1

Sceeter and Kenny are under the loft as the sink area. They have on smocks, and are mixing together water, sand, and paint. This is the laboratory play. Sceeter announces that the laboratory is exploding, and the boys climb up into the loft. After they come down, Kenny falls to the ground and pretends to die. Sceeter goes down with him and also pretends to die. In the next scene, Sceeter is mixing the materials at the sink and Kenny pretends to die again. Sceeter goes over to him and drags him across the floor.

Videotape 2

Sceeter, Randy, Suzy and David are in the loft playing “babies”. Sceeter and David are babies, Randy the father and Suzy the mother. The children and next at the couch and Randy announces their roles to a teacher. Sceeter and David suck their thumbs. Randy tells Sceeter and David to be “good boys” while he goes out. Sceeter and David pretend to fight and Randy comes back to scold them. He calls them “bad boys”. In the next scene, the children are still on the couch playing “babies” when Ben dressed as a tiger comes by to scare the children. Randy chases him. In the final scene, Sceeter and Kenny are at the media table filled with water. Sceeter says the laboratory is going to explode and they go to the loft. They are interrupted by a teacher who asks Kenny to come down.

Videotape 3

Sceeter is at the media table filled with shaving cream. He, Randy, David, Bobby, Ryan and a teacher are playing “ice cream”. Sceeter says he is the person who tests the ice cream to make sure it is healthy. The children talk about “stirit”, which is a reference to the shaving cream. Sceeter says the ice cream is cherry nut flavor. The teacher asks for an ice cream sunday. In the next scene, Sceeter is in the porch area with David. Sceeter calls for a fireman to help him and coughs to show smoke around him. David comes over with a plunger on his mouth as a mask. He spays imaginary water and leaves.

Appendix G

The Contribution of Videotaped Documentation

Assent for child

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

Assent for Child – to be tape recorded as it is read to the child, and as the child responds

Title of Project: Children's Interpretation of Pretend Play

Investigator: Nathalie Carrick

I would like to talk to you about your make-believe play, and show you a tape of you playing. We will watch the tape in another room. We will watch the tape one time and then we can go back and watch parts again and talk about it. I want you to know that if you get tired or if you do not want to answer a certain question, we can stop. Is that all right with you? You can let me know that you want to stop by simply telling me. Tell me what you would like to do if you want me to stop.

Appendix H

Interview Questions

Themes

The questions related to themes are grounded in the prior research on the use of themes in symbolic play. The questions are designed to elicit children's responses to preference in themes, emotions related to themes, negotiation of themes, and repetition of themes.

1. "Tell me about what are you playing here." (in relation to the video)
2. "Why did you choose that?"
3. "You were (smiling, frowning...) in that play, tell me what you were feeling while you were playing that?"
4. "What kind of things do you like to pretend to do or play? Why? Which is your favorite? Why?"
5. "Are there things you don't like to pretend? Why?"
6. "If you could play (name of favorite theme of play) however you wanted, would you play it over and over again the same way or change it? Why
7. "Tell me about how you and your friends decided to play something."
8. "Tell me what it means to you to "pretend" something?"

Roles

These questions are based on the literature on roles. The questions are designed to elicit responses regarding preference and choice of roles, and restrictions of roles according to gender and age.

1. "Tell me about who you are pretending to be here." (in relation to the video)
2. "How did you choose that?"
3. "Tell me about your favorite thing to pretend to be."
4. "How does it make you feel to be that?"
5. "If you were playing house, would you ever be the mom (for a boy) / dad (for a girl)? Why?"

Object Substitution

The Contribution of Videotaped Documentation

These questions are based on research on object. The questions are intended to elicit information about choice of objects for substitutions and any limitations of specific objects for substitution.

1. "I see you are using a (name of object) here to (action). What else could you use to do that? Could you use a (name of object with higher level of realism)? How about a (name of object with lower level of realism)?"
2. "Another child told me I could not use a block to pretend to brush my hair. What do you think? What else could I use?"
3. "If you could play this over again, what would you like to see the teacher put out for you to play with? Why?" (in relation to the video)

Appendix I

The Contribution of Videotaped Documentation

Teacher Interview Questions

1. What documentation is done specifically for the children. What is the process?
2. How do the children react to documentation?
3. How do you use documentation to enrich the children's symbolic play?
4. How does the classroom environment support symbolic play?
5. How do you as a teacher support symbolic play?
6. Explain why you use the word "work" in reference the children's activities.
7. How do you see J's experimenting play? Do you think he is pretending?
8. How do you see C's making cookies play? Do you think she is pretending?

Appendix J

The Contribution of Videotaped Documentation

Parent's Interview Questions

1. What is your child's exposure to videotaping?
2. What was your child's reaction to watching the videotapes of his/her play?
3. Tell me about your child's pretend play.
4. Your child said s/he was not pretending in (specific scene), how do you see that?
5. Does you child ever say s/he is pretending to be someone else?

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The Contribution of Videotaped Documentation

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Education

- 8/97 – 5/99 Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University, Blacksburg, Virginia
Master's of Science in Child Development expected May 1999
Thesis: Exploring the Contribution of Documentation to Children's Symbolic Play
- 9/91 – 6/95 Tufts University, Somerville, Massachusetts
Bachelor's of Arts in Child Development
- 1/94 – 6/94 Study Abroad Program
Boston University in Padova, Italy

Experience

- 8/98 – 5/99 Teaching Assistant
Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University, Blacksburg, VA
- Assisting professor with organization and instruction of an undergraduate course (Human Development, FCD 1004) of 300 students taught in the classroom and on-line.
 - Preparing power point lecture presentations for on-line access.
 - Creating and supervising laboratory assignment.
- 8/97 - 5/98 Administrative Assistant
Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University, Blacksburg, VA
- Supported Program Director with clerical duties, including applications, children's records, and enrollment.
 - Assisted teachers and families with daily activities.
- 8/97 – 5/98 Team Teacher, Preschool
Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University, Blacksburg, VA
- Co-taught afternoon program for fourteen 3 & 4 year-old children in university lab school.
 - Planned and implemented a developmentally appropriate curriculum.
 - Mentored seven undergraduate teaching assistants including guiding their understanding of child development and implementation of age appropriate activities.

The Contribution of Videotaped Documentation

- 6/96 – 7/97 Head Teacher, Preschool
Bright Horizons Child Care Center, Boston, MA
- Supervised the care of ten 3 year-old children.
 - Fostered an emergent curriculum to reflect the interests of the children to support social, emotional and cognitive development.
 - Collaborated with teachers and administration to improve daily activities for children and parents.
- 8/95 – 6/96 Team Teacher, Montessori
Montessori Educare, Newton, MA
- Co-taught twenty 3 – 6 year-old children.
 - Prepared classroom environment to support the Montessori philosophy.
 - Modeled correct Montessori procedures of materials to develop math, language, and motor abilities.

Profession Presentations

- 4/99 Quint State
University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN
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Languages

Fluent in French