THROUGH THE VOICES OF INDUCTION TEACHERS IN KOREA:

THE JOURNEY TO BECOME AN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR

by

SU KYOUNG PARK

(Under the Direction of Deborah Tippins)

ABSTRACT

This study focused on recognizing how induction teachers construct and reconstruct particular meanings early in their teaching career and how they shape their sense of self as early childhood education teachers in their everyday lives. A case study approach was used to conduct this in-depth investigation of Korean early childhood education induction teachers and how they perceived themselves as newcomers in the teaching world.

The participants in the study were four Korean women in their 20s who had fewer than two years of early childhood teaching experience. To understand the experiences of the individuals in this study, five primary data sources were used: (1) field observations, (2) focus group discussion, (3) individual interviews with participants, (4) field notes, and (5) photoessays. The secondary data sources included the researcher's journal and artifacts such as e-mail messages, pictures, newspapers, school handouts, and lesson plans. Case analysis was integrated with narrative analysis and a grounded theory approach.

In particular, this study focused on how these teachers negotiated their sense of self in the world around them from the perspective of Bakhtin's (1993) concept of "Being" in the world and Foucault's (1979) notion of "power relations." The researcher tried to be especially cognizant of

the existence of multiple identities in order to explore political aspects of teacher identity formation. The findings of this study describe the extensive journey that these early childhood education induction teachers took to find their own way in the world of teaching. All participants demonstrated enthusiasm and passion for becoming a teacher when they chose early childhood education as a major. However, the teachers experienced positionality as legitimate peripheral participation when they entered the "real" teaching world. They played the roles of social negotiators and resistors of imposed criteria and labels such as "novice" or "brand new" in order to find and represent themselves in their everyday lives. The teacher identity construction process of all participants was relational in the sense that it was continually being structured out of various memories, social interactions with people, and past and present experiences. The ongoing events of the induction teachers were different and unique according to the given contexts, and they experienced power and ideology as they continuously negotiated their teacher identity in every given moment. The tensions and challenges the induction teachers experienced were not "universal" but "unique" because their given circumstances were endlessly constrained by structure and power relations. This study demonstrated the ways in which a group of early childhood education induction teachers introduced new pedagogies and resisted the dominant thinking about children and teaching.

INDEX WORDS: Early childhood education, Teacher Identity, Teacher Induction, Teacher education, Power relations.

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To My Roots and Wings:

My God,

My Parents, Gwangchul Park and Junglan Lim,

My Husband, Junsoo Lee and

My Son, Justin Juhyoung Lee

For their Patience, Support, and Love

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"Perhaps there is the assumption that nobody ever has asked this particular research question in quite the same way, so it is as yet impossible to determine which variables pertain to this area and which do not. This reasoning creates the need for asking a type of question that will enable researchers to find answers to issues that seem important but remain unanswered." (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 40)

Teaching is the kind of continuous activity that strives to make a difference, to remake the world. To become a teacher is to investigate and reflect on oneself. Teaching is not simply what one does or what one has to be. There are no exact answers in teaching. Therefore, it is very difficult to evaluate who is a good teacher and who is not because every teacher has a different personal background and different educational beliefs. To become a teacher is to negotiate an endless number of demands as well as responsibilities, to develop a sense of commitment, and to sacrifice oneself. Among the many levels of teachers, early childhood teachers, in particular, encounter struggles for existence. They are recognized as a group who are devalued in society and their struggles are various: money, status, responsibilities, and dignity (Ayers, 1989). Many early childhood teachers experience difficulty staying in their teaching jobs. In this sense, early childhood teachers are more oppressed than other teachers.

Being an early childhood teacher is a decision which is intertwined with the teacher's own sense of self and identity as a teacher. Also, to cease teaching young children is generally not a quick decision resulting from a single event. Early childhood induction teachers who are taking their first steps in the teaching world face many difficulties and struggles because of their status as newcomers. These teachers, who need positive support to understand and learn their

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first job, exercise their roles and responsibilities in intuitive and tender ways as they strive to become more professional. They negotiate their identities continuously in the teaching context. As Katz (1972) stated, they need technical assistance and on-site support to survive. How, then, do they master their learning? In what ways are their concerns different from those of experienced teachers? In the learning process, how do they construct a sense of themselves?

It is necessary to explore early childhood education induction teachers' own perceptions of their identities in order to appropriately understand them. Teacher identity as an early childhood induction teacher is not created by a one-time event. Rather, it is intimately connected with social context and with the ever-changing states of being as a teacher. Therefore, to understand early childhood induction teachers' identity, which has been constructed, challenged, and negotiated throughout their teaching experience, it is essential to conduct investigations within the teachers' particular contexts.

Problem Statement

We call teaching a professional job but compared with other professional jobs such as accountants, doctors, and lawyers, teachers' salaries are relatively poor (Johnson & Liu, 2004; The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 1996). Nevertheless, decades ago, Lortie (1975) observed "many people both inside and outside teaching believe that teachers are not supposed to consider money, prestige, and security as major inducements" (p. 30). Conversely, Johnson and Peske (2004) noted "the next generation of teachers makes career decisions in a labor context that is strikingly different from what it was thirty years ago, and the interests and options of today's prospective teachers are unlike those of any teachers who have preceded them" (p. 19). Today's new teachers differ from previous generations of teachers. What are the reasons that make new teachers stay and leave the profession?

Internationally, there have been two types of research on new generation teachers. One is the study of new teacher turnover. Many scholars have monitored the teacher shortage and have been alarmed by the statistics on the attrition of new teachers—those who have left within the first five years (Ingersoll, 2002; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003; Johnson & Donaldson, 2004). For instance, in the United States, the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF) (1996) reported the "need to hire more than two million teachers to handle huge enrollment increases, replace an aging teacher workforce ready to retire, and respond to the chronic attrition of new teachers that plagues American schools" (p. 8). In England and Wales, 5% and 8% of teachers left the profession prematurely (Smithers, 1990). Also, as Merrow (1999) pointed out, "The teaching pool keeps losing water because no one is paying attention to the leak. That is, we're misdiagnosing the problem as 'recruitment' when it's really retention" (p. 64). The studies on teacher attrition have consistently informed schools about how to prepare, recruit, retain and put new qualified teachers in every classroom via alternative and teacher development programs.

The other international foci of research on new teachers in teacher education has moved from external factors related to skills and strategies of teaching (Johnston, 1985; Veenman, 1984) to internal factors focused on teachers' personal experiences and real teaching contexts (Johnson & Kardos, 2004). In addition, studies on mentoring as a way to support new teachers have increased (Bower, 2005; Casey & Claunch, 2005; Rowley, 2005). However, existing studies have focused on a general view of teachers rather than focusing on individual new teachers in their particular contexts. In fact, there are few studies based on teaching level, subject matter, or location or size of institutions from the perspective of new teachers. Therefore, this study focuses on individual teachers' experiences in a specific teaching context.

In particular, few studies have paid attention to exploring the lives of early childhood education teachers, although many studies in teacher education have focused on listening to teachers' voices. Generally, from both a research and pedagogical perspective, early childhood education teachers have been seen either as *glorified baby sitters* or *a subset of teacher*s (Ayer, 1989). Korean early childhood teacher education programs typically provide many courses so that preservice teachers can learn about theories and have actual experience through student teaching. Although teacher preparation programs stress the importance of early childhood teaching, what do early childhood induction teachers think about themselves as teachers when they enter a real teaching context? In addition, do they consider themselves as professional educators during the induction period? With this background, in mind, this study focuses on exploring individual Korean early childhood education induction teachers' experiences in their specific teaching contexts.

Purpose and Research Questions

Currently, early childhood teachers in the researcher's country, South Korea, rarely stay in their jobs for long. After obtaining early childhood teacher certification in college, the majority choose a teaching job but later change to another job (Koh, Rye, & Na, 2006). The induction teachers who choose a teaching job make an effort to adjust to their first job, but they end up leaving because of struggles in their teaching contexts (Oh, 2006). What causes this phenomenon? What do teachers think about this phenomenon? To investigate this phenomenon, it is important to hear the voices of early childhood induction teachers in a "real-life context" in the study.

Goodlad (1983) described teaching as each teacher's "highly individualistic, isolated endeavor" (p. 56). In this sense, teacher identity can be a lens to understand how the individual

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teacher thinks about his/her own teaching and practice. In particular, it is crucial to explore the variety of tensions and struggles which the individual teacher experiences in the teaching context to understand his/her sense of self as a teacher. However, little research exists about teacher identity and teacher lives specific to early childhood educators. Therefore, in the current climate of early childhood teacher education reform in Korea, the findings of this study can provide implications not only for educational policy makers, but also for those interested in early childhood teacher induction.

In this study, the term *induction teacher* refers to a teacher in the transition from being a student teacher in pre-service teacher education to being a teacher of students in a real teaching context. The research questions are as follows:

1. What factors affect an induction teacher's decision to become a professional early childhood educator?

2. How is early childhood induction teacher identity constructed and reconstructed through social interactions in a particular sociocultural context?

3. How do induction teachers see themselves as professionals in early childhood education?

4. What tensions and challenges exist in early childhood induction teachers' lives?

Significance of the Study

This study is of value to the field of early childhood teacher education in the following manner:

1. There is a dearth of in-depth qualitative studies that define early childhood induction teacher identity from the perspective of induction teachers. This study may encourage other researchers and teachers to find new ways to approach, investigate, and facilitate the understanding of early childhood teachers in South Korea.

2. The attempt to represent everyday lives of early childhood teachers through their own lens and the findings of this study will provide an empirical foundation to use for developing own expertise in teaching.

3. Early childhood induction teachers' perspectives can help those in teacher education understand how to support professional development programs for induction teachers.

Overview of Conceptual Framework

This study used the lens of teacher identity and power to recognize how teachers construct and reconstruct particular meanings in their teaching career. This lens helped the researcher understand the participants' sense of self as early childhood education induction teachers in their real teaching contexts. In particular, this study focused on how teachers negotiated their sense of self in the world around them in accordance with Bakhtin's (1993) concept of "Being" in the world and Foucault's (1979) notion of "power relations." The researcher tried to be especially cognizant of the existence of multiple identities in order to explore the political aspects of teacher identity formation.

Overview of Methodological Framework

To uncover the complexities of individual early childhood induction teachers' identities and their lives, the researcher used a case study approach. Briefly, all the participants were female induction teachers who had one or two years of teaching experience in Korean early childhood education. The methods for this study included various sources: field observations, focus group discussions, individual interviews with participants, field notes, and photoessays. In addition, narrative analysis and ground theory approaches influenced the course of this study.

Subjectivity Statement and Biases

My subjectivity centers around the belief that the world is very complex and continuously changing. I believe individuals have different cultures, and they have different thoughts and experiences. However, the world pursues universality and excludes distinctiveness. Teachers experience many situations day by day; yesterday's experience is different from today's experience and tomorrow's experience. Nevertheless, currently, teacher education programs do not support the notion of differences between teachers. Although there is no single rule in teaching, teachers have to practice the rules of the workplace. I believe teachers are different from one another just as children are different from one another. Also relevant to this study is my vision of what constitutes good teaching. I believe that we cannot make a judgment on what good teaching is and who a good teacher is because people change according to the context and position in which they find themselves. My study was designed to enable me to rethink the notion of new teachers, not by evaluating their work, but rather by trying to explore their experiences.

Additionally, I am aware of bias based in terms of my epistemology. Until I enrolled in the doctoral program, my research concerns had been largely oriented toward a positivist approach. I thought that the only way researchers could learn about teachers' perspectives was by means of measuring. However, over time, during my doctoral study, I adopted a different perspective. In this study, my primary approach to teacher education was to ***understand*** teachers so as to reflect their voices through my study. This was what my study pursued eventually.

To monitor my subjectivities and personal biases, I listened carefully to the voices of my participants to increase the viability of the study. Throughout the whole research process, multiple methods of data collection, or triangulation, were used as "an attempt to secure an in-

depth understanding of the phenomenon in question" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 5): field notes from different peer reviewers at different dates and times, and temporal checking of peer interactions. Also, various skills were used as data generation strategies: observing, artifact collection, and interviewing.

Overview

Chapter one presented the introduction, problem statement, purpose, research questions, significance of the study, and subjectivity statement and biases. Chapter two provides a review of scholarly literature that guided this study, including the existing literature on teacher identity, teacher induction, and induction teachers as well as the conceptual frameworks. Following this, chapter three introduces the study design that was used to arrive at the findings. Chapters four, five, six, and seven describe the findings of this study. Finally, chapter eight concludes this study by presenting a discussion and further interpretation of the findings, implications of the study results, and recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2 – Conceptual Framework and Related Literature

Overview

This chapter consists of two sections. The first section is a discussion of the conceptual frameworks of this study. The second section contains the literature review, which is comprised of conceptual discussions and empirical findings from three relevant areas. This literature review introduces the notion of teacher identity, teacher induction, and induction teachers' lives, which constitute the primary research themes of this study and provides contextual information for the research topic.

Conceptual Framework

Defining Korean Early Childhood Education (ECE) Teacher Identity

In serving as the conceptual framework for this study, the notion of Korean ECE teacher identity mirrors the idea of "an active Being in his/her everyday life" in contrast to a passive being objectified by practice. Danielewicz (2001) noted that teaching is not just a state of becoming somebody automatically. Rather, from her perspective, teaching is a "state of being" that requires engagement with identities. This state of being as a teacher is related to Bakhtin's (1993) concept of "Being" in the world. According to Bakhtin (1993),

> The world is arranged around a concrete value-center, which is seen and loved and thought. What constitutes this center is the human being: everything in this world acquires significance, meaning, and value only in correlation with man—as that which is human. All possible Being and all possible meaning are arranged around the human being as the center and the sole value. (p. 61)

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In everyday life, Korean ECE teachers experience countless "events" around them, which provide meaningful and unique teaching and learning contexts. The teacher as "a solo actor" plays an important role in the ongoing events because "the category of experiencing the actual world, actual Being—as event—is a category of uniqueness or singularity" (Bakhtin, 1993, p. 44). From Bakhtin's (1993) perspective, in terms of uniqueness and universality, "A value-judgment about one and the same person that is identical in its content ('he is bad') may have different actual intonations, depending on the actual, concrete center of values in the given circumstances"(p. 63). For these reasons, people can not interpret a given person by universal values or norms. In particular, people cannot evaluate who is a "better" teacher purely based on years of experience as though experience were a universal standard because every teacher has her own unique sociocultural context.

Throughout the day, teachers engage in dynamic discourse (e.g. personal discourse, classroom discourse and school discourse) wherein they experience the various dialogues embedded in these events. It is important to consider how these dialogues influence Korean ECE teacher identity conformation in a variety of teaching discourses of Being-as-event through actual participation, as well as how the Korean ECE teacher perceives his/her participation at any given moment. If these events of a Korean ECE teacher's life exist contiguously, teacher identity is not fixed, but rather an ongoing process.

Power and Korean ECE Teacher Identity

Following Bakhtin, human beings' everyday lives are constrained by structure and power relations because internally persuasive discourse comes with authoritative discourse. As Brickhouse and Potter (2001) stated, "individuals have some control over identity yet are also constrained by structure and power relations that may limit the kinds of identities that are viable"

(p. 966). In particular, dialogues of institutions which emphasize a rational, clear, and structured system perspective highlight a pattern of interplay between domination and resistance. As Bakhtin (1981) asserted, "The ideological becoming of a human being, in this view, is the process of selectively assimilating the words of others" (p. 341).

The particular words and norms existing in Korean ECE institutions are associated with the "ideological views of those who habitually use those words" (Wortham, 2001, p.147). When Korean ECE teachers participate in the dialogue of the school system, they experience internally-persuasive discourse (e.g. aspects and role model of ECE teachers). Also, these teachers face constant struggles in their everyday lives. Bakhtin (1981) characterized struggles such as these as attempts "to assimilate more into one's own belief system, and the simultaneous freeing of one's own discourse from the authoritative word, or from previous earlier persuasive words that have ceased to mean" (p. 424-425).

In particular, the ideological power of Confucian social values in South Korea has entailed a legacy in building a strong Korean culture. Confucius regards the role of the person with authority (e.g. ruler of nation, teacher of classroom, and parents of family) as "an attractive model of what a person should be, like the polestar" (Kupperman, 2004, p. 107). In addition, from the Confucian view point, in forming somebody's identity, it is very important to take into consideration "the responsibilities that one has by virtue of a position one occupies, whether it is a position that one has taken up, such as that of an official" (Shun, 2004, p. 194). The Confucian paradigm of "five relationships" refers to ruler/subject, father/son, older/younger, husband/wife, and friend/friend. Since the anti-Confucianism trends, progress has occurred "on women's status for 'the discourse of patriarchy and the oppression of woman', but the emphasis generally remains on how Confucianism has victimized women" (Duncan, 2002, p. 449).

However, Ageism, traditionally a significant aspect of Confucianism, has remained a strict custom regulating social conduct in Korean culture. As Clark (2000) explained, according to Confucianism, an older person should set good examples for a younger person and a younger person should follow. Korean social relationships today are still hierarchical by age in Korean culture. Each person knows his/her position in relation to other people and each person's emotions are to be suppressed because Confucianism stresses "the harmony of social relationships." Thus, ideally, people act respectfully toward each other. According to Hur and Hur (1993), "Korean society is based on a hierarchical social system in which Koreans need to know the position of another person in order to determine how to relate with him, whether in terms of respect given or the language to use in conversation" (p. 169).

The Korean ECE institution typically includes a society of teachers based on a hierarchical social system according to positions or ages (e.g. young teacher and older teacher, novice teacher and experienced teacher, lead teacher and principal). Accordingly, these particular positions within authoritative discourse determine more strictly how people ought to act. If the hierarchical social system exists according to power in the Korean ECE, how do the teachers perceive themselves in this particular context? Foucault (1979) stressed the idea that like authority, power "is exercised rather than possessed" (p. 26). From Foucault's perspective, the Korean ECE teachers exercise power in their everyday lives.

As Swidler (1986) articulated, "a culture is not a unified system that pushes action in a consistent direction…it is more like a 'toolkit' or repertoire from which actors select differing pieces for [constructing] lines of action" (p. 277). However, the cultural toolkit has an authoritative power for individuals with respect to shaping their identity. For example, there are dominant cultural myths to being in the Korean ECE world. As Zembylas (2003) noted, "the

cultural myths about teacher identity—for example, the teacher is an expert, the teacher is highly professional (i.e. unemotional), and so on—aim at creating a totalizing object of teacher identity that leaves little room for 'abnormal' identities" (p. 233). For Korean ECE teachers, certain cultural myths exist: an older person is wiser, so younger teachers need to respect older teachers, or good ECE teachers love children, so ECE teachers need to sacrifice themselves and their lives for young children. How do these cultural myths in the matrix of power influence Korean ECE teacher identity formation?

To understand ECE teacher identity, it is important to account for teachers' cultural identity in a particular historical situation because "one's cultural practices can never be value-free, but always involve an interpretation" (Dreyfus, 1982, p. 166). This inquiry is related to a larger system of power in which the institution, as well as people's social interactions and activities, is nested within ECE institutions. Taken together, the micro and the macro focus make the formation of teacher identity both situated in daily discourse and shaped by power relations, which are reproduced and contested in the ECE teachers' lives. This contestation is in line with Foucault's idea, for as Dreyfus (1982) stated, "power needs resistance as one of its fundamental conditions of operation. It is through the articulation of points of resistance that power spreads through the social field" (p. 147).

Thus, this study focused on recognizing how teachers construct and reconstruct particular meanings in their teaching career and how they shaped their senses of self as ECE teachers in their everyday lives. Because of these characteristics of authoritative and power discourse and its assumptions, this study needed to orient inquiry within individual actors, between individual actors and others, and between individuals and society. It was especially important to look at how Korean ECE teachers made meaning in relation to social interaction and how they perceived

and negotiated their own sense of self in the world around them. To explore these political aspects of Korean ECE teacher identity formation, the researcher tried to be particularly cognizant of the existence of multiple identities.

Building on these different conceptual frameworks, this study focused on describing Korean ECE induction teachers' everyday events, and understanding the way they construed, conceptualized, and acted upon the world around them throughout these daily occurrences. The study was grounded in the assumption that identity is shaped and reshaped by the continued interweaving of self and others.

Related Literature

This study aimed to uncover the complexities of Korean early childhood induction teachers' identities and their everyday lives. Scholarly literature in multiple areas guided this study in pursuing this aim. The literature comprised conceptual discussions and empirical findings from three relevant areas, including *teacher identity, teacher induction, and induction teachers' lives* (See Figure 1 for illustration).
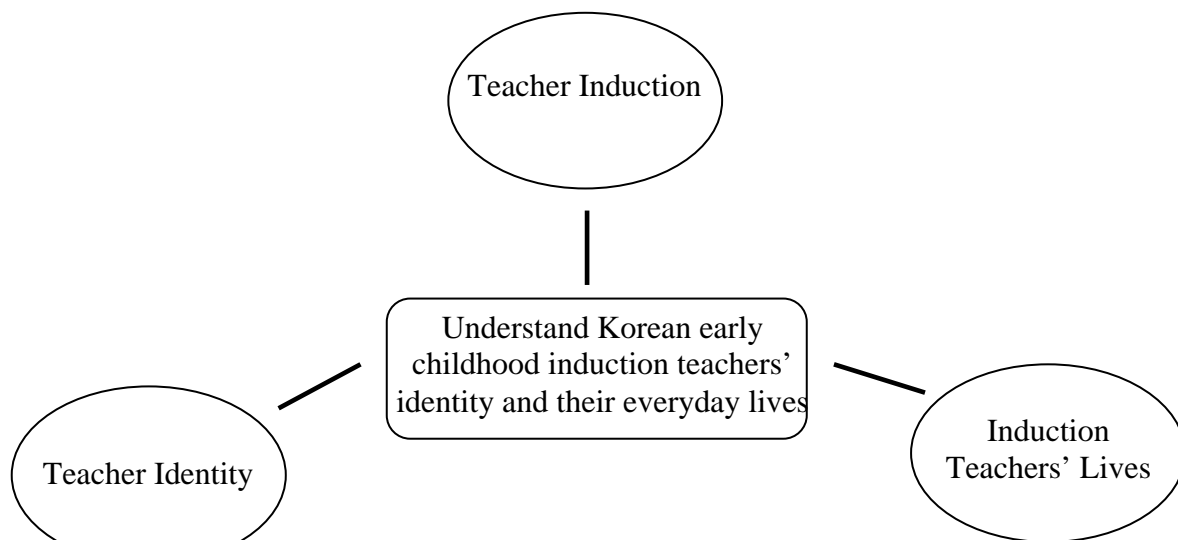
Figure 1. Three Dimensions of the Related Literature

Teacher Identity

In this study, the researcher used the term "teacher identity" because she explored the multiple identities teachers assume -- not only the teacher's internal one, but also external identities in a variety of relations, such as between teacher and others, teacher and institution, and teacher and culture. To recognize teacher identity is to understand the dynamic ongoing process teachers face as professionals in the teaching world. This is because the teacher "self" is central in constructing the way in which teachers interact with the world around them. Currently, studies of teacher identity continue to depend on each researcher's research questions, purpose of study, and the definition of identity. Scholars have used various terms in their studies: teacher identity (Flores & Day, 2006; Johnson, 2003; Morgan, 2004; Proweller & Mitchener, 2004; Sumara & Luce-Kapler, 1996), teaching identity (Varelas, House, & Wenzel, 2005), and professional teacher identity (Alsup, 2006; Doecke, 2004; Watson, 2006).

Researchers in the area of teacher identity have conceptualized identity in many different ways. Inspired by Plato, early scholars conceptualized the self as fixed and stable (Allport, 1955; Gee 2001). However, recently this perspective has been challenged because we cannot understand who a person is without considering the individual's contexts. Some researchers have thought about identity as a changeable and dynamic process which develops over time and varies by place (Lemke 2003; Watson, 2006). Currently, researchers tend to assert that identity is constructed and reconstructed through internalization and externalization among ourselves, others, and the external environment. In accordance with these ideas, researchers explain teacher identity in different ways. Table 1 shows current studies that have explicit definitions with respect to teacher identity.

Table1

Definitions of Teacher Identity

Year	Author(s)	Definition of Teacher Identity
2006	Søreid	Teacher identity is flexible and adaptive to the context and the relations each teacher is a part of.
2005	Day, Elliot, & Kington	Teacher identity stems from an interaction between personal experiences, and the social, cultural, and institutional environment. Teacher's commitment is related to teacher identity.
2005	Varghese, Morgan, Johnston, & Johnson	Teacher identity is constructed, maintained, negotiated through discourse. Teacher identity is a crucial component in determining how teaching is played out.
2005	Lasky	Teacher identity is how teachers define themselves to themselves and to others. Political and social contexts mediate teacher identity.
2004	Bejaard, Meijer, & Verloop	Professional identity not only answers the question, "Who am I at this moment?" but also, "Who do I want to become?" Professional identity implies both person and context.
2003	Johnson	Teacher identity shifts in teachers' relationships with people.
2003	Zembylas	Teacher identity is constituted through social interactions, performances, and daily negotiations within a school culture that privileges emotional self-discipline and autonomy.
2001	Drake, Spillance, & Hufferd-Ackles	Teacher identity is a sense of self as well as knowledge, beliefs and orientations to work.
2001	Sachs	Teacher identity is a culturally embedded, open, and shifting process.
2000	Beijaard, Verloop, & Vermunt	Teacher identity is related to aspects of teaching common to all teachers at a general level, implying subject-matter, didactic, and pedagogical expertise.
1998	Volkman & Anderson	Teacher identity is a complex and dynamic equilibrium between personal self-image and teacher roles one feels obliged to play.

Bejaard, Meijer and Verloop (2004) pointed out the lack of consensus on the definition of teachers' identity. Although different researchers define teacher identity in different ways, they agree on certain common characteristics. Many researchers believe that teacher identity is an ongoing process and that teachers' contexts influence their identity formation. In other words, teacher identity is not fixed or static, but can have an interpretation and a reinterpretation of experiences within the context.

In addition to defining the concept of teacher identity, some scholars have attempted to describe several components or characteristics that comprise teacher identity (Gohier, Chevrier, & Anadon, 2007; Lasky, 2003). Also, some scholars, such as Van den Berg (2002), have articulated the role of given contexts as well as individual psychological factors in shaping teachers' identities, noting "The assumption that teachers' meanings are not entirely determined by individual psychological factors was examined. The functioning of teachers is also influenced by the dominant political structures and culture within a school" (p.595).

As an attempt to clarify this complex area, three recent articles that used different approaches to defining identity were reviewed. Table 2 shows the different emphases and angles highlighted in each study.

Table 2

Different Aspects of Teacher Identity

Author (s)	Gohier, Chevrier, & Anadon, 2007	Singh & Richards, 2006	Zembylas, 2005
Theoretical Framework	Psychological dimension of the construction of the professional identity, in particular, the theory of identity	Critical sociocultural view of learning in context, in particular, perspectives of Lave and Wenger and Vygotskian models of cognitive apprenticeship	Poststructuralist view on emotion and identity in teaching, in particular, Foucauldian ideas
Definition of identity	Identity is a self construction process	Identity is constructed in relation to its particular activities and relationships.	Identity is understood as a result of power relations within discourse.
Conception of teacher identity	Teachers' professional identity can be defined as the representation which teachers have of themselves as teachers.	A person's identity plays a special role in teaching. [In teacher education] teacher identity is 'woven' through the ideologies, discourses, contents and approaches of the course, and the individual	Teacher identity is theorized as constantly *becoming* in a context embedded in power relations, ideology, and culture.

teacher's own desire to
find meaning in becoming
a teacher.

From a psychological viewpoint, Gohier, Chevrier, and Anadón (2007) conceptualized the construction of professional identity. In Quebec, these researchers studied how graduating student teachers in the last year of a university elementary teacher preparation program represented themselves and were linked to their professional identity. Four hundred and five third-year preschool and primary school student teachers completed a questionnaire based on ideological components such as professional occupation, religion, and life style and interpersonal components of identity such as friendship, gender roles, and leisure activities. In the same study, to explore how the personal and professional attributes varied according to the identity status of the student teachers, the researchers also interviewed seventy six participants. In their whole study, they implied that a humanistic approach in teacher education has led to "an idealized concept of the self and of the profession," and they advocated for teacher education in which student teachers understand who they are both as individuals and as teachers within "a more realistic portrayal of teaching" (p. 153). Their study focused on two aspects of teachers: both "as individuals" and "as future professional teachers," emphasizing the idea of "the whole person" rather than "the professional self". They articulated that the formation of teachers' professional identities is dynamic and interactive because there are internal or external conflict situations in the process. The results of their study indicated that there is not always a clear concordance between personal and profession attributes, but on the whole, there is some consistency.

According to Gohier, Chevrier, and Anadón (2007), identity statuses are not "static" or "definitive" but "may be conceived of as moments within a self-identity process which mainly evolves through conflicts" (p.143). Thus, according to these researchers, conflict plays a role in

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the development of a professional identity. Their study additionally found that there was strong concordance between personal and professional attributes that student teachers associated with themselves. However, the study did not shed light on why the attributes were meaningful to the student teachers or what contexts influenced the identities that the student teachers used to represent themselves. Moreover, the study did not explain the relationship between the internal and external locus of identity formation in detail. The authors argued for "an idealized conception of themselves and of the profession" (p. 141) but they did not synthesize how the idealized concepts influenced teacher identity formation in the particular context. Pointing out these perspectives of situated identity in context, the following scholars suggest different conceptions of teacher identity.

Drawing on sociocultural theory and identity construction, Singh and Richard (2006) explored how the social processes of the "course room"—teacher education classes—could contribute to professional learning. These researchers reconsidered the nature of teaching and learning in a language teacher education (LTE) course. They criticized the technical-rational discourses of language teacher education. Noting "the location of teacher-learning—the course room—cannot simply be taken as a given" (p. 151), they argued that teacher learning is not grounded in the dominant technical-rational discourse of teacher education, but created in a community of practice to be shaped and learned through engaging in activities and discourses, and mediated through cultural artifacts. For Singh and Richard (2006), a community of practice is "shaped by larger systems of power, which are reproduced in the micro-context of the course room" (p. 150). From the critical sociocultural perspectives employed in their study, Singh and Richard stressed that teacher education should focus on helping teachers become critical reflective practitioners. Furthermore, they articulated a belief that teacher education courses

should play a role in acknowledging the realities of power and ideology in daily practice, rather than transmitting given theories.

Singh and Richard (2006), drawing on Vygotskian perspectives of learning, emphasized that teachers are autonomous agents who are able to look at their own practices critically. Singh and Richard identified the zone of proximal development (ZPD) and mediation, key concepts of Vygotsky's cognitive development, to be socially mediated. They articulated a view of learning as a process of "apprenticeship" involving collaboration in social practices. Furthermore, Singh and Richard (2006) stressed that constructing new meanings, collaborations with teacher educators, mentors, and peers as mediators as well as mediating artifacts such as technology, course room layout, and handouts were crucial to teacher learning. In relation to the findings of their study, Singh and Richard argued that teacher identity is socially constructed. In addition, they clarified that teacher identity is also influenced by powerful ideologies, discourses, and activities that shape the practices of teacher education. They further argued that teacher education must be "sensitive to the conflicts in agendas and expectations, the power and status asymmetries, and the implicit ideologies at work—all of which impact on the behavior and attitude of teacher-learners" (p. 152).

In particular, drawing on Wenger's (1998) situated social perspective on learning, Singh and Richards (2006) conceptualized the LTE course as an emerging community of practice, which they defined as occurring when people jointly engage "in a mutual enterprise, with a shared repertoire of actions, discourses and tools" (p. 155). They saw induction teachers as becoming active teacher-learners through their participation in the community of practice of the course room. They explained,

The teacher-learners may initially enter this world at a marginal position, they acquire the agency to challenge this negative social position through interacting with cultural and social artifacts. Through their participation in the activities of the course room, teacher-learners grow into this world, gaining a sense of their position and standing in a community of practice. (p. 157)

Singh and Richards (2006) insisted that teacher identity is tied to the social practice in the LTE course room, and the knowledge of teacher learning in the course room is distributed across the community and not possessed by individual teachers. In other words, in the course, teachers' identity as learners was not static. Instead, it was a dramatic process across the community of practice that encouraged teachers to reshape their identity through theorizing their pedagogical practice. Thus, the course could not help but focus on creating active learners. Figure 1 illustrates how the LTE course affected teacher identity. According to Singh and Richards (2006), the construction of teacher identity relies on a teacher's social contexts, identities in practice, and situated social interaction. Mediation, discourses, activities, and artifacts within the course room also affected the identities in practice.
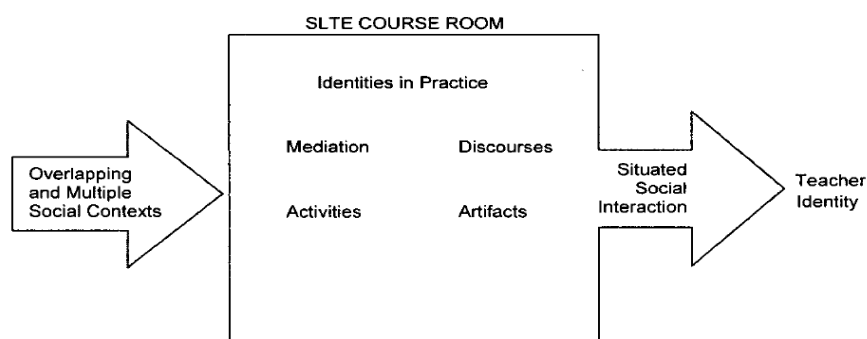
Figure 2. The Course Room as a Community of Practice (Singh & Richards, 2006, p. 154)

Singh and Richard (2006) pointed out that "becoming a member of a new community of practice is not just about learning new content but also about acquiring new practices, values,

and ways of thinking which enable particular identities to be realized" (p. 158). They stressed that the multiple discourses of the teacher-learners to be navigated in LTE have a powerful impact on teacher identity. However, in their study, they did not describe multiple discourses within teacher-learners, between teacher-learners, or by teacher-learners. Additionally, they did not explain in detail how power and status asymmetries are embedded in situated social interactions (e.g. experts and newcomers), although they did call experts "learning resources" (p. 155).

Finally, Singh and Richard (2006) did not concretely show how teacher identity in practice is constructed and reconstructed or how it relates to mediation, discourse, activities, and artifacts (e.g. textbooks). Nor did they show what are posed as the power and status asymmetries in practice, how teachers constantly negotiate their identities in relation to their particular contexts, or the relations between teacher identity and powerful ideologies. If, as Singh and Richards maintained, teacher identity and the community of practice in the course room are mutually constituted through participation, how then is teacher identity constructed and reconstructed in terms of resistance to change in the real teacher world? This view is what Zembylas (2005) presented in her Poststructuralist study.

From a poststructuralist view, Zembylas (2005) emphasized identity and relations with power in her study. Zembylas (2005) noted that studies in the line of poststructuralism have examined "the role of culture, power, and ideology in creating *emotion discourses* and highlight how teachers participate in this process by adopting or resisting these discourses" (p. 937). She criticized most sociological studies about teacher identity, focusing on the processes of identity construction in situated social situations. Zembylas (2005) conducted an ethnographic study of the emotions of teaching with one teacher who had early childhood and elementary teaching

experience. In her study, focusing on the ways in which a teacher understands, experiences, performs, and talks about emotions as aspects of identity, Zembylas (2005) described how a teacher constituted herself within discursive practices and power relations. Zembylas (2005) stressed that it is necessary for teacher identity "to be studied in the classroom and other school settings where teachers are emotionally engaged in how their selves come to be constituted" (p. 937). As her study suggested, Zembylas recognized teacher identity in relation to individual reality, social interactions, and sociopolitical contexts instead of formation by internalization from practice or experiences.

Zembylas's (2005) conception of identity was explained by Foucault's term "subjectivity", which emphasizes discourse of experience. Zembylas (2005) used Foucault's notion to describe power relations. She explained the significance of power relationships in terms of identity in the following way:

> Power relations are inherent in "emotion talk" and shape the expression of emotions by permitting us to feel some emotions while prohibiting others (for example, through moral norms and explicit social values, e.g. efficiency, objectivity, neutrality). Unavoidably, then, resistance is a part and power is productive. (Zembylas, 2005, p. 937)

According to Zembylas' interpretation of Foucault, discourse is not experience itself but is an integral concept to be subjected to social and historical contexts. Zembylas elaborated, explaining that "the concept of subjectivity implies that self-identity, like society and culture, is fractured, multiple, contradictory, contextual, and regulated by social norms (p. 938). Thus, according to Zembylas (2005), identity is never complete, but rather is continuously reconstituted in the discourse of experience.

Additionally, Zembylas (2005) paid attention to the conceptual framework of power manifested in discourse practice. She believed that discourse produces power in constituting identity. She found that teachers confronted discursive practices and power relations. In her case study of school policies, practices, and social conventions, she showed how a teacher was supposed to control her emotions and identity "appropriately." She asserted consequently, that teacher identity was produced and constrained through power in everyday life.

In summary, scholars have conceptualized different aspects of teacher identity. For example, Gohier, Chevrier, and Anadón (2007) focused on the developmental stages of identity that people pass through; they categorized the characteristics of each stage in terms of individuals and the environment. Singh and Richards (2006) used the concept of identity in relation to its particular activities and relationships; they described, from a sociocultural perspective, how teacher identity developed through activities, artifacts, discourse, and situated social interactions, in the context of a community of practice. Zembylas's (2005) notion of teacher identity shifted from a traditional view by emphasizing *who* the teacher is, pointing to *when, where, how,* and *why* the teacher is with great detail. Her interrogation of teacher identity was theorized in a complex context embedded in the power relations, ideology, and culture of a teacher's daily life.

Many studies on teacher identity have focused on linear change. (Hammerness, et al., 2005). Such studies tended to focus on development over time rather than the dynamic and complex nature of teacher identity in teachers' ongoing professional lives. However, Zembylas's study (2005) explored teacher identity by investigating the complexities embedded in power relations, ideology, and culture. The purpose of the present study was to understand how individual early childhood induction teachers shape and reshape teacher identity through the

ongoing daily events around them. Therefore, Zembylas's notion of teacher identity provided a powerful way of conceptualizing this study.

<center>***Teacher Induction***</center>

[The next generation of teachers] will only stay in the classroom if they feel successful and they are most likely to feel successful if they've received support in their jobs—specific, ongoing help from colleagues, administrators, and mentors—and been able to work in conditions that enable good teaching. (Baldacci, 2006, p. 13)

The Concept of Teacher Induction

The notion of teacher induction is a relatively recent one (The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2005). According to Horn, Sterling, and Subhan (2002), "The term induction was coined as early as the 1960s when it was equated with entry into school as a beginning teacher" (p. 4). After teacher induction was initiated at the Wisconsin Improvement Program in 1971 (Varah, Theune, & Parker, 1986), studies on induction teachers' socialization process flourished. Researchers were interested in the adjustment phenomenon of new teachers and in developing interventions for them (Griffin, 1985). Andes (1995) stated that teacher induction programs in the mid-to late 1980s were designed to support student teachers as *self-directing professionals* in response to political pressures and teacher attrition. Horn, Sterling, and Subhan (2002) argued from this perspective that, "the control of teacher preparation was transferred from the power of the universities to the local districts" (p. 5).

According to Wayne, Youngs, and Fleischman (2005), "Researchers still lack a clear definition of what induction means; however, what schools call 'teacher induction' may consist of as little as a one-day orientation program or a casual assignment of another teacher to act as a mentor" (p. 76). In general, teacher induction means the transition from being a student teacher to being a teacher of students (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). However, scholars who have researched

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teacher induction have interpreted it in different ways, viewing induction variously as a period of time, a program, or simply as entry into a school (Blair-Larsenm & Bercik, 1990; Horn et al., 2002).

Additionally, Wong, Britton, and Ganser (2005) defined induction as a concept culminating in a period of time and a program characterized by "a highly organized and comprehensive form of staff development, involving many people and components, that typically continues as a sustained process for the first two to five years of a teacher's career" (p. 382). More recently, Howe (2006) defined teacher induction as the process of becoming a professional teacher. Literature regarding research on teacher induction has included an emphasis on practices such as orientations, release time, mentoring, reduced teaching loads, observations, and group work (Horn et al., 2002; Humphrey et al., 2000; Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000; The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2005; Veenman, 1984). The Alliance for Excellent Education (2004) summarized research which suggests that the benefits of teacher induction for beginning teachers was to reduce attrition, improve teacher quality, and improve student achievement. Recently, Hebert and Worthy (2001) used empirical data, to show that research on induction teachers is increasing.

Historical Shifts in Teacher Induction

Images of teacher induction constantly evolve in response to its role in the dominant culture of teaching and learning. According to a report from the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (2005), "A system of induction should include a network of supports, people, and processes that are all focused on assuring that novices become effective in their work" (p. 4). The NCTAF report (2005) identified three broad historical phases in the changing nature of teacher induction. These phases included the 19th century factory model, the

20th century solo teaching model, and the 21st century learning community model. The next section will briefly discuss each phase of teacher induction based on these categories.

   19th century factory model. The notion of teacher induction in the 19th century factory model was non-existent. There were no external supports such as mentoring frameworks, teaching observations, assessment or evaluation. New teachers had the same workload as older teachers and sometimes were given extra duties. Teacher induction in the 19th century factory model is referred to as "sink-or swim" or "survival of the fittest" because only those who weathered the entry period remained teaching. Teachers in these 19th century traditional schools had to focus on closed-door solo teaching in isolated classrooms. If they left the profession they were viewed as interchangeable and easily replaced because there were little or no expectations for teaching growth. This stands in contrast to a focus on individual teachers' constant learning.

   The 20th Century solo teaching model. The status of a new teacher improved with the 20th century solo teaching model. This model was influenced by the fact that many teachers left before they became proficient educators. Also, the fact that inexperienced, underprepared teachers were concentrated in low-income schools became a social equity issue. According to the NCTAF report (2005), the use of an informal one-to-one buddy system provided emotional support for new teachers. The term *teacher induction* became popular, and the length of an induction program was considered one year. Induction teachers started to receive external supports such as evaluation summative assessments. Schools and districts were sometimes interested in mentoring new teachers, but this was not well organized. Mentors were frequently volunteers assigned to help induction teachers, although they had little or no training or accountability. New teachers of the 20th century solo teaching model "had gaps in skills and knowledge to be filled by random acts of professional development that led to a personal

teaching style" (NCTAF, 2005, p. 5). Their workload was still the same as that of veteran teachers, and they were often given extracurricular duties.

The 21ˢᵗ century learning community model. The status of induction teachers in the 21ˢᵗ century learning community model has significantly improved such that new teachers are considered as contributors to the school's learning community. As the NCTAF report (2005) notes, "Novice teachers have gaps in skills and knowledge, but also areas of expertise; they learn alongside experienced teachers in a community of learners that is continually evolving" (p. 5). Since today's teachers face truly complex challenges, both new teachers and veteran teachers need a type of support that can help them deal with the challenges. Hence, the design of this model focused on professional development for veteran teachers as well as for new teachers. In this model, induction programs increased in length to two to three years. Mentoring for teaching improvement of new teachers became more structured, and the training of mentors was ongoing. Also, new teachers were placed in less challenging assignments and given reduced workload without extra duties during their induction period. In this model, teachers had opportunities for reflection and self evaluation through teaching observation. The 21ˢᵗ century learning community model provided a professional community characterized by shared expertise, such that teachers were better prepared to respond to the increased complexities of schooling.

In short, the notion of teacher induction has changed from teacher-alone to teacher as part of a learning community. Rather than focus on induction teacher oriented activities only, the 21ˢᵗ century model of teacher induction focused on a social network designed to provide resources, learning, and support for all teachers. Also, the responsibility of teacher induction has moved from individual teachers to the realm of policies and partnerships.

Major Components of Teacher Induction for Support of Teachers

The need for support for induction teachers is well established in teacher education. Gold (1996) described the notion of support for beginning teachers as instructional-related and focused on developing teaching knowledge, skills, strategies and psychological support designed to build positive confidence, self-esteem, and stress management during induction periods. Gold (1996) believed that offering social support such as individual, group, and computer networks could "prevent the loss of talented, intelligent teachers early in their career" (p. 560).

High-quality mentoring. Generally, mentoring is a popular way to support teachers. However, Wong (2005) emphasized that the term *mentoring* is not a synonym for *induction.* Clarifying the distinction between induction and mentoring, he wrote:

> Induction is a noun. It is the name given to a comprehensive, coherent, and sustained professional development process that is organized by a school district to train, support, and retain new teachers, which then seamlessly progresses them into a lifelong learning program.
>
> Mentoring is most commonly used as a verb or adjective, because it describes what mentors do. A mentor is a single person, whose basic function is to help a new teacher. Mentoring is not induction; it is a component of the induction process (p. 43).

To date, there have been few research studies published that focus on mentoring in teacher induction. Why is mentoring a major component of teacher induction? According to Wong (2005), mentoring is a partnership between an experienced teacher and an induction teacher to support induction teachers. Essentially, mentors provide personal and emotional support for induction teachers. The NCTAF report (2005) noted that induction teachers have the chance to explore a variety of teaching strategies and resources through mentoring. Awaya, McEwan,

Heyler, Linsky, Lum, and Wakukawa (2003) looked at mentoring between mentors who were teaching in schools and student teachers who were seeking elementary or secondary certification. They found mentoring was a journey and involved building an equal relationship, sharing expertise, and providing moral support. Stanulis and Russell (2000) explored how two student teacher/mentor teacher pairs made sense of their roles at an elementary school across a six month mentoring period. They emphasized the importance of mutual mentoring in which all participants encourage each other and scaffold at appropriate times. Their findings suggested the importance of creating trust and having communication as integral components of mentoring.

However, Wong (2005) stressed, "The use of mentoring alone, without the other components of induction, is not supported by research as being a proven strategy" (p. 44). Scholars have noted that few studies have been conducted to examine specific mentoring practices and their effects on teaching (Bennetts; 2001, Little; 1990). In addition, many researchers have reported that the quality of mentors needs to be highlighted and that mentor teachers need training in various techniques for successful mentoring (Casey & Claunch, 2005; Fletcher & Barrett, 2004; Rippon & Martin, 2006; Rowley, 2005; Sweeny, 2005). Many studies have also investigated the use of release time and financial issues for effective mentoring (Horn et al., 2002; Sweeny, 2005).

Opportunities for collegial collaboration. Many studies have suggested that induction teachers can learn what they need from collaborative work with peer teachers, administrators, and principals. According to Spindler and Biott (2000), the relationship between peer teachers has changed from "structured support" of an individual to "emerging colleagueship." Schempp, Sparkes, and Templin (1999) noted the need for induction teachers to form scholarly communities. For instance, Wong (2003) suggested the notion of a "study group in which new

teachers can network and build support, commitment, and leadership" within a learning community. In particular, Stigler and Hiebert (1999) stressed the significance of "lesson study" to help induction teachers see themselves as contributing to the development of knowledge and focusing on the direct improvement of teaching in context in teacher induction. Williams, Prestage, and Bedward (2001) studied the significance of teacher culture during the first year of teaching using case studies in primary and secondary schools. Their findings highlighted the importance of collaborative cultures at both the school and individual teacher level to improve the quality of induction practice. They emphasized informal, unplanned and opportunist experience as the key to effective collaboration.

Adjustment to working conditions. Several studies have focused on how induction teachers must adjust to a new school culture upon accepting a job (Darling-Hammond, 1995; McGlamery & MacIssac, 1996, January; Plummer & Barrow, 1998). Wood (2005) studied how the school principal could serve as a key source of support and guidance for beginning teachers. In their study of induction teachers, Weiss and Weiss (1999), found that new teachers learned the philosophy, cultural values and sets of behaviors expected from veteran teachers assigned by the school. Additionally, Weiss (1999) studied how first-year public and private full time teachers perceived their workplace using nationally representative data. Exploring the relationships between perceived working conditions, commitment, and planned retention, she defined a more responsive environment for new teachers. In addition, Weiss found that a school culture including collaboration was strongly related to higher morale, stronger commitment, and intention to remain in a teaching job. The findings of her study highlighted the importance of providing supportive workplace conditions during the induction year for new teachers.

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Ongoing professional development. Professional development is intended to strengthen continued professional roles for teachers. Traditionally, professional development has been characterized by teachers taking part in regular seminars and meetings to improve their teaching knowledge, skills, and attitudes and to increase student learning for new teachers. The report Alliance for Excellent Education (2004) suggested that professional development should meet teachers' needs to expand content knowledge and address diversity. Fullan (1995) defined professional development as "the sum total of formal and informal learning pursued and experienced by the teacher in a compelling learning environment under conditions of complexity and dynamic change" (p.265). According to Fullan, because induction teachers are building teaching skills, professional development improves their teaching and learning. In other words, professional development for induction teachers is a "critical period" in shaping the rest of their careers (Ramsey, 2000).

However, Loucks-Horsley and colleagues (2003) argued professional development should not be an event but a process. Their studies noted professional development programs need to be made up of multiple approaches and offered simultaneously to different groups of teachers to meet their different needs. As an example, they suggested a professional development approach for novice teachers might focus on an inquiry immersion experience followed by mentoring. Additionally, from a postmodern perspective, Hargreaves (1995) defined professional development as an integration of "technical competence of teaching, the place of moral purpose in teaching, political awareness, acuity, and adeptness among teachers, and teachers' emotional attachments to and engagement with their work" (p. 26). This view stressed what individual teachers could bring to teaching that would influence their professional development. From a similar perspective, Dunne, Nave and Lewis (2000) studied the effectiveness of the Critical

Friends Group (CFG) program for teachers' collaborative professional development. They

focused on evaluating the professional development program from the perspectives of the

participants who had one to five years of teaching experiences. They found that the CFG

program facilitated thinking in terms of teacher learning at different phases of the teaching

process. They suggested ways in which teachers could be supported to develop their professional

knowledge and new pedagogical practices.

Induction Teachers' Lives

> First year teachers may hear "You can't" as often as they say it…I heard countless "You
> can'ts," cleverly disguised as "advice." "You can't take any crap." "You can't start out
> nice and then become strict." (Gould, 1996, p. 122)

Many studies in the educational literature have focused on induction teachers' lives. Yet,

it appears that the literature regarding induction teachers has taken different paths. Some scholars

view the lives of induction teachers as largely challenging (Berson & Breault, 2000; Sabar,

2004), while others represent it as a successful journey (Hebert & Worthy, 2001). Nonetheless,

the majority of studies have focused on a sense of difficulty stemming from induction teachers'

instantaneous socialization into the teaching profession (Brock & Grady, 1998; Lortie, 1975;

Ryan et al., 1980). For example, Sabar (2004) described the process of induction teachers'

adjustment to the teaching profession in Israel as comparable to the experience of migrant

workers. He explained that like migrants, induction teachers seem to leave a familiar culture and

move into a strange one where "the illusions, the hopes and expectations, the despair, the crises,

the sense of loss and grief [are] replaced by compromise, acceptance and adjustment" (p. 146).

Veenman (1984) called this type of induction teacher experience "reality shock." Concretely

focusing on teachers' stories, Baldacci's (2006) study described induction teachers' experiences

as "accounts of inattentive or abusive principals, inappropriate or unfair assignments, inadequate

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supplies, ad hoc approaches to discipline, insufficient time with other teachers, and insufficient

opportunities to grow" (p. 15). The next section will review the literature on induction teachers'

lives in terms of three categories: the problem of solo teaching in the classroom, the workload of

induction teachers, and the concerns and problems of induction teachers.

Solo Teaching in the Classroom.

Teacher isolation has been considered a problematic situation not only for induction

teachers but also for experienced teachers. Johnson (1990) pointed out that many teachers desire

to collaborate so as to receive help in their classes and teaching practices. However, as

Hargreaves (2000) noted, collaboration is demanding because of inadequate time and financial

support. Sabar (2004) stated, "Novice teachers come to school alone" (p. 149). Conducting in

depth-interviews with novice teachers, she compared their situations to those of immigrants. She

found that novice teachers were similar to marginalized people who could not be full members of

society.

Sometimes induction teachers receive informal advice from experienced teachers, but as

Paine, Fang, and Wilson (2003) mentioned, eventually the induction teachers themselves must

decide how they will teach in their own classrooms. Therefore, many scholars articulated the

need for dynamic social networks to overcome induction teachers' challenges. Drawing on the

social capital perspective of Coleman (1988), Sabar (2004) emphasized the appropriate role of

teaching organizations as support systems to mediate multiplex relations with other teachers.

According to Coleman, "Social capital comes about through change in the relations among

persons that facilitate action" (Coleman, 1988, p. 100). Baldacci (2006) insisted, "New teachers

yearn for professional colleagues who can help them acclimate to their school's unique culture,

help them solve the complicated, daily dilemmas of classroom teaching, and guide their ongoing

learning" (p. 21). Hence, in the name of teacher induction, many researchers have studied how social networks help new teachers adjust to school culture from the perspectives of the induction teachers.

Hiring and Workload of Induction Teachers.

Some studies of teacher induction have investigated the hiring and workload of induction teachers. Liu and Johnson's (2006) study found that induction teachers did not receive enough information about their schools in the hiring process. They explained, "Many new teachers are not hired until the summer, when school is not in session, few teachers are available to conduct interviews of prospective colleagues, and it is impossible for candidates to observe the school in action" (p. 351). Using a survey instrument, Liu (2005) explored new K-12 public school teachers' experiences of hiring. The findings of the study suggested that there was a need for districts and schools to provide prospective teachers with an information-rich hiring experience. The study revealed how good job previews were very important to the new teachers because they provided a comprehensive picture of the job and influenced job satisfaction.

Additionally, many researchers have reported that induction teachers have heavy workloads from the start. For example, Plummer and Barrow (1998) described how "new teachers are frequently given large classes with unmotivated students and assigned to schools with high rates of teacher turnover, large numbers of inexperienced staff, and apathetic parents" (p. 293). Liu and Johnson (2006) attributed these circumstances to the fact that induction teachers enter the school after existing teachers have already selected their assignments and resources. Oh (2006) also found that the hierarchical relationship of school culture plays a significant role in placing the extra workload on the shoulders of new teachers. For example, in Oh's (2006) description of the status of teacher induction in South Korea, she related how extra

duties were often given to early childhood induction teachers. In Korean culture, which expects respect for one's elders, she observed that early childhood induction teachers were at the bottom of the pecking order.

Concerns and Problems of Induction Teachers.

For the past forty years researchers have studied concerns and problems that occur in teaching. In Fuller's (1969) first conceptualization, she proposed a three phase developmental model of teacher concerns: (a) a pre-teaching phase of non-concerns, (b) an early teaching phase of self concerns, and (c) a late teaching phase of pupil or impact concerns. According to Fuller (1969), after gaining some teaching experience, teachers become more concerned about their abilities to manage the tasks of teaching. With regard to stages of teacher concerns, Katz's (1972) theory of preschool teacher development is the most detailed in outlining the stages. She extended Fuller's conceptualization, drawing on her own experience with preschool teachers. Concerned with the location, timing, and content of teacher education, she identified four stages of preschool teacher development: (a) the survival stage, (b) the consolidation stage, (c) the renewal stage, and (d) the maturity stage. These stages were identified in terms of preoccupation with specific kinds of concerns at different points in the teacher's careers (Katz, 1972, 1985).

Tsai (1990) conducted a mini-study with five American preschool teachers to explore their concerns in relation to Katz's theory. She found that, in general, the results confirmed Katz's posited stages of preschool teacher development and illustrated significant differences among groups in terms of teaching experiences, certification, educational background, inservice training, and teaching assignment. She suggested that preservice and inservice education should be based on teacher concerns. The body of research on teacher concerns and the stages of teacher

development implied that induction teachers in the initial stage need professional support such as seminars, institutes, courses, and degree programs for their growth and learning.

Other researchers have focused on studying problematic situations that induction teachers face. Gold (1996) noted that "most teachers enter teaching with a certain amount of idealism" (p. 555). According to Gold, when preservice teachers enter the real teaching context filled with *idealism*, they feel a lack of personal accomplishment. As a result, many variables enter into a teacher's decision to stay or leave teaching. However, as Baldacci (2006) stated, "regardless of the quality or duration of new teachers' preservice preparation, novice teachers must continue to learn long after they enter the classroom" (p. 22). In other words, novice teachers need to learn as teacher learners although they think they have already learned how to teach effectively as a consequence of their preservice teacher education. Research shows that in learning on the job, induction teachers experience many problematic aspects of teaching such as frustration, anxiety, and self-doubt, particularly when dealing with classroom management and individual differences among students. They find their teaching jobs different from what they expected (e.g., Korthagen 2001, Sabar; 2004). Many scholars have continued studies in relation to trying to understand teacher workplaces, job satisfaction, and specific problems in various contexts from induction teachers' perspectives (e.g. Gordon; 1991, MacDonald; 1995, Ryan; 1986, 1979). Hebert and Worth (2001) described some of the problems that such teachers face:

> First-year teachers overwhelmingly have difficulty managing student behavior and find discipline the focus of much of their attention and energy. Given little time to reflect, they feel overwhelmed and unsure of how to solve their problems, often lowering expectations to gain student compliance. (p. 898)

An additional concern noted by Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002) was induction teachers'

intense desire to be accepted by students, parents, teachers, and administrators. Induction

teachers in their study typically tried to do their best in order to gain self-confidence and

accomplishment with passion, enthusiasm, and energy because they knew some parents and

administrators expressed doubts when they were assigned in a classroom as a full time teacher.

Rust (1994) emphasized that although induction teachers have student teaching experiences in

preservice teacher education, they remain "largely unaware of organizational, administrative, and

interpersonal forces likely to influence their lives in schools" (p. 216). Hence, as Baldacci (2006)

suggests, induction teachers need to become dynamic learners to understand the culture and

philosophy of their schools, and the complex needs of the students, their families, and the

community.

However, other researchers stressed that induction teachers have differences as learners

in the same way that students have individual differences. For example, Darling-Hammond

(1997) investigated the level of skills required to obtain a teaching certificate and found that the

requirements varied considerably from state to state. Some teachers had very high skill levels in

places that required higher degrees such as a bachelor's or a master's degree. Others learned little

about their subject matter or about teaching, learning, and child development in places that had

low requirements for licensing.

Many scholars have suggested that teacher induction can support novice teachers in

developing their knowledge and bettering their skills in a specific context. Baldacci (2006), in his

study of induction teachers in cultures that lacked a teacher induction process, found that new

teachers "were demoralized and often felt ineffective with their students" (p. 15). On the other

hand, Wong (2003), in a study of successful teacher induction programs found that induction

teachers were characterized by sensitivity to teaching contexts, and as a result, had the potential

to develop a passion for lifelong learning and professional growth.

By conceptualizing the related literature, this study focuses on representing induction

teachers' real contexts in Korean early childhood education. Figure 3 below illustrates the key

themes of selected literature reviews in relation to teacher identity, teacher induction, and

induction teachers' lives.

```
                         Teacher
                         Identity


                                          Teacher Induction

  Induction Teachers' Lives                • High-quality mentoring

    • Solo in the classroom
                                           • Opportunities for
    • Rush hiring and extra                  collegial collaboration
      workload
                                           • Adjustment to working
    • Concerns and problems                  conditions
      in the teaching contexts
                                           • Ongoing professional
                                             development



                         Teacher
                         Identity
```
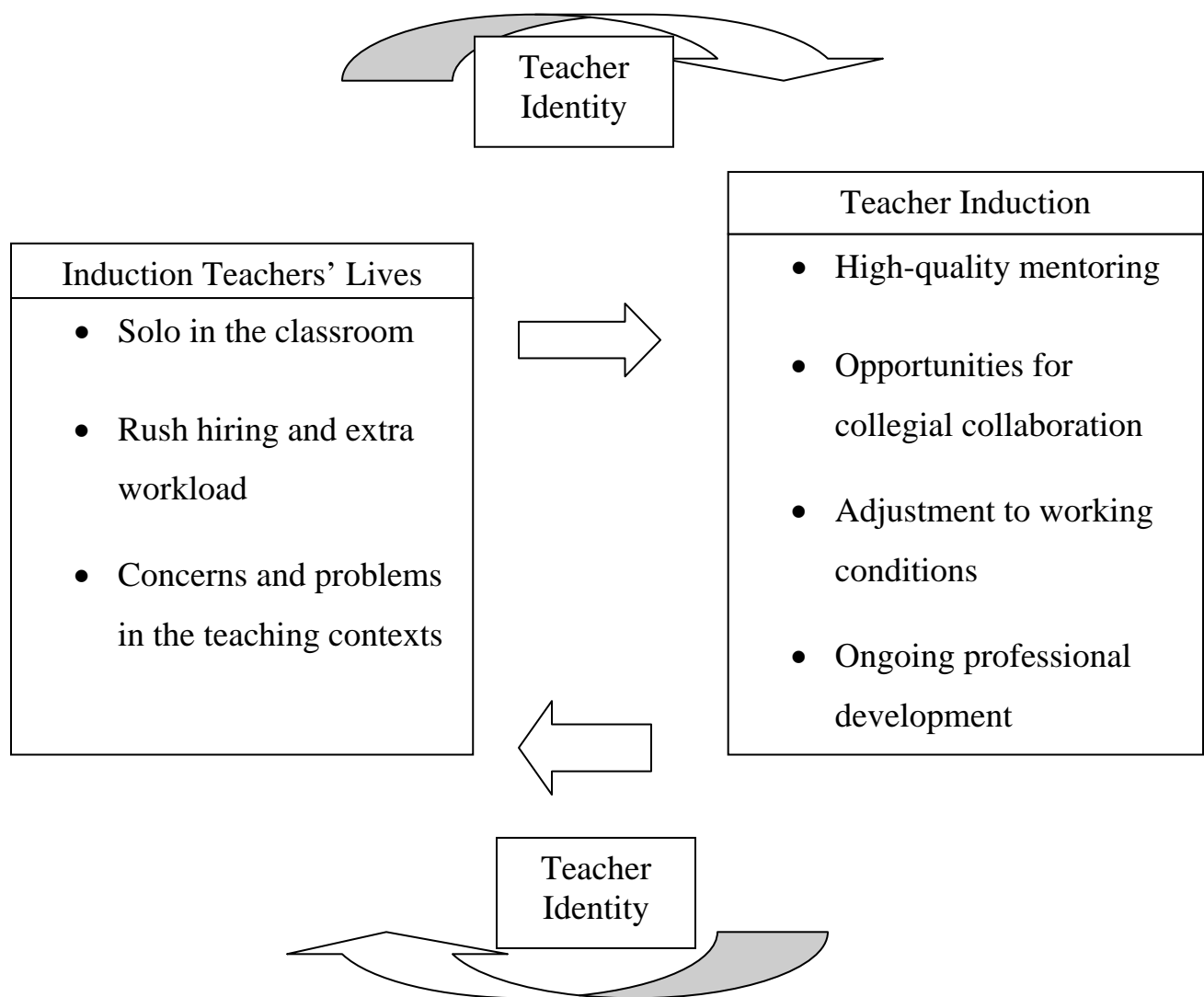
Figure 3. Key Themes in relation to Teacher Induction and Induction Teachers' Lives

Summary

In this chapter, initially conceptual frameworks that guided the research questions of this study were discussed. Although each of the conceptual organizing discussions in the previous section may seem somewhat disconnected from one another, each played an important role in understanding induction teachers' professional lives in reality. In the next section, literature informing three related areas -- teacher identity, teacher induction, and induction teachers' lives --was reviewed. The related literature review was crucial in gaining insight into the essential aspects of teachers' lives such as emotion, commitment, and social relationship in the teaching context. The studies of the first part of the literature review articulated that teacher identity is a dynamic ongoing process in the teaching world. Many scholars explored teaching as a complex and non-linear process. In the next section of the literature review, the focus was narrowed to teacher induction. Specifically, this section was a discussion of the concept of teacher induction and its historical development. This was followed by a review of literature focused on the use of teacher induction in support of teachers. Finally, studies that explored induction teachers' lives were discussed, as they provided contextual information on the research topic. Based on insights from the conceptual framework and literature review, detailed methodological and analytical considerations in relation to studying induction teachers' real contexts in Korean early childhood education are discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 3 – Methodological and Analytical Considerations

Overview

This chapter discusses the methods of inquiry, data collection and analysis for this qualitative research study. It also provides a rationale for using the case study approach and describes the procedure for adopting case analysis. The researcher's experience and background relative to the study are also described along with a discussion of how it might influence, to a certain extent, data interpretation. Some discussion about the nature of primary and secondary data sources is included. Finally, specific procedures for analyzing data are described and the processes for effectively managing data analysis are presented at the end of the chapter. In this chapter, an attempt has been made to describe the methodological approach and procedures that were employed to explore Korean early childhood induction teachers' identity, in the context of their everyday lives.

This chapter is composed of the following sections:

- Design of the Study: Case Study Approach
- Description of Research Site and Process for Gaining Access
- Context of the Study
- Participant Recruitment and Sampling
- Methods of the Study
- Data Analysis
- Data Collection Procedure
- Researcher Role and Ethical Considerations

- Establishing Trustworthiness

- Preview of Chapter 4, 5, 6, and 7

Design of the Study: Case Study Approach

Generally, in qualitative inquiry, the researcher uses inductive logic, studies the topic within a research context, and uses an emerging design. In doing so, qualitative research investigators work with details before generalizations, describe the context of the study, and continually revising their questions based on information acquired in the field. For this study, the researcher chose a case study approach to qualitative inquiry.

Based on the research questions, the researcher found case study to be useful in the following ways. First, the primary advantage of the case study is that "as the most complex strategy [case study] may entail multiple methods—interviews, observation, document analysis, even survey" (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 56). According to Yin (2003), case study focuses on an empirical inquiry that investigates "a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context" (p. 13). The research questions for this study were based on both "understanding the phenomenon" and "representing the teachers' lives." Thus, the research questions benefited from the "investigating a contemporary phenomenon" notion of the case study.

To uncover the complexities of Korean early childhood induction teachers' identities and social interactions, the researcher used a multiple case study (Stake, 2006). This case study is an in-depth investigation of how Korean early childhood education induction teachers perceived themselves as newcomers in the teaching world. Because a characteristic of case study is providing "a rich and thick description" (Merriam, 1998), this research typology was the best vehicle for providing "intensive descriptions and analyses of a single unit or bounded system such as an individual, program, or group" (p. 19).

By using a case study approach, the researcher aimed to present an in-depth understanding of the situation, describe the meaning for those involved, and include descriptions of each participant's background and real contexts. The boundaries or units for this case study were individual induction teachers who worked in a particular Korean early childhood education setting. In other words, each teacher was a case. Also, the researcher represented the participants in the contexts through cross-analysis of the individual cases (Stake, 2006). Thus, this multiple case study was an intrinsic and an instrumental case study (Stake, 1995, 2006) because the research purpose was not only to understand these particular teachers in an institution but also to give information to policymakers or practitioners as a real case. Another distinct advantage of a case study approach is that researchers can explore significant features of the case, create plausible interpretations and convey convincingly to an audience the argument or story (Bassey, 2006).

The research participants were four individual induction teachers working in the same early childhood school setting. Their stories and descriptive accounts of educational events in particular contexts deserve to be told to interested audiences. While many methodologies could be informative to the design of this study, case study as a research method was selected for the additional reasons.

The holistic nature of cases and multiple case study were suitable for this study. Sturman (1994) characterized the holistic nature of cases, which particularly fit with the research context of this study, as follows: "Case study researchers hold that to understand a case, to explain why things happen as they do, and to generalize or predict from a single example requires an in-depth investigation of the interdependencies of parts and of the patterns that emerge" (p. 61). Understanding what constitutes Korean early childhood induction teacher identity is a very

complex issue that was difficult to answer specifically. Thus, the efforts of in-depth

investigations were the most effective in handling the complexity. Additionally, describing what

constitutes Korean induction teachers' everyday lives called for a multiple case study. As Stake

(2006) stated, "An important reason for doing the multicase study is to examine how the program

or phenomenon performs in different environments" (p. 23). The individual induction teachers'

lives had diverse contexts. Hence, cross-case analysis provided good opportunities to learn about

complexity and contexts through the mediational experience of induction teachers.

Description of Research Site and Process for Gaining Access

Feldman, Bell, and Berger (2003) stated, "Access is not something that happens before

and outside the research but is part of the research process" (p. 5). For this study, the selection of

a research site was a sensitive task. The researcher considered a carefully planned entry process

to establish the groundwork for good rapport and collaboration because gaining access is critical

in qualitative research. In designing this study, the researcher decided to focus on induction

teachers, who were early childhood teachers working in a preschool or a child care center.

Gaining entry required establishing a professional relationship between the researcher

and administrator, in that the data were collected from observing teachers' lives in the natural

setting of the center as well as from interviewing participants. As Bogdan and Biklen (1992)

noted, however, "all sites are not as easy or as interesting to research" (p. 61). After choosing

early childhood preschools and child care centers located in the city where the researcher lived,

the researcher invited potential research sites to participate voluntarily in this study via electronic

mail. However, the researcher did not receive any responses. Thus, the researcher called the

institutions directly and explained who she was and the purpose of the research in detail. After

meeting with some directors individually, only two directors were interested in the research.

However, they did not agree to participate in the study at the meeting and asked for some time to think about it. The directors justified their delayed response by saying they believed that the teachers were very busy and did not have time to take part in the study. The researcher wanted to meet the teachers to explain the study, but did not initially do so because she respected the directors' authority and understood the directors' point of view since she had at one time been a preschool teacher in South Korea. Fortunately, the researcher received a call from the director of "Sarang School" (a pseudonym) and was invited to use the school as her research site.

Feldman, Bell, and Berger (2003) stressed that the preparatory learning process of a study is important in order to gather information in person. As they noted, in reference to the potential of initial interviews, "it is important that the researcher approach these encounters in a way that shows one to be reliable, trustworthy, and open to all the site has to offer" (p. 6). The initial interview with the director of Sarang provided a wealth of information about the institution as a research site and helped the researcher develop contacts with the participants of this study.

<center>**Context of the Study**</center>

The research site for this study, Sarang School, was located in the city of Mirae (a pseudonym) in southwest Korea. The school opened in March 2007 and was operated by a province (Korea has eight provinces) for the purposes of education and family service. Housed in the annexed building of a government facility, the center served 120 children in six programs: Infants, Young Toddlers, Older Toddlers, Three-Year-Olds, Four-Year-Olds, and Five Year-Olds. In particular, the early childhood education department of Somang University (a pseudonym) played a role in advising the institution in such areas as management, administration, and teaching. The center also offered an inclusion program for children with special needs. To enroll in the program, parents were required to place their child on a waiting list; selection was based

<center>45</center>

on sibling status, affiliation with the government faculty in which the school was housed, date of application, and age of the child.

Sarang School, staffed by eight teachers and a director, offered an all-day program from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The classrooms, divided into play areas and storage areas for teachers, contained tables, chairs, toys, easels, and supplies. Outside the classroom was a playground with an assortment of toys, bikes, scooters, wagons, swings, a slide, and toy storage.

Participant Recruitment and Sampling

This study focused on understanding induction teachers' lives at the intersection of social, economic, historical and cultural contexts. Thus, the decision was made to select induction teachers working in the same institution rather than selecting teachers from different institutions. This allowed the researcher to present a deeper description of participants' lives in a natural setting. A purposeful sampling (Merriam, 1998) strategy was used to select participants that had particular characteristics suitable for the research. These characteristics included the following criteria: Korean early childhood teachers with national certification; induction teachers in the transition from being a student teacher in pre-service teacher education to being a teacher in in-service teacher education; teachers in the same school. Using purposeful sampling, four induction teachers working in Sarang School in 2008 were invited to take part in the study. Although the potential number of participants depended on how many induction teachers were working in Sarang School in 2008, for sampling purposes, the target number of induction teachers comprised four respondents. This number supported a balance between observations and interviews as well as allowing the researcher to focus on the deeper understandings of participants.

After the researcher obtained official approval for the study from the center, potential participants were contacted. According to the director, the exact number of teachers meeting the selection criteria would be known by February 2008 because the new school year starts in March 2008 in South Korea. However, the director expected that Sarang School would hire three more new teachers. After the teachers were hired in February 2008, the director was asked to identify a list of eligible teachers in the center; they were contacted individually via email.

In the course of email exchanges encouraging participation, induction teachers were provided with the following information: personal information on the researcher, an overview of the study, a description of the research process, and an explanation of how their participation might be personally valuable to their professional growth. In the event that the study aroused concern about the privacy of the participants, such as accidental disclosure of personal histories, teachers were assured that participation was voluntary, and that no identifiable information would be revealed in any records during data collection. Participants were also assured that they would receive no penalty or prejudice from refusing to participate in this study. In order to ensure confidentiality, participants were assured that only the investigator would have access to the data, and although it was retained for further analysis, no identifiers would be attached to the tapes and fieldnotes. In addition to the assurance of confidentiality, it was stressed that the purpose of the study was not to evaluate or judge but to learn and understand, and that the researcher's primary role in the institution would be as an observer, with interviews based on these observations.

In particular, the participants had an opportunity to have any of their questions answered in a pre-conference prior to signing the consent form. The pre-conference stressed that the study would potentially result in emancipatory benefits by reflecting the voices of induction teachers:

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It was hoped that induction teachers would be able to identify their sense of self in early childhood education through the study. The researcher also explained how the results could potentially benefit teachers and teacher educators interested in early childhood education by providing implications not only for educational policy makers, but also for those interested in teacher induction programs. In the end, the researcher explained how often she would observe and conduct interviews, and obtained permission from each teacher to take field-notes and photographs, and to use audio tapes.

The next chapters—four, five, six, and seven—describe the four early childhood education induction teachers who were participants of this study in detail. Briefly, all the participants were Korean women in their 20s. There were all born and educated in the southwest of South Korea and had one or two years of teaching experience in 2008. Table 3 briefly lists the characteristics of the participants.

Table 3

Participants in this study

Name (Pseudonym)	Birth Year	Degree	The First Year of Teaching	Class They Teach
Jina	1979	Two Bachelor's degrees (engineering, early childhood education)	2007	Four year olds' classroom
Sunny	1986	Bachelor's degree (early childhood education)	2008	Three year olds' classroom
Hemin	1985	Bachelor's degree (early childhood education)	2008	Three year olds' classroom
Aram	1984	Bachelor's degree (early childhood education)	2007	Two year olds' classroom

Methods of the Study

To understand the experiences of individuals in this study, five primary data sources were used: (1) field observations, (2) focus group discussion, (3) individual interviews with

participants, (4) field notes, and (5) photoessays. The secondary data sources included the researcher's journal and artifacts such as e-mail messages, pictures, newspapers, school handouts, and lesson plans. Case data from each source in this study were complementary and helped the researcher understand teacher identity and individual teacher's lives. The researcher obtained IRB approval for data collection in Spring 2008. The data were collected from April -August 2008. After signing an informed consent form, each participant took part in three semi-structured individual interviews (Merriam, 1988) and two focus group discussions. The interviews and group discussions were conducted in Korean by the researcher, a Korean. All observations were recorded with field logs and notes. All the raw data were transcribed first in Korean using a word processing program, and later translated into English. Each participant was provided with an initial draft of their case study written in Korean, so they could indicate any aspects of the narrative that made them uncomfortable in terms of inclusion in the study.

Field Observations

Field observations were an important data source for the study. Observations of participants working in the early childhood education institution provided insights into their teaching practices and the context in which they worked. An attempt was made to observe everything in great detail, including not only teachers' lives in the classroom but also the important moments in school settings outside of the classroom. For instance, observations took place in settings such as teachers' professional meetings, which were a regular part of their daily schedules in school. The observations also served as a source of interview questions. In the interviews, participants were asked to describe aspects of their lives observed during the observations.

Participants were asked not to make any changes in their work because of the researcher's presence. Extensive observations helped address the concern of observer effect. However, the researcher's presence in the natural setting inevitably had some effect on teachers' work. Participants were assured that the researcher's primary role during classroom observation was that of a "complete observer" (Merriam, 1998), who would observe without interfering, unless a child was in danger. For the classroom observations, each participant was observed for a two to three hour period once a week. However, observation times were negotiated with participants prior to the start of the study. The researcher usually sat in the back of the classroom, consistent with the role of an observer. By actually observing teachers' classroom practices and taking field notes, the researcher attempted to capture the details of what teachers' lives were like in their classrooms. Prior to the start of the study, permission was obtained from the school director and from participants to observe school events, professional meetings, and informal meetings such as break time and lunch time.

Focus Group Discussions

The focus group discussions lasted approximately one and a half hours each and were audiotaped. The focus group discussions in the study were intended to reduce the distance between participants and the researcher and produce rich data. The skills a researcher needs for conducting focus group discussions are similar to those needed for individual interviewing. Yet, the group facilitator needs to be careful because group discussions have some problems not found in individual interviews. For example, the facilitator should make an attempt to obtain responses from the entire group and must balance "the directive interviewer role with the role of moderator" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005, p. 704).

On a continuum ranging from semi-structured to open-ended, the focus group discussions in this study fell somewhere in the middle. A list of questions was developed in advance to guide the discussions. The focus group discussions consisted of two activities. The first group discussion included a dilemma analysis activity based on a case developed by the researcher. The participants were asked to read the case in advance. The case provided a specific story connected with the teaching and learning context. The case, taken from a case book of Neuharth-Pritchett, Payne, and Reiff (2004), was a kindergarten classroom teacher's story about the first day of teaching in the new academic year. The induction teacher in the case had struggles in preparing for her first day of teaching and described how she cooperated with other teachers. This case-based approach was used to promote the creation of a community of learners. The researcher hoped that through critical reflection on the case, the teachers would analyze and problem solve complex and diverse situations about the topic (Neuharth-Pritchett et al., 2004). During the focus group discussion, the participants analyzed and criticized the dilemma-based case.

The second focus group discussion centered around a photoessay activity. Photoessay as a reflective inquiry tool helped teachers make sense of situations in their classrooms and school by providing them with "opportunit[ies] to critique…events experienced, issues of empowerment, change processes, or perhaps negotiate alternative views of teaching and learning" (Nichols et al., 1997, p. 178). Prior to the second focus group discussion, the participants prepared their own photoessays. In the pre-conference, the researcher provided a disposable camera for each participant and explained the process of constructing a photoessay. The participants took pictures collecting meaningful or challenging scenes in their everyday school lives with the camera. They wrote meaningful reflections corresponding to the pictures. In the second focus group discussion, participants brought the photoessays to share and discuss with group members. The photoessay

activity, which used a photo-interview approach (Grbich, 2004) served as a springboard for the focus group discussion. In particular, examination of the teachers' photoessays and of the discussion that surrounded them helped the researcher understand what the everyday lives of induction teachers looked like from their own perspectives. A sample photoessay is included in the appendix of this study.

Interviews

The individual interviews lasted approximately one and a half hours each, followed procedures for qualitative interviewing (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005), and were audiotaped. As stated above, by observing the participants working in the school, the researcher hoped to gain a better understanding of the context in which teachers worked. The observations of teachers in their natural school setting served as a source of interview questions. The individual interviews were another primary data source. The researcher tried not to evaluate participants based on her own personal interests, but rather tried to understand their voices. Three semi-structured interviews were conducted with each participant (Merriam, 1998). A list of guiding questions based on research questions and observations were prepared prior to each individual interview.

The individual interviews served many purposes. Each interview stemmed from the researcher's informal and formal observations in school. The interview questions are included in the appendix of this study. In the first interview, the conversation focused primarily on participants' previous experience, their central ideas in teaching and learning, and the ways in which they saw themselves as individuals and professionals. In the second interview, participants were asked about their views of children, parents, and peer teacher cooperation; they were also asked to share stories about a significant teaching experience. The last interview focused on their

views of Korean society and early childhood education. In addition, participants had opportunities to clarify the researcher's observations and reflect on data from other sources.

Secondary Data Sources

The researcher collected e-mail messages, pictures, newspapers, school handouts, and lesson plans from each participant. By reviewing a collection of these anecdotal materials, the researcher hoped to understand the background and historical context of the research site, and collect other data which might shed insight into the identity and everyday lives of the participants. Additionally, the researcher kept both paper and audio journals to systematically track her thoughts, memos, and questions throughout the whole process.

Data Analysis

In qualitative research, data analysis can run simultaneously with the data collection process (Merriam, 1998). According to Patton (2002), "Case analysis involves organizing the data by specific cases for in-depth study and comparison" (p. 447). In this study, case analysis was integrated with narrative analysis (Manning & Cullum-Swan, 1994) and a grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

In narrative analysis, the stories from the participants are both personal and social, reflecting a person's life history and the working contexts where they live (Chase, 2005, Riessman, 1993). In the present study, narrative analysis was based on the participants' photoessays, interviews, conversations, field notes, journals, and e-mail messages between teachers and researcher. In addition, the researcher focused on the narrative of the school as an institution and on the stories of each teacher's experiences within that school in a deeper and more complex way by using their stories. In the integration of representational and presentational

narratives, teachers' words or stories captured their thoughts, beliefs, and feelings. Through this analysis approach, the teachers' narratives were analyzed and portrayed the teachers' lives.

Additionally, a grounded theory approach including constant comparison, open-coding techniques and memo-writing, was used to guide case analysis. The researcher identified tensions that gave insight into the induction teachers' identities and lives as early childhood educators in South Korea. She kept asking questions of the data and wrote journal reflections. With respect to the open-coding process, the researcher underlined words, phrases, and sentences and wrote codes in the margin. When there were repeated words or phrases, she highlighted them using different colors for constant comparison. She attempted to develop categories and generate descriptions of tensions that illustrated how identity influenced teaching experience and practice. The findings were shared with the teachers for the purpose of member checking. Figure 4 depicts the procedure for initial data collection and analysis and further data collection.

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                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │    Research Questions    │
                    └─────────────────────────┘
                               │
                               ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│  Collect Data: discussion, interviews and observations of the first round │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                               │
                               ▼
                 ┌───────────────────────────┐
                 │        Open Coding         │
```

Research Questions

Collect Data: discussion, interviews and observations of the first round

Open Coding

Memo Writing

Member Check

Identify Categories

Preparation for further data and analysis:

Describing Tensions

Making Sense of Tensions (Interpreting)

Figure 4. Analysis Procedures

Data Collection Procedure

The narrative analysis and grounded theory approaches influenced the course of the research procedures. The procedures of the study were comprised of three integrated phases: The first phase was an orientation to the study and included activities related to that goal. The second phase was the data collection and analysis phase. The third phase was the data interpretation and writing phase.

Data collection required approximately five months with a total of fifteen individual interviews, two focus group discussions, at least one formal classroom observation of each participant every week, and frequent informal observations in the natural school setting. Table 4 presents the specific procedures along with the timeline of this study.

Table 4

Procedures and Timeline

Phases	Sessions	Tasks	Timeline
Phase 1: Study Orientation	Sample Selection	Recruit the group of induction teachers	March 8-March 24
	Pre-Conference with Participants	• Introduce the research • Explain the research procedures • Introduce the data collection methods	March 25-March 31
Phase 2: Data Collection & Data Analysis	First Round	Conduct interview with each participant	April 1-April 10
		Observe participants in the natural school setting	April 1-May 15
		Conduct focus group discussion	May 13
		• Synthesize the interview responses, group discussion, and observations • Revise the second round interview protocol	May 10-May 15
	Second Round	Conduct interview with each participant	May 16-May 31

		Observe participants in the natural school setting	May 16-June 30
		Conduct focus group discussion	June 26
		• Synthesize the interview responses, group discussion, and observations • Revise the third round interview protocol	June 26-June 30
	Final Round	Observe participants in the natural school setting	July 1-August 10
		Conduct interview with each participant	August 1-August 7
		Synthesize the feedback from participants	August 11-August 30
Phase 3: Findings		Data interpretation and writing	September 1-January 31, 2009

Constant Comparative Analysis

Specifically, a constant comparative analysis was conducted to analyze the data. Charmaz (2006) defined the constant comparative method as "a method of analysis that generates successively more abstract concepts and theories through inductive processes of comparing data with data, data with category, category with category, and category with concept" (p. 187). This analytic method of constant comparison involves exploring a full range of complexity because of continually shifting and comparing of elements based on emergent concepts of existing and new data. In particular, Pidgeon and Henwood (2004) pointed out that "similarities and differences are central to promoting dense conceptual development" (p.637). To explore similarities and differences of data is a dynamic and highly interactive process in grounded theory. Thus, through the constant comparative method, the researcher can compare every possible permutation of data categories. Pidgeon and Henwood (2004) explained that highlighting, cutting, pasting and re-sorting photocopies of documents or transcripts are traditional approaches used in a constant comparative method. During the three rounds of data collection, the researcher simultaneously

watched for phrases and concepts that reoccurred in the transcriptions and compared them to discover emerging patterns and themes in the data. These identified consistencies and patterns then were categorized based on similarities. As Strauss and Corbin (1990) described, this procedure helps researchers to give "the concepts their precision" and "specificity" (p. 63). Due to the ongoing analysis through every round of data collection, the findings were subsequently integrated into the interpretations.

Open Coding

Charmaz (2006) pointed out that coding can make a significant link between collecting data and developing themes. Through the coding process, a researcher can define and discover what is happening in the data (Charmaz, 2003). Strauss and Corbin suggested three different ways of approaching the open coding: (a) line-by-line analysis (phrase by phrase and even sometimes single words); (b) code by sentence or paragraph; (c) an entire document, observation, or interview analysis. Using this open coding approach, the researcher synthesized, explained, and conceptualized larger segments of data.

Memo-writing

Memo-writing was one of the important steps between data collection and analysis. According to Pidgeon and Henwood (2004), "the contents of memos are not constrained in any way and can include: hunches, insights; comments on new samples to be checked out later; deliberations about refinements of file cards; and explanations of modifications to categories" (p. 638). Therefore, by writing memos, the researcher hoped to capture teachers' emergent ideas, directions, and questions to pursue. In a word, memo-writing is a conversation between the researcher and the data in search of insights and new ideas. Using memo-writing, the researcher captured many ideas that helped her develop relevant themes.

Researcher Role and Ethical Considerations

> The move to individually responsible research and respect for others should not be too difficult if we agree with Mikhail Bakhtin (1990), who has suggested that the other already inhabits the self as one of the many voices absorbed during identity formation as an interactive member of different social groups. This provides our basic humanity—our empathy and understanding of others. (Grbich, 2004, p. 90)

In qualitative research, the quality of the study depends on how well the researcher builds relationships with the participants (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). In this study, as the researcher listened to the multiple voices of participants, she was both an insider and an outsider. She was an insider because she had worked in a Korean preschool for three years and taught preservice teachers for two years. She was also an outsider because she had never met the participants, induction teachers. Her role as a researcher was to represent the experience and teaching lives of participants from outsider perspectives as well as insider perspectives. In doing so, the establishment of trust was crucial in the study. Hence, under the dimension of procedural ethics (Ellis, 2007), the researcher took time to tell participants about the purpose of the study and its potential contributions as well as providing an informed consent form in the process of gaining entry (Feldman, Bell, & Berger, 2003).

Above all, to protect their rights to privacy and confidentiality, the participants' names were not attached or referred to in any publication or presentation developed from this study. As a precaution to protect participants from disclosures, recorded interview tapes were stored in an office in a locked drawer. Only the researcher had access to the tapes for transcription and coding purposes. Alphabetic codes were used in the transcripts to link the data to identities, with the records and the transcripts to be destroyed prior to ten years from the conclusion of the study.

Also, under the dimension of "ethically important moments" (Guillemin & Gilliam, 2004), the researcher experienced unexpected situations in the course of the study. For example,

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because the researcher was interested in power relations between induction teachers and peer teachers in the school, participants sometimes felt uncomfortable answering questions. When the unexpected situations arose, the researcher discussed the difficulties with the participants, underlining her belief that participants should benefit from the study.

Establishing Trustworthiness

Marshall and Rossman (2006) argued that it is important for researchers to "respond to canons of quality—criteria against which the trustworthiness of the project can be evaluated" (p. 200). Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested a new concept called *trustworthiness* as an appropriate criterion for qualitative inquiry. They asserted that trustworthiness responds to the question, "How can an inquirer persuade his or her audiences that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of?" (p. 290). Marshall and Rossman (2006) summarized the four trustworthiness criteria developed by Lincoln and Guba (1985): credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Credibility

According to Marshall and Rossman (2006), "The credibility/believability of a qualitative study that aims to explore a problem or describe a setting, a process, a social group, or a pattern of interaction will rest on its validity" (p. 201). They implied that an in-depth description should satisfy the readers as they will assess the credibility based on their perspectives. Lincoln and Guba (1985) maintained that in order to establish credibility, the reconstructions of data must be credible to the respondents. Hence, to establish the credibility for both respondents and eventually the readers of the study, the researcher used the following strategies.

Triangulation. Triangulation, according to Denzin (1970), is an approach that has identified a variety of data sources, the use of several different researchers, the use of multiple

perspectives to interpret a data set, and the use of multiple methods or theories in order to confirm the findings. Multiple sources involve "multiple copies of one type of source (such as interview respondents) or different sources of the same information" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 305). Specifically, this study triangulated data sources from data collection including the group meeting with the participants, semi-structured individual interviews, focus group interviews, and observations in the natural setting. Another aspect of triangulation of this study was member checking. Member checking refers to "taking data and tentative interpretations back to the people from whom they were derived and asking them if the result is plausible" (Merriam, 1998, p. 204). In this study, member checking was incorporated in the procedures of data collection. The interview responses of each round were synthesized and distributed to the participants in order to verify the interpretations. The responses were then modified based on the participants' feedback and reflected in the interview questions for the next interviews. Information was circulated between each participant and the researcher throughout the study. Finally, the participants were asked to do a final check to ensure that their responses were adequately represented and that they were comfortable with how their responses were depicted. In sum, constant member checking occurred throughout the data collection process in this study.

Reflections: Journaling. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), a journal consists of personal reflective notes that "record (a) variety of information about (the) self and (the) method" (p. 327). As the study included an interactive data collection between observations and interviews, it was critical to make notes to document personal progress. The researcher kept paper and audio journals to systematically track thoughts, memos, and questions throughout the whole process.

Transferability

Transferability questions whether the findings of a study will be useful to others in similar situations with similar questions (Marshall and Rossman, 2006). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), transferability is, in a conventional sense, not possible to establish in a qualitative study. Marshall and Rossman (2006) argued that "a qualitative study's transferability or generalizability to other settings may be problematic, at least in the probabilistic sense of the terms" (p. 202). These researchers believed that transferability may be possible only by providing a thick description that enables readers to make their own judgments. While it was difficult to address transferability within the design of the study, the researcher attempted to make rich descriptions in the presentation of the research process and results.

Dependability and Confirmability

Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested using inquiry audit as a major technique for establishing both dependability and confirmability. This is made possible thorough examination of both the process and the product of a study. In order to provide an audit trail, the researcher kept all the raw data including electronically recorded materials, written notes, data reconstruction, and synthesis products. Additionally, the researcher kept a journal that consisted of her personal reflective notes. As the study included many data collection methods, it was critical to make notes to document personal progress. In addition, the researcher discussed the on-going investigation with colleagues. Such discussions served the purpose of "peer debriefing" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985 p. 243). This process was helpful in developing interview questions and in analyzing the data.

Preview of Chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7

Chapters four, five, six, and seven consist of the description of each participant as a case. The first part of each chapter is the participant's biography. This description is intended to help the readers understand the personal background and experiences of each participant before becoming a teacher. The main part of each chapter is the description of each teacher's life which emerged from the data including each participant's teaching context. A description of the teaching context allows for a better understanding of each participant's struggles and tensions as a teacher. In addition, the context conveys not only how each participant identified herself as an early childhood teacher but also what the negotiations entailed for her on a daily basis.

Chapter 4 - *Jina's Teacher Life: "Now I am like Cinderella [before the ball].*

But I am Still a Hopeful Teacher."

"Teaching is often discussed as discrete behaviors or universal practice. Teaching is often dissected, and subjected to detailed analysis. While some of the effort brings knowledge and insight, much of it does violence to something fundamental in teaching, that is, that teaching cannot exist outside of a person, and people cannot exist outside of situations. While computers can do many things teachers do, for the computer the doing has no deeper significance. It is not simply that computers do what human intelligence and interest tell them to do; it is that computers lack intention. Teachers have intentions, desires, motives, and goals. Teachers exist and make choices in context." (Ayers, 1989, pp. 140-141)

Jina worked at Sarang School with age four children. Formal and informal interviews with Jina often revealed that her experiences differed from those of the other early childhood educators' at her school. Jina said that she entered early childhood education late, and had a strong desire to be an educator in this area. However, when she encountered actual field experience as an early childhood teacher, she faced many struggles and tensions because of the exhausting workload and her relationships with other faculty members. Nevertheless, Jina did not give up her hope of becoming a contributor as an early childhood teacher for young children.

Jina's Biography

Jina was 5'4'' tall with medium-length dark brown hair. She usually wore a teacher's uniform, a dark blue one-piece dress, earrings, and a hairpin. She often wore a yellow cardigan over the uniform when she felt that it was cool inside of the classroom. Everyday she enjoyed drinking a cup of coffee while doing her paper work when the children had nap time after lunch. Sometimes she had tea in the hallway with her neighboring classroom teacher during the nap

time. Jina was born in 1979; she was old, when compared with the other classroom teachers, as she obtained her bachelor's degree in early childhood education when she was in her late 20s. She started attending an early childhood education teacher education program after finishing a bachelor's degree in engineering. In the first interview, she talked about her life experience, as follows:

> After my high school graduation, I entered the four year university and my major was engineering at that time. After the bachelor's degree, I was at home without doing anything. I really want to have a professional job. So I searched for something special as a job for me. I realized that I love children. Accidentally, I got an announcement that an early childhood education program at a university was admitting some transfer students. So I applied and entered the undergraduate program as a transfer student. Of course, the decision to change my career was not easy because my friends at the same age were economically independent from their family…I mean…I had to also think about being an adult. I was very fortunate that the acceptance could be a part of my life because I had a lot of support from my family. My family has always supported my choice. (Interview, 04/02/08)

Between her two degrees, Jina had to be an undergraduate student for six and one half years. She stressed the importance of her family's support during that time. She remembered wanting a professional teaching job very much, even while in the moment selecting another major. Jina initially chose engineering as a major because of her high school teacher's counseling. However, she was much more interested in early childhood education than in engineering and commented that enrolling in the early childhood education program was a turning point in her life.

When I was specializing in engineering, I was bored and I did not expect that

engineering was going to be my future job. I was thinking again and again about my

future career as I studied engineering more and more. After acquiring my first bachelor's

degree, I needed to change my life. I wanted something new that matched me. When I

entered my second university, I already knew and was accustomed to what the life of an

undergraduate student is. So I wanted to focus on just my study about early childhood

education. I think that I was a good student there. I studied very hard because I was

interested in the courses which my university offered. However, frankly speaking, I was

a little nervous at that time because other students were third year students in early

childhood education but I was like a freshman although I was really a third year student.

But the study was very interesting to me. (Interview, 04/02/08)

Jina recalled some of the difficulties she encountered in her undergraduate course work as a

result of transferring as a third year undergraduate student. She felt that she had a different

starting point, in terms of prior knowledge, in relation to her undergraduate classmates. In

particular, she mentioned that she was satisfied with taking the required courses but she

struggled when she went to the field experience.

I was different from my classmates when I entered the early childhood teacher education

program. They had already learned some of the courses in education, such as child

psychology, introduction to early childhood education, etc. I had to take many courses

and at the same time I had to go to the field experience together because I started in the

third year. The courses were philosophical and meaningful to me. However, I had an

especially difficult time when I went to the field experience as a student teacher. I

thought I had a lack of experiences about early childhood education as a preservice

teacher. Of course, I have some nephews and had been taking care of them sometimes. Except for meeting them, I had never met young children closely. So it was very difficult to know how to interact with each child when I went to the field as a student teacher as soon as I entered the early childhood program. (Interview, 04/02/08)

Jina stressed the disconnect she experienced between what she learned in her early childhood teacher education program at the university and what she was expected to do as a student teacher in a preschool. During her student teaching time, she felt that she really understood how children were educated in the preschool setting.

When I went to the field, it was very, very different from what we learned from the textbooks. My professors always said that the practice is different. I directly saw it was true. The teacher education program emphasizes the aptitude and competence of children. However, in the field, it was not there. Most schools have worksheets for children everyday. It looks like they are just doing their duty. So I was very confused about my teaching philosophy. What is right? Am I correct? Also, according to each school, it was different regarding management styles. For instance, in a public school, teachers were like elementary teachers. They were in the classroom just for 30 minutes and gave the children break time between the subjects. They had the same break time when the children had a break. Some teachers stayed out of the classroom during their break time. The children had two teachers such as a regular teacher and an all-day teacher. Most all-day teachers took care of the children in the afternoon. The interesting thing is that the regular teachers stayed in the classroom only in the morning. They never cared about the children in the afternoon. I was very curious. Is it right from an ethical perspective? (Interview, 04/02/08)

Jina experienced various challenges as a student teacher when she participated in different settings, including private schools. She described negative experiences with her mentor teacher during student teaching. It was the first time that she experienced the importance of relationships between teachers.

> When I went to a private school, it was very similar to this school where I am working. They gave children many worksheets. For example, the worksheets consisted of math and phonics and the top page had many squares the children needed to put the words in and the back of the page had addition and subtraction questions. My mentor teacher forced me to do that in the same way. I did not want to, so I asked why I needed to do that. She said it is a kind of rule there. I could not understand that, but I had to copy what she did without saying anything because I was just a student teacher, and I had no power there. That kind of conversation made me and my mentor teacher uncomfortable in building a good relationship between us. (Interview, 04/02/08)

Jina noted how the majority of her mentor teachers had perspectives about the value of worksheets in the classroom. She explained that her education professors often argued against the usefulness of worksheets for young children. She agreed and wanted to cite supporting evidence, but felt that she could not argue for a reduction in worksheets because she had no power as a student teacher. She felt more confused about her identity as an early childhood educator after practicing in the field. Furthermore, she learned that as a student teacher at school, there was little freedom and many responsibilities. She recalled her student teaching time:

> We had a kind of rule for all student teachers. We needed to go to the principal's office every morning to greet him. That was the starting point of our daily schedule. And then we could go to the classroom to meet children. I went to the school at nine o'clock and

got out of there at five o'clock. It was the same schedule with my mentor teacher. I could

not stay in the classroom all day long. I was in the teachers' lounge and made some

materials which my mentor teacher let me do. When my mentor gave me permission, I

could be in the classroom. Most of what I did was observation. Sometimes my mentor

gave me a topic and then I prepared for the lesson by my self. Or sometimes my mentor

gave me her plan and I taught students as she planned. I remember I had no freedom

there. I was alone. I felt that my mentor teacher was like a strict boss instead of a

supportive mentor. I was less satisfied than I expected. I did not have any creativity as a

teacher there. I mean…No creativity was there. (Interview, 04/02/08)

Although Jina recalled her unsatisfactory experience in student teaching, she emphasized that the

negative experiences gave her direction for the future. The negative experiences taught her that

practice is different from what she learned in the university classroom setting. She maintained

her desire to teach young children in ways that she had learned in her university courses when

she obtained a job as a classroom teacher in the future. She believed that she could do it. She

expected that teaching would be an important part of her life. Her confidence about herself as a

teacher was the reason why she immediately found a job upon graduating.

I know every teacher has different styles. After finishing my student teaching, I really

wanted to just accept the positive things for my own teaching. I remember I also had bad

experiences with my mentor teachers because frankly, I could not accept their teaching

methods. For example, I observed my mentor teacher often yelled at the children. They

were just children. I understood why they acted like that. But my mentor teacher had a

very bad temper as a teacher. It made them scared. It was wrong, wasn't it? At that time,

I thought it was the very reason why I needed to stay there. I wanted to make a

difference with my passion as a teacher. I was looking forward to becoming a teacher. I

did not want to hesitate to become a teacher. (Interview, 04/02/08)

However, in tandem with her enthusiasm for teaching was a concern about economic issues

when she thought about her job as an early childhood educator. She felt passionate about

becoming a good teacher, but soon realized that an early childhood educator's salary was much

lower than she had expected. She discussed the salary issue with her friends, engineers. She

confessed she never knew how much early childhood educators earned prior to her student

teaching experience.

You know, we are people. We need money to survive in the world. I did not know the

exact salary of early childhood educators. Of course everybody knows their salary is low

although they are called teachers. When I chose this career I had ignored that part in

choosing the job because I did not care about that part. But (with a deep sigh), it was

really, really low when I heard her exact salary from my mentor teacher. I was very

disappointed. Do you know how much people can get when they work in a restaurant or

a dress shop? Their salaries are higher than early childhood educators. They did not have

any degree when they applied for those kinds of jobs. But I had two bachelor's degrees

and I spent six years studying at my universities. I can dedicate my passion to early

childhood education but I need money to survive. My parents could not sacrifice

themselves to care of one of their daughters. When I considered this economic issue, I

could not help hesitating about my job as an early childhood educator. (Interview,

04/02/08)

Jina explained how a professor recommended her for her current job when she was in the process

of seeking employment. She received a strong recommendation from her university professor,

and was offered a position at Sarang School. Jina felt that working at Sarang School was her destiny.

> When I was in the 4th year, that means senior year, my classmates started working in many private early childhood education schools. Only a few classmates and I did not apply for the teaching jobs. I wanted to spend some time to think about myself. I did not want to rush out to get a job. At that time, one of my professors suggested this position at Sarang School, which opened last year. So it needed a lot of teachers and my university professors worked as counselors for this school. I expected it could be different from the other schools and something special if the professors recommended the school. The professor told me my salary would be more than other schools because they would push for a higher teachers' salary. So I applied for the job because I trusted my professor at that time. Why am I working here? I think it's like destiny. I did not expect this kind of school. This school gives teachers some more money. Of course, my current salary is not much more than other teachers. I can not compare my salary with elementary teachers' or high school teachers'. Yet, it's just a little bit more than other early childhood teachers. The teachers of this school can acquire just a little more if we work after school. I think it is fair because we teachers work more than the other schools. More work, more money, that's normal, right? (Interview, 04/02/08)

Simultaneously she talked about her salary in relation to her workload at Sarang School. Jina stressed that she worked hard from morning to evening as a teacher at Sarang and felt very tired everyday. She described the difficult aspects of her daily schedule.

> I usually arrive at the school between 8:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. And I go home very late because the teachers are very busy. When I had internships in other schools, I remember,

I went home at five o'clock. Now I realize that is abnormal compared to my schedule

here as a teacher. Children come to the school from 7:30 in the morning and they go

home after 6:00 p.m. You know… that means the schedule of the teachers is longer than

the children's. Also, teachers have to work on Saturday once a month because we are

supposed to clean up our school. I am sure that I am working hard here. At the same time,

I feel very tired everyday. (Interview, 04/02/08)

Although Jina's schedule as a teacher at Sarang was very tough, she explained that she stayed

because basically, she loved working with young children in the classroom setting. She

mentioned the irony: she loved children but hated the job sometimes. She talked about the pros

and cons of her teacher life.

I remember my childhood in my kindergarten…kindergarten! We think it is a very

happy place, right? I remember I loved going to my kindergarten. My childhood in

kindergarten was wonderful. I remember that I had a very nice teacher and very good

friends. I was waiting for the next school day because I could go to the kindergarten to

meet them. So whenever I feel tired, I think of that time. I would like to make happy

days for my students just as mine were. Also, when I feel my job is tough, my students

make me smile. Especially, I feel confident when I see my students are developing

because of my caring and teaching. For instance, I had a child who cried whenever he

entered the classroom every morning. He was in my mind all the time. Why was he

crying? Emotionally what happened to him? I looked in my textbooks to see how to care

for him. I really tried to take as much care of him as I could. One day, he ran to me to

hug me. I felt very happy. I did it! It was very moving. At that time, I thought that is why

I work here. Isn't it ironic? I have complained a lot about this job, but I am still working

here. This job gives me happiness and unhappiness at the same time. (Interview, 04/02/08)

Meeting her fiancé, Minsu, when she was 23-years-old was a significant event for Jina. Minsu was a classmate at her first university. When she was trying to make a decision between her first major, engineering, and her second major, early childhood education, he gave her a lot of advice. Jina was very appreciative of how Minsu supported her teaching, even when she was very busy. Jina believed the trust and the relationship she had with Minsu helped her do her job as a teacher.

My fiancé likes this job. His parents like my job, too. They said how happy I am because I have time with innocent young children everyday. My boy friend said being an engineer is good for money, but it is not an interesting or energetic job. I think that they like my teaching job better than a job concerning engineering for a woman. When I considered in studying in early childhood education, my fiancé really welcomed it. After becoming a teacher, my teacher life is no longer a part of my life—it became all of my life. I think of my job at home as well as in the school. I always talk about my teacher life to my fiancé. The topic of conversation between me and my fiancé is always about my children. One day, he said, whenever I talk about my students, I smile and look very happy. He said, I must be a good mother later because I have many experiences now. I assume he likes this job. He is very interested in educating his future children. So he is understanding about my situation now. My fiancé and I can not meet often because I am very busy until the night during weekdays. But he has never complained about it so far. I know most fiancés want to have a good time always with their girl friends. If they cannot do that, that can be a reason to break up. I am very lucky and appreciate how he is there for me. I mean…We are there for each other. I am thankful for his partnership

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and his commitment to me. If I get married next year, he will continue to play a good

role as my supporter emotionally. (Interview, 04/02/08)

Jina emphasized that her fiancé was proud of her job as a teacher. She felt that her relationship

with Minsu had helped her to become a more positive teacher and feel more secure. During this

study, Jina was teaching in the four year old classroom. As a teacher, Jina wanted a happy

classroom.

Last year I taught the same kids who are in my current classroom. And some more

children came to my classroom this year. Actually, I am teaching in the four year old

classroom now. I have 15 students in this classroom. Four year old children…Their

emotions are very up and down. If they don't like something, they just don't say

anything but just sit there. So I feel awkward in interacting with them. I really want to be

an understanding teacher for an individual child. But I have to take care of 15 children. I

am the only teacher in the classroom. You know, there are some nice teachers like

angels who are not angry but smile all the time. I really wanted to become that kind of

teacher. In reality, I cannot do that. Every Monday, I swear to myself to become a nice

teacher and not to be angry with my students. It does not work all the time. I really want

to be a teacher who is never angry because this means I understand my students'

perspectives. When I am upset with my children in the day, I feel very sorry in the

evening. It seems that I feel kind of guilty. I think a teaching job is a special job. Not just

educating somebody. It needs a lot of self reflection. (Interview, 04/02/08)

In terms of her future, Jina believed that feeling "safe" and "joyful" about her job was important.

She wanted to stay at Sarang as long as possible, but, in reality, she felt that she would not stay at

the school for long. She explained how her teaching job was somewhat of a temporary position.

Not only I but also everybody thinks the teaching job in early childhood education is a temporary job. Most people think this job is for before getting married. They think a teacher who gets married will quit this job. For example, in the cases of my friends, they all quit their teaching job when they got married. If somebody wants to stay longer here after getting married, they think of going to graduate school. The reason is teachers feel very tired everyday. Being here has very tough schedule. We are human beings. Emotionally, we obtain something happy from the young children. But physically, we are out of energy here because we have no time to take a rest. This is true. I am O.K. so far. But if I work more, I will be out of here. I will not be able to do this any longer. (Interview, 04/02/08)

Jina mentioned her enjoyment of exercise such as aerobics or yoga. She recalled having time for exercise in the past. That was an important part of her life. She lamented the fact that she no longer had time for exercise. She hoped to find a balance between her life inside and outside the school in order to remain as a teacher in her present position. The following section presents Jina's daily life as a teacher at Sarang.

Theme 1: "I am busy busy."

Jina worked at Sarang School from morning to evening as a full time classroom teacher. She worked with the 15 children, eight girls and seven boys in her classroom. All the parents (or either the father or mother) of the children were workers in the province capital next to the Sarang. Except for field trips with her students, Jina stayed in the school building. She had a regular schedule everyday, but her departure time from the school at the end of the day was irregular. Her daily schedule with the children included the following: attendance, calendar,

recess, unit lessons, morning snack and afternoon snack, nap time, free play time, specials, and

dismissal. She briefly described a typical day at Sarang:

> I usually come in before 8:15 a.m. and go to the gym where children are gathering and
>
> playing before picking them up from their classroom teachers and entering their
>
> classroom. After taking them to the classroom, I start checking the parents' notes or
>
> medicine from their bags. Usually children don't come in together because it depends on
>
> their parents' work time. So I finish checking up almost by 9:30 a.m. As soon as the
>
> children come in the classroom every morning, they start free play in the classroom
>
> centers. I can not take part in the center time as a teacher because I need to be in the hall
>
> way to check their entrance and bags. At 9:30 a.m., I give them morning snack. And I let
>
> the children read books. Some of my students can not read a book yet, so I focus on
>
> teaching using an individual instructional approach. It is hard but I enjoy it. From 10:30,
>
> we have calendar time and story time. After that, we go outside to take a walk or play by
>
> 11:30. And we come in the classroom and have lunch time. During lunch time, I serve
>
> the food for them and teach them how to brush their teeth. And then I clean up the
>
> classroom floor because they sleep on the floor. When they wake up, I clean up their
>
> pillows and blankets and tell them to wash their faces and hands. After afternoon snack
>
> time, the children need to go to the specials such as Physical Exercise, English, and
>
> Gabe from 4:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. I need to go with them for the specials. Before 5:00
>
> p.m., I teach one of the unit lessons using hands-on art based activities. And then
>
> children have afternoon free play time from 5:00 p.m. We move to the gym again at 6:00
>
> p.m. for the dismissal. Parents pick up their children who are waiting for them and
>
> watching a video at the gym. (Interview, 05/13/08)

Jina was flexible and changed her classroom schedule when needed. She went on field trips with

her children in relation to her unit topic and took the children to the gym to take part in a

morning meeting [1]at 10:30 a.m. every Monday morning. Jina's classroom was located between

the five year old classroom and six year old classroom on the second floor. Her solo teaching,

without teaching assistance, continued from the morning to the afternoon. She was always

responsible for the care of the 15 children in her classroom. Consequently, she looked very busy

at times. She always walked or ran across her classroom quickly when she was busy. She found

it difficult to take care of all the children because they were very young. On many occasions, she

appeared to be stressed beyond her capacity.

> It is 5:30 p.m. In Jina's classroom, she is talking about where to hang a drawing with one
>
> child who finished an art activity. Jina says to him, "Where do you want to hang your
>
> drawing?" All of a sudden, the phone rings. After walking to the phone quickly and
>
> answering it, Jina looks for a girl and calls her name. She said, "Chaeyoung, you need to
>
> go home." On the opposite side of her, she finds that one child is crying. And one child
>
> says to Jina in the art center, "I am done." Jina helps Chaeyoung and tells her students,
>
> "If you are done, please put it over there (pointing with her finger to the shelf in the art
>
> center) and sit down on your spot. We will pack up." Jina says good bye to Chaeyoung
>
> in the hallway and comes into the classroom again. She makes sure that everybody is
>
> sitting on the mat and checks the children's art work. Jina finds a child is playing with a

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[1] Sarang School has a morning meeting for moral instruction and musical practice for one hour every Monday morning. All children from six-month-olds in the infant classroom to six-year-olds in the oldest children's classroom gather at the school gym. The children sing the Korean national anthem and a new song of the week, and learn children's rhymes and finger plays together. The director and experienced teachers who take turns lead this morning meeting in front of the children and the other teachers. (Researcher's observation journal, 04/12/08)

dog doll in house play center and says to him, "Don't touch. Give me the dog." After

checking the clock, she goes to the book center. She says, "Look at this (pointing to the

books on the floor). It's a mess here. Who wants to clean up here? Who did I say needs

to clean up here?" She twists her face touching her lips and says, "Ouch!" She starts to

clean up the books very quickly and two children come in the book center to help her.

The children on the mat shout, "Here is Jungmin's mother!" After checking the mother

in the hallway through the classroom door, she goes to the restroom, brings Jungmin to

the classroom, and goes to the hallway with him. After saying good bye to Jungmin and

his mother, she comes into the classroom again… The phone rings again. Quickly

walking to the phone, Jina says to herself (whispering), "I am busy busy. Thursday is the

worst." (Researcher's observation journal, 06/05/08)

There was no break or lunch time for Jina during her work with the children at Sarang. She spent

the entire day, from arrival to departure, staying with her children. She even had lunch with her

students in the classroom. She had the same menu for her snack and lunch as her children.

It is art activity time right before lunch time in Jina's classroom. Sitting in their own

chairs, some children cut pictures out of a paper: a fan, some iced water, and an air

conditioner. They paste these pictures on another piece of paper titled "To Enjoy This

Summer." Jina moves around the classroom to help the children and write their names

on the paper. She watches the clock on the wall and says to a boy, "You did a very good

job, Junsue." A girl next to Junsue says to Jina, "I am done." Jina says to the girl, "Pick

up the trash on the floor." The girl picks up the trash and throws it in the trash can. Jina

glances at the clock on the wall again and says to her children, "If you are done, put

away your glue and scissors." After cleaning up the classroom with her children, Jina

washes the table with a wet wipe while saying to the children, "Go to the restroom." She

hears from somebody in the hallway, "Lunch is ready." Jina goes out of the classroom,

pushes the lunch wagon to the classroom, and says to the children, "Please, sit down on

your spot." Some children recognize the good smell and gather around the lunch wagon.

Jina smiles and tells them," We have Samgyetang[2] (chicken soup with ginseng) today."

A child shouts loudly, "Wow, my favorite Samgyetang." Jina tells them, "You know

what to do." The children go and sit down on their spots. While Jina is serving the food

with a scooper to everybody, the children are waiting their turns. One child finds there

are some watermelons as dessert and shouts, "Wow, there is a watermelon as well." Jina

answers, "Yes, we will eat them all." Jina serves some salt and Kimchi to the children

and breaks up the chicken with her hands so that the children can eat easily…While the

children are eating, Jina is going around the children and helping them to eat

comfortably without eating anything. When the children are almost done, Jina serves

herself and starts eating hers standing by the lunch wagon. Her menu is the same as the

children's: Samgyetang, Kimchi and watermelon. She is eating her food quickly, but her

eyes still watch the children eating. When the children ask her for some more food, she

stops eating her lunch to serve them. She has less time to eat than the children do.

(Researcher's observation journal, 07/29/08)

Even during lunch time, Jina looked very busy. She ate her food standing without sitting in a

chair. When the children asked her for something, she hurried to help them. It seemed she was

accustomed to doing that. On Jina's shelf, there were many documents all the time. After lunch,

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[2] Traditionally, by the lunar calendar, there are three special summer days in Korea. It calls Boknal (hot day). These days are hottest days in the summer. Usually, Korean people eat specific foods for their health. Samgyetang is one of them.

when the children fell asleep, Jina had a lot of documents to complete. However, Jina mentioned she never had enough time to finish them. Jina commented,

> Usually, I try to do my paperwork when the children are asleep. Yet, if I cannot finish it, I do it during the children's play time. For example, all the teachers have to write how the children's day was on the notes for parents. I have many children here. So I need a lot of time to do it everyday. So I have to use other times like children's play time and snack time. Of course, sometimes I can not even have my snack because of it. When I do it during children's play time, I feel guilty… (Sigh) Because I know what is more important for my children. But I have to do it. (Interview, 05/13/08)

Jina's work did not finish with dismissal time. Her second schedule began after students left the classroom, as noted below.

> I clean up my classroom from 6:30 p.m. to 7:10 p.m. And when I finish, I go to the faculty meeting for four to six year old classroom teachers. We usually talk about what happened today for 10 to 20 minutes. On Monday and Friday, we also have faculty meetings for all the classroom teachers. It takes a lot of time. We usually go home after 10:00 p.m. Do I go home earlier? Sometimes it's 9:00 p.m. or 9:30 p.m… Almost 10:00 p.m. (Interview, 05/13/08)

There was a mandatory faculty meeting held every day after school. However, the meetings were meaningless for her. She did not want to be involved in the meetings. She yearned to go home because she felt so tired in the evening. Nevertheless, no matter how much she wanted go home, as soon as the faculty meeting finished, there were other reasons for her to stay longer.

> I have a reason why I can not go home early. The old teachers always say, "Later…" So we can not go home together even if we finish our day. How we can go if the experienced

teachers don't go? Isn't it interesting? That's a kind of invisible rule here. (Group

discussion, 06/26/08)

Additionally, at Sarang, there was a time scheduled where all teachers gathered in the same place

to make teaching materials.[3] This took place after the faculty meeting in the evening. Jina had a

negative opinion about preparing teaching materials in this way. In discussing her personal

reasons, she explained:

> Frankly speaking, the materials I made with my hands tended to break when my children
>
> played with them. So we teachers complained about it to the director and the
>
> experienced teachers. Do you know what they told us? They said we needed to make
>
> them stronger. I did my best when I made them. If I had some more time, I could make
>
> them stronger. But that is impossible actually. I don't have enough time. I have just two
>
> or three hours to make them in the evening. I usually make one per a night.
>
> Consequently, I think, teachers need to spend time not in making the materials but in
>
> studying lessons and preparing for them. I really need the time for lesson preparation.
>
> The more time we spend preparing, the more appropriate the lesson, I think. However, I
>
> usually prepare my lesson just a day before or on Saturday and Sunday at home because
>
> we have no time because of all the time we spend making materials. And they are
>
> printed very quickly…We really need to do it in the school. (Interview, 08/05/08)

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[3] Once or twice a week, all the teachers make "home made" teaching materials at Sarang School. Mostly the materials are related to a unit or a lesson and the children have the chance to play with them during the free play time when the teachers put them in the play centers. The teachers are supposed to make books, calendars, bulletin boards, or toys such as puzzles, finger dolls, and board games and these materials are used instead of store bought materials.(Researcher's observation journal, 04/12/08)

Jina felt that the school was unfair in forcing teachers to make teaching materials so late in the evening. Instead, Jina wanted more time to prepare her lessons. She stressed the value of study and preparation of the lessons. Even at home in the evening Jina could not rest because another duty was waiting for her. She had to call all the parents once a week. This school requirement was designed for teachers to share the children's lives in the classroom with parents. She pointed out the time she spent on these calls two or three days a week, particularly when she arrived home early (Informal interview, 07/29/08). In addition, once a semester, Jina needed to clean up the Sarang building with other teachers. Jina complained about her responsibilities to the school on Saturdays, her personal day:

> We have clean up time once every month. Actually we are supposed to come at 10:00 a.m. and to leave at 1:00 p.m. However, they don't let me out by 2:00 p.m. They order me to do something more and keep me working until 5:00 p.m. or 6:00 p.m. It seems they find some more work for me and drag me out to do it. After one day, I gave up leaving early, because I could not go even if I hurried up. For example, I knew it didn't need to be hurried, but they said, "You need to do this. You need to do this." Like Cinderella (laughing)…If they talk like that, my work increases more and more. Naturally, it is difficult for me to go home." (Interview, 05/13/08)

The metaphor "Cinderella" was used by Jina to describe her busy Saturday. From morning to evening including Saturday, she was stressed everyday because of her busy workload. She mentioned how so many tiresome chores influenced her teaching and interaction with the students.

> I am busy everyday. It affects my next day's teaching, especially with my children. O.K. Let me tell you something. I learned how important observing children is from a

professor in the inservice teacher education last night. I was really impressed. I really

agree with that and I want to be a teacher like that. On watching the video yesterday, I

realized how hard the teacher worked in her classroom. On the other hand, I think it is

impossible in my working place. In this professor's case, it seemed to me that her

observation was not just for the children. It was mainly for her research. I have 15

children in my classroom, and I am tired from morning to night here. How can I analyze

the observation after video taping like her? It looked like her school's situation was

different from mine. (Interview, 05/13/08)

Jina felt that the only time she had a chance to think about herself as a teacher was when she had

a summer vacation for five days. Rather than being refreshed by her vacation, she was depressed

because she realized what life was like outside of school.

I came back from the summer vacation. One week. During my vacation, I experienced

the outside world which I cannot see while I'm working. I thought that this was real life.

I came back here this Monday and I keep thinking that this is not life as a human being.

From the Monday morning…From now, I need to stay here and survive again through

September, October, November, December, January and February. My life will repeat

again and again… until my next vacation, the winter vacation. This is how I am

thinking. It makes me very gloomy. Can I survive here? (Interview, 08/05/08)

Jina was unwilling to talk about her salary. However, it was apparent that she was more

concerned about enjoying her limited leisure time than earning money. She felt that her entire

life was spent teaching. She pointed out that she had no time to meet her friends or her family.

On Saturday when I work, I can get some extra money from the school. But just from

10:00 a.m. to 1:00 a.m. So every teacher hates it. In fact, they have the same thought.

We hope we can leave earlier without receiving the extra money, even if we can get the extra money after the work. On weekdays, I want to enjoy my life after the departure at exactly 7:00 p.m. I want to say that but I cannot because this school has a very authoritative top down approach although my facial expression says, "I don't want to." If, for example, I have an appointment at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, the director or the experienced teachers say, "Why did you make an appointment today?" To tell the truth, I have a complaint about this: If I hurry my work, I can finish it all by 1:00 p.m. on Saturday. My working style is to do everything very quickly. Only the experienced teachers here have a lazy style. It's their fault, not mine. Nevertheless, if we finish earlier, we need to help them. In the end, even Saturday is not mine. Actually, this is the only place where I live. I have no life outside of here. (Interview, 05/13/08)

Jina had a tired life at school, and sometimes she brought her work home with her. Teaching was always on her mind, whether at school or at home. Jina had the stamina for teaching, but struggled with the extra workload required by the school. The extra workload and the irregular work time made her consider seriously her future at the school.

Theme 2: I can't be custodian, nurse, curriculum organizer, and secretary together.

Jina's official job title was classroom teacher at Sarang School. But, the Sarang School asked her to play many additional roles including custodian, nurse, curriculum organizer, and secretary. Because her school was short-staffed, she said, "I'm all over the place here from morning to evening" (Informal interview, 07/24/08). There was no custodian, nurse, curriculum organizer, or secretary in the school, which was why Jina was asked to play multiple roles. Jina didn't like the role of custodian very much. However, as one of her duties, she had to clean up her classroom for about 30 minutes every evening after her students went home. Also, all

teachers working at Sarang School had to thoroughly clean the school every third Saturday of the

month, as described below:

> Today is Saturday and clean up day for the Sarang teachers. It is very hot outside with
>
> the temperature over 86 degrees. Jina came to school at nine o'clock because today is the
>
> expected clean up day even though she is going to have a summer vacation the next
>
> week. Today is a special clean up day since the teachers need to clean up outside the
>
> building as well as inside the building. Jina is wearing athletic clothes instead of her
>
> regular uniform. As soon as she comes to her classroom, first, she starts cleaning up her
>
> classroom. She vacuums and gets down on her hands and knees to wash the floor after
>
> cleaning up the tables, chairs and toys. Her face and back are already full of sweat and
>
> her pink shirt is wet. She looks very tired, but she continues to clean up her classroom
>
> without saying anything. After finishing cleaning up the classroom, she goes to the
>
> children's restroom which is shared with the next classroom. In the restroom, a teacher
>
> of the next classroom with five year olds is cleaning up the toilets using a hose. And
>
> then, Jina and the other classroom teacher pick up the non-slip wooden mat that covers
>
> the floor and lean it against the wall. The other classroom teacher looks very tired like
>
> Jina. They do not have any conversation. After finishing the restroom, they go down to
>
> the school. Jina and the other teachers go outside to clean up the building after looking
>
> for equipment such as long sticks and mops in order to remove spider webs.
>
> (Researcher's observation journal, 07/19/08)

Another role Jina played was caretaker of sick children. She always checked the children's bags

to see whether parents had put in medicine every morning. If a child felt sick, Jina needed to care

for the child, taking the child's temperature, letting the child take a rest, giving medicine, and

calling the parents. Therefore, she was faced with the added stress of determining whether or not her students were sick.

      After spending two days and one night with her students at the summer camp, Jina brings her class back to Sarang School by bus. It is one o'clock when Jina's students come back from the camp to the classroom. Jina starts checking that everybody is well in the classroom. She carefully observes students' condition as well as asking them their feelings. Most of her students need to stay in the classroom until their parents pick them up after six o'clock, the regular pick up time because parents work. She lets her students take a nap in the classroom. She gives all the students pillows and blankets for them to lie down. She turns off the light and then, with a deep sigh, she sits down on the floor and said to herself, "I am tired. I want to take a rest like you." She calls one of her students. "Come here, Junseo." As soon as Junseo comes to her, Jina touches his forehead with her right hand. He looks very tired and sick. And she holds his hand and brings him to the office on the first floor. Nobody is in the office. After she finds a thermometer in the first-aid box on the small refrigerator, Jina takes his temperature. Jina says to him, "You have a fever; your mom will come here to take you after two hours." Jina brings him back to the classroom. She lets Junseo lie down on his mat in the classroom and starts to organize the children's bags and tooth brushes sitting on the floor in the corner of the dark classroom. Some children make a noise without taking a nap. She says to them, "Please, be quiet. You need to take a rest, and teacher needs to take a rest. I am tired." And she stands up holding a small towel and goes to the restroom. She soaks the towel with water and goes to Junseo. She puts it down on Junseo's beforehead. Some children are looking at what their teacher is doing. One of the children says,

"Teacher, you sleep." She answers, "I want to, but I can't." Jina brings her backpack

from her cubby in the hallway and empties it out on the floor. There are bandages, Band-

aids, Tylenols, and Fusidin (ointment for anti-biotic). (Researcher's observation journal,

07/10/08)

Jina felt tired more than other days when she had to look after her students day and night at the

summer camp. She had to sleep with 14 children in a camping room without any help or

assistants because the parents did not go camping with their children. After arriving back to the

classroom on the following day, Jina still took care of her students, without any time for rest

after the summer camp. As soon as Jina's students took a nap in the classroom after the camping

trip, she started planning her lessons for the next week, sitting on the floor in the darkness of the

classroom. Teachers were required to prepare the lessons for the following week before Friday.

Jina explained,

I need to do my work, even though I am tired. Because we are supposed to do that before

this Friday. As it depends on the situation, I think, we can make a lesson plan right before

the day but, my director does not like it. If I do not this now, I need to bring this to my

home. If I want to take a rest at home tonight, I have to finish this work. (Interview,

04/02/08)

Jina planned her lessons by herself because there was no curriculum organizer at Sarang School.

Every classroom in Sarang School had a different curriculum. Jina could freely organize an

appropriate curriculum as a decision maker everyday. However, she had to organize the

curriculum of her classroom quickly, so she hurried to prepare everything; she didn't have

enough time to organize her lessons because of her busy schedule. The curriculum at Sarang

School was composed of classes such as 'Taking a Walk Outside Program'[4], 'Economic

Program'[5], 'Sex Education Program'[6], 'Safety Education Program'[7], and 'Book Rental

Program'[8] in every classroom. Jina explained the curriculum, noting:

> Our school has a lot of good programs for education. However, I don't know about them
>
> well. Our pamphlet introduces the programs for the parents. Usually, we give children's
>
> parent the pamphlet in orientation at the first of the day. As teachers, we did not have
>
> any orientation about what the programs really are. So every classroom teacher has
>
> different aspects about the programs. In my case, I don't know how I am doing well
>
> about the programs. If we had a curriculum organizer who is in charge of a support such
>
> as planning, advising, and mentoring for teachers in the school, I would like to ask some
>
> more specific questions. You know, teachers need to specify the objectives about the
>
> programs in the planning step, because, according to children's development level, the
>
> programs can be differentiated. Right now…I just made plans every week as a just one
>
> of my duties. I don't feel confident in that part because there is no guideline for the
>
> programs. (Interview, 05/08/08)

In addition, Sarang School had special programs such as 'English Language Education

Program[9]', 'GABE program[10]', and 'Physical Education Program'[11]. For these programs,

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[4] Children take a walk outside around Sarang School Building and have activities such as caring
for rabbits and ducks, planting and observing plants, picking up fallen leaves, observing the rain
and the snow.
[5] Children understand economic concepts such as needs, necessity, choosing, demand, supply,
opportunity expense, price, exchange, purchase and saving on a very basic and low level.
[6] Children learn how babies are born, being a big brother and sister, how to protect the body from
somebody, and the differences between a boy and a girl.
[7] Children learn first aid and safety in case of fire. They also learn about water safety, and safety
in food, transportation, and play on a basic level.
[8] Children borrow books from the small library in the school every Monday and Wednesday and
read the books with their parents at home.

teachers from companies came to the classroom and taught children for one hour once a week, and the children's parents paid the extra expense once a month. The special program teachers asked the classroom teachers to stay in the class in the role of an assistant. Jina was not in charge of planning and teaching the activities of the special programs, but she had to do many things to help the special teachers. The following observation by the researcher illustrates Jina's work in relation to the special programs.

> It is nap time for children. In Jina's classroom, the light is turned off and every child is asleep. Jina sits down on the floor after bringing Gabe worksheet books for the children. The title of book is written as 'Creative Gabe Play Ground.' She puts the 15 books on her favorite mini table which is used by children in house play area. She picks up one of the books and puts it just in front of her. She starts tearing the first page from the end section of each book. The page includes a pattern for a child to make a parachute. It is not easy to tear the page because the paper is thick. She says to herself, "It is difficult." She starts tearing it with her two hands. She hears a child cough at the back of her. She moves her head and watches her. And then she tears the books again. Yet, cautiously, she often observes the sleeping children while tearing the pages. After tearing all the pages, she puts away the books from the table. And she carefully organizes the pages on the table and starts punching holes of the pages. It takes 35 minutes for Jina to prepare

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[9] A native English speaking teacher comes to the classroom with her own curriculum every Tuesday.

[10] Gabe (in Germany, "Gift" in English) is made by Friedrich Froebel who was born in Germany in 1782. Froebel created Kindergarten and designed the gifts as educational materials to help children recognize and appreciate the common patterns and forms in nature. The teacher of the Gabe program brings and introduces it to children.

[11] A male physical education teacher comes to the gym of the school and teaches children every Thursday. He plans his own lesson and teaches children using different materials

for making parachute patterns for 15 children (Researcher's observation journal,

05/29/08).

The preparation of parachute patterns was one of the special programs. Jina attended the special

classes with her children but also prepared materials and homework for other programs besides

preparing for her lessons. The special teachers made Jina help them and she did so using her

personal time. Additionally, Jina played the role of secretary in the Sarang School. When she had

duty day once a week, she came to the school earlier than other teachers and opened the door

after releasing SECOM, a private security support system for building security. She stayed in the

office and answered all the phone calls until other teachers came to the school, rather than

spending the day preparing for her classroom. In one discussion, Jina spoke about a woman who

was both a substitute and secretary of Sarang.

> This school has a woman who is a substitute teacher and secretary. But her schedule is
>
> very different from teachers. She comes here later than teachers and goes home earlier
>
> than us. I think she is not helpful for teachers. She looks like a director's personal
>
> secretary. (Group discussion, 06/26/08)

In addition to the demands of the school, Jina talked about the parents' demands of the teacher.

She mentioned that parents expected the teacher to play many additional roles such as caregiver,

hair designer, party planner, and academic teacher. Jina felt that she could not be indifferent to

the parents' perspectives. Even though she had 15 children in her classroom every parent had

different expectations from her in terms of educating and caring. Jina felt that as a caregiver, she

could not merely ignore even one parent's perspective, as explained in her photoessay:

> This picture shows my position to simultaneously take care of just one child who is in
>
> the hall way and all the children who sleep in the classroom. I am in the middle of the

classroom door between the hall way and the classroom. Children's nap time gives me

some time to do paperwork or to make lesson plans. One of the parents asked me to let

their child never sleep because the child falls asleep late and gets up late in the following

day if she has nap time in the classroom during the day. So the child is reading books in

the hall way, and between the classroom and the hall way, I am doing my work watching

her instead of being in the classroom. I can't use my table because I am just crumpled on

the floor. It is an irritable and angry moment. (Jina's photoessay in the group discussion,

06/26/08)

Jina was expected to design the hair of the girls in the classroom on a daily basis. The parents did

not like their children to look unclean, messy, or untidy when they picked them up at the end of

the day. Jina spent a lot of time doing that for the parents. She mentioned, in her photoessay, how

the constant need to play the role of hairdresser make her feel tired.

The important time in my classroom comes before the dismissal time. It is the time to

hair dress for the children. Of the 15 children, the 8 girls' hair needs to be combed, put

up, or braided. Every girl wants for me to make her own style. Usually, it takes over 20

minutes to do that. Whenever I comb the last girl's hair, I feel a pain in my shoulder,

waist and back. Is my classroom a hair designer's shop? Sometimes I get sick of doing

this. (Jina's photoessay in the group discussion, 06/26/08)

Jina explained that she understood why parents expected their children to look clean and neat.

She felt that the reason was that parents didn't want other people to think their children were

neglected since most were busy with work and careers. They expected the teacher to play the

role of a caregiver. However, Jina felt that it interrupted her main role as a teacher. For example,

she usually spent half of the play center period dressing the girls' hair, even though she felt that the teacher's role in the play center time was important from an educational aspect.

Jina brings a comb and a water sprayer from her drawer in the corner of the classroom and sits down on the floor near the classroom door. She calls a girl holding the comb with her right hand and the girl comes closer to Jina from the block play center and sits down in front of her. The girl seems to know why Jina called her name and what to do now. Jina asks her, "Do you want a hair pin or not?" The child answers, "No. I want to braid." Jina says to her, "Braid?...(Jina closely inspects the girl's response pursing her lips together.) O.K. (Jina's eyes watch the other children who are playing in the block center.) Where is your hair band?" The girl gives Jina her hair band which was around her wrist and answers, "Here." Jina takes it and moves it to her right hand but at the same time Jina is observing the children at the block center. While combing the girl's hair, Jina keeps watching the children in the house play center on her left side. Jina sees one of boys is moving another play area without putting away his toys in the block play center on her right side and she says to him, "Minjae, you forgot to put it away before leaving the center." Jina finishes braiding the girl's hair and says to her, "You can go to play." Jina calls another girl. They are talking about what style the other girl wants. Jina recognizes there is some noise from the block play center. The girl who went to the block play center just after finishing having her hair done and a boy are arguing. The boy says to the girl, "I got it first." The girl answers to the boy, "No, I got it first before you played here." Jina keeps combing and watches the block play center. She says to the boy and the girl, "Be nice to your friend. Find another block. There are many blocks there." The girl says to Jina, "I want to play with paper blocks he has them (pointing out the

paper blocks). We have only the paper blocks." Jina ignores them and pays attention to pinning on the hair pin. The girl in the block starts crying and comes to Jina. Jina stands up suddenly, holding the girl's hand in one hand and her comb in the other and goes to the block play center. Jina says, "Let me see." She takes some blocks from the boy who put on the blocks in front of him and says to the boy, "You have many paper blocks. Please, give some blocks to her." Jina checks that the boy begins giving the blocks to the girl and she comes back to her seat in order to keep combing for another girl. Jina's hands look very busy. However, Jina's eyes keeps watching not only the block play center but also other play centers. (Researcher's observation journal, 04/10/08)

Jina played many roles at once in her classroom and spent a lot of time playing these roles everyday. Sometimes she had to play unexpected roles. Jina mentioned that she was asked be a party planner as well. The following observation by the researcher illustrates Jina's role as a party planner.

Jina's classroom has a birthday party for one of the children, Heunjin. On the snack wagon in the hall way, there are some beverages such as orange juice and grape juice as well as some of the children's favorite snacks such as Cheetos, Onion Chips, Corn Choco, and Peanut Chips with squid favor. This snack wagon is what Jina prepared in advance for her classroom instead of the regular morning snack. With a high tone voice, Jina says to the children, "Everybody, clean up." And she calls the children who are reading books on their chairs in the classroom to the whole group mat and pushes the wagon to the classroom. The children realize the party is starting soon and gather on the whole group mat looking at the snack wagon. As soon as Jina talks about cleaning, two boys run out of the classroom and check what the snack wagon has. One of the boys

cries out, "Wow, look! There is a birthday cake!" The other boy says, "Teacher, is that a birthday hat?" Jina looks at the children and says to them, "Yes. Please, go to the mat. If you are in the sea (meaning the area around the mat), we can't start it and we can't eat any of them." Jina brings a camera from her cubby and says to her students, "Whose birthday is today?" The children point at Heunjin with their fingers with a smile. Heunjin looks a little bit shy as she smiles and stares at Jina and her classmates. Jina lets Heunjin put on the birthday hat and sit on the chair in front of the children on the mat. And then, Jina turns off the classroom lights and tells them, "Let's sing a birthday song for Heunjin. How many times are we supposed to sing the song?" The children answer together, "Two times." Jina says to them, "O.K. You know what to do. Very good! Let's sing a song loudly." The children sing the birthday song clapping their hands and Heunjin blows out the candles on the cake. Jina is taking many pictures for her here and there. Jina helps Heunjin cut the birthday cake with a white plastic knife and turns the light on again. Jina says to the children, "This time, who wants to kiss Heunjin's cheek? Please, come on." Two children at a time take turns kissing her cheeks and Jina takes picture of it. Jina is very busy because she needs to say something to the children continuously and take pictures at the same time. (Researcher's observation journal, 04/24/08)

In an informal interview, Jina mentioned she needed to prepare this kind of birthday party in her classroom at least once a month. She uploaded the birthday party pictures because the parents wanted to see the pictures on the school's web site. According to Jina, some of the parents were very concerned about birthday parties because they were working and didn't have time to

organize birthday parties for their children and friends. Jina felt that most parents held high

expectations in terms of her fulfilling multiple roles.

> I know parents are very busy everyday. You know, between the teacher and parents, we
>
> have somehow different roles. I am just a teacher. The birthday party for children can be
>
> different because I am not a professional party planner nor am I parents who take care of
>
> preparing a party for just one child. However, it seems that the parents want something
>
> perfect. For instance, one day, one of the parents wanted to see their child's birthday
>
> party pictures at the beginning of this semester. So, I uploaded them to our web page.
>
> After that, many parents requested it and I have done it for every party. You know, that
>
> means I have to prepare each birthday party thoroughly because they could share the
>
> pictures. Everybody wants me to be fair. (Group discussion, 06/26/08)

Jina did her best to be a good listener so that every parent felt satisfied with her performance.

She also talked about parents' academic expectations. Some parents had high expectations in

terms of their children's academic achievement and others did not. For Jina, the difficult thing

was balancing academic and non academic concerns as a classroom teacher.

> I know most parents in my classroom are good people. It seems they trust me as the
>
> classroom teacher in terms of academic achievement. I know that. Whenever I consult
>
> with them about the children's academic development, I feel confident. But some of
>
> them really are more concerned about things such as reading and writing than others. At
>
> least, in front of me, they agree with my teaching beliefs and methods and nod their
>
> heads, but who knows? Even if they have a different perspective, they don't say it
>
> directly in front of me. I just assume these parents have higher expectations for their
>
> children. I agree that children develop as a whole child through learning by playing. I

know some parents think play is just play and not for learning. Those who believe that

want their children to do worksheets everyday. I remember one of the children brought

his own worksheet from home and I let him do it in my classroom. When I make plans

as a teacher, I cannot help but negotiate between their different perspectives. (Interview,

04/02/08)

Jina mentioned one parent, in particular, who was really concerned about the kinds of teaching in

the classroom. The parent wanted to observe the classroom often even if there was not an open

house or a regular observation time for parents. Jina confessed that she felt like she was being

supervised whenever the parent wanted to observe.

Who as a teacher loves observations? Is it fun that parents can observe the classroom

whenever they want in the middle of a lesson? For one hour or two hours? I think that it

is a depersonalization for the teachers. I can not tolerate their view point. You know, our

classroom is small and has no mirror observation room like other lab schools…How

many schools open their classrooms for parents to observe their children and the teacher

anytime? If they don't trust the teacher, they don't need to register here. They had better

take care of the children for themselves. (Group discussion, 06/26/08)

She felt that the teacher's most significant role should be that of an educator for children. She

recalled her student teaching and talked about the dream of future teacher she held at that time.

Her dream was to become a teacher and stay with children who were always happy and lovely.

Jina mentioned she would still like to strive for this dream. However, she felt that she always

needed to negotiate her primary role as an educator in light of the other roles which she faced in

reality.

Now I understand why my mentor teachers were that way during my student teaching somehow. My first role is just to do something for my students not for other people. I really want to listen to children's words and help them as a teacher. I don't want to change my mind. But look at me! I see that I am doing just what my mentor teachers did before. I really don't want to. I am a teacher for my children! (Interview, 05/08/08)

Jina explained that she wanted to make her teaching dream come true. In fact, Jina felt that she tried her best to negotiate between her multiple roles. She strongly insisted that her first role should be that of an educator. Jina explained how she had never thought about these multiple roles when she was a student teacher.

If I heard about the many roles as a teacher when I was a student teacher, I wouldn't have considered having this job. Of course, I observed while student teaching, but just a little. I had never looked at it in my textbook and had never heard it from my university professor. I remember the teacher's image that I learned before was curriculum organizer, nice care giver, kind helper, great and capable supporter and a lover of children. It is true. I agree that those roles are the first roles as a teacher. (Interview, 08/05/08)

She felt that it was problematic that the university curriculum did not touch on the issue of multiple roles, thus neglecting reality. Jina mentioned she never gave much thought to what actually happens in the field, perhaps because the university classes were lecture-based and did not allow time for discussion. She believed student teachers need to experience a kind of critical moment where they make decisions as a teacher about what to do in the moment. She stressed that in her university courses she had just learned the "ideal image" of a teacher; later she felt she had to try to become a teacher based on this image. Jina explained,

I know the ideal image of a teacher is what we learned from the textbook. I agree that is very important in my mind. It seems my professors wanted us to instantiate that image. However, if I want to retain the image of the teacher, I must not stay in this area. If I want to do that, I think, I had better find another school in which the image works. Our work for children is very small part. Unfortunately, I never had a chance to think about the reality in the field. At least, if I had thought about it before and had learned how to deal with it, I would be less confused now. I often feel confused between the reality and the ideal because I just learned the ideal image. Why didn't they teach me the reality at that time? (Interview, 08/05/08)

Jina expressed some regrets about the shortcomings she perceived in her preservice teacher education. In her reality, she tried to do her best, but was not satisfied with that. Jina said that sometimes she was tired of always striving for the ideal teacher image. At first, she mentioned that reality is that the ideal is just an ideal. The more Jina worked at Sarang, the more difficult she found it to focus on her first enthusiasm as a teacher. She explained,

At first, I did not want to let my students do worksheets when this school planned to use worksheets for the children. Four parents in my classroom really didn't want to do that—they shared my perspective. I said to them if they didn't want to, they didn't have to do. I did not really force it on them. I don't really like the worksheets for the children even if in the science activity I use it sometimes. Some teachers have different perspectives. The teachers think they can have more time for themselves if they use the worksheets in the lessons. For example, they say it is easy for planning lessons and preparing for them. So they like using them at some point. I don't think so. We as adults don't like the repeated worksheets either. You know, we can see that the children's faces

become very serious because it is not interesting to them when they do worksheets. If the children are not interested in it, they and I together can get stressed. What am I supposed to do? Do I need to take it away from my children? I remember I had great enthusiasm as a teacher. But now? I don't know. As I stay longer, I am more confused about my position and my roles. (Interview, 08/05/08)

Jina hoped that everything she did was in the best interests of the children. She expressed dissatisfaction with doing things just for show. If the idea or philosophy of the teacher, the school, and the parents were aligned, Jina mentioned, she could work as a teacher without any difficulties.

Usually, the opinion of the school or parents is more important than that of teachers. I remember one of professors acted as a consultant for this school for a while last year. She stressed just showing off to somebody was not a real education for the children. At that time, I was more satisfied than now. I remember we teachers asked her a lot of questions about educational aspects. Can I say we were guided in the right direction? It was easier for us because the teachers' thoughts and the professor's thoughts were the same. Now our director…she is closer to the parents' perspectives. Does it seem she herself is confused about her way? (Group discussion, 06/26/08)

In addition, Jina felt that her multiple roles were sometimes meaningless, because they were not really intended for the good of the children. Jina felt that people conspired to create multiple roles for teachers. She felt caught in the middle, and she could not help but to negotiate the many roles that other people expected from her, all the while keeping in mind the role she herself desired to play as a classroom teacher.

Theme 3: "I am a new teacher without power."

At the time of this study, Jina had worked as a classroom teacher at Sarang School for almost one year. She experienced many kinds of tensions between faculty members working there. One of the tensions was related to workload. For instance, Jina had more work than experienced teachers: planning and organizing the curriculum. She complained that the school demanded extra duties from new teachers like herself.

> I am a teacher in the four year old classroom. In this school, there are two four year old classrooms. The other classroom teacher has more experience than me. It seems to me that the teacher thinks of herself as a good teacher. You know, the experienced teacher can do it when they have some teaching materials. I mean…I assume they already know what to do with them. Therefore, they do not pay attention to preparation for their lessons because they believe in their competence so much. I have shared my plans with her continuously although the teacher needs to make plans for herself. She did not make her own all the time—she just took mine, and copied it every week. She said the reason was that as an experienced teacher, she was busier than me. Of course, I know her position is a lead teacher for the three, four, and five year old classrooms. However, what is more important, her role as a lead teacher or her role as a classroom teacher for her children? Nevertheless, she has never asked questions about my lesson plans. She thinks she knows everything? I don't think so. I can share mine with her all the time, but I think she still needs to take the time to make her own lesson plans. It seems she just gave me extra duties because I am a new teacher without power. It is just unfair. (Interview, 04/02/08)

Jina wondered about the difference in workload for experienced and inexperienced teachers. While she felt experience was important, she insisted that every individual had a different teaching context and that this was more important than experience.

> I don't really know what the other classrooms are doing because we don't have regular sharing time or collaboration time in this school. My classroom is located on the second floor. I don't really know what happens on the first floor. Frankly speaking, I did not have chances to observe experienced teachers' classrooms. I've often heard experienced teachers are better than inexperienced teachers. But I don't really know. In what way? Does every classroom have a different situation according to who is teaching it? You know, there are huge differences in every classroom because children have different development stages and individual differences…I don't think that the experienced teacher's position is higher than mine. The experienced teachers just have different workloads compared with mine. As far as I know, it seems they feel a strong sense of superiority. When I passed the classroom of an experienced teacher, I just observed what she was doing and how the classroom was like through the door in the hall way. It was not impressive to me at that time. She has her own teaching style and I have my teaching style because we work in different classrooms. I don't mean that sharing is not necessary because everybody works in a different situation. Teachers need to share with each other. Teachers, including me, on the second floor have often asked each other what this week's topic is and what material is used. If I ask, "What works well?" it really helps me because I can get a lot of advice. Yet, I am not sure that all the advice works for my classroom all the time. (Interview, 04/02/08)

Jina suggested that she did not want any more evaluation or criticism. Rather, she wanted help

and empathy from people. The experienced teachers criticized her teaching and did not provide

much support. Jina explained,

> Most experienced teachers are very conservative and strict. They say something very
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> directly even if they can say it nicely. In any case, I can accept what they say and I bear
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> in mind I need to be corrected. However, we are human beings. I mean, I am not saying
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> what they say is always incorrect. I am talking about a kind of relationship. Who doesn't
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> make a mistake sometimes? Everybody always learns in life. When an experienced
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> teacher criticized me or corrected something rudely, I was upset. I could not accept why
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> she said it in that way. If I were her, I would say it in a different way. The problem is
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> that I couldn't say anything in front of her because she was an experienced teacher. You
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> know what the meaning of help is. I just need help which I really want from somebody
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> like the teachers on the same floor. (Interview, 04/02/08)

Jina noted that the new teachers who started working at the school at the same time gave her

more help than the experienced teachers. She felt free to talk with the new teachers but more

hesitant to talk with the experienced teachers, as noted below:

> At every faculty meeting, mostly experienced teachers bring up the issues that we need
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> to talk about. Actually, there is no conversation. They just inform us about what we need
>
> to do. When they say something in that way, new teachers, including me, will not talk.
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> Sometimes we can not talk. But usually we don't talk. And when the experienced
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> teachers come out of the room after the meeting, we start talking in whispers. This is
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> this…in this way…we talk to each other at that time in a frank way. I think
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> communication with the experienced teachers constitutes a vertical line. On the other

hand, when I talk with other peer teachers, I enjoy it. I can get many suggestions and

help from them. We talk about our own classroom context and accept the fact that

children's development has variety in every classroom. And we often give and take the

teaching materials to each other. They give me a lot of help. (Interview, 04/02/08)

Jina hoped that the teachers would have many chances to talk about their concerns or difficulties

with each other; she felt that it was positive to share with peer teachers. However, she felt that

the experienced teachers and the director overlooked the value of this sharing. In particular, she

believed the school needed a supportive director who would take care of mentoring the new

teachers.

I always think everything has a cause and effect. So, do we need communication to

understand somebody's situation? It seems the director and the experienced teachers in

this school don't understand individual teachers (with quiet voice). They just give us

directions. If the teachers who are in charge of something don't follow directions, they

start getting upset first without any communication. That causes us to get stressed out so

much. For example, the director told us to do something by Saturday, on Monday in the

faculty meeting. Evidently, I remembered she said by Saturday. She started to get angry

on Friday because we did not finish it. So I checked the due date from the faculty

meeting records. At that time, I found she was wrong, and I was upset, too. Why did she

begin getting angry with us first without talking to us? It seems she has really

stereotyped us. I assume she always thinks we are late because we are inexperienced

teachers. Why is she so negative about us? Why can't she understand us? If she tried to

be positive and took care of us as a boss, wouldn't we feel comfortable here? (Interview,

04/02/08)

Jina felt that her boss did not treat every teacher fairly. Jina was convinced that the director only

paid attention to the voices of the experienced teachers. What was missing, according to Jina,

was a sense of team spirit and unity. In order for this to happen, Jina contended that every faculty

member needed to have commitment.

> It seems we have an obstacle between the director and us, I mean, new teachers. If we
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> make a mistake, it goes to the director through the experienced teachers. Sometimes that
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> makes the director misunderstand us because she heard something only from the side of
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> the experienced teachers. I think they need to be objective not subjective in the working
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> place. When the experienced teachers talk to the director, they just deliver our stories to
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> her without introduction or closure. So so subjective…In the director's case (quietly
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> speaking), I've never heard about her educational philosophy in over one year. I've often
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> observed that she is internet surfing or shopping in front of her computer. As a teacher, if
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> I want, and if I can, I will criticize her. If I were her, I would be concerned about
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> listening to new teachers' voices and taking care of the teachers rather than surfing in
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> her room. But I really try to understand her position as a person. If I do it, she needs to
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> do it, right? We are team workers at Sarang. We need to acknowledge that we trust each
>
> other. (Interview, 05/13/08)

Fortunately, Jina felt that there was good commitment between the new teachers. She trusted

them and received emotional support from them. However, she assumed that the experienced

teachers and the director did not like the sense of commitment between the new teachers. She

stressed the importance of the school climate as an important indicator of commitment between

teachers.

The next door classroom teacher left. It is easy to think this classroom is mine and the

next door classroom is not mine. However, we can not ignore the relationship between

people. When the next door classroom teacher left, I was distressed. It seems my school

is dreary. How can I say it? Why is my job like this? Now we have trouble with

relationships. I heard from the director that she does not like informal meetings between

teachers. One day, the director said she observed us talking about something to each

other on the second floor. I remember, once or twice? I could not ask the director when.

When she said something about it, I ignored her because informal meetings are very

necessary for me. For example, we talked and shared information about our teaching. If I

got teaching resources from the internet, I could share it with the next door classroom

teachers. It just took a second. However, it seems that the director believes it is needless

chit-chat. After all, she doesn't trust even this small-talk. Yet, I really need it. (Interview,

08/05/08)

As much as she emphasized the importance of having good relationships between faculty

members, Jina also believed that every faculty member needed to keep an open-mind to foster a

positive learning community. Jina felt that all the teachers needed to be good listeners in order to

receive support from each other. She mentioned that when teachers had problems with

communication, they could not work well together. She stressed the idea that a teacher

community that is truly a partnership must have good communication.

Now our school has no channel for good communication. Frankly speaking, it is

impossible now in this school, I think. So, some of the teachers left last month. You

know the old saying, "If you don't like it here, go away." The director and some teachers

said that the teachers left because they were tired of their teaching. But, my thought is

different from theirs. To tell the truth, caring and teaching is tough for everybody. Everybody knows. Every school can be the same. We already knew that this job was not easy when we chose this job. I think the main reason why they quit is the relationship between faculty members. I know the relationship depends on the people's personality. Except for special cases, most teachers quit their job because of the same reason, relationships (frustrated sigh). We usually say we can stand it and work here if we encourage and support each other based on good relationships even though we are so tired. I think money concerns are less important for us. The most important thing is not getting stressed out from the relationships. (Interview, 08/05/08)

Jina pointed out that good communication channels are necessary for mutual understanding among members of a community. Positive peer relationships were extremely important for Jina. She believed that negative relationships between faculty members created an atmosphere which made her more tired. She emphasized that building good relationships was even more difficult than her actual classroom teaching. Ultimately, she felt that there was a dialectical relationship between peer relationships and her classroom teaching. She explained,

We often say that we can stay longer if there are good and supportive people around us even if this job is very hard and challenges us everyday. If I have trouble with the relationships between people I trust, it definitely is delivered to the children in my classroom. If the teacher gets stressed out in the classroom, the children experience that indirectly in the classroom. You know, social interaction is very important to a human being. In fact, I would like to make my career here in the same school. I don't want to have time spent here and there. However, if the people annoy me and I feel tired because of the relationships, I would like to leave without saying good bye. Spending the time

with my students even if I feel tired in the classroom is O.K. because I like teaching. At

my home during the weekends, I really miss my children. Except for the tiresome

relationships? I can not bear them. I hope my school is full of fun and trust for all the

people. (Interview, 05/13/08)

Jina struggled with the entangled relationships between faculty members in the school. She

emphasized that it was the responsibility of every teacher to work together and make an effort to

trust each other and build a positive work environment.

Theme 4: Developing a coherent set of beliefs: Epistemological tensions.

Sarang's brochure describing its philosophy stated that the school tried to support

children's development by offering education for the whole child as well as a creative education

based on the individual child's interest. Nevertheless, at Sarang School, many worksheets were

located on the shelves of every hallway in front of the three, four, and five year old classrooms.

Mostly the worksheets were used for teaching science, language arts, and mathematics. For

academic subject matter, Jina emphasized that she would like to use diverse instructional

approaches instead of using the worksheets published by particular companies. She felt that she

could help the children learn more by designing her own worksheets, rather than forcing them to

make academic progress by structured and repeated lessons using the worksheets. Jina explained,

According to school policy, all teachers are supposed to use the worksheets. Yet, I'm not

using the worksheet as it is when I teach language arts. You know. For young children,

teaching language arts is not just a structured lesson like a company's idea (pointing to

one of the worksheet books on her desk) which approaches each separate letter through

repeated hand writing. I prefer the whole language approach for my teaching. Therefore,

standardized worksheets are not appropriate. I write a word or some words related to the

letter on the board and sometimes I send it home with them…because the worksheets stress the individual letters. Some parents teach their children with it and share it at home. One of the parents told me it was very helpful in a positive way. I was very glad at that time. It confirmed my style was effective. I felt confident. (Interview, 08/05/08)

Jina felt confident that her own style in terms of academic skills-related lessons, including hands-on activities worked; she felt this approach was more effective than repeated instructions and worksheets for the children. She believed that using the prepared worksheets created a disconnected form of instruction and prevented her students from gaining creative knowledge. Jina had difficulty in adjusting her own beliefs to the school's philosophy, yet she continued to do activities consistent with her own philosophy whenever she felt it was needed by the students. For instance, in the middle of the daily schedule, Jina often gave her students time to play with the Gabe blocks. Originally, the Gabe blocks were supposed to be used with a prepared lesson conducted by the teacher.

It is afternoon free play time in Jina's classroom and every child is playing in the play center. One of the play centers is a Gabe block center which is close to the classroom door. Jina is watching her students play with the Gabe blocks in front of the classroom door. The children are making what they want with the blocks. One of boys says to a girl who is sitting down next to him. "No, you are wrong. You need to follow the order. See! This needs to go here. . . [matching the block's color]." After looking at him for a second, the girl asks Jina, "Teacher, do we have to do exactly as we did with the Gabe teacher?" Jina comes close to the children and says, "What do you want to do?" The girl answers, "I want to make a domino." Jina says to her, "I said you can make whatever you want to make." Smiling, the children shout, "Yippee!" Jina says to them, "Can I join

in?" Jina made many kinds of dominoes with her children. After each child made his/her

own domino, Jina proposes that they make a long domino together. The children and

Jina cooperate with each other in order to make a long domino. They look like they're

having great fun in the center and some children from the other centers start gathering to

see the long domino. (Researcher's observation journal, 08/04/08)

Jina stressed the importance of social as well as academic skill-related activities for her students.

By including social skill activities, Jina hoped that her students would develop a sense of

ownership and control over what happens in the classroom and be able to organize and manage

their own activities. She noted how the use of worksheets led to very teacher-centered lessons.

Jina explained the history behind the requirements for using worksheets for teaching. The

requirement came about as a result of the opinion and requests of parents. She explained,

At first, as far as I know, the school did a survey to understand parents' perspectives

about using the worksheets. Most parents really liked using worksheets and so we

followed their opinions. However, I don't agree. My children are just four years old. I've

learned play-centered learning is vital for them and I really agree with it. When we use

the worksheets, we might quickly check their progress everyday. In my classroom's

case, it seems that one out of ten children may enjoy it. The others do not. Yet, they

cannot help doing it. They know if they don't, their parents and the teacher would scold

them. Also, I understand that they do it compulsorily because other classmates are doing

it. I could see that clearly. They need play time, I think. By using a different approach,

they can learn appropriately…It does not match with my teaching philosophy. I don't

like it. I hate it when my students act like robots. (Interview, 08/05/08)

There were many occasions where Jina spoke in English when she talked to the children in the classroom. She had her own beliefs regarding the use of English in teaching young children. She believed that English education was very important for today's youth. Her classroom English instruction was focused on speaking and listening in a practical way rather than using worksheets. She commented,

> This school emphasizes foreign language education teaching because the parents are really interested in that. However, the children are not interested in writing the alphabet, even for Korean letters. I think the approach is more important for young children. It seems that today's kids are very different from when I was a kid. They need to learn a lot of things from their early youth in advance. My nephews' English is good even though they are very young. The young children today learn what we learned in middle school. One of my nephews is a 1st grader at the elementary school. When I looked at his English textbook, it was hard. Therefore, my classroom children are just four years old, but I hope they are accustomed to speaking and listening to a foreign language. (Group discussion, 05/13/08)

Jina mentioned that she learned how to teach English for young children in her preservice teacher education program at the university and thought that it was very helpful for her teaching. She wanted to teach English naturally in the classroom using a whole language approach much like the way that she taught Korean language, rather than giving direct instruction using worksheets. Jina continuously received support on how to use English in the classroom from the teacher education professors who visited the school once a month. She was very satisfied with what she learned from them. Jina mentioned that, besides the advice on English teaching and learning, the educating time once a month had influenced her own teaching. She learned how

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important it was for teachers to observe children in the classroom as well as the use of portfolios in teaching and learning.

It is 7: 35 p.m. on Monday. It is the time that all teachers gather in a classroom and receive inservice training from the University professors once a month. The teachers sit on the floor in rows and two professors sit on cushions in front of the teachers including the director. One of the professors shows a video related to a teacher's observation during the free play time. After watching it, the professor gives the teachers summarized papers about various observation skills and shares how to observe the children in a practical way with the teachers. The professor gives some advice to the teachers about the classroom observation. She says to the teachers it is important to write down what the teacher observes without any delay whenever the teacher observes the children. The teachers nod their heads while taking notes. In the second section, the other professor gives the teachers an English lesson using children's English books. When the professor reads the book, the teachers repeat after her taking their turns. The professor helps the teachers correct their pronunciation and accents. It is almost 9:00 p.m. but the teachers look very focused and are engaged in learning. (Researcher's observation journal, 05/19/08)

From Jina's perspective, child-centered education was a very important idea she had learned at the university. She felt that teachers need to focus on child-centered instruction, but explained how the challenge of the "real world" made it difficult to do so. She renewed her ideas as a teacher from the inservice education once a month. Even though the inservice training took place late after a long day's work, she participated in the meeting joyfully and confidently. She often

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argued at the meeting that play center time should be fundamental, and that the schedule needed to meet the needs of children, not adults.

> I am very interested in play-centered education for young children because play-centered education is related to children's individual interests. You know, it is an education for the whole child. It has been really interesting to me. When I call parents, they really worry about their children in terms of academic skills. "How about learning the Korean language?" "How about studying mathematics?" and "Is my child doing well?" When I talk about my teaching philosophy regarding play-centered education, some of them do not accept my opinion. But, I always try to help them understand my opinion.
> (Interview, 05/18/08)

Jina wanted to be able to interact with her children in the free play center time. She emphasized how important the interactions between the teacher and the children were at that time. At the very least, she didn't want this time to be interrupted by other things. Nevertheless, she typically had to spend this time making phone calls and doing extra work.

> It is the morning free play time in Jina's classroom. Jina is talking with a boy who is making a robot in the block center. He says to Jina, "This is a Transformer." She answers, "Wow, it looks good. How does it change?" He shows Jina what he made and explains it to her. Jina smiles and responds to him, "Do you want to share it with your friends later? He smiles nodding his head and goes over to the block basket to make another robot. Jina goes to the art center. After she observes the children there for a while, she moves to the puzzle center. One of the children brings two pieces of a puzzle, one labeled with "1" and the other with "0" and shows them to Jina. The boy asks Jina, "Teacher, if I attach these together (attaching the two pieces with his two hands), it

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should be 0?" Jina smiles and answers, "It is 10. You have 1 and you have 0. It looks like 10, right?" He puts one of them on the floor and finds another piece. A secretary comes to Jina's classroom and asks Jina, "Do you have your picture with you? I need it to post it on our Web Page, which the director asked me to do." Jina says, "No." The secretary asks, "I need it now. Can I take your picture now?" Jina goes out of the classroom with the secretary who takes her picture in the hallway. When Jina walks into the classroom and goes over to the boy with whom she was talking, he shows her the two pieces and asks Jina, "How about this? Is this 20?" Jina responds to him, "How smart!" She keeps observing the other children who are playing in the puzzle center. One of the children calls Jina from the art center. She moves to the art center to help the child. The next classroom teacher calls her name from the front of her classroom door. Jina comes over to her. She says to Jina, "We need to post the pictures on the Web site. After answering, "O. K", Jina goes to the art center where the girl is waiting for her. (Researcher's observation journal, 07/01/08)

Jina wanted to plan and work hard "just for my students" because it made her comfortable and confident as a teacher. She explained that she was not a "superwoman" and she lamented the fact that she spent perhaps only three hours or so per day, actually teaching (Interview, 08/05/08). She wanted to devote herself to preparing effective lessons in the evening. In addition, Jina maintained that teachers needed to continuously learn and conduct research in order to improve their teaching.

We are the teachers for young children. I know I sound just like a textbook. However, I want to become a teacher who does her best to understand children's perspectives. So I need to learn as a teacher. I will do a portfolio some day. We don't have to think it is our

duty. The teacher needs to do it just for the children. I want to use a 'Project Approach'

method in my classroom which I learned before. I want to always be a teacher who

continuously learns. (Interview, 05/13/08)

Jina was very interested in the 'Project Approach' which she had learned about at her university.

However, she worried that, if she adapted it in her teaching, she would have extra work in

addition to her current workload. So she hesitated to try the 'Project Approach' (Group

discussion, 05/13/08). She hoped that parents and the people who worked in the school would

understand and respect her teaching philosophy.

I have 15 children in the classroom. I think all teachers have their own teaching

philosophy. I am not taking care of just one child. I need to take care of 15 children

simultaneously. Isn't there a difference between a one-child classroom and a 15-child

classroom? In my classroom's case, I realize that each child's personality is very

different compared with children in another classroom…as a teacher, I find the most

appropriate teaching method for them. From the parents' perspectives, they want me to

do it their way. It drives me crazy! (Interview, 05/13/08)

Unfortunately, she did not believe that she would be allowed to fully put her teaching philosophy

into practice at Sarang School. She thought that there were too many obstacles in her way.

Nevertheless, Jina hoped that other people would understand her as a teacher and respect her

teaching style, as she continuously tried to pursue her philosophical beliefs.

Theme 5: Demonstrating agency: New teachers have many ideas although they cannot

share them all the time. But Jina tries to share ideas anyway.

Jina emphasized that the main focus of the school was education for the happiness of

children. Nevertheless, that very happiness was often ignored by the school. Jina disclosed that,

at some point, the school would need reform to provide a high quality education. She felt that

others might see her as a whiner. However, for Jina, it was not just about whining. She hoped

that at least one person would listen to her complaints. She wanted to have a "butterfly effect[12]"

in the school.

Everything is top down —one hundred percent. No discussion, no conversation here.

Every teacher is dissatisfied with the system. But we cannot say anything. If somebody

says something about it, the person is an outcast. People say that she is a strange or

peculiar person. That way makes us zip our lips. But…I say it oftentimes. That means

some people think of me as an eccentric? The way everybody is quiet, but I am just

muttering. When I protested about using a worksheet, one of the experienced teachers

said to me, "Other classroom teachers are quiet and doing well, why do you talk like

that?" Actually, the experienced teachers liked using the worksheets. It's old-

fashioned…And they say things like this. "I use them. They're good." When I listened, I

was dumbstruck. It seems to me they have experience, but they are not influential

teachers. Some teachers follow them. But, not me. I tried to do as I learned and I

thought. So I have experienced a lot of conflicts. For example, I dissented about using

worksheets, I said, "Decreasing our workload is not important. The first thing is doing

something for our children. This is different from what we learned. If reality is different,

we need to change it." Without at least trying it, it is not right that we have to do it

because other schools do it. I believe the director and the experienced teachers should

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[12] "A butterfly′s wings might create tiny changes in the atmosphere that may ultimately alter the path of a tornado, delay, accelerate or even prevent the occurrence of a tornado in a certain location. The flapping wing represents a small change in the initial condition of the system, which causes a chain of events leading to large-scale alterations of events.″ (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Butterfly_effect)

know that. So I complained in front of them and I persisted in my opinion when I called

the parents. (Interview, 08/05/08)

Additionally, Jina insisted that planning time for teaching was actually very important. She

stressed the importance of planning with other teachers. Jina explained to her peers what she

thought the teachers' main role should be. At first, the other teachers did not pay attention to her.

Later, the teachers, including Jina, continuously claimed they had ideas for changing the policies

of the school and their ideas were, in fact sometimes, incorporated by the school. Jina mentioned

the amount of time it took for change to occur. But she was glad when the director considered

the suggestions. She explained,

> When we come to clean up on Saturday, first, the experienced teachers usually tell us
>
> what to do. We just follow their directions. Or before the Saturday, they let us know our
>
> responsibility in advance and then, we do it on Saturday. I thought about using a
>
> cleaning service from a particular company instead of our doing it. So after the
>
> discussion between us, we asked the director about it. In earnest, we talked about our
>
> tiring workload on Saturday and what we want to do on Saturday instead of cleaning. To
>
> begin with, the director did not accept our opinions. After the long meetings, however,
>
> we decided to get parents' help from the next semester. (Interview, 08/05/08)

Besides this incident, Jina mentioned that new teachers like herself needed to be involved and

have a voice in everything that was going on, and realize that the school belonged to everyone

(Informal interview, 05/13/08). She stressed the need for everybody to be open minded,

regardless of their status in the school.

> When I worked with other people in this school, the invisible distinction between
>
> teachers and the authority was over my head. Sometimes nobody had an answer in a

particular situation. At that time, the experienced teachers managed everything. They

spoke with authority and came to the conclusions that we were wrong and they were

right. Everybody can have a different thought. Everybody needs the chance to make an

assertion on the same level and, everybody needs to listen, I think. Because we are all

members. (Interview, 04/02/08)

Countless times, Jina maintained new teachers should have a "fair crack of the whip" in the same

way that other teachers, particularly the experienced ones did, without bias or favor. She also

pointed out the importance of every teacher becoming a responsible and contributing member of

the school. Jina voiced her opinions to the people in authority from time to time, but it was still a

challenge to make her voice heard.

I was not supposed to say something to the director immediately. I cannot explain why. I

mean, I don't know why. If I said it, my life here would be very challenging. For

example, I would get more work from somebody or I would get on the wrong side of

some people…So people say nothing even though they know it is wrong. The important

thing is…if people are the same age and have the same years of experience, age comes

before experience. That means age is more powerful. When I met the experienced

teachers at first, I just thought I needed to learn from them. Now I have changed my

mind. In some parts, I am doing better than them. I feel confident as a teacher. For

example, if they are good teachers, they shouldn't eat something in the kitchen and leave

their children alone in the classroom. They can and we can't? This is not right. We work

harder than them and we have the same title as a teacher. If I think the experienced

teachers are good models as a teacher, I can admit their superiority…when new teachers

come, everybody needs to be a good support for them. You know, how uncomfortable

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they are! Conversely, the experienced teachers throw around their power. One experienced teacher gave the new teacher a lot of extra duties and was constantly picking on her. In the end, one of the new teachers was so exhausted that she quit her job. I don't resist them without careful thought because I experienced indirectly what she went through. It seems that other teachers learn how to live at ease naturally. Yet, I am still watching for a chance to give my opinion. (Interview, 04/02/08)

Jina emphasized that things were slowly changing, and that the experienced teachers were starting to listen to the youngsters. Because she was critical of the way the experienced teachers taught, Jina thought the new teachers as well as the experienced teachers should work together to contribute to the ongoing development of the school. Although she did believe the accepted Korean adage, "Experience or age makes a good teacher," she wanted people to value the contributions of newcomers.

The experienced teachers always worry about the new teachers. However, their anxiety or concern is groundless. So I conclude they are anxious about what has not happened instead of making an attempt. When we (new teachers) create a good plan, it often happens that they ignore it because of their worry. Conversely, I pay attention to listening to the ideas of the new teachers. When I review the idea, it looks creative, not just recycling the same old ideas. What about the case of the experienced teachers? They bring some old ideas from old books. You know, if I were they, I could do what they do with my eyes shut. At that point, I can not understand them. They always look for some books to copy for their teaching activities. I was disappointed when I observed their working style. It seems experience is not everything. It is important to do your best in order to be creative as a teacher even if it takes some more time. (Interview, 04/02/08)

Jina believed that new teachers open up and talk when there is good rapport between people. Jina shared her experience of a positive relationship with another teacher. She said that, at first, the experienced teacher did not like her attitude, but over time they eventually understood each other and the relationship developed through ongoing communication (Interview, 04/02/08). Jina was firm in her belief that communication between teachers was very important. She believed that school-based support for good communication was very necessary. The school-based support Jina wanted was not the one-way system she had primarily experienced. She desired a type of communication in which teachers compromised with each other through school-based support.

> Needless to say, we have no meetings between our teachers outside of the school. Even personal meetings… For me, the status of the experienced teachers is the same as the director's. I feel sometimes they are higher than the director. We each had an interview, like a counseling session, with the director last month. It was the worst for me. It was not an interview, but she pressed me to assume my responsibility. An interview or a meeting should have conversation. Person to person. But the director looked down upon me from the sky. What I said previously harmed me. It was like a big minus. When I say something, I can tell the director is rolling her eyes and thinking, "There she goes again." She just tells me what I have to do. She just made her decision and gave it to me in the middle of the interview. I hated it. At the beginning of the interview, what did she say to me? She asked (imitating the voice of the director), "How are we these days? Any different? Why, do you think?" I smiled and answered, "I don't really know." She said the reason is because of me. She said my role was a mediator between the experienced teachers and the new teachers because of my age… The interesting thing was it seems she wanted to use me to hear other people's concerns. I don't want to be involved in

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doing anything like that. The biased opinions need to be excluded. If she wants to know, she needs to have a conversation with the person. Right? That was not the kind of communication that I hoped for. If somebody is concerned about something, we can support each other by means of communication. This school needs that. (Interview, 08/05/08)

Jina desired a school environment where people, especially experienced teachers, did not push their opinions on new teachers. Instead, she stressed the need for an environment that was more accepting of the ideas of new teachers. She hoped for an environment where experienced teachers and the director would not make decisions based on inflexible standards. Moreover, Jina spoke about the need for a good support system for new teachers.

Instead of jumping to a conclusion, all the teachers need to support newcomers. For example, what are their difficulties? In my case, it is difficult when the children argue with each other. We learned it from the textbook, you know, "Could you give it to your friend nicely?" Of course, it works. I usually use the textbooks. In my room, I still have books which I read when I was an undergraduate student. They are very helpful. However, the conversation with other teachers is more helpful. Accordingly, I hope to have enough time to have a conversation between teachers. Sharing that we can talk about the challenges is also necessary. Yet, the important thing is the fact that the help from teachers with a similar status is better than the help from much more experienced teachers. It seems the experienced teachers think their experience is superior and always talk based on their standards….before asking somebody's opinion. Sometimes when I explained my idea in detail, at that time they changed their mind. But first, they made a

conclusion in advance. You know, though, people can learn from trial and error. I'm not

afraid of doing that. (Interview, 04/02/08)

The faculty meeting that Jina envisioned was one where every teacher would have a chance to

talk, regardless of their status. However, she felt that she had primarily experienced only one-

sided communication. Jina felt that nobody enjoyed the faculty meetings. It seemed to her that

only the experienced teachers spoke, and the new teachers just listened.

> Today, after cleaning up their classrooms, there is a faculty meeting for the three, four
>
> and five year old classroom teachers in the office. An experienced teacher starts the
>
> meeting and says, "We need to exactly fill out the student record form by this Friday
>
> 6:00 p.m. You need to include the date, health information…You need to write down
>
> what you know. From the next year on, we will report more specifically." Other teachers
>
> are listening quietly. The experienced teacher keeps talking. "Let's talk about the
>
> preparation for the summer camp." Other teachers are still listening and taking notes.
>
> The experienced teacher asks (looking at the clock), "Don't you have special issues
>
> today?" Nobody answers. The experienced teacher keeps speaking, "Oh, I forgot about
>
> writing something for the parents. You need to write something about the child for the
>
> parents everyday. The director says we need to write as much as we can." During the
>
> meeting, the experienced teacher keeps giving information to the teachers. With their
>
> heads down, the other teachers are taking notes. All the teachers who are participating in
>
> the meeting look very serious and unhappy. (Researcher's observation journal, 06/24/08)

Jina believed that teachers should like their working place, much in the same way that children

should love their school. She hoped that the teachers who were working with her were doing so

in the belief that they could make a contribution to Korean early childhood education. She

thought the reason Korean early childhood education was developing slowly was because of a lack of open-minds. Jina stressed the importance of having an open-minded school community.

We can experience the influence of Confucian ideas descending from our ancestors wherever we go. Because of this, conflicts seem to occur between higher status people and lower status people. The communication gap between these people and the authority of the high status people might impact building a relationship in the work place. To maintain harmony, it is considered a virtue that lower status people need to adapt to the attitude of higher status people. It exists everywhere in Korean early childhood education…No… I mean…it could not be everywhere because the times have changed. Yet, my school…definitely, it influences it my school a lot. When I think of the tension with the experienced teachers, it is not important to the teachers who work in a creative way. No matter how creative and confident newcomers are, even if they are young maybe, it is meaningless here. To tell the truth, when new teachers who already had experience start working with us, the director said, "The experienced teachers are wonderful. You need to respect and follow them." This is wrong for me because, in my opinion, experience does not equal competence. We are all teachers. We have the same position with the name of "classroom teacher." We are equal [with a firm tone of voice]. If we have a different idea, we can share it and prove it with open-minded perspectives. I tried to put up with it because I remember the awful responses when I tried to make my voice heard. But when I can't stand it any more, I have to speak out. Because I think this process can make a contribution to early childhood education…I hope it becomes a comfortable school where every teacher can feel free to talk about her own opinions with an open-mind. (Interview, 08/05/08)

Jina emphasized that it was essential for a school community to be open minded in order to

develop as a place that provides good quality education. Jina had an open-mind about the Korean

government evaluation and accreditation program for early childhood schools[13]. She mentioned

that, for instance, following the evaluation and accreditation tasks could be very worthwhile in

terms of good quality education.

> I had studied the government evaluation program at home. The evaluation items,
>
> although my school has a negative perspective, include a lot of positive things for the
>
> children. For example, the experienced teachers as well as the director said we could not
>
> provide some cognition-related activities if we accept the use of the evaluation items.
>
> But what I learned was different from their opinions. If we had the evaluation program, I
>
> think it would be very helpful for the children here. When I heard about it at first, I
>
> thought, that's just for show for other people, like an advertisement to bring in more
>
> children under the banner, "The school passed the government evaluation." But from the
>
> parents' perspectives, if this school passed the evaluation, that fact itself could make
>
> them trust this school's quality. When I looked into the evaluation items specifically,
>
> they didn't seem to be difficult. The director and the experienced teachers said that we
>
> would do that someday. But you know, if we want to do that, we need to make lists and
>
> keep our minds on it from now on. (Interview, 05/13/08)

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[13] The goal of this evaluation and accreditation is to contribute to high quality early education
and care for young children using the evaluation items and the agreements of qualified experts. It
was created in 2003 and completing the evaluation task has not been mandatory but voluntary.
The evaluation items are about environment, management, curriculum, interactions with children,
health and nutrition, safety, cooperation with parents and community. There are four steps:
application, self evaluation, field observation, and consultation/certification. Usually it takes nine
months from the first step to the last step. (Korean Childcare Accreditation Council,
http://www.kcac21.or.kr)

However, Jina felt that some teachers were afraid of educational reform. Jina stressed that the

school needed to make changes in order to develop as a high quality community. As a particular

example, she mentioned that parent involvement was very important in building a good

community among children, parents, and faculty.

> It is natural that everybody has different thoughts. There is another new teacher who
>
> tried to give her opinion about parent involvement. It seemed to me the teacher raises her
>
> right hand when the director tells everybody to raise their left hands. I encouraged her a
>
> lot and applauded her in my mind…Why shouldn't parents be involved? We are in the
>
> same community. When the parents have good or different ideas, we can revise ours.
>
> The director and the experienced teachers said if the parents came in, they would
>
> complain a lot…Among the government evaluation items for early childhood education
>
> schools, I found that there is something about whether every teacher has a chance to talk
>
> in the faculty meeting or not. Also, there is something about parents' participation.
>
> Those items are very necessary for this school. (Interview, 05/13/08)

Ultimately, Jina believed that children learn from creative and open-minded teachers. She hoped

to become a creative and passionate teacher for the children, in ways that she learned about at the

university. She believed that teachers should not be stuck in a groove, but should make an effort

to continuously change (Interview, 05/13/08). She wanted to share her ideas with other teachers

and stay as an activist to bring about change in her school.

Jina: In Summary

> *To take part in this research was very interesting to me. I hadn't truly realized what I was thinking. Before, I just thought this was a terrible working place. This opportunity allowed me to think about myself. I learned a lot. I hope my story is known to everybody. As a matter of fact, I wonder if teachers anywhere else in the world sweat and labor to clean up spider webs outside of the school building. To tell the truth, I felt uncomfortable for the first two weeks when you observed me. Yet, after that, I didn't. As*

far as I know, usually this kind of research has been based on teachers' surveys. This research based on the interviews and the observations made me talk frankly and truthfully. Sometimes after going home I have even regretted that I spoke so frankly. But I usually felt more relieved. I heard some experienced teachers don't like it when someone comes to observe the school. However, we enjoyed participating in this research because we could talk with each other with our whole heart and learned something special. We are thankful. (Interview, 08/05/08)

Jina's entry point into early childhood teaching was late in comparison to other teachers. She knocked on the door of early childhood education late because she found her job interest later in life. However, Jina's life as a teacher was hard for her. She had no personal life outside of school or even inside school. She felt tired every day, from morning to evening because she had to play many roles simultaneously at Sarang. Continuously, she was negotiating these multiple roles. In addition, she was facing tensions and conflicts in the relationships with faculty members. Nevertheless, she tried to find her own way as a teacher, and she hoped that her surroundings would allow her to enact her teaching philosophy.

Jina's approach to dealing with the challenges at Sarang focused on her belief that everything needs to be done for the sake of the children. Jina expected colleagues who were working with her to be aware of what was important and what needed to be done. She did not like accepting the top-down hierarchy between teachers nor did she like the fixed channels of communication in her school. Jina expected she would have a chance to converse with other colleagues through open communication rather than keeping quiet to avoid conflicts between teachers. She strongly believed that the school should encourage the new teachers not in the 'traditional' vertical way, but through the good rapport of horizontal communication.

In the next chapter, Sunny, who was working in the classroom for three year old children at Sarang, is introduced.

Chapter 5 - Sunny's Teacher Life: Learning, Teaching and Surviving in the Various

Relationships in the School Community

"The complexity of the teacher's task is based on its idiosyncratic and improvisational character—as inexact as a person's mind or a human heart, as unique and inventive as a friendship or a love affair, as explosive and unpredictable as a revolution. The teacher's work is about background, environment, setting, surround, position, situation, connection. And, importantly, teaching is at its center about relationship—with this person, with our world." (Ayers, 2004, p. 11)

Sunny taught at Sarang School, working with age three children. Her classroom consisted of one girl and four boys, including a child identified as having special needs. Sunny's hope was to work in a euphonious school community with active involvement of all members. She had pondered the many relationships in her time as a teacher: with children, with parents, and with her colleagues. She was continuously trying to make her own teaching dreams come true at Sarang. How did she work with her children in the classroom? As a newcomer who had worked for only a few months, how did she think of herself in her school community?

Sunny's Biography

Sunny was 5'5''tall, with medium-length black, curly hair and the fresh complexion of a child. She usually wore a black teacher's uniform in the school, but wore a T-shirt and jeans when she arrived and departed each day. She changed her clothes in a supply room located in a hallway next to her classroom. Sunny had a clear voice and a slight regional accent, and spoke somewhat slowly when she communicated with her children and/or teachers. When she interacted with children in the classroom, she always had a smile on her face.

Sunny was born in 1986 in a small city in southwestern Korea, and graduated from elementary, middle, high school, and university in the same city. She was the second of three children—two boys and one girl with a working dad and mom. She had lived with her family since birth and her childhood memories were filled with good times with her family. She was satisfied with living in a small city with her warm family. The reason that she chose teaching as a profession was because of her expressed love of children since her early years. She began exploring options for her college major when she was in the third year of her high school. She explained,

> I love children a lot. However, I did not think about it as my job. I mean I did not consider studying in an early childhood education major. Actually, I thought about a nursing for my major. In the meantime, all of sudden, I thought about the major of early childhood education. I don't know why. Is it my destiny? So I talked about it to my parents. Yet, their opinions were firm. They wanted me to have a nursing major. But I persisted in my opinion. (Interview, 04/03/08)

She persuaded her parents of her strong desire to study early childhood education. However, her parents disagreed with her decision, because of Korean peoples' general opinions of early childhood educators. According to Sunny, people think anyone can teach, even if teaching young children is a professional job. However, Sunny was proud of her teaching job, as her comments suggest:

> My parents knew how much I love young children. Nevertheless, they doubted whether I could do it. From their perspectives, they knew how difficult the teaching job is because they had experience taking care of their children honestly. As another reason, my parents were concerned about other people's views about early childhood teachers…Generally

speaking, people assume that teaching young children is like one of the "3D" [difficult,

dirty, and dangerous] occupations. I mean, nobody wants the job because of recognizing

the low status and salary. People consider the job as something anyone can do if they

want to. So I understood my parents' opinion. I held fast to my decision and, in the end,

my parents permitted me to go where I wanted to go. To be honest, I had the same idea

about my major by the time I got the admission from the university. I mean, I realized I

underestimated teaching young children and I made light of them as a mere young

children. I experienced huge differences when I studied my major in an early childhood

education. I found there are lots of things to need to study. Some things were so difficult

for me. It was harder than I expected. For example, there are many things regarding

education. At that time, I thought studying early childhood education as comprehensive

as studying nursing. Above all, I learned that it is very significant to educate very young

children. Whenever I took my courses at university, I was surprised because it was more

different than I thought. Educating young children is the most important thing. I believe

that teaching young children is not a like 3D job. It is very professional, not just anyone

can do it. (Interview, 04/03/08)

Sunny specifically thought about a teaching job in early childhood education after her experience

as a student teacher. She expected that early childhood education would, in the future, become a

central concern for most people and that they would change their thoughts about early childhood

educators. She mentioned how she had been concerned about the development of Korean early

childhood education since her time as a student teacher. She compared early childhood education

between Korea and other countries.

I had even seen the case of other countries since I had been an undergraduate student in

early childhood education. I heard summer camping does not exist in some countries because of the safety issue. Some countries have more teachers for younger children in a classroom. Some countries are interested in parent involvement and cooperation with the local community. I think this country needs to look into those kinds of things. In a word, people always say that young children are our dream for the future. I hope they will give better treatment to us, the early childhood educators. To be honest, people consider the elementary teachers as real teachers but not us (early childhood teachers). They don't think we are teachers and make a light of a person as a teacher. They don't know that early childhood education is a base for lifelong education. Why don't they consider us as teachers? People ignore this job and the salary is the lowest anyway. When I think about these points, the major focus in order to develop Korean early childhood education should be respect for the teachers first of all. Definitely, it is important to make higher salary. Treating the job as a professional occupation is also necessary. In reality, we always are treated contemptuously even if this is a difficult job. However, I believe that the situation will change someday because this country is developing step by step. (Interview, 08/06/08)

Sunny believed her job was an important one in the world, even though she was aware that many people disagreed. This pride made her decide to stay as a teacher in early childhood education. When Sunny recalled the times she was a student at her university, she mentioned how she really enjoyed studying as an early childhood education major; on the other hand, she was doubtful of whether she could be successful at the job. However, she maintained that her teacher education program enabled her to develop her sense of responsibility as a teacher, even when placed in

unfavorable situations. Sunny went into teaching with her eyes wide open and paid attention to

the child-centered philosophy in her teacher education program. She recalled,

> I often heard about the child-centered education from my professors. I thought the
> teacher-centerness is just when children copy their teacher as the teacher directs. When I
> went to the field as a student teacher, primarily, I thought it was right to follow not the
> teacher but the children. I got a sense of the responsibility as a teacher in my teacher
> education. Absolutely, the children are cute. But, first and foremost, I could try to do my
> best for my responsibility from the child-centered educational perspective. (Interview,
> 04/03/08)

Sunny shared a particular experience that impressed her during her university life. From her

experience as a student, Sunny learned the importance of helping children feel comfortable at

school and the need to develop personal relationships with individual children from the

beginning of school. She clarified,

> I just thought "Children's Play" was giving the children directions when the children
> play. But I was surprised that the words "Play and Teaching" were in the course name.
> As another example, I thought "Physical Education for Young Children" was like playing
> outside with children. It included moving activity, non-moving activity and dynamic
> activity with music. Actually, I learned a lot in those courses. But I experienced it is
> important to be flexible during my student teaching. You know, even if I planned very
> specifically, sometimes it did not work because of a time management issue or a
> classroom management issue. At that time, I thought experience was regarded as an
> important thing because of the situations. After then, I thought I need more experience
> based on my philosophy and educational theory. I experienced the textbook does not

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include everything. I remember the textbooks used at university focused on how to teach so much instead of understanding children's perspectives. When I was a student teacher, I thought about the children's lives at school. Like how do they think of themselves at the beginning of schooling? Pre-school is the place they go when they come out of their homes for the first time. What do they think about the teacher? What difference do they see between their parents and the teachers? What is the children's perception about their school? I was very curious at that time. (Interview, 04/03/08)

Sunny criticized her mentor teacher during her student teaching for not being a good role model as a teacher. She confessed that her mentor teacher was a very strict person with the children and that she did not like her mentor's teaching style. She described how she sympathized with the children as a student teacher, and had a chance to confirm her beliefs as a teacher during that time.

I was always interested in child-centerness. That was my dream. When I tried it as a student teacher, I realized it was not as easy as I had imagined. On the contrary, teacher-centered education was very easy. It was more difficult for me to adapt to children's perspectives. You know the reason? Because the children were already trained by the adults. I mean, the teachers… The children were accustomed to doing as the adults wanted and they became aware of the power of the adults by studying the teacher's face. The classroom had the cramming system of education. It was a seven year old classroom and the teacher expected the children to learn everything by rote. The teacher's attitude was very heavy-handed. Because I was a just student teacher in her classroom, I could not help following her teaching style. The classroom children looked like pathetic and miserable. It seemed that the children had lost heart and were discouraged because the

teacher made them remain silent. You know they can understand if the teacher explains

and encourages them in an easy way. It seemed the children were tamed by the teacher's

direction. At that time, I thought about my future teaching. I did not want to be like her. I

made doubly sure that I would do something from the perspectives of my children.

(Interview, 04/03/08)

Sunny successfully received her bachelor's degree in early childhood education with a teaching

certificate in four years. While in her degree program, she took a course, "Literature for Young

Children," which was taught by the director of Sarang. The director strongly recommended that

she apply for a job at Sarang, so Sunny assumed that she was the director's favorite. Sunny

began to work temporarily in the office at Sarang. She earned a low salary as a secretary, while

working at Sarang with two titles at the same time: secretary and substitute. After about three

months of working in this capacity, she became a classroom teacher for three year old children.

She explained,

> Before my graduation at university, I worked here. I was a secretary and I helped the
>
> teacher every lunch time in the two year old classroom before I was in charge of this
>
> classroom. At that time I met the children who are currently in my classroom. Usually, I
>
> organized the documents and filled out the papers in the office. Definitely, I could earn a
>
> small salary. I was looking forward to working with the children in my classroom at that
>
> time. I remember that I felt confident a lot at that time. I hoped to have my own
>
> classroom as soon as possible. (Interview, 04/03/08)

Sunny said frankly that she was buoyant with expectations before she had her own classroom.

When this study began, Sunny had worked as a classroom teacher for only one month. Sunny

was definitely a newcomer as a classroom teacher at Sarang. She mentioned she could not

compare her working experience as a secretary with working as a classroom teacher. She stressed working as a classroom teacher was much more difficult for her. However, the pre-experience working in the office of Sarang was very helpful later when she had her own classroom, as she explained:

> From March, actually, I was supposed to be a teacher in my classroom. Yet, if I started working from March without any pre-experience at Sarang, I would have had a hard time to be adapted to stay here. I already knew who would be my children and what would be my work because I stayed here from December. This month is April. It is time to start getting along between the teacher and the children. But I already did. It's a good thing for me. Mostly new teachers start working from the end of February as soon as they finished their graduation. I think that's not a good idea. Newcomers need enough time to adapt in work through orientation. (Interview, 04/03/08)

Sunny pointed out that there was never enough time for teachers to adjust to a new job position because they have to work immediately after getting a job offer. Based on her experience, she felt that more time was needed for new teachers to adjust, because of the importance of the starting point as a classroom teacher. She was somewhat satisfied with working at Sarang and hoped to stay at the school for a long time. The goal of her life was to become a good teacher, as she explained;

> As an early childhood teacher, the important thing is the heart that loves children. Without respect for the children, I can not. Whatever I do, if I may have my belief and love for my children, I can do it. If I do my best on my road at this point, can I become a director in future? (Interview, 04/03/08)

During her student teaching, Sunny planned to teach children as a temporary job because she was very disappointed with the reality of her field experience. However, when she had her own classroom as a teacher, she found the reality quite different from what she had imagined.

> Actually, I didn't want this job for a long time. I plan to quit if I get married. But now I love this job so much, and I expect that this job can be very helpful for my own child in the future (smiling). Just kidding…You know women need a job these days. We live in a period of lifelong education. We need endless learning. I want to keep learning about early childhood education. This part is very attractive to me. I could learn from my students and colleagues. I will stay a teacher as long as I can. One of the parents in my classroom is keeping her teaching job. I heard that her college major was in early childhood education. I thought that her beliefs as a parent were different from the others. It looked very good to me. When I consulted with her about her child, I felt I got through to her. Like the mom, after teaching and learning for a long time, I want to become a director who has my own school. (Interview, 08/06/08)

As part of her future plans, Sunny hoped to become a good director of a school. She described a good director as a person who understands and respects newcomers. She discussed honestly the philosophy of the director she dreamed of becoming.

> Above all, I want to be a person who considers newcomers. Frankly speaking, this school is making fish of one and flesh of another. I want to receive fair treatment as much as we are working in the same working place. Even if I am a person in a higher status and I have more experience, I will respect that everybody has his/her own ideas and teaching philosophy as a teacher because I went through the same experience. Instead of

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emphasizing that the teachers are supposed to be in this school, I as a director will respect the opinions of the teachers. (Interview, 04/03/08)

Although she liked her teaching job and thought about her future plans in early childhood education, her main concern was time management between her teaching and personal lives. She commented:

It seems the time just for me was stopped already. I mean there is no personal life now. I think first I need to take a rest for the next weekdays although I want to go somewhere during weekends in my mind. If I have no break during the weekend, it would influence my students. So mostly I fall asleep and take a rest. Thus, I don't have time to meet my friends. I feel I need to be more energetic to teach the child with special needs in the classroom. Sometimes if I cannot stand this life, it seems that I am not a qualified teacher. The child did not answer the first time. But now he shows he is developing day by day. When I see a kind of difference in my classroom, I think I can sacrifice my personal life for awhile. I can do it not because I like my colleague but because I like my students. I don't know how long I can hold it. However, what I evidently say, the unchangeable thing in my mind is that I always stay with my students with all my heart. (Interview, 08/06/08)

It seemed that Sunny loved her teaching, as she described it as her destiny. She explained that she chose the job because she loved children. This was also the reason why she wanted to remain a teacher for a long time. Above all, Sunny regarded the relationships between her and her students as a very important aspect of teaching. How was her teacher life as a classroom teacher? What kinds of challenges and tensions did she face as a teacher at Sarang? The following analysis section focuses on various incidents Sunny faced as a classroom teacher at Sarang.

Theme 1: "I don't think experienced teachers are superior to me."

Working at Sarang School was Sunny's first job. Sunny, who was teaching in the three year old classroom, identified herself as a novice teacher. When she described herself, she used a Korean jargon, "chotzza" (Korean meaning: a novice or an inexperienced person). In a formal interview, Sunny commented about the meaning of a novice teacher.

Usually, the novice teacher means the teacher who takes the first step in the field as soon as she graduated from the university and had a teacher certification. This notion is defined as an immaturity stressing her first step. But my thought is different. No matter how novice she/he may be, if the teacher has expertise and a firm belief, he/she can do it well. In my case, I can find what the children really want better than the experienced teachers. For instance, in case my children are sick or need medicine, I look for the professional book or internet for myself. Of course, the experienced teachers are good at making those kinds of treatments more quickly than I do. I feel sometimes I am slower compared with them. But when I interact with my students, I feel confident because I am doing my best. Even if people call me a novice teacher, I am doing well as a teacher. At first, I looked up to the experienced teachers who had five years, ten years experience admiring them like "wow." But since I came in my field, no matter how the experienced teachers have a lot of experience, I do not think they are superior to me any more. I mean… I changed my mind from the thoughts how they do well like that to thoughts I can do well as much as they do. People think of me as a chotzza teacher but I don't like the labeling. It seems the word decides my expertise as a teacher. (Interview, 04/03/08)

Sunny hated people called her a "chotzza" teacher, because of the negative connotation. She mentioned people recognized her as a novice teacher because she looked very young even if she

did not disclose her age or experience as a teacher. In particular, when she was in charge of her own classroom in the new academic year, Sunny felt that some parents had a biased opinion about her. According to her explanation, at the first of the new academic year, parents were really interested in who was going to be their children's teacher and how many years the individual had worked as a teacher. Sunny confessed that she had a very hard time because of the parents' stereotyped views:

> The parents believed, "She cannot do it well because she is a chotzza teacher." I looked very young when they met me. One of the parents said, "You have no children. Moreover, you are a novice teacher. How do you do that well?" I assumed they talked about me among the parents. So I was really worried about it. But, that's me. I cannot change my situation, you know. Some of the parents started comparing me with other classroom teachers. You know, some children have siblings in other classrooms. They can talk about the other teachers, especially, the experienced teachers, comparing each other. The teacher did this and this. They can complain why I didn't do it. I don't think that comes from the difference of experience. Just the difference from personal attitudes. So in the case of my children who have siblings in the other classroom, I feel tension when I take care of those kinds of children because the parents believe it as the difference between the experienced teacher and the inexperienced teacher. But, basically, I think the way I teach and take care of the child can be differentiated because they have individual differences even if they are siblings. For example, in March, I did not call a child's parents often because I did not think that is needed. She has a brother in another classroom. The parents got often a call from the experienced teacher who is the teacher of her brother. I heard that the parents said I did not call them often because I was an

inexperienced teacher so I am not interested in their child. What is the correlation between the frequency of calling and my identity as a novice teacher? Isn't the logic funny? (Interview, 04/03/08)

Sunny had to make an extra effort in her classroom because the parents thought of her as a novice teacher. She focused on giving the parents confidence in her teaching by showing them that she was an expert teacher. She commented that her effort made parents change their biased opinions about her. The starting point of her relationship with parents was not ideal, but it soon began to improve:

At first, it seemed the parents didn't like me because I am a novice teacher. I felt that a lot. When I said something to them, it seemed they did not believe me. They just gave the random answers like this, "Yes… yes." Even calling…But now I feel their differences. Now I believe that they changed their minds because they trust me. I think my efforts made this change. I have talked with them based on my specific classroom observations. For example, I observed a child scooping from the inside to the outside with her spoon. The mother said she did not realize it before I said it. It seemed the mother admitted that I am a teacher interested in the life of her child. After that, she began very specifically talking about not only something important but also something trivial regarding her child. In the long run, I find people trust me when I try to do my best regardless of my inexperience. It is a good thing they believe I am a good teacher. I am very satisfied with it. Of course, I had a hard time. But I succeeded because of all my efforts. (Interview, 05/29/08)

Sunny mentioned that not only the parents but also the other teachers in the school had a bias against new teachers, including her. She often felt that novice teachers' fresh ideas were ignored

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in situations involving discussions with experienced teachers. Sometimes Sunny was distressed, caught in the middle of conflicts between what she wanted to do in her classroom and what the experienced teachers expected her to do. Whenever she faced this situation, Sunny felt depressed. She frankly described her feelings in those situations:

> I know my classroom well. So I want to do something different (hitting her right fist on the palm of her left hand). I always think why I need to change because of other people. Do I have to follow their (the experienced teachers') directions always? To tell the truth, I had an opportunity to look at the monthly plans and the weekly plans in her (an experienced teacher') classroom. Because I wondered how superior she is to me. But I found hers is not as good as mine. So I feel bad. To compare with hers, mine was better and fresher. At that time, I thought why did they scold me when I showed mine…Because am I a newface? I am the youngest here. They always said, "You are the youngest here. Nevertheless, why did you do that?" Why don't they look after me because I am the youngest and a novice teacher? The labeling, I am the youngest teacher here, has me very stressful. They expect what I have to do. I would like to do what I want here. (Interview, 04/03/08)

Sunny said candidly that her school requested many extra duties from the new teachers in addition to what the experienced teachers needed to do. As a matter of fact, it was natural for Sunny to do some chores for the other teachers, as the observation below demonstrates.

> Today is Saturday. All Sarang's teachers including the director are taking part in a conference for the local early childhood teachers at the huge local gym in the morning. It is crowded with over two thousand teachers. Sarang's teachers find their school's name and sit down there. They are sitting in two rows; the experienced teachers are sitting on

the front row and the novice teachers are sitting at the back of the row of the experienced

teachers. They are waiting for the opening keynotes of the conference passing their time

in small talk. Because of all the teachers' chit chat, the gym is very loud. An

announcement says that some snacks for the participants are ready. Sunny did not hear

the announcement because of the noise. One of the experienced teachers turns around,

looks at the novice teachers, and says, "Our snacks are ready. Please, go get them." The

teacher starts talking with the teachers again and Sunny and another novice teacher stand

up suddenly. Sunny goes to the stage with the teacher and brings a box which is full of

some bread and drinks. The box looks very heavy for the two teachers. When Sunny and

the teacher put the box on the floor, other teachers begin coming to the box and pick up

their snacks. Nobody says thank you to Sunny and the teachers. (Researcher's

observation journal, 06/21/08)

Sunny mentioned the experienced teachers took for granted that it was their right to interfere in

the work of the "chotzza" teachers. Even when all of the Sarang teachers gathered and made

their teaching materials together, the experienced teachers gave continuous advice to Sunny and

other novice teachers. Sunny listened to their advice and revised her teaching materials without

complaint, as the observation below illustrates.

After all the children have gone home, the teachers bring some materials such as various

papers, sponges, scissors, glue, and so on from the supply room and gather in the gym.

Sunny brings small pictures of her children, a printed paper with the children's names

written on it, glue, tracing paper, cardboard, and her scissors. Sunny makes a tripod with

the cardboard and glues the pictures on it. One of the experienced teachers next to Sunny

says, "Why don't you use another color for the matt for the picture?" Sunny stops and

says to her, "Do you think I should?" Sunny stands up and goes to the supply room again. She brings more card in other colors, yellow and bright green, and tries to match the colors with the tripod which she made. The experienced teacher turns around to Sunny and says to her again, "Don't you think the pictures and their names are too small for the children?" Sunny glances at the pictures and the size of letters and goes to the office in order to revise them. Sunny does not concentrate on her work and goes here and there to follow the advice of the experienced teacher. (Researcher's observation journal, 05/06/08)

Sunny was accustomed to listening to advice from the experienced teachers in front of other teachers. She always felt tense about making mistakes. She said frankly that she sometimes had a heavy heart because of the many human relationships she experienced as a novice teacher. She went so far as to say that, if she could, she would like to "buy experience." Also, she commented, if all the people preferred only the experienced teachers, there would be no space for the new teachers.

I am happy when I see my students, but I come in here in the morning with very heavy steps. Because everybody thinks of me as a novice who looks immature…I worry a lot about making mistakes. Especially, in relationships…The experienced teachers always emphasize their experience. I heard that they said the experienced teachers like them are needed when this school recruits teachers. At that time, I was distressed. Where were we, the novice teachers, supposed to go? I found the experienced teachers are involved in recruiting the new teachers. They decide this person is this…I think the inexperienced teachers would have no place to teach if everybody wanted the teachers with experience. (Interview, 05/29/08)

Sunny mentioned the self-confidence of the experienced teachers when compared with the novices. She thought that the self-confidence of the experienced teachers sometimes influenced their decision making as teachers in negative ways. Sunny explained, in a low voice, that the experienced teachers had no intention of listening to the opinions of other teachers and they held firm to their views:

> The experienced teachers convinced that they are all right. They ignore the novice teachers. They think we are good for nothing. I had experience making teaching plans in my teacher education. Just I need time in the field so that I can adapt to the context because every school has a different context. If it has an environment which it admits teacher's uniqueness and creativity, I would be praised by them. On the other hand, I was ignored by them. They said, "Because she is a novice…" I can make mistakes and they blame me as a novice because I have to follow their way even though I can plan whatever I want because I am a teacher in my own classroom. In my classroom's case, I would like to focus on dynamic activities because the children are young. In contrast, the experienced teachers say, "You had better do art activities like making things because the parents are not interested in the activities. Yet, I don't think I need to do things just to have something to show to the parents; instead I do things based on the interest of my children. Making something without an adult's help is hard for them sometimes. You know, so the teacher ends up making it all for them instead of the children doing it. The experienced teachers do not admit this perspective. They just persist in their own opinions. It seems that they don't want to change their minds. (Interview, 04/03/08)

In addition, regarding the support system from the experienced teachers, Sunny had particular views. She felt confident that she knew the context of her classroom more than any other teacher.

Therefore, she questioned the process of appropriate support for herself and other novice teachers. She explained,

> I know I need to receive support from somebody sometimes. Now I am thinking about the way to be supported. When I came here at first, the experienced teachers tended to help me. Yet, their views were different from mine. For instance, when a child cries in the classroom, I can make a decision whether or not I can listen to what he/she wants or just ignore it. You know, it depends on the situation and the child. When the experienced teacher in the adjoining the classroom found a crying child, she just came into my classroom and she gave the child something to eat. And then the child stopped crying. I could not say anything to the teacher, but I thought it was the wrong way in my mind. When I talked about it with the other novice teachers later, they agreed with me and felt it was rude. And they shared the similar situations which they faced. It seems that the experienced teachers think we always need help from them. Why don't they ask us before taking action in somebody else's classroom? On the contrary, if we, the novice teachers, do it in their classroom, what will they think about our action? I understand the good intentions of the experienced teachers to help me, but I think that I need to solve the problem by myself even if it is a challenge to me because this is my classroom and I know the context more than the other teachers. Without asking or saying anything, they just drop in my classroom and do something to my children? Whenever I face difficult situations, can they come to my classroom? What do my children think of me as a classroom teacher? That makes me embarrassed. To tell the truth, it hurts me. I need to receive encouragement from the experienced teachers, which means I can do it by myself. If the experienced teachers saw my challenging situation in the morning, they

could give me advice and I could talk about my challenges with them after school. I think

this is good communication and support. (Interview, 05/29/08)

What kind of help was Sunny, as a novice teacher, getting from the experienced teachers at

Sarang? When Sunny was teaching her students, the experienced teachers often visited her

classroom. Regardless of exactly what she was doing in the classroom, the experienced teachers

would take over Sunny's classroom, even though Sunny was there. Sometimes Sunny felt it was

interference in her teaching, but she did not say anything about it to the experienced teachers.

Whenever the experienced teachers dropped in her classroom and did something with her

students, she felt like a bystander in the situation. The following excerpt from the researcher's

journal describes an example of this.

In Sunny's classroom, she is talking about swimming safety with her students on the mat.

After the large group teaching, she tells them to bring their swimming suits from the shelf

and helps them to change into their swimming suits for a swimming activity. One of

children says to Sunny holding his swimming suit with his two hands, "I don't want to."

Sunny says to him, "Let's go to outside and have fun in the pool. Look at your lovely

swimming suit!" The boy suddenly starts crying out. Sunny comes close to the boy in

order to talk with him. In the mean time, the next classroom teacher who is an

experienced teacher hears the crying voice from the restroom next door and comes into

Sunny's classroom. All of a sudden, without saying a word to Sunny, she takes the boy to

her classroom. Sunny, who was headed toward the boy, stops and watches what the

teacher is doing. After the teacher brings the boy into her classroom, she says in front of

her own students, "Look at this boy. He has a beautiful swimming suit, right? The boy

stops crying and looks at her students. In Sunny's classroom, it seems she is not

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concerned about what the teacher is doing with the boy anymore and she just keeps helping her students change their clothes. However, it seems Sunny makes a wry face. She slowly says to the children with a deep sigh, "If you are ready, go to line up in front of the door." And Sunny and her students wait for the boy to come back to the classroom. As soon as the boy comes back, he begins crying again even though he stopped crying for a while in the next classroom. The boy lines up in the last row without stopping his crying. Sunny says to her students, "Let's go!" (Researcher's observation journal, 07/29/08)

Although the novice teachers, including Sunny, were receiving support from the experienced teachers, they mentioned it was not what they wanted. Sunny did not feel communication with the experienced teachers should be a one-way street. Instead, she wanted a comfortable atmosphere in which they could talk with each other. For Sunny, it seemed that Sarang School was not a team but just a collection of individual players. Sunny thought she was alone there. Even outside of the school, Sunny mentioned that the same atmosphere occurred.

> It seems every teacher is playing for herself. They don't want teamwork. Not even try…After school? We don't share what we feel. If we do, just on a surface level…Everybody is working alone here. Especially, a novice teacher like me is alone. If I do not knock at the door of the other classrooms, I cannot share with anybody after school. From the outsiders' view, we seem to have good teamwork because of having dinner together, but we do not. Even when I go to dinner with all the teachers outside of the school, the experienced teachers usually talk a lot and we (novice teachers) just listen to them. I don't like the atmosphere. Somebody said it seemed like she had a stomach ache at that time (smiling and with a low voice). If it doesn't have a good atmosphere, we

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had better not go to dinner. If we [the novice teachers] have opinions, why can't they [the experienced teachers] listen to us in positive ways? You know… It can never happen to us. It seems it is not a fun time but just a listening time for us. I feel more tired after the dinner. Nevertheless, I can not say I don't want to take part in it. It is an uncomfortable time. (Interview, 08/06/08)

As a novice teacher, Sunny wanted to show that she was working hard at Sarang. She always left late from school. She worked hard in the late evening after the other teachers had gone. However, not only Sunny but the other novice teachers worked hard and late at Sarang. Sunny commented that this was because of her identity as a novice teacher who was expected to prepare more than other teachers.

There are no specific teacher's working hours to be decided after school. We usually work in the evening. And usually the novice teachers leave after the experienced teachers go home. Even if I finish my work, I cannot leave earlier than the experienced teachers because I am a novice teacher. You know, this is a kind of Korean culture. The situation is that I am a newcomer here and I need more preparation. So I usually leave here very late. At first, I worked hard even during weekends. Because…I don't know why…because I thought I needed to work harder? Other novice teachers were in the same case. Haha!(smiling) Sometimes the novice teachers felt sympathetic with our situations, when we worked on weekends. Now we [the novice teachers] work hard late evenings instead of the weekends. We try to finish our work from Monday to Thursday because we want to take a rest from Friday night on. Please! No work for the weekends! Yet, last time, what happened to us was that the experienced teachers preferred to work on Friday. Actually, we were already done with work by Thursday. However, we could not go

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earlier on that Friday because the experienced teachers were working. If we left earlier than them, as I felt, the experienced teachers would think the novice teachers did not try to do their best and were gone even if we needed more preparation. And then, in the following weekdays, they would criticize the novice teachers including me worse. So I did not go earlier and waited for the experienced teachers' to leave. Isn't it weird? (Interview, 04/03/08)

In fact, the challenges that her identity as a novice teacher brought to Sunny influenced her daily life at Sarang. Sunny commented that she experienced unfairness between the novice teachers and the other teachers at Sarang from time to time. Whenever she experienced unfair dealings, Sunny thought about her identity as a powerless novice teacher. As an example, Sunny mentioned her summer vacation was unlike other teachers.

I want to say something about my summer vacation. Actually, the parents don't want the teachers to have summer vacations. I know they are selfish, but I understand their situations that they need to work and find babysitters during the teachers' vacation time. But, it seems everybody forgets how valuable a teacher's vacation is. Anyway…This summer I did not have a vacation although the experienced teachers had a full week's vacation…At first I thought at least three days for my vacation. I took just one rest day at home. Nobody cared about our summer vacations nor complained about the limited vacation. Rather, the experienced teachers said that we should be thankful for a one day vacation. It seemed natural to them. If I become an experienced teacher, I can have the same vacation as the experienced teachers do. But, not this time. Isn't it unfair? It is kind of a sad story? Even I could not complain about my vacation because I was afraid that they would think of me as just a whiner. (Interview, 08/06/08)

In terms of relationships with the parents, Sunny felt sometimes parents ignored her because of her identity as a novice teacher. In the last interview, Sunny mentioned the most challenging moment was when the parents did not recognize her as a classroom teacher. Of all her experiences at Sarang, this was the most shocking moment for her. She explained,

> One day one of my students really had fun in the classroom and I told this to the parent. Yet, the parent did not know I was a teacher for her child. One of the parents did not know even my name. This was in August (the semester began in March). I felt very sorry that the parents did not remember my name even though one semester had already gone. I felt sad because I thought about my identity at that time; they don't like me as a teacher and they don't remember even my name because I am a young teacher although I tried do all my best. It hurt me. You know, (with tears in her eyes) calling teacher's name is a basic part of the relationship. (Interview, 08/06/08)

In those challenging situations, Sunny tried to do her best and quickly the semester passed. Ironically, the longer Sunny worked at Sarang, the more comfortable she felt. The reason Sunny felt more comfortable was that she was socialized into playing her role as a novice teacher at Sarang. She began to believe what everybody thought—that she was a novice teacher—and she could not change the label by herself. She confessed,

> I just hope the time passes quickly and I become an experienced teacher as soon as possible. When I was a university student, the situation was the opposite. I wanted to leave as a freshman. When I want to say something here, the other teachers would think my opinion is not important because I am young…(she stays silent for a minute)…When I make even a tiny mistake, they say the reason is I am an inexperienced teacher passing through. That has hurt me. Yet, now I am habituated to my identity, an inexperienced

teacher from their view. Because I can not become an experienced teacher right now. I

cannot help but accept the identity given to me by other people…because that is my

identity at Sarang. So whenever I am curious about something, I ask the experienced

teachers first, before taking action by myself because I do not want to listen to their

criticism later when the situation all is over. I feel that is the easy way for me now. Am I

like a robot to them with no brain? (Interview, 05/29/08)

With a sinking heart, Sunny felt like she had given up her own identity as a passionate, idealistic

teacher, and thought that was the easiest way to survive at Sarang. She pictured herself as a

powerless robot of the experienced teachers.

Theme 2: A constellation of relationships.

In Sunny's opinion, a teacher's status was decided at Sarang based on experience, even

when they held the same official title, a classroom teacher. This status influenced the

relationships between Sarang's faculty members. What kinds of challenges did Sunny face in

these relationships? Sunny described it as a power game. She mentioned that there were

unavoidable conflicts between powerful people and powerless people. Sunny gave an example to

clarify the conflicts:

The school purchased a variety of gorgeous teaching materials including many kinds of

toys at the beginning of the semester. Who took them and who did not take them? The

experienced teachers had the first choice to take them, and they gave me something

useless which was located in the classrooms of the experienced teachers, saying that my

classroom really needed it. I did not like it. To be honest, my school did not have enough

room or storage for keeping the useless materials. It seemed that it was why they sent

them to me. My classroom also needed the gorgeous toys instead of the useless materials

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from the experienced teachers. I thought some of the things that the experienced teachers

gave me were dangerous for my young children. I just hide them in the corner because

the experienced teachers gave them to me. Actually, I wanted something else from the

other classroom, but I gave up since the experienced teacher got it first. Sometimes I feel

my powerlessness impacted my children's opportunities. (Interview, 05/29/08)

Her novice teacher identity positioned Sunny as a powerless person at Sarang, and her

positionality continued to build negative relationships between the teachers. Sunny felt the

experienced teachers looked like supervisors of the school rather than like colleagues who were

working with her. Whenever she asked the experienced teachers for some advice, she had to

worry about the uncomfortable moment she might face. The form of communication with the

experienced teachers that was the status quo was hard for Sunny because of the status barrier

between the experienced and novice teachers. She commented,

If I had questions, the experienced teachers said, I could feel free to meet with them. But

I had a hard time doing that. When I needed to have more specific explanations from

them, I could ask them "why". But they would think of me as a newcomer, I have no

right to be so cheeky. It seemed like they were not welcoming? Other friends said that if

the teachers have the same age, they can get along with each other. Sometimes they can

meet outside of the school. On the contrary, the situation is harder here. It seems the age

difference influences the social relationships between the teachers. I worry about the

good relationship a lot because my personality is not outgoing. If I stay here one more

year, that would be different? Now I just want to not be a trouble maker for them.

(Interview, 04/03/08)

Sunny explained the official mentoring system in place between the experienced teachers and the novice teachers. The experienced teachers played the roles of supervisors for the novice teachers all the time. Sunny felt the individual meetings with the experienced teachers were a testing time. The mentoring system had very strict rules rather than a welcoming atmosphere for teachers. Even for their teaching plans, novice teachers needed to get permission from the experienced teachers. This system caused friction in the relationships between teachers, as she explained,

> I have to show my plans to the experienced teachers. The due date of the monthly plan is the third Friday of every month and the due date of the weekly plan is the Monday one week before the plan begins. After they check it and give me their permission, I can send it to the parents after making copy. The experienced teachers seem like overseers and I am a laborer. Can you imagine our relationship? (Interview, 04/03/08)

Even when all Sarang's teachers gathered to prepare for a school event or a special day, Sunny experienced difficult moments in her relationships with other teachers. At first, she was looking forward to enjoying the preparation for the sake of the children. However, she found that what the experienced teachers wanted her to do was to follow directions without any input into the process. Her comments indicated it was not a fun time for her. The researcher's journal excerpt below describes one of these special days.

> Tomorrow is a children's event day at Sarang. In the children's nap time, all the teachers gather in the school gym to prepare tomorrow's school event. One of the experienced teachers says, "We teachers will put on a play in front of the children like we did the last year." Another experienced teacher says, "How about Little Red Riding Hood? The children will love it." When the teacher says this, actually Sunny looks surprised. It seems she wants to say something about it. However, Sunny and the other novice

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teachers nod their heads and listen what the experienced teachers say. One of the

experienced teachers says, "Let's hurry up. We don't have enough time." The teacher

divides the roles of the play and says quickly, "We need many characters such as a wolf,

a girl, a grandma, and a hunter. Who wants to play the wolf's role...Nobody responds to

her and the experienced teachers start deciding who is who and keep talking. The novice

teachers practice their roles in the play and the experienced teachers keep teaching the

novices the appropriate voices and actions. (Researcher's observation journal, 05/03/08)

What was it that Sunny really wanted to say in the situation? She wanted to discuss what she

believed would be the appropriate story plot for children. In an informal interview (05/03/08),

Sunny mentioned that the plot of the story "Little Red Riding Hood" was inappropriate from an

educational viewpoint because the story could give children a biased view about good or bad.

However, she commented that she could not speak out in an atmosphere in which every

experienced teacher agreed with the story as an appropriate plot for the play. Sunny was afraid it

would damage her relationships if she said something in front of the other teachers. According to

Sunny, having experience was important in Sarang because those who had it could feel free to

say whatever they wanted. In fact, above all, Sunny yearned for emotional support from

somebody at Sarang. She believed that emotional support was very different from intervention or

interference. The support she wanted was one that would be built on the basis of good

relationships with faculty members as described below.

At this point, receiving directions is not important for me. I need somebody to *listen* to

my words. I don't like grouping like... this is a group of the novice teachers and this is a

group of the experienced teachers. [I want] a friendly atmosphere…a moment for

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teachers to give encouragement each other. I need it. And then we can share everything

under the name of the Sarang membership. (Interview, 04/03/08)

The somebody who listened to Sunny's words was the new teachers who entered the Sarang

School at the same time. As a matter of fact, Sunny did not have enough time to talk with the

other new teachers at the school, but was glad whenever she had an opportunity to share her

feelings with them. In a formal interview, Sunny mentioned that Sarang's teachers did not have

enough emotional space to understand each other because of their busy work schedule.

Nevertheless, the new teachers who started at Sarang at the same time did listen to Sunny's

challenges and feelings in the personal meetings. Sunny commented, "Just to have someone

listen to me helped a lot" (Interview, 04/03/08). Why couldn't she have chances to talk about

herself with the experienced teachers as well as the new teachers? Sunny explained,

> Here at Sarang, I think I cannot join in the conversation with the experienced teachers
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> because I am young. I really wonder what their stories are sometimes. And I want to join
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> with them. That makes me depressed. I am talking about the most delicate situation. I
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> want to enjoy talking with them since I think we are the same teachers, but I don't. I feel
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> sorry because of that often. It seems that the teachers who have worked have a common
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> story. But, because I am a newcomer, I cannot be included or share it with them. It looks
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> like they don't have any difficulties in their relationships. Sometimes, when they were
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> talking to each other in a room, if I came into the room, they would stop talking because
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> of my appearance… So it is natural that I find the other teachers, the new teachers who I
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> can join. But (with strong voice)…the experienced teachers would think our group is not
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> like theirs. They would not know why we prefer to talk to each other. I feel sorry
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> whenever the experienced teachers think in that way. (Interview, 04/03/08)

In terms of the relationships between teachers, there was an obvious barrier between old timers and newcomers. The two groups segregated themselves. When they had a faculty meeting (Researcher's observation journal, 06/26/08) or dinner in a restaurant (Researcher's observation journal, 04/03/08), their seating always followed one rule; one table was for the experienced teachers' group including the director, and the other table was for the new teachers' group. In particular, Sunny explained that even the experienced teachers and director did not like the collaboration between the new teachers. She explained what the director had told her.

> The director said that she didn't like the meeting between us, the new teachers in an individual consulting section with her. She wanted me to follow her kind of rule. She mentioned the name of one of the new teachers—one she did not like very much—and observed that the new teacher led the meetings on the 2nd floor. It seemed the director hoped every teacher worked only in her own classroom. Yet, usually, I go upstairs to visit in a classroom to use a computer because my classroom has no computer. She told me that she did not like it. So, on purpose, she stayed far away from the new teachers. But, I am sure I can learn something from visiting the other classroom. When I visited in the classroom with the different age group in upstairs, I could observe them indirectly and learn various activities for the age group. I don't think it's good that we don't know each other between the downstairs classroom teachers and the upstairs classroom teachers. We are separated from one another. (Interview, 08/06/08)

When Sunny worked with the other teachers, she felt competitive. She explained that it was from the tangled relationship with the teachers. She hoped that in the future this competitiveness would no longer be necessary at Sarang. She thought that the competitive relationship between faculty members made her tired. She explained,

Sometimes I feel competitive with the other teachers. I think this is because the experienced teachers made the atmosphere because they compare the new teachers with each other. One of the new teachers is getting along with the parents and the other teacher is having difficulty in the relationships with the parents. The experienced teachers talked about this when they had in the personal meeting. It seems like they like comparing us. Sometimes I have a challenge because of this. For example, my classroom is a little bit noisier than other classrooms. They would talk about this. "Sunny's classroom is blah blah…" You know, when I heard them comparing us, I tended to worry about it. Actually, my classroom is located right next to the school's main office. A novice teacher said that she heard the conversation between the director and the experienced teachers: they said that my classroom is noisier than the other novice teacher's. So I am concerned about every little sound. I have even glanced at the other novice teacher's classroom to compare it with my classroom. Also, one of people who work in the kitchen heard that the director said that Sarang wouldn't work without the experienced teachers. It seems that the director really trusts the experienced teachers more than me even if I am doing my best. Their (the experienced teachers') voices seem to have more powerful. I cannot be an experienced teacher, but I am certain that I envy the experienced teachers a lot and tend to compare myself with them. This competitive relationship between our faculty members made me more tired here. (Interview, 08/06/08)

In addition, sometimes the experienced teachers' negative criticism of the new teachers influenced the relationships between teachers at Sarang. Sunny was bothered by the criticism from the experienced teachers and the director. She used the term "Jijokjil" (in Korean language) for an explanation.

Sarang's teachers have had a strange habit. They usually call it "Jijokjil."[14] When I face

the "Jijokjil" situation, it hurts me. The term is humorous to the experienced teachers, but

not to me. I feel really serious in the situation. Mostly, one of the experienced teachers

began saying, "This is weird. I don't like it." And then all the other experienced teachers

join in the mob criticizing the teacher. Usually, the experienced teachers don't do that to

each other. Although I have my own opinion, they say it doesn't match up to the level of

Sarang School. Frequently, the way that they say is from a negative viewpoint.

However… you know, I think creating bulletin boards or arranging the toys reflect the

teacher's personality. It doesn't need to be that everybody is the same. From the starting

point, if somebody strongly speaks in the negative way, it can be hurt somebody. After

facing those kinds of situations, I am scared and dread having the individual meeting with

the teachers because I remember what they said to me. But they don't mind. I can not

understand them. Why can't they just be nice? If I were them, I could do it. I really want

to work in a comfortable atmosphere. (Interview, 05/29/08)

Furthermore, Sunny was afraid of participating even in the formal teacher meetings because of

the hostile atmosphere for new teachers. She wanted everybody to feel comfortable everywhere

at Sarang and pointed out that working in a comfortable environment made for a better teacher

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[14] This term expresses a situation for a person to actively look for someone's fault or shortcoming in a negative way. Sarang's experienced teachers have used this term regularly although this term has a negative meaning. It seems the meaning of term is similar to the term "witch-hunting" (looking for someone to blame) in western culture. For example, when one of teachers made a teaching material, the teacher said to the other teachers, "I need your Jijokjil for this." And then everybody started commenting without any hesitating about the material to be improved: "I don't like the color," "It needs to be harder," or "Just change to another pattern." (Researcher's observation journal, 05/06/08)

community. For good rapport between teachers to develop, she emphasized that everybody needed to keep an open-mind.

<div style="text-align: center;">**Theme 3: Surviving burn-out.**</div>

From morning to evening, Sunny worked without a break at Sarang. She took care of five students in her classroom everyday. She shared the same classroom with another novice teacher who was teaching seven more students of the same age. Sunny's students were several months older than the ones in the other teacher's classroom. The small class size was because of the ratio of students to teacher for this age group, which was mandated by Korean education and care law. With respect to sharing a classroom, Sunny commented that there were positive things and negative things simultaneously.

> I am sharing my classroom with another teacher. She started working with me here at
> Sarang. She graduated from the same University and so we already knew each other.
> Sharing the same classroom with another teacher gave me something good. Sometimes I
> felt inconvenient in that we have to make plan together because we support the same
> curriculum and schedule for the students. Instead, I can get emotional support from her as
> a friend and we can cooperate and share our good ideas. (Interview, 04/03/08)

Sunny's schedule as a classroom teacher at Sarang could be divided in terms of two chunks. One was the actual time spent with children in the classroom. The other was the time spent on planning and other activities after her children went home. She explained her daily workload.

> Usually I arrive in school at 8:00 a.m. And then I meet my children at the school gym and
> I have a greeting time with my children there. Taking them from the gym to my
> classroom, I let them change clothes and play in the play centers. And they have morning
> snack and morning activities. After lunch and nap time, we go to walk outside or do an

art activity. But for the act activity, I need to help a lot the children, standing by them. So I sometimes choose story telling or a puzzle activity. After the activities, the children have afternoon play time. At five o'clock, we prepare for going home. When they go home, my other work time starts. First, I clean up my classroom and prepare for the lessons for the next day. Sometimes I go to the faculty meeting right after the clean up. Monday and Friday have a faculty meeting for the all the Sarang teachers including the director. And Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday have a faculty meeting for infant and toddler classroom teachers. Mostly we talk about what happened today. And I can go my home at around 8:00 p.m. in the evening. (Interview, 05/29/08)

Sunny's busy workload did not finish even after the faculty meeting in the evening. In terms of her daily work schedule, Sunny thought that the most important was the greeting time to meet her students and the consulting time to talk with the parents because these mostly influenced the interactions that took place in the classroom. She had to find time to call the parents after she went home. Therefore, her work schedule continued even after she arrived at home.

I cannot help but call the parents after 8:00 p.m. because of the faculty meetings in the evening. Even if I call them before 8:00 p.m., you know, usually the time is for family dinner time. So I tend to avoid the dinner time. Actually, my schedule never ends. It seems I can not sleep, if I don't stop working. I have a lot of things to have to do although I do my work in advance without laziness. For the calling times with the parents, it doesn't take long. But when I try to do it for every student, it takes long. When I go home, I just go to bed without any family life. I don't even have time to talk with my parents at home. Usually, I arrive at home when they are already asleep, I. When I arrive earlier than them, I fall asleep earlier than them. I have never talked with my parents

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about my tiring life as a teacher because they worry about me. This was my life for one

month here. I worry about my health a lot. You know, everybody needs to take a rest.

(Interview, 05/29/08)

Since starting her work at Sarang, Sunny had been concerned about her health. Except for the

weekends, she did not have dinner with her family. As a rule, she had lunch with her students in

the classroom and ate the same food as the children. Also, she often skipped dinner or shared a

light supper with other teachers at the school. Furthermore, when she ate something in her

classroom, she had to hurry because she took care of the children's lunch at the same time. The

following excerpt shows an example of this.

It is 12:05 p.m. In Sunny's classroom it is lunch time. Her students sit down on their

names and wait for their plates. The menu is the fried rice with the black sauce called

"Jajang," a dikon (a kind of Asian vegetable) soup, and a piece of cooked tofu with soy

sauce. After serving the food and mixing the rice and the sauce on the plate so that her

children can eat it easily, she gives to a plate to each child. She looks very busy. The

children and Sunny sing a praying song for their lunch together. The plot of the song is

about remembering to thank their parents and the teacher. The last line of the song was

"Please, eat first, teacher." As soon as the song finishes, the children begin eating their

lunch and Sunny say to the children "Enjoy your lunch," and observes her students eat

without even serving food on her plate. Sunny figures out that one of her children is poor

at using a spoon and chopsticks, and helps him. Also, she finds that the other child did

not eat his soup, so comes to the child, and says calling his name, "You scoop your soup

as well." The other child calls Sunny and says, "I need more Tofu." It is almost 12:30

p.m. Nevertheless, Sunny has not started her lunch yet…It is 12:35 p.m. now. She serves

a little bit food on her plate which is the same size as the children's and starts eating her

lunch. She eats hurriedly, continuing to observe her students. (Researcher's observation

journal, 06/25/08)

After lunch, Sunny's students had a nap time everyday from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. When the

children prepared to take a nap, Sunny set up the mats and blankets which were located on the

shelves in a hallway. While Sunny cleaned the classroom in preparation for nap time, another

teacher stood near the restroom to take care of Sunny's and her own children while they were

brushing their teeth or going to the potty. During children's nap time, Sunny had a lot of

documents to complete. Usually, Sunny worked together with another teacher in her classroom.

The following expert from the researcher's observation describes Sunny's work during the

children's nap time.

> Sunny's classroom children are all taking a nap. Sunny and another teacher who shares
>
> her classroom sit down near the door of the classroom. Sunshine beside the window of
>
> the door lights on the table of them. Sunny and the teacher are doing paperwork without
>
> any interaction with each other. On the table, there are a lot of yellow folders and Sunny
>
> unfolds one of the folders. The title of the folder with big font size is "Journal of
>
> Education and Care" and the school's name and Sunny's name are on the bottom of the
>
> folder's first page. Sunny finds one of her children's names and fills out something about
>
> the child in the last column which was titled "Observation and Evaluation for the
>
> Children." She writes, "Jungwook said that he needed to clean up well before the lunch.
>
> He started understanding his daily schedule." And then she keeps writing for the next
>
> child, "Usually Junmin does not like eating vegetable, but today he ate all of the
>
> vegetable in the fried rice." Sunny keeps writing her journal as she remembers. At the

bottom of her journal, there is some space for writing the names of children who took

medicine. When Sunny needs to fill it out, she does it as well. After finishing her journal,

Sunny unfolds another folder which is a list of teaching materials and toys and fills it out.

And then she finds another folder, "Journal of Consulting Parents." She writes a name of

the child, consulting time, and a context of a consulting on the one of the sheets: These

days, Jinwha has a kind of baby talk and imitates the babies. She often follows the

teacher. Her mother said that she played the baby to the parents at home as well. After

filling the parents' consulting journal, she keeps doing paperwork—"Journal of Taking

Walk Outside" and "the Present and Absence List." Meanwhile, the school's secretary

comes in her classroom and talks about the monthly bill of children's tuition. The

secretary says, "Please, send the tuition bill today." After answering, "Yes," Sunny

starting looking at her weekly teaching plan and says to the other teacher, "I need to copy

this." She goes to the school's office to make copies. It is almost 2:30 p.m. Sunny looks

very busy even if her children have a nap time. (Researcher's observation journal,

06/05/08)

One of the reasons why Sunny felt tired everyday was that she had no time to rest. She really

worked very hard without any break at Sarang. As soon as her children left for the day, she

cleaned up her classroom and restroom without any help from the school's custodians. In

addition, she attended the faculty meeting everyday after cleaning up her classroom. However,

she thought most of the faculty meetings, particularly the faculty meetings for age one to three

classroom teachers, were meaningless for her. She explained,

Since last week, we need to take part in more meetings. The meetings are for the teachers

who teach younger children at Sarang. At first, I assumed the meetings would be

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something special and specific because they are separate from the meetings of the older

classroom teachers. I expected something different from the Monday and Friday meetings

which all the teachers of Sarang attend. For example, sometimes we have a different

schedule compared with the older children's classrooms. The picnic is a good example.

We go to picnic in a different place. I thought that the meeting of Tuesday, Wednesday,

and Thursday would have that kind of agenda. However, now the meetings are just a time

for novice teachers to report their work. We have always personally reported it to the

experienced teachers. But now we have to do it again in the meeting. I think it is time-

consuming. Nothing is different even if we attend the meeting. Rather, we just go home

late. I feel it is meaningless talk. Nobody likes the meeting. Instead, I need to take a rest.

(Interview, 05/29/08)

In addition, Sunny often had to make teaching materials after school, following the faculty

meeting. Sunny thought it was one of the most difficult times of her daily schedule, and it was

stressful for her. Personally, she did not like making hand-made teaching materials. She thought

of what she made as just toys, not teaching materials. She commented how these instructional

materials were different from what she had learned about at her university.

At my university, I usually made something useful for teaching class. So I did not think it

was difficult. It was something educational and creative that we could not buy in the

store. But here…we make just factory toys. I need to make something hard like real toys.

Making it regularly gives me a challenge. Especially, in March…I had a hard time

making them. I always had to think about making them in my mind even though I really

needed some time to adapt myself [to my new job] and to reflect on my new work at that

time. I don't like making materials personally. Of course, I can feel confident because of

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the achievement when I make them. But it doesn't last for long because sometimes my

children break them and I have to repair them again and again. It is difficult to keep them

because we don't have enough storage. In my classroom, I just put them on my shelves

higgledy piggledy. Today, there are lots of good and educational toys in stores. I think

those are better than mine. Instead of spending the time to make the material, if I could

just take a rest, it would be better for my children as well as me. (Interview, 08/06/08)

Even when Sunny's students were in the classroom, she sometimes needed to work as a secretary

in the office. When the director and the secretary were absent from the school office, they asked

Sunny to be there. In addition, when they needed somebody else's help, they always called

Sunny rather than the other teachers. Sunny felt tired from this situation and worried because her

students were alone without a teacher. Based on her beliefs about education, she did not think it

was appropriate for the teacher to play the role of the school's secretary. She gave an example of

a situation in which she had had to act as the school secretary.

To tell the truth, the director called my name whenever she needed somebody's help. I

wondered why. It was not only because my classroom was the nearest door from the

school office. You know I am the youngest. So they rationalized that I need to do those

kinds of things and took advantage of me. When I worked in the office, I worried about

my children who waited for me in the classroom. Actually, we have a new school

secretary from this month. We call her a secretary, but she needs to be a substitute teacher

as well because our school has no substitute. As far as I know, the previous secretary

worked harder than a current secretary. The current secretary is older than me and older

than the previous one. The director has never let her do much. So, I need to work harder

instead of her. For example, I have to take the trash out. Usually, when I see the

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experienced teachers doing that, I say I can do it for them. It seems that is all my work

and the experienced teachers expect it. It looks natural here. When I talk about this with

another new teacher, we often say "Why do we have to do this?" We know that is unfair

but we do it. Even if I'm busy, the experienced teachers think, "What is Sunny doing?" If

were only one time, that would be O.K. for me because it doesn't take long and I like

helping people… But I think it is not right when my children are alone in the classroom.

Nevertheless, they call me even when I'm busy. I don't really like it, but I have to do it.

(Interview, 08/06/08)

In addition, Sarang School regularly had a lecture-centered conference for the parents every

semester. Usually, a professor from a university was invited for the lecture and more than 40

parents took part in it. It was held around 6:30 p.m. in the evening because most parents worked

in the day. When the parents participated in the conference, none of the Sarang teachers could go

home until it was finished. In particular, the experienced teachers prepared for the parent

conference with the director and the novice teachers took care of the children in the classroom.

The following excerpt describes Sunny's work during the lecture-based parent conference.

There are 23 children in the Sunny's classroom. Some children are Sunny's and the

others are an experienced teacher's in the next door classroom. The children have a story

telling time on the large mat. Sunny starts reading a story about summer, and the children

enjoy listening to the story. And then Sunny sings many songs such as "three little pigs,"

"the fruit song," and "little by little" with the children. Sunny puts a lot of effort into her

teaching, and her voice becomes more and more husky. It is almost 7:55 p.m. when the

parent conference is finished. The parents visit Sunny's classroom to pick up their

children from the conference place, the school gym. Sunny sees off the parents and

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children in front of the school's main door. Sunny has taken care of her children for 12

hours today. Sunny looks even more tired than she does on other days. (Researcher's

observation journal, 06/30/08)

Besides classroom teaching, cleaning her classroom, making teaching materials, and

participating in faculty meetings, Sunny needed to wash the children's blankets and sheets every

month. Sunny said that Sarang's parents did not want to take them home and wash them because

they were busy. When the school asked the parents if they would be willing to wash their

children's blankets, the parents suggested instead that they could purchase another washing

machine for the teachers to use. Thus, Sunny washed them instead of the parents. In an informal

interview, she mentioned she felt tired from washing so many blankets and sheets (Informal

interview, 05/27/08). Regularly, it took Sunny two hours to wash the sheets and blankets because

the school had only one washing machine (the parents still had not purchased another), so every

teacher needed to take turns using it.

Theme 4: "Teaching and learning go together for me."

Although Sunny had a tiring life as a teacher at Sarang, she felt confident when she was

in her classroom. Teaching three-year-old children, she tried to do her best to follow her teaching

philosophy. Her face was gloomy when she talked about her busy workload at Sarang, but she

looked very happy when she talked about her classroom and the students. She described her

happiest times as those moments when she saw the development of her students. Sunny's

students were just three years old, but she talked about their future.

Now my teaching will influence the future of my students. I am sure of it. They will not

remember me in the future because they are very young. However, the meaningful

conversation…the friendly moments of giving and taking will impact their future lives.

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Probably, they gave me the wonderful moments. Even though they are three years old,

they remember what I want and understand what I tell them. For instance, we went to go

outside in order to observe the spring flowers. When we came back, they remembered

what I told them there. At that time, as we passed the flower garden, with a quiet voice, I

asked why the flowers blossom. Yet, they remembered it and talked about it with their

classmates. I was surprised at that time. Even though they are very young, they can

carefully watch, remember, and reflect on everything. Above all, I am so glad that they

recognize me as their teacher. I believe that even my minimal teaching moment will

influence their daily life. (Interview, 04/03/08)

In relation to her classroom, Sunny mentioned that each individual child had very different

characteristics and personalities, even though she had only five students. According to her

observation, their development was very different even at the same chronological age. The more

she got to know her children, the more she noticed the individual differences. She explained,

Age difference…it seems to be just a small thing. When I observed my children

thoroughly, they were special and original. Every child thought in different ways. I really

have tried to be a good teacher who listens to children's words. Especially, there is one

child who is different from the other children. I don't want to call him a child with special

needs because every child has special needs. I would like to say he needs more help from

me. This boy always cries out when he likes something or when he can not do what he

wants. I think he has just a different communication style compared with the other

children. Of course, first, he made me get stressed out because I did not recognize why he

did so. When I tried to communicate with him, he tended not to listen to me. He gave me

a big worry at that time. It seemed he fell into his world and I did not know what to do. It

looks he tested my patience. Now he is better. But… I want to say that I changed rather

than he changed. When I started understanding him, he looked different. I realized that he

needs my love and attention. Now my little hope is just for better communication to

understand him more. If I give him my love more often, he will listen to my words better.

He is one of the special children for me. (Interview, 05/29/08)

In terms of her relationship with the students, Sunny felt satisfied as a classroom teacher. She

was proud of herself and had confidence in herself. She found that her life was worth living

when she was in her classroom. When she first met her students, she mentioned that she made a

lot of effort to love each individual child and to understand each one from their own perspective.

This was connected with her beliefs as a teacher. She commented that she hoped the children

would think of her as a teacher who loved them so much and remember her not as an angry

teacher but as a kind teacher (Interview, 05/29/08). Sunny stressed that it was important to keep

in mind that the children had limitless potential, and their own reasons for not wanting to do

something. However, sometimes Sunny faced challenging moments in her teaching. Whenever

they occurred, Sunny tried to understand the viewpoints of the children. She described her

feelings in her photoessay.

I feel confident as a teacher in my classroom. However, of course, I don't feel confident

all the time. I am sure teaching and leaning go together for me. When I felt the

confidence as a teacher, it was a teaching moment for my children. On the other hand,

when I felt deficiency as a teacher, it was a leaning moment for me. For example, I had a

challenge because of the nutrition for my children during lunch time. Chiefly, one of

children did not like eating all of his food and ate only his favorite things. When he was

served the food he did not like, he turned over his plate and cried a lot. When I tried one

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more time to encourage him to eat the food after cleaning up the mess on the table and floor, he started hitting me. At that time I was very sad, and I wanted to let him do whatever he wanted in my mind. To be honest, when the food the boy hated came out, I was often afraid because I knew what would happen to me and the boy. It was a very challenging time for me. When I asked the experienced teachers about this situation, they did not give me a good solution. Rather, they said that it seemed that the boy was strange and had autism. But I did not agree with them. Until a doctor diagnosed him as an autistic child, I did not want to call him a child with autism. I regret that I asked them about the child because they knew the boy and his context less than me. I have learned about him from the moment when I met him first. I had already read some books for teaching him and started having an interest in special education. As his classroom teacher, I am teaching and learning continuously. (Sunny's photoessay in the group discussion, 06/26/08)

Learning and teaching in her classroom was very important for Sunny. She pointed out that she had learned that teachers need to take part in various inservice teacher education programs, refresh their beliefs, and learn new things. However, she emphasized it was more important to make an effort to develop her own beliefs as a teacher than anything else. She mentioned that the starting point and ending point of her beliefs was the importance of the perspectives of the children. She explained,

According to the books, you know, understanding children is very basic. I think it is true. Concerns and affections are the most important thing in teaching young children. When I observe my classroom children, I really feel it is true. They want to receive praise and they are starved for praise all the time. I think the reason is they are always looked after

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by me, only one teacher, not their parents. They have spent a lot of time in the school

since they were very young. They need warm interaction with somebody. When I praise

them, I can see their improvement and their happy faces. (Interview, 08/06/08)

Sunny always tried to do her best to have positive interactions with the children. In relation to the

interaction with her children, Sunny mentioned that her heart was full in that she seemed like a

mother herself in the classroom. As an early childhood educator, she thought giving love to her

children made her happy and satisfied with her life as a teacher. She felt that some of her

children were not well cared for at home. When she put something like the wet clothes in the

children's bags, she observed that sometimes they stayed in the bags for over three days. She was

glad that she could look after the children more than their parents. When reflecting on today's

children, especially children with working moms and dads, Sunny noted that they needed more

attention and affection from adults. The most important schedule for Sunny in her classroom was

the greeting time in the morning and the dismissal time in the evening because these were the

times when the caregiver role was evident for the children. However, expressing regret that most

adults did not have this kind of concern for the children, Sunny insisted that parents needed to

understand, respect, and share her teaching beliefs. She was disappointed that most parents had

concerns about other things that were quite different from her own perspectives. She explained,

I have good relationships with the parents and I never faced any special conflicts with

them. But, I think we have different views from each other. My concerns usually come

from the children, and I think it is right. Yet, their (parents') concerns come from the

teacher. How the teacher takes care of the children…blah, blah…They also talk about the

quality of teachers. But who can really know the quality of the teachers? If the teacher

graduated from a great college, is it certain she has good quality? Can we evaluate who

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has real quality? One of the parents, though not a parent of the children in my classroom,

posted a question about the quality of the teachers on our homepage. Another parent

posted something about the special curriculum. Their concerns were not focused on the

children's perspectives. I was embarrassed and disappointed although I have had good

relationships with them. How different are teachers' views and parents' views?

Ultimately, what is more important for our children? (Interview, 05/29/08)

Sunny experienced tension because of the different educational views between the parents and

herself at Sarang. Occasionally, the different views influenced her teaching emotionally.

However, as an educator she believed that the starting point of education should come from a

child-centered pedagogy, and she wanted the parents to agree with this perspective.

Theme 5: Having a sense of agency in the school community.

It was essential for Sarang School to have plentiful chances for parent involvement as a

method to introduce the teachers' educational views to the parents. Parent involvement, Sunny

thought, could be a good channel for building positive relationships and energetic

communications that would narrow the gap between them. In particular, Sunny believed parental

involvement from the beginning of a child's life was critical for both the child and society and

was very much needed for young children like those in her classroom. However, some teachers

at Sarang School had different opinions about parent involvement. Sunny experienced tension

with other teachers because of this. She explained,

The director and the experienced teachers did not agree with the parents' participation

originally. For example, some of parents in my classroom really wanted to take part in

the school's program as volunteers. In the case of the "Sarang Flea Market" play, they

learned how to interact with the children and how to prepare the activity because they had

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opportunities for observing the children and teachers. They could also observe the educational perspectives of this school. Actually, in the school's online homepage, they often said, "This school needs some kind of school activities for the parents." They wanted to be helpers for the teachers as well as the children. They had great intentions as well. You know, we are the members of the same community. But some teachers didn't like the participation of the parents. I did not understand them. (Interview, 05/28/08)

The point of Sunny's opinion was to understand why the parents wanted to attend voluntarily. She emphasized the importance and value of parent involvement for developing a good school community. However, when she tried to convince the other teachers of the value of her idea, she had to become a brave teacher. When she first shared her thoughts with the experienced teachers, they responded negatively. And next, when she mentioned her ideas to the director, she got the same response. However, she constantly maintained her opinion in faculty meetings. She commented,

This school needed to change its views about parent involvement. The process was…First, when I proposed the idea about parent involvement, they (the experienced teachers and the director) ignored me. And when I put it on the agenda in the faculty meeting, of course, I was afraid of their criticism, but I was brave. It seemed they worry that parents would criticize the teachers after participating in the program and observing the school. I realized that they were cowards at that time if they disagreed with me about parent involvement. You know, it is important to show how hard we work here to the parents and their help can be very educational for the children. If they criticize us in a negative way, we need to listen to them for the school's development. However, we don't

need to think that they are just evaluators. Furthermore, they would not just complain because they think that they are also members of this school. (Interview, 05/29/08)

When Sunny proposed the participation of the parents for a school event, "Sarang's Flea Market," in the faculty meeting, she felt that the atmosphere of the meeting became chilly. She became an advocate for it and finally other new teachers agreed with her in the middle of the long meeting. At the end, the experienced teachers and the director accepted Sunny's opinion and the parents took part in "Sarang's Flea Market." All the teachers as well as the parents were satisfied with the result of the parent involvement. Sunny felt great confidence at that moment as a teacher, noting:

> When I proposed the parent involvement, you guys know, my face turned red because it was the first time I gave my opinion as a new teacher in a formal meeting. Anyway, I survived the moment. The result made me feel confident as a teacher. Also, I proposed one more idea at that time. I said we needed to give an evaluation form to the parents after participating in the activity. I did not see the evaluation results yet because only the director and the experienced teachers shared it. Who read it?... I don't know why this school doesn't share everything with everybody… But I guess some of the parents wrote down positive things and other parents wrote down negative things. Can this kind of communication with parents contribute to the development of the school? This school really needs open-minds (shaking her head)… (Group discussion, 06/26/08).

The reason that Sunny advocated for parent involvement was because of her belief in the necessity of good communication channels. Even though she faced a challenging moment in the faculty meeting, she commented on the fact that she had survived that moment. Primarily, she felt that the school needed a smooth communication channel between the school community

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members. However, for this to occur, Sunny thought that the school needed many changes. Sunny felt that if people had different thoughts and ideas, it would be necessary to have a "window" to talk about them. She explained,

> Everybody thinks in his or her way. Some parents have huge differences. One of the teachers complained that our school's parents were selfish. For instance, I heard one mother did not say anything to the teacher even though our starting time for a picnic was delayed because the mother and her child came late. If she worked as a volunteer teacher at that time, she would have realized how important the schedule of the children is. And I could understand her personality and educational view as a parent before I blamed the mother if I spent some time with the mother. You know…To understand somebody, we need a window (channel) for the relationship. (Group discussion, 05/13/08)

In terms of the idea of parent involvement, Sunny assumed that the new teachers might feel more comfortable because they had spent a lot of time learning about this when they were student teachers. She thought that the experienced teachers had a strong sense of rivalry compared with other schools or other teachers. Furthermore, she pointed out that this might reflect some aspect of Korean culture. She explained,

> I learned to become a teacher with an open-mind when I was at a university. My professors strongly advocated teachers should keep an open-mind. Probably, the experienced teachers did not learn or focus on it, or forgot it… It seems that comparison is one of the characteristics from Korean culture. Some parents might compare this school with other schools. So, on the other hand I can understand what the experienced teachers worried about. The experienced teachers were afraid of the comparison. But, I believe, every place has a different history and background. That means, every school has

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a different context. To compare the teachers is the same thing. Teachers are all different

according to their educational philosophy… Usually, we know the comparison can create

negative criticism and hurt somebody, but we do it. However, parent involvement is a

different story, I think. The experienced teachers need to have open-minds about the

parent involvement for the sake of the children. No matter how it might come from

Korean culture, we need to change. (Interview, 08/06/08)

Sunny wanted a welcoming environment for new ideas about parent involvement which initiated

from her and the other new teachers. She strongly believed that it was not useful to compare

Sarang with the other schools. Rather, it was more important to contribute to developing a good

school community among children, parents, and faculty members.

Sunny: In Summary

This participation was fun for me. It helped me get rid of my stress. To tell the truth, when I talked about my life here with my friends who were working in other schools, I thought they would not understand my stories. But when I took part in the group discussions for this research, I felt we had common stories here. What I really wanted to say…I said it to you as well as the other participants first. I felt participating in this research was a burden to me at first in that I spent some more time to prepare my lessons because of the participant observations. But, after a few days, I felt comfortable. It was the first time to do a photoessay and I really liked it. I wanted this school to have those kinds of discussion times and teacher reflections through the photoessays. While I was participating in the interviews, I had a chance to reflect on myself as a teacher. How about the participation of the director and the experienced teachers in this kind if research? It seems they could reflect on themselves as teachers like me (smiling quietly). When I heard this research would continue through the summer, I thought it was a long time. It's already August. Time went by so fast. I will miss the interviews and the group discussions. (Interview, 08/06/08)

Sunny was the youngest among the teachers of Sarang School. Although as a newcomer

with a busy life from morning to evening and even Saturdays at the school, she was proud of

herself and felt confident as a teacher in her classroom. Sunny always felt that her teaching and

learning were aligned together. The longer she worked at Sarang, the more comfortable she felt.

However, she sometimes had challenges in the relationships with faculty members because she was the youngest teacher. Pointing out that the climate consisted of the experienced teachers having more power, she wanted to change her school based on a commitment of trust between all the faculty members.

She felt she was surviving in the many relationships at Sarang. Concerning the relationships with her children, parents, and faculty members in the school, Sunny used the term "community." She emphasized the importance of having open-minds and communication to build a good school community. Above all, she wanted the school community to focus on the students' perspectives, not the adults'. Because of different educational beliefs of faculty members and parents, she experienced many challenges. However, Sunny did not give up and tried to have a voice at Sarang. In particular, she was very interested in promoting parent involvement in the school. She strongly believed that parent involvement would contribute to establishing a good school community.

In the next chapter, Hemin, who was also working in a classroom for three year old children at Sarang is introduced.

Chapter 6 - Hemin's Teacher Life: "I am on a Rollercoaster while Teaching Here."

"A life in teaching is a stitched-together affair, a crazy quilt of odd pieces and scrounged materials, equal parts invention and imposition. To make a life in teaching is largely to find your own way, to follow this or that thread, to work until your fingers ache, your mind feels as if it will unravel, and your eyes give out, and to make mistakes and then rework large pieces. It is sometimes tedious and demanding, confusing and uncertain, and yet it is as often creative and dazzling: Surprising splashes of color can suddenly appear as its center; unexpected patterns can emerge and lend the whole affair a sense of grace and purpose and possibility."(Ayers, 2001, p. 1)

Like Sunny, Hemin worked in the three old year classroom at Sarang. She had an exhausting workload and encountered many tensions because of her relationships with other faculty members and parents of her classroom children. In addition, she faced challenges in her classroom in terms of enacting her beliefs as a teacher, in spite of a firm teaching philosophy that she articulated, which went beyond just "follow the manual." Having a fresh perspective as a new teacher at Sarang, Hemin anticipated having a mentoring system or teacher support group as a vehicle for sharing daily struggles and successes.

Hemin's Biography

Hemin had big black eyes and long straight hair. She was 5'6''tall and often laughed aloud when talking with people. She dressed casually in a black teacher's uniform in the school and wore a T-shirt and blue jeans when she arrived and departed. She had a husky voice and spoke fast when she communicated with teachers, but spoke slowly when she talked with students and parents, with a big smile on her face.

Like Sunny, Hemin was born in 1985 in a small city in southwestern Korea. She had lived in a larger city during her youth but returned to the city where she was born when she was a high school student. She was the first of two children, and had a brother who was attending Korean military service. She lived with her parents and helped them often when they were busy because they ran a seafood restaurant. Having a good relationship with her family, Hemin appreciated her parents, who were continuously supportive of what she did after graduation from the university.

> My mom and dad always trusted me on what I wanted to do. Generally speaking, when people asked a teacher why she/he became a teacher, the answer was because of liking children. I know this is a common answer. But my answer is the same. I really loved children from my youth. When I was very young, my mom had asked me what I needed in the market. I don't remember at that time, but (laughing) my mom said that I asked her to buy a baby. I really liked babies. Whenever I visited my parents' restaurant to help them, I used to stare at the babies of the customers and play with them and stopped working. So my parents thought I had better become a teacher who can take care of children. Originally, they were very supportive and trusted me and my brother. You know, Korean parents…usually they over-bring up their children even if the children have already grown up. But my parents didn't. They always gave me support based on strong trust. When I also chose this job, my parents agreed with me and encouraged me a lot because they knew I loved children. I think teaching is the right way for me. I have never regretted that I chose a teaching job. (Interview, 04/04/08)

Hemin believed that her decision to be an early childhood teacher was a natural one, and she was satisfied with her current job. But she recalled negative experiences from her own childhood

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school life. She was critical of her school experience, which was academic, competitive, and not based on the welfare of the individual child. She mentioned how her own childhood school experiences had influenced what and how she worked as an early childhood educator.

> I remember my kindergarten which had a beautiful garden and playground. The teachers were very nice to me. The teacher who was always smiling and spoke nicely not only impressed me at that time but also inspired me as a teacher. But when I entered the elementary school, I started looking differently the image of the teacher. The elementary school teachers were very strict, and my life was very competitive and I was not a cheerful child any more because the school stressed a high academic education. I wanted to stay for my students like my kindergarten teacher who was interested in the happiness of the child. I don't understand why the upper level teacher (elementary, middle, and high school teacher) looks different even thought he/she is called "teacher." Higher level teachers, stricter. (Interview, 04/04/08)

Remembering her upper level early childhood school teachers as authoritative persons, Hemin reflected on her position as an early childhood educator. She believed upper level teachers were very strict; however, she maintained that children always needed encouraging rather than strict teachers. Strangely, for Hemin, she felt that people thought of upper level teachers as real teachers and smarter than early childhood educators.

> People think an early childhood teacher is not a teacher. What is the meaning of *teacher*? In a word, a person who teaches somebody... People think real teachers start from elementary school. I am a teacher and my title is a teacher. My students call me a teacher

all the time and everybody calls me a teacher[15] at school. Although the early childhood

teachers teach the students, they don't think the young children need teaching? They

consider us as play partners. Whenever I heard that I was sorry. I have a bachelor's

degree and plan for the children like elementary school teachers. I am an educator. But it

seems that people don't admit it. Adults naturally understand that spring is a blossom

season and the sky is blue. But children don't think like that. I agree with the children.

From the perspectives of young children, it is not natural. They are curious about

everything. I can understand the viewpoints of young children with my expertise better

than anybody. Nevertheless, when other people ignore my expertise and profession, I

feel sad. (Interview, 04/04/08)

Hemin attended a local university in her city and studied early childhood education for four

years. Many courses about learning and teaching young children helped her develop firm beliefs

as an early childhood teacher. She met several instructors who had influential impact on what

and how she taught young children. Even though Hemin felt that other people ignored the status

of early childhood teachers at her university, Hemin was committed to a belief in the important

role of being an early childhood teacher. She enjoyed studying and taking part in many events of

local schools for young children. Her university sponsored an activity in which student teachers

invited a lot of young children and showed plays and musicals every fall. She was proud of

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[15] For example, in American culture, students call a teacher who teaches somebody at school by
his/her name such as Mr. Lee, Mrs. Kim and Miss Park. In a friendly relationship, the peer
teachers can use first names such as Vivian, Anna, and Tom. In Korean culture, however, people
don't use the name of the teacher. Instead, they always call a teacher a "teacher." Calling the
name of a teacher is rude and the term "teacher" is an expression of respect for students, teachers,
and parents.

participating in the activity every year. However, when she was a senior, Hemin's student teaching experience presented her with her first struggles as a teacher. She explained,

> My teacher education program provided only one month of student teaching when I was a fourth year student. I thought it wasn't enough time for an appropriate field experience. Even if I enjoyed learning about early childhood education, the student teaching gave me a challenge. Of course, in a positive way, that was a bridge between what I learned before and what I needed to do in the real world. However, I felt alone as a teacher without anybody at that time. I went to a private school. For one month, I had just one day solo teaching. My position was vague. Not a student, not a classroom teacher. I was like a door keeper. When I planned my teaching, it felt difficult because nobody helped me for my solo teaching. I thought I really needed somebody at that time. Now as I recall that time, I regret that I did not learn how to interact with the parents and how to manage my own classroom. (Interview, 04/04/08)

Hemin started working as a classroom teacher at Sarang after obtaining teacher certification as soon as she graduated from her university in February, 2008. Teaching at Sarang was Hemin's first job in life; she had never held even a part time job, with the exception of helping her parents. In terms of her classroom teaching, Hemin mentioned that it was very different from her study at the university and her student teaching experience. From a critical perspective, she pointed out that she felt that her teacher education was problematic.

> Actually, I loved the way I learned at my university and I respected my professors. I thought that was an ideal way to go forth. But when I became a classroom teacher, I met a barrier which I could not jump over. I learned ideal images of early childhood education and I didn't know how to manage situations which were different from the

ideal image. I realized that teacher education programs needed to provide more related-practice opportunities. One month of student teaching[16] is a very short time. In reality, it was not only about the children. Parents and other teachers were also important resources for teaching. If I had had more experience in the field when I was a university student, I would be good at working with them appropriately now. At least, I had to go to the field to observe real teaching every semester, not just one time. Also, I spent a lot of time making authentic teaching materials when I was a student teacher. But now I have more concern about how to consult the parents. Sometimes I don't feel confident in meeting with parents. I work hard but I need something more all the time. Anyway, I am thinking about a lot of things in my mind. March was a terrible time. My children needed to adjust to my classroom and I also needed some time to adjust to my work. (Interview, 04/04/08)

Unlike Sunny, Hemin did not have enough time to adjust to her work at Sarang. This made Hemin nervous from the start, and made it difficult for her to understand her first job. However, Hemin did not give up teaching, and received a lot of support from her parents.

My mom and dad told me the first job is always a challenge all the time. In March, I always went home late. My parents had to give me a ride every night because I had no car. They advised and encouraged me a lot in the car going home. Sometimes, I used to cry because of my exhausting life. My mom gave me hug and my dad said I would be O.K. when the time passed. They told me it was my life. That's true. After I started working here, it seems this is my whole life. In this life, I go home and come to school

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[16] In order to obtain a teacher certificate for all the levels from pre-kindergarten to high school students in Korea, student teachers have to have four weeks of obligatory student teaching before graduation.

everyday. My students are always in my mind. They are everything for me. When I say

something to my parents, I talk about my children. My parents have learned by heart the

names of my children. Without their support, I could not have survived March.

(Interview, 04/04/08)

Whenever Hemin felt challenged as a teacher, emotionally her family held her hands. Hemin's

parents taught her to have a strong work ethic, including persistence. In addition, Hemin kept

herself busy outside the school. She had worked as a volunteer teacher for five year old children

at Sunday school in her church since she had taught at Sarang. She felt joyful about teaching on

Sunday even though she wanted to take a rest at home. Her Christian religion also influenced her

life as a teacher whenever she felt challenges. She believed her dedication to teaching was a gift

from God.

I think I received from God a talent to love and understand children. So I want to use my

talent for other people. I don't just want to show my talent to somebody, but I want to be

a good teacher for young children. I feel the children listen to me and follow me. When

they give me their attention when I teach, it seems like I am riding the rollercoaster to

the peak. Of course, when I am scolded by the experienced teachers or the director, I am

taken down endlessly. At that time, I pray or meditate to do well. (Interview, 04/04/08)

Hemin's goal was to try to be a wonderful teacher for young children. Even though she had highs

and lows as a teacher, she tried to do her best in her first job. However, she commented on her

future as a teacher.

My short goal is to teach young children for a year and to survive here. Everybody says it

is important for the first three years. After three years, it will be more comfortable, and

after five years, the teacher will start having concerns about his/her future again. Now I

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am only thinking about my first year. I chose this job by myself. So I will do my best. Someday I would like to reply that I taught for over 10 years with a good conscience when people ask me how long I have taught. On the other hand, I hope the Korean situation for the welfare of early childhood teachers can develop rapidly. I know today is better than before. When I think whether or not my teaching job will continue in the future or not after I get married, I have no idea. To compare with other countries, I heard that most Korean early childhood teachers quit their teaching jobs after they get married. I want to stay longer, but I might begin taking care of my own children as a mother if I have my own family after marriage. A teacher's work day is so long in the current situation. Now I am doing this with a passion, but I don't know how my life as a mother and wife and my life as a teacher would unfold. If the working conditions for teachers are improved, I don't want to stop teaching young children in the classroom. (Interview, 08/14/08)

Hemin wanted to stay longer in her teaching job at the school if the teaching conditions really improved. How did her life play out as a first year teacher in Sarang School? Also, what kinds of challenges did she face? The following section describes Hemin's daily life and challenges as a teacher at Sarang.

Theme 1: Hemin's schedule at Sarang: "Going round and round like a squirrel in a wheel."

Hemin had seven children in her classroom, one girl and six boys. Her daily classroom schedule consisted of calendar time, morning snack, inside morning play, outdoor walk, outside play, lunch, nap time, afternoon snack, unit activities, weekly-based specials such as Gabe and physical education, inside afternoon play, and dismissal. In terms of her classroom schedule, she worked without break from morning to evening at Sarang.

I have a duty day once a week. When I have duty, I need to come earlier than other days. Today I came here at 7:30 a.m. because I had duty. I could not sleep well last night because I was nervous about the fact that I have duty today. I am busy all day long. Even the children's nap time is my busy time because I have a lot of things to do. Currently, I have to do one more thing for the parents. So I am busier than before. My classroom children don't go to the gym after 6:00 p.m. and I need to look after them until every parent picks up his/her child. Because the last child to go home departs at 7:00 p.m. usually, I start to clean up in the classroom after 7:00 p.m. When I finish cleaning up, it is almost between 7:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. If I need to take part in the faculty meetings, I can not help but clean up after the meetings and do my personal things such as planning and preparing for the next day. One day I went home at 11:00 p.m. As a rule, I go home late, but I need to work more even at home. (Interview, 06/16/08)

Except for her duty day once a week, Hemin arrived in the school at 8:00 a.m., although Sarang's teachers were required to be there at 8:30 a.m. Her arrival in the school meant she started work. Hemin noted that she did not have breathing time before she began her day. Hemin greeted parents and children even before she changed her clothes because parents often brought children earlier than expected. After finishing their morning snack, Hemin's classroom had play time. She was always busy in the morning because she did not have an assistant teacher. The following excerpt describes her morning work in the classroom.

It is 8:00 a.m. in the morning. As soon as Hemin opens the school's main gate, she finds a mother taking off her child's shoes. Hemin says, "Good morning." The mother replies "Good morning, teacher." And the mother starts saying that her child was sick last night and she needs to take medicine because of fever. As the mother leaves the gate and

Hemin takes off her own shoes, another mother and child come to the gate. Hemin greets

them. The mother questions Hemin about Gabe, one of the special activities in Hemin's

classroom. Even though Hemin tries to answer briefly, the mother keeps asking detailed

questions. Hemin continues to answer without entering her classroom. After talking with

some more parents at the gate, Hemin arrives in her classroom. It is almost 8:40 a.m.

Hemin finds that the children are playing in the centers without her. Hemin does not

have time to change her clothes and goes directly to the children. The morning snack

wagon is waiting for Hemin in the hallway. (Researcher's observation journal, 05/15/08)

Like Jina and Sunny, Hemin also had lunch with the students in the classroom. After lunch,

Hemin was very busy. She looked after the children in the classroom and in the restroom as well

as preparing for nap time simultaneously. After all the children fell asleep, she started filling out

her documents everyday without delay. The following excerpt describes Hemin's busy work in

the transition between lunch time and nap time.

Standing in front of the restroom and passing out toothpaste, Hemin helps the children

get ready to brush their teeth. She says to the children, "After you are done, bring your

toothbrushes, please." Hemin puts the toothbrushes in the ultraviolet sterilizer when the

children bring them after they are done. And then, walking with hurried steps, she goes

out of the classroom to the shelf in the hallway. With her arms full of blankets and sheets

for the children's nap time, she comes in and puts them on the classroom floor. Some

children sit on the blankets and sheets and jump around on their bottoms. She smiles at

them. Hemin realizes some children are still waiting for her in order to put the

toothbrushes away. She goes the children and says nicely, "Give me the cups and put

your toothbrush in it." She turns around and says to the other children who are hanging

around the classroom, "Go to the potty." They reply together, "Yes, teacher." After

turning off the light, Hemin brings the pillows and puts them on the children's sheets.

One of the children lying down on his sheet says to Hemin, "I already went." Hemin

hears noise from the restroom and finds two children playing with the water. She says,

checking whether the children's clothes are wet or not, "No more fun, go to bed." The

children come to the classroom and lie down. After closing the window curtains and

switching on the audio cassette, Hemin says, "It's time to sleep. Your friends are asleep.

Please, be quiet." She finds one of children who needs to take medicine and brings him

to the classroom door where she can see well. After taking the medicine, the boy lies

down on his spot. Hemin goes around the classroom to keep patting her children or

kissing on their cheeks. Now her walking steps become slow. After checking that every

child is asleep, she gets her documents and sits down at the small table in front of the

classroom door. She lowers the volume the audio cassette and starts doing her

paperwork. However, she often checks the condition of the sleeping children by looking

at the mirror located in front of her table. The hallway is very calm. It is nap time for all

the classrooms at Sarang. (Researcher's observation journal, 04/02/08)

In the quiet and dark classroom where the children fell asleep, Hemin did her paperwork.

Sometimes she brought a cup of coffee from the kitchen and drank it while working. In an

informal interview, she mentioned she sometimes envied her children who could easily fall

asleep, because nap time was a peaceful time for the children but a busy time for the teachers.

After every child falls asleep, Hemin is writing journals about taking a walk outside[17]. A journal sheet consists of photos, explanations, and the teacher's opinion. Hemin opens the yellow folder and writes one of the children's names in the blank column. She asks to herself, "It was April 30?" After checking the date of her camera, she writes the date. She starts cutting the photos to set the margins. After she glues the pictures for one child, she scratches what she will write on construction paper. She often looks at the photos to remember what happened there. She writes and stops writing to think after practicing. She writes, "After observing a spring flower far away, Jisung said, 'What a beautiful flower!' And then he touched the flower with his finger." After finishing Jisung's, Hemin starts writing the journal of another child. This time she fills out the opinion column first, "Sungju talked about the color and smells one of the spring flowers." And then she glues two photos for the journal sheet. Continuing to write the journals, she reads what she wrote before. She spends ten to fifteen minutes completing each journal. Sometimes she checks her weekly plans and revises some words of the journal (from the word "smell" to the word "scent") using a white correction pen. Hemin explains the photos for every journal. She writes in detail, "Sungho is observing a royal azalea," "Minjang is talking about the flowers' various colors," and "Jongmin is pointing at a royal azalea when the teacher asks him to smell the flower." Hemin sits there and

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[17] All Sarang's teachers write a compulsory journal after an activity, such as talking a walk outside. A yellow folder includes sheets with the names of each child. After observing the students and taking pictures outside, the teachers glue them to the sheets and write about the incident remembering what the child mentioned outside. The teachers write regularly so that each child has a sheet once a week. Mostly, the incidents are about the children's observation of nature outside the school, such as trees, flowers, animals and the lake. The journals are included in a portfolio of each child and are sent to the children's parents every semester. (Informal interview with Hemin, 05/06/08)

concentrates on writing the journals for an hour and half until three o'clock when her

children need to wake up. (Researcher's observation journal, 05/06/08)

Hemin also had to write in a journal after parent consultations.[18] These journal entries were also

obligatory for all the teachers at Sarang. Usually, Hemin wrote in the journal while her children

were taking a nap in the classroom.

On Hemin's table, there are a lot of folders to fill out during the children's nap time.

Hemin picks out one of the folders. It is a journal folder about parent consultation.

Hemin writes Sunmin Oh in the child's name column, Sihang Choi in the parents' name

column, June 3rd for the consulting date, and circles phone call for the contact method.

With a deep sigh, Hemin starts writing in the content column, "Sunmin likes to sing at

home. He has a cough and sneezes often. Needs to see a doctor. When he plays alone at

home, he talks about one of his classmates, Kwangsu. It looks like Kwangsu is a good

playmate for him at school." Hemin finishes writing the journals during the whole nap

time. Instead of taking a rest, she keeps writing without a break. (Researcher's

observation journal, 06/04/08)

Once a week in the afternoon, Hemin attended physical education class with the children. In this

class, her main role was to assist the physical education teacher. For example, the physical

education teacher led the prepared lesson, and Hemin supported the children who could not focus

on the lesson. Hemin felt that the teacher-centered physical education lessons were not

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[18] All Sarang's all teachers have to write a compulsory journal whenever they have parent consultations. A yellow folder includes sheets with the names of each child and the content of the consultations. The teachers need to report the date and the method of contacting them such as visit, phone call, memo, and webpage. Also, the journal sheet includes a parental suggestion column. The director checks this journal regularly, and it needs to be on file as an important document in the school. (Informal interview with Hemin, 05/06/08)

appropriate for children who were so young. For her, the lessons were also boring and made her more tired. She explained,

> If the children had free play time instead of physical education class, they as well as I would have more fun. I think it is very boring for my kids. Although they want free play activities, the children have to follow the teacher directly as he leads the lessons. If I have my own children, I would not want to let them do it. Of course, I feel very tired during the lessons. You know, when children are bored, they hinder the lesson by talking with the next friend or they say that they have to go to the restroom. Usually, I am very busy at this time (PE class) because I have to take care of these kinds of children.
>
> (Interview, 06/16/08)

After the afternoon activities, Hemin's children went home with their parents. However, Hemin's day was not finished. In a group discussion, Hemin talked about the cleaning up time after dismissal as one of the most challenging times. She felt drained after her children's departure. However, she put it out of her mind and always worked hard when she started cleaning the classroom and restroom. The following excerpt describes Hemin's work while cleaning up.

> After the last child goes home with the parent, Hemin starts cleaning up her classroom. First, after moving the mat for the large group activity, she takes a wet rag from the restroom and goes to the house play center. And she puts away the dolls from the refrigerator, and changes the dresses of the dolls. After scrubbing the sink, she takes art materials on the floor and puts them on the shelf of the art center. After cleaning up some materials in the art center, she brings an electronic steam mop from the storage in the hallway and plugs it in. After cleaning the classroom floor, she goes to the hallway to

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clean up the nap stuff such as sheets, pillows, and blankets. Before cleaning the floor of

the hallway, she organizes the centers: an art center, a block center, a reading center, a

house play center, and a puzzle center. An experienced teacher comes into Hemin's

classroom and asks to use the electronic steam mop. Hemin answers, "I need it now.

When I finish, I will bring it to your classroom." She starts cleaning the floor again with

the electronic steam mop. And then, she brings a magic block which is famous for

cleaning dust and wipes the dust on the tables and mirror. She takes the electronic steam

mop and gives it the teacher who asked to borrow it. After coming back to her

classroom, Hemin moves the mats to the center of the classroom and starts cleaning the

restroom. (Researcher's observation journal, 06/19/08)

In relation to her busy schedule, Hemin thought that doing paperwork was a crucial and positive

aspect of teaching her children. It helped her understand the children and allowed her to connect

with the parents. However, she confessed she had concerns about her health and the importance

of break time for the teachers. Her busy work time related to paperwork prevented her from

taking a rest and influenced her teaching. In addition, she had trouble with back pain since

starting her work at Sarang. Hemin mentioned that she felt her backache might stem from one of

the habits[19] of early childhood teachers, using a small chair or table. In fact, Hemin used the

children's small furniture when she worked in her classroom.

In Hemin's classroom, children are having a large group activity on the mat. Hemin sits

down in a child's small chair. Smiling, Hemin starts singing a fish song, a stick song,

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[19] It is hard to find an adult size chair in Korean early childhood education classrooms. The teachers usually use the children's small chairs and tables. Even though the teacher has a large group activity such as storytelling time and calendar time on the mat, the teacher sits on a small chair in front of the children.

and a bean song. The children are very involved in singing finger songs with their

teacher. Sitting on the small chair for 20 minutes, she continues to teach the children.

(Researcher's observation journal, 04/23/08)

While Hemin was working alone in the classroom, she did not have any breaks. She wanted to

have a vacation to refresh and recharge herself as a teacher. Although Sarang's experienced

teachers had a whole week of summer vacation, Hemin only had a one-day break. She mentioned

it was a concern not only for her but also for all early childhood educators.

Every company as well as every school has a summer vacation officially. But usually

early childhood schools don't. Originally, the schools for working moms and dads like

Sarang could not have any vacation according to the Korean law. At Sarang, I heard

every teacher could take a vacation in summer and winter last year. But some of parents

objected to an official vacation time at Sarang. As far as I know, they had a difficult time

in finding someone to take care of their children. Because of this issue, the early

childhood teachers can not have a vacation. The schools with good support for teachers

can have a vacation because they have enough substitute teachers. But not at Sarang. To

have a vacation, teachers needed to take turns subbing for each other. Moreover, the new

teachers could not have a vacation like the experienced teachers. The new teachers had

to take care of children from the experience teacher's classroom while the experienced

teachers were on vacation. The funny thing was… at first I did not expect even one

vacation day. So, when I heard I would have a break day, oh, my goodness! I was

thankful. However, the fact was that it depends on the director's decision. The new

teachers had to take turns like the experienced teachers. The director said the parents

might not like it. But I thought that was a mere excuse. She was not a person who took

care of the new teachers. If the director explained to the parents why the new teachers

also needed to take a vacation, the parents would understand it. This is a problem of her

management style. (Interview, 08/14/08)

Talking about support from the school for the new teachers, Hemin mentioned that job

responsibilities were unequal and unfair from the start at Sarang. She thought everybody

accepted the situation, but as a result, new teachers were more tired than the other teachers at

school. She explained,

The experienced teachers had worked here and I did not at the beginning of the new

school year. They had the privilege of choosing the classroom and the age to teach. For

example, the newcomers could not be given an easy classroom to manage. I mean…like

the classroom with a small number of children. The newcomers like me did not have any

choice. Also, I found that the experienced teachers brought good teaching materials for

their classroom because they already knew where they were. It was a kind of top down

story. Unlike Sunny who started working in advance, I did not know about this school at

the beginning. I did not know what kinds of program this school has or what kinds of

responsibilities the teachers have. It was the most challenging time in my life. To

compare with my freshman life at the university, it was very different. At that time, I got

some advice from my professors and senior students. Their support made my freshman

life comfortable and easy. I remember I was very nervous at that time. I was also

nervous when I came here at Sarang. Yet, I could not get help from anybody here as a

newcomer, and I had to do everything for myself. It was very different from freshman

life at my university. I felt the teachers who worked with me were different from my

professors and my friends. I thought my current working place was very different from

the schools I attended. I did not know why. Everybody knows college is the best time in

life. I agree. If I can, I want to return to that time. Here my life as a newcomer has been

challenged. (Interview, 08/14/08)

Hemin compared her life as a teacher at Sarang with a squirrel, going round and round in a

wheel. From time to time, missing her university student life, Hemin wanted to have free time to

refresh her tired life.

Theme 2: Hemin's struggles to provide children a meaningful school experience:

Becoming a reflective teacher.

Based on her childhood experience, Hemin strongly believed that having a joyful school

experience was critical to the current and future lives of children. In her classroom, Hemin tried

to provide a variety of hands-on activities and opportunities for children to choose from. She

wanted children to have freedom to make choices in her classroom. However, she faced the

struggles of behavior management in reality. She explained,

> When the experienced teachers observed my classroom, they would think that my
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> classroom needs more control from an experienced teacher because it looks disordered.
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> As a matter of fact, the experienced teachers worried about my classroom at the new
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> academic year. They said my classroom needed to be better regulated. But I thought my
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> role as a teacher was to support their joyfulness in the classroom and to help children to
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> be aware of their right to individual freedom. I didn't want my classroom children to do
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> something not by choice but by necessity. From the children's perspectives, something
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> they have to repeatedly do by force like a robot could make them be under stress. When
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> the children play, they need to have freedom and to enjoy it. However, I observed one of
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> the experienced teachers was very strict in her classroom. It reminded me of my strict

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childhood teachers. I learned the children really need freedom and opportunities to make their own decisions. I had concerns about it at that time and I guessed that I could learn it in reality. But it was totally different. I mean… I got confused in reality. I saw sometimes that the experienced teacher scolded her very young students very seriously and even I saw she smacked one of the students with her hand. I could not imagine that before. At that time, I was very shocked. I swear I would not do like her in my classroom. Did I have to copy her classroom management for the ordered classroom? I did not want to nor could I. (Interview, 04/08/08)

In particular, Hemin did not like the Monday morning meeting time (see footnote 9 in chapter 4) when her students needed to remain in one place for a long time without moving. She thought of it as a meaningless time that robbed her young children of their freedom and joyfulness. The following excerpt describes Hemin's classroom during that time.

It is 10:30 a.m. on Monday. All Sarang's teachers and children gather in the school gym. Each classroom finds the place in which they need to sit under the direction of each classroom teacher. Hemin's classroom children sit in the first column from the right and Hemin sits in the back of the last row. One of the experienced teachers jumps on the stage and starts a patriotic song holding a microphone in her right hand to the melody of the piano which one of the new teachers plays. Hemin and her children sing the song. And then the experienced teacher keeps teaching songs for all the children on the stage and the children sing along. One of Hemin's children comes to her and says, "I want to go to the potty." Hemin hurries to take her to the restroom in the hallway. With a smile, the experienced teacher asks to the children, "Who wants to come here to sing this song in front of your friends and teacher?" Some children raise their hands and the teacher

points out the children with her finger. Most of young children including Hemin's

children are not paying attention to the activity. In particular, the infants and the toddlers

start going around the gym and their teachers prevent them for moving around. After the

children come in the front, they sing a song and the experienced teacher encourages the

other students to clap their hands. At that time, Hemin comes in the gym again with the

girl she took to the restroom. After the singing time finishes, the experienced teacher

gets down from the stage and goes to her children. And the director jumps on the stage

and sits on the chair which is located in the center of the gym stage. The director

introduces a poem to the all children. She says, "Repeat after me, please." When the

director reads the poem, the children and the teachers repeat it. Hemin's children keep

moving and twisting their bodies here and there. Some children are talking with the next

child without focusing on what the director is doing. Hemin goes to the children and

makes a quiet sign with her pointing finger. She looks nervous looking the director and

the other teachers consciously. It seems the children feel it is boring as well as the

teachers and they don't want to participate in this activity any more. Nonetheless, all the

children need to concentrate on the morning meeting activity for one hour from the

starting to ending. (Researcher's observation journal, 04/12/08)

As can be seen from the description of the Monday morning meeting at Sarang, Hemin's

children were not able to pay attention for an entire hour. She wrote more about this issue in her

photoessay:

My classroom children are three year olds. It is hard time for them to stay for one hour in

Monday meeting. As a member of Sarang school, I understand that can be a good time

for all the children and the teachers. However, it's too much for my young classroom.

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They don't understand why they need to be there. And sometimes the songs to learn there

looked very difficult for this age. When my children were not involved in the activity, I

felt nervous in that I was responsible for their actions. I felt other teachers thought of my

classroom as a terrible classroom. When my children asked me not to participate, I could

not say anything. What should I do? Should I listen to my children's words? Or should I

follow the school policy without saying anything like the other teachers? (Hemin's

photoessay in the group discussion, 06/26/08)

According to Hemin, her interaction with the children in the classroom was very important. In

her opinion, young children in the classroom preferred to interact with her through play.

Accordingly, Hemin believed that one of her important teacher roles was to support the

children's play development. In the classroom play time, she tried to interact with the children,

spending as much time as she could playing with them.

It is an afternoon free play time for Hemin's classroom. Hemin is playing with one of

her children in a house play center. After putting a pan with some vegetable toys in the

oven, a girl says to Hemin, "Mom, I am cooking." Hemin is watching what a girl is

doing. Hemin, "I am very hungry." The girl, who pretends to wash the dishes in the sink,

says to Hemin, "O.K. It's done. Mom, take the food out of the oven." Stopping taking

the pan out of the oven, Hemin shouts, "It's very hot. What can I use for it?" The girl

replies, "Don't forget to use the glove. It's very hot." Hemin says, "You're right. I forgot

it. (Pretending to turn off the oven and putting on the glove on her right hand) Smell's

good." Hemin moves the food to the table and says, "I am ready. Let's have dinner." The

girl whispers to Hemin, "We have a guest today. (With a high tone) Mom, uncle is not

here yet. We need to wait for him." At that time, one boy comes in the house center and

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asks the girl, "Can I play here?" The girl says to Hemin, "Mom, here comes uncle."

Hemin, the girl and the boy pretend to have a dinner in the table. After the dinner, the

girl starts washing the dishes and the boy follows her and washes the dishes with the

girl. Hemin stands up and puts her plates and toy food away. And she says to the boy

and the girl, "Mom needs to go to work. See you later." The children turn around and

say, "Bye." Hemin goes to the block center and watches what the children are doing.

One of the children says to Hemin, "Look at mine." Hemin smiles and says, "It's

beautiful. You used various blocks. Squares, circles,…" The other child shows what he

made and says, "This is an incredible gun. Look! It's very strong. Bang bang." Hemin

pretends to die when the boy shoots and says standing up again, "I am a superwoman. I

am alive." Smiling, the boy gives Hemin what he made and starts making a different

one. With a big smile, Hemin observes what her children are making in the block center.

Until the play time finishes, Hemin goes around the classroom and interacts with her

children continuously. On her face, the smile never disappears. (Researcher's

observation journal, 05/14/08)

During both inside and outside play time, Hemin continued to interact with the children. She

always communicated with the children in a nice tone, even though she appeared to be very tired.

She loved the free play time because it enabled her to give children some freedom. She preferred

this free play time to any other scheduled activities such as the Monday morning meeting or

teacher-centered specials. The children, as well as Hemin, liked the free play aspect of their

schedules. The following excerpt describes the outside play time of Hemin's classroom.

It is sunny Thursday. Hemin's children put on their high boots and run out to the outside

play area from the back door. Hemin brings an outside toy box from the gate and follows

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her children. All the children in the sand area have smiles on their faces and Hemin also

looks very happy. Hemin put the toy box in the center of the sand area. The children

gather to find their toys. Some children quickly find what they want to play with and

start playing. Hemin is not far away from the children and observes her children closely.

Hemin also finds a basket from the toy box and goes to her children. One of children

says, "I will make a big mountain" and put a lot of sand on a spot. Hemin says, "Wow.

It's a lot. What is the name of mountain?" The child says, "It's a just big mountain."

Hemin stays with the child and buries her left hand in the sand. The other child asks,

"What is that, teacher?" Hemin answers, "I know a traditional song. Do you want to

listen?" The child nods his face and Hemin starts singing a "toad" song with putting

some sand on her hand. The other children around her starts smile and look at Hemin in

wonder. It seems they like the song. They start copying what Hemin is doing. Hemin

looks very content. Hemin tried to communicate with her children continuously during

the outside play time. (Researcher's observation journal, 04/03/08)

Hemin discussed how the interaction between the teacher and the children was important in

understanding children's perspectives and in developing a sense of community during play time.

Nevertheless, she felt disappointed that she did not have enough time to interact with the children

due to the excessive amount of paperwork.

My tiring paperwork made me down. Especially, I was sorry for my children. As a

teacher, I felt guilty sometimes. I understand them, so they get along with me as well as

they do with their classmates. When they wanted me, they came to me and I interacted

with them as long as I was not busy. I think they feel the teacher ignores them when the

teacher rejects them and focuses on the other thing even if they are very young. I am

talking about the good timing…when they want it, the teacher supports them. It is a good

teaching moment. Sometimes I think I could be good at doing paperwork and finish it

more quickly if I was an experienced teacher. It takes me two times or three times longer

than the experienced teachers because I need to meet the experienced teachers to report it

after I am done. To do it perfectly and not to get negative criticism from them, I write

again and again and I revise it again and again. When I do paperwork, my children come

to me asking me to play with them. Whenever it happens, I say, "I am sorry. I need to do

this. Go to play with your friends." But in my mind, I feel sorry because I know what is

more important. I got upset with myself because I know my major role as a teacher is to

support my children. Isn't it more important that I interact with my children? I hope my

students always learn a sense of community. Ironically, as a teacher, I am not a good

model for them. (Group discussion, 06/26/08)

To help children develop positive relationships with classmates, Hemin exposed them to

interactive play times. First of all, she believed that children's curiosity and their active minds

could be better nurtured through the free play time and hands-on activities. However, she related

her struggles to provide exploratory activities in her classroom. She always had concerns about

addressing the interests of her children.

I wonder what my children's interests are. I like to spend some time in thinking about this

concern because it means I am approaching their perspectives as a teacher. Doing

paperwork is a never-ending story for me. But my concerns about teaching make me

grow as a teacher. When a child said it was boring at Sarang, I did not know what to do.

It seemed I lost my way. What could be good activities for my children? I thought again

and again. But because of the school policy, I could not provide just fun activities for

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them. They needed to take part in other activities with the special teachers and I needed to teach how to write their names or how to read the alphabet sometimes. (Interview, 06/16/08)

In fact, Hemin mentioned she did not like the Gabe program (see footnote 7 in chapter 4) for this very reason. The Gabe instruction was a challenge for Hemin in terms of her beliefs as a teacher. She explained,

First of all, everybody knows the children's interests are important in learning. That's a natural way. But the Gabe program doesn't take their interests into consideration because it consists of order-based instruction. It does not provide the freedom for the children. And the Gabe materials are very old-fashioned. I don't want for my classroom children who are very young to do them. So I did not recommend it for the parents from the start. It seemed the children just copied what the teacher did rather than thinking about what to do and how to do it. I told the parents frankly that I did not like Gabe based on my educational belief, but (whispering) my director or the teachers who prefer the program didn't know this. To be honest, until now, I want every child in my classroom to have a play time instead of the special. But I cannot help but follow the special schedule because it's one of the school programs. (Interview, 08/14/08)

Hemin believed, from her heart, that understanding children's perspectives, for adults, was very difficult. She thought that a regimented classroom was not a happy place for children. Instead of strict regulation, she wanted children to understand what it really meant to have a choice and why having certain rules in place empowers them. To help them understand, Hemin mentioned the importance of becoming a patient teacher, who would be able to explain ideas to children. She engaged in reflective thinking, noting:

Because I am a human being like any teacher, I was sad when my children did not follow

me as I wanted. For example, the large group was a hard time. Although the children

were three year olds, they needed to stay in their seats for over 20 minutes. But, from

their perspectives, it was natural for them to want to move out. Sometimes, I could not

help but scold them. But, soon, I admitted my mistake and reflected on myself as a

teacher. I regretted that I was wrong and I realized that it was from my greed…And I

tried not to do that again. Usually, I continued to explain why they needed to do. If they

were older children, they could quickly understand what I meant. But they were very

young. So I could not help repeating my explanations. I think it is natural and right for

them. (Interview, 04/04/08)

Hemin tried to be reflective in terms of her teaching. In her opinion, a lot of reflection was

essential in teaching children. In addition to the importance of reflection, Hemin also believed a

teacher needed to constantly check and control his/her emotions. This was one of her daily

challenges.

I know that emotional control is a personal thing. It can be just my problem. I believe

that emotional control is very important for classroom teachers. However, I could not

smile all the time because I am a human being. Sometimes I was depressed. Especially, I

felt tired here because of the exhausting workload and complicated human relationships.

That influenced my teaching and my children. I always wanted the experienced teachers

or the director to wait until after my children went back home before saying something

to me. Yet, they often criticized me in the middle of the day. They thought it was

important to tell me at once, but…You know, when I heard what I was not doing well

and I needed to develop in some parts in a day, how could I smile at my children? I felt

sad at that time, and I thought my children realized that their teacher felt down. I wanted

to hide my emotion for my children but it was expressed on my face. Whenever I faced

that situation, at first, I reflected on myself as if I was a bad teacher. After reflecting on

myself again and again, I thought about what was good for my children at that moment

and what I needed to do for them at that time. (Interview, 04/04/08)

Hemin wanted to be a good teacher who was there when her students really needed her. Because

of the lack of a school nurse at Sarang, sick students needed Hemin to take care of them. This

was one of the difficult aspects of the job for Hemin, but she did her best to care for them as

though she were their parent. Nevertheless, when the parents were critical instead of being

thankful, she felt unhappy. Hemin recalled,

I remember when one of my students was sick. The boy had a cold. Because his mom

was working, I understood his mom's mind and took care of him as well as I could.

Actually I had the other children to take care in my classroom, but I was concerned

about the boy. I let him take a rest, put a towel on his forehead, and checked his

temperature whenever I had time. I brought another substitute food from the kitchen

because he did not want to eat anything for his lunch. I was like his mother.

Nevertheless, when the mom picked him up in the evening, she never said she

appreciated it. Instead, she said her boy needed to stay at home in the following day

because the boy got worse in the classroom. I was upset and depressed as a teacher at

that time. I have another instance. One day, a boy came in the classroom late in the

morning after he had a preventive injection. I looked after him very carefully and told

him to watch the injection site because I knew a child needs to be careful after having a

shot, and he was usually a very active boy. In the afternoon, he hurt the shot spot playing

with his friends. When I called his mother in the evening, his mom said, "He got hurt in the area where he had the shot in the classroom. So I am upset." And then, he was absent for two days. I could not help but apologize at that time, but, simultaneously in my mind I thought 'Do I feel guilty in this situation?' When my students were sick, it hurt me like parents. But, the parents did not understand me. I am also the children's mom in the classroom. I stay with the children longer than their parents do. If I am a biological mom in my future, can I understand parents' view at that time? (Interview, 08/14/08)

Hemin felt that she acted like a mother to her students even though they were not her biological children. In fact, when the children were ill in the classroom, she spent a lot of time taking care of them and this made her even busier. The following excerpt shows an example:

Hemin's classroom has a large group activity in the morning. Hemin reads a picture book in front of her children. The children pay attention to the story on the mat for the large group, but one boy is lying down on the big cushion in the reading center near the window. While Hemin is reading the book, she glances at the boy who is taking a rest. After the activity, the children go to the restroom and Hemin goes to the boy. Hemin says, "How are you feeling, Jiwoo, are you better?" The boy does not say anything looking at Hemin. Hemin brings a thermometer from her shelf and takes his temperature. She says touching his belly, "You look better now. How about your stomach? Can you have lunch?" The boy says, "Yes." Then Hemin rushes to the restroom to check on the other students. After serving food from the lunch wagon, she brings different food including a rice soup from the kitchen and calls Jiwoo. Hemin helps Jiwoo eat some food. After the other children are done with their lunch, they put away the plates and go to the restroom to brush their teeth. Jiwoo is the last child to finish the lunch in the

classroom. Hemin looks at the clock and hurries to have her lunch. After eating only two

spoonfuls, Hemin stops eating. She starts cleaning up the lunch and wheels away the

lunch wagon from the classroom. Soon she prepares for the nap time. (Researcher's

observation journal, 05/29/08)

In addition to a squirrel in a cage, Hemin compared her teaching to a rollercoaster ride:

sometimes she was satisfied with her classroom teaching and sometimes she felt depressed. In

the many challenges in teaching her children, Hemin did not give up and she made a continuous

effort. She was proud of her teaching. She mentioned her happiest moment in teaching was to see

developing children. Even a small amount of development gave her satisfaction as a teacher. She

believed that children were not robots to be moved around as pawns of the teacher. She believed

it was important to focus on the interests of children and to listen to their voices even though she

faced many kinds of challenges in doing so.

Theme 3: Being a "baby teacher".

Like Sunny, Hemin started working as a classroom teacher at Sarang in 2008, and

everybody thought of her as a *chotzza*[20] teacher (a baby teacher). In a discussion between the

participants, Hemin defined a *chotzza* teacher as a lonely teacher who had to survive without

anybody's help and as a silent teacher who could not speak out without restraint (Group

discussion, 05/13/08). Hemin believed that her identity as a new teacher at Sarang influenced her

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[20] Originally, this word is from the Chinese characters, 初 (beginning) 者 (person), with the pronunciation, "choza." Korean people usually say this word with a strong accent, as "chotzza," signifying a degrading meaning. This term means "a person in the first [beginning] step" or "a newcomer." Usually, when Korean people use this term, the context is when a person is looked down upon as a beginner with a lack of ability or skill. This expression is similar to "new kid on the block" in English. It carries negative connotations and would not be usually used in front of novice teachers except for situations of telling jokes or describing a beginner to others. At times, the novice refers herself as "chotzza" in a self-deprecating manner for an excuse or humor.

workload. In fact, according to Hemin, it was a natural and unspoken rule that the school

expected the new teachers to perform many extra duties. As one of the new teachers, Hemin also

had to complete many duties in her daily schedule. Most duties of the new teachers stemmed

from the order of the director or the experienced teachers without prior notice or discussion

between the teachers. Hemin struggled because she believed that sometimes these extra duties

interrupted her teaching. The following excerpt describes Hemin's duty at the Monday morning

meeting at Sarang.

> Every teacher and child at Sarang gathers in the gym for the Monday morning meeting.
> Hemin is directing her children to sit on their seats. In the meantime, one of the
> experienced teachers calls Hemin's name and says, "Hemin teacher, you need to play the
> piano for today." Pointing at herself with her finger, Hemin says to the teacher in a very
> quiet tone, "Me?" The experienced teacher nods her head and beckons with her hand.
> Hemin says, "Yes" and goes to the piano near the stage of the gym. She sits on the piano
> chair and waits for the sign from the experienced teacher who leads this meeting at the
> stage. Hemin's classroom children don't pay attention to the meeting and some children
> keep looking at what Hemin is doing. The other teachers don't try to take care of
> Hemin's children. Continuously, Hemin turns around and makes a quiet sign for her
> children. It seems that Hemin has concerns about her children even as she is playing the
> piano. She looks very nervous because she realizes that her young children are not
> involved in the Monday meeting activity because of her absence. While Hemin is
> completing her duty, her children are unsupervised. (Researcher's observation journal,
> 07/21/08)

Hemin felt that this kind of extra duty was unfair for the new teachers. She explained,

Mostly, we, the new teachers work more than the experienced teachers. It's not fair. Why can only the experienced teachers avoid the duties? We are the same teachers…But it's O.K. because I think the duties need to be done by somebody at the school. I want to contribute to my school as a teacher. What I want to say is the process. If the school needs somebody for the duties, we need to discuss it in advance. That's right. Usually, the experienced teachers or the director order us to do something in front of the children. I believe that the children know everything—who has power and who has no power. I don't want to show my powerlessness to my children. I know it's a funny thing. But it is true. Whenever I face the situation that I have to take an action under the direction of them (the experienced teachers and the director) in front of my children, I think of myself as a powerless figure. (Interview, 06/16/08)

In addition, when the experienced teachers gave advice to her, sometimes Hemin thought the advice might not work in her classroom. She believed that every classroom had a unique context which only the classroom teacher could understand and manage. Therefore, when Hemin was overwhelmed in her teaching, she wanted to find her own way by herself rather than ask the help of another teacher. She explained,

When I was struggling, I solved it by myself instead of getting somebody else's help because they would give me the same advice I gave myself. I knew they tried to give me advice and to say something because they thought I was a baby teacher. However, at the end, the final decision was made by me, not by them, because I was in charge of my classroom. Also, I realized that their advice was not working perfectly all the time. Even though they thought of me as a baby teacher, I knew more about my children than the experienced teachers. For example, one of my children often cried out in the classroom

and did not want to hang up his school bag. He even held on to his pillow with his hand all day. In a parent consultation with his mom, she said that his grandma had looked after the child because she was a very busy working mom. So her child started having an attachment when his mom went to work. The child was accustomed to holding the bag or the pillow while he was waiting for his mom. I totally understood the context. So at the beginning of this semester, I just let him do whatever he wanted to do because it was his first time at school. But, the experienced teachers from time to time came into my classroom after hearing him cry and asked me why he always cried in the classroom. They wanted me to do something for him such as hugging and talking to him. I realized that the experienced teachers thought that I was not capable of taking care of him. But who knows? It seemed to me that the boy needed to have some more time to adjust to the new environment than just hugging him or giving him some sweet snack. After some weeks, he cried less and less. He is better now. My way worked! Teaching doesn't have a perfect answer as the experienced teachers said.

Additionally, Hemin struggled in finding the appropriate language to use with her children because she had a different view about language development than that of the experienced teachers. She was upset when the experienced teachers commented that she did not speak correctly to the children. She provided the following example:

The experienced teachers often told me that I needed to use honorific forms[21] of

sentences like the way I did for the old people. But, personally, I would like to use

friendly sentences like when I am talking with my friends. I believe it is useful to create

friendly relationships with my children. I do not want to be a strict teacher. I usually say

to my students (using friendly sentences and tones), "How was yesterday?" or "How are

you feeling?" But, the experienced teachers told me not to use those kinds of sentences

for my children because the children need to learn how to use the honorific forms of

sentences from their teacher. Of course, I could not say anything at that time. If I insisted

on giving my opinion, they would think that I was a stubborn teacher as well as a wrong

teacher. In my opinion, I didn't have to use the honorific sentences with my children all

the time, especially when I talked with a child personally. I believe social relationships

can evolve from language. I mean, language can make somebody be upper status. If I

use the honorific forms of the sentences, the children might think of me not as a friendly

teacher but just as an adult to be treated as a superior. So I don't want to use it. Yet,

when I talked with a boy in the hallway, one of the experienced teachers accidentally

observed me. The experienced teacher said that most baby teachers were not accustomed

to using the honorific forms of the sentences and told me to use them at that time. After

that, I started observing some experienced teachers because I wondered how they talked

with their children in the classroom. But you know what? I realized that the experienced

teachers did not always use the honorific forms of the sentences as she told me.

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[21] In the Korean language, there are different language forms according to whom you are talking
with. For example, when someone talks with an older person, he/she needs to use the honorific
forms to show respect for the old person. On the other hand, when someone talks with a younger
or same age person, he/she needs to use the regular or friendly forms.

Actually, everybody is different. Even experienced teachers had their own way of talking with the children. What I want to say is to find my style even if I am a baby teacher. Did I use them because I am a baby teacher? She used wrong logic. (Interview, 06/16/08)

Hemin admitted that she needed more practice to become an effective teacher. Thus, when somebody gave her good advice, she accepted it with an open-mind. Nevertheless, when she believed what she did was right, Hemin did not want to back down. She took action thoughtfully not to make a mistake because she did not want other people to consider her as a baby teacher. Her identity, a baby teacher, made Hemin reflect on her actions constantly. She always wanted to make sure that she was doing well and tried to find better ways to do things. As a result, Hemin kept observing the experienced teachers.

I always wondered how the experienced teachers acted. I know this came from my identity, a baby teacher. It might be a feeling of self-accusation. First, I really wanted to do well like the experienced teachers. When I made mistakes, I felt guilty and accepted that it was my fault. Sometimes, I stole a glance at what the experienced teachers did. Especially, it seemed they knew exactly what the parents wanted to hear. We, the new teachers, were completely different from them. On the other hand, I think the new teachers have more open-minds than the experienced teachers. The experienced teachers said that they had open-minds and accepted everything. That was not true. When I tried to say something to them, it seemed like I was talking to the wall. They are very conservative. In contrast, the new teachers are innocent. They are not calculating like the experienced teachers. Of course, the new teachers have a lot of things to learn from the experienced teachers. They know about the world because they have much experience.

We, the new teachers, have capabilities but little experience. I don't know who I am. After five years, will I be a teacher like the experienced teachers? At this moment, I am confused in talking about myself as a teacher. (Interview, 06/16/08)

Hemin mentioned the difference between the experienced teachers and the new teachers in terms of the pro and cons. In her current status, as a new teacher Hemin was concerned about her identity, a baby teacher. She tried to find her own way as a classroom teacher, but at the same time, she was still negotiating her identity, in the relationships with the other teachers. She felt depressed because she felt that the other teachers at Sarang were biased against her. In addition, Hemin believed that some parents also had a biased opinion about her because of the fact that she was a baby teacher. She explained,

One of the parents directly asked me about my teaching career at the beginning of semester, and I answered honestly. I did not understand why the mother asked me at that time. When I told the story to one of the experienced teachers, she said I had better pay more attention to her child than any other children as it seemed the mother was picky. And then, by chance, I observed that the mother talked about her child with the child's previous teacher instead of me. I felt she did not trust me and I was down. A previous teacher is a previous teacher. The current classroom teacher is me. Now I still worry about the relationship with the mom. To tell the truth, what I heard from the experienced teacher imposed a burden on me. I don't know why I am nervous whenever I talk with the mom. Definitely naming somebody as a baby teacher is not good, I think. Now, at some point, I regret that I told her this was my first year of teaching (smiling). If I had lied to the mom, saying that I have five years experience, would she act differently? (Group discussion, 05/13/08)

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The conversation with the mom did not disappear from Hemin's mind. Hemin commented on how uncomfortable and anxious she felt whenever she met with the mom. Even Hemin wanted the mom to forget the fact that she was a baby teacher.

> Whenever I met the mom, it reminded me of my identity, a baby teacher. I wanted me to forget about it and her to forget about it. I knew it was impossible. Probably, nobody understands this kind of emotion. When I tried to talk about this with one of the experienced teachers whom I respected, I felt she did not understand me. She just advised me that I needed to do a better job. Do I have to do more because I am a baby teacher? Is it taken for granted? And the other funny thing was what the experienced teacher told me. She told me I had better not say anything to anybody at school about what happened with the parents because if I said something, everybody would know I had no ability as a teacher. It did not make sense for me one hundred percent. But I understood why she said that because I know she was just advising me. Frankly speaking, I did not speak to anybody. I just wanted to receive support from somebody to solve the problem. I did not want to make an issue of it. However, the experienced teacher told me that sometimes I needed to shut my mouth as a teacher, and I learned it even if I did not understand it because I was a baby teacher. At that moment, it was more complicated. I just wanted every teacher to experience a similar case and hear their experiences. So, anyway, after that, I did not say anything to my colleagues. I learned that sharing was not easy. I think this is one of the negative school atmospheres. (Interview, 06/16/08)

Hemin as a "baby" teacher had learned what she needed to do from the experienced teachers and the parents. Sometimes she directly heard how other people thought of "baby" teachers, and this influenced her identity.

> Frankly speaking, I know there is a parent who does not like a baby teacher and there is a parent who wants an experienced teacher for her child. Actually, I was not treated fairly because I was not an experienced teacher. When I made a mistake… it's a little thing. I had never made a big mistake. For example, my mistake was to forget to help the child pack the jacket or hat. I thought those mistakes were not from the fact I was a baby teacher. The experienced teacher could make those kinds of mistake, I thought. Nevertheless, it seemed the parents thought of my mistakes in that way. And I was not imposing to them. The parents thought of me as a person who left much to be desired and did not trust me, whatever I said. One day I talked with one of the parents for a long time. The mother asked me directly, "Are you a 'chotzza' teacher?" I just smiled and she said again, "You are a 'chotzza' teacher, aren't you?" I asked honestly, "Do you not like me because I am a 'chotzza' teacher?" And she said, "I don't mean it. I just wanted to say that you looked nervous and disorganized. I know baby teachers are very passionate. But they don't show expertise." After the meeting with the mom, I thought about myself and I was more worried about what the mother thought of me whenever I took action. That made me stress out. (Interview, 06/16/08)

Hemin had experienced how other people thought of her in the school community. Her identity as a "baby" teacher gave her many challenges while she was teaching. Because of her identity, she was often tired from dealing with the many social relationships and was worried about

whether she was doing well at Sarang. She wanted everybody to think of her as a teacher who had confidence, not as a "baby" teacher.

Theme 4: The challenge of building a good rapport with faculty.

Hemin struggled in her relationships with other faculty members. She discussed how what she experienced was not what she expected in terms of collegiality. For Hemin, it was very important to have a commitment between colleagues in a school. She thought about her relationships with other teachers as similar to family relationships, explaining:

> The relationships looked very formal. I did not think we were like family. Our relationship was not as deep as a family. It seemed like we said hello in the morning and good-bye in the evening. No conversation was going on. When a teacher had a difficult time, everybody thought it was none of her business. Actually, when I struggled because of a problem with the parents, I experienced that the teachers went home early even though I was crying in the classroom. At that time, I realized nobody cares about what happened in the other classrooms, and I felt lonely here. I knew that nobody had time to take care of other people because they were busy all the time. I felt desolate about the social relationships. I wanted to have a good relationship with the other teachers because we stayed together in school all day long. I wanted a warm relationship like my family. (Interview, 06/16/08)

Hemin often felt lonely while she was working at Sarang. She wanted her school to have a warm atmosphere with a family like emotional support of each other. She confessed,

> While I was working here, I realized my struggle was just my problem. Nobody could solve it for me. The other teachers, it seemed they didn't care about my struggle. But I really wanted to hear what happened to everybody. If I wanted to, I could pretend that I

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was doing well and I didn't have any problems. But, you know, we are working together at the same school. We need to care about each other and share our feelings… (with a deep sigh) I had a bad experienced. One day, the director and I talked about one of the parents. However, the director told another parent what we talked about. And the parent talked about it to another teacher. Finally, the teacher told me exactly what I had said to the director. Isn't it funny? The conversation was like a circle. At that time, I regretted talking to the director so honestly. Actually, I did not intend that what I said to the director should be heard by any other person. I really wanted to share my feelings with the director and to receive support. After it happened, I wouldn't say anything else to the director. Think about family. Even though we talk with each other at dinner, a family member doesn't spread our story. (Interview, 06/16/08)

In terms of the social relationships between teachers, Hemin thought they were more difficult and more important than her actual teaching. She emphasized that it took a lot of effort to build relationships at Sarang. She explained,

Establishing social relationships are very important as well as difficult for me. To try it…unconditional support is difficult. I can see myself making an effort to have relationships with other teachers. But, unless I go to them first, I don't even have a chance to talk with them. This is what I learned here. I need to cross the boundary to have good relationships. I know it is difficult because I understand most people are selfish, but it's natural for people to give and take in a formal work place. Probably, I have high expectations about my colleagues. Moreover, it seems that there is competition between the colleagues because we are working at the same place with a same title. The rivalry to be better has made us less cooperative and more competitive. I

feel that nobody wants to show her shortcomings to the other teachers. Also, the power

difference affects our social interactions. I can see invisible rivalry between the teachers

with power and the teachers without power. The powerful teachers want others to follow

them. Yet, sometimes the teachers without power refuse to follow them and keep their

voices. But, finally, those who have more power lead the other teachers. It looks like a

power game. (Interview, 06/16/08)

Hemin did not like the competitive atmosphere between Sarang's teachers. Instead, she wanted

everybody to be open-minded and work together to create a good teaching community. She

explained the importance of having a sense of school community.

I think it is wrong to compare teachers. Some teachers (the experienced teachers) often

make those kinds of mistakes. They tell a particular teacher that she is better than

somebody else. Usually, they have a generous attitude to the teachers who have the

same ideas they do. On the other hand, they have a hostile attitude to the teachers who

have different ideas. Therefore, social relationships are a challenge for the newcomers.

The newcomers can not help but do what the experienced teachers prefer. But, I believe

everybody is different. There is no one answer to the question, what is good or what is

bad. So I think one group should not criticize another group. If a criticism hurts

somebody, I think it is mean spirited. To criticize somebody is just a personal opinion. It

should not be generated. (06/16/08)

Hemin wanted good rapport between the teachers, but felt it was difficult to achieve at Sarang.

She thought this was because some teachers held more authority. In fact, from Hemin's

perspective, Sarang's experienced teachers looked like supervisors to the new teachers. Their

workload was different from the new teachers' and their voices influenced the school's policy.

Hemin mentioned that there seemed to be a barricade between the two groups, the new teachers and the experienced teachers.

> Our school has two groups. Probably, everybody recognizes it. One group always has the authority. The other group has no power. So it is difficult to have a good relationship between the faculty members. I have felt that continuously since I started working here. The management style of the director also influenced this situation a lot. The director always tells the new teachers what to do even though we are all teachers here. She sometimes did not even use the honorific forms of tenses to us. When we have a meeting, the experienced teachers always sit near the director in the center of the table. We, the new teachers, sit at the corners of the table. It is natural for everybody. We usually sit in that way even though nobody told us to do that. I think the director feels more comfortable ordering us around than the experienced teachers. That means we have an unfair workload because of our status. (Interview, 08/14/08)

The unequal distribution of work between the experienced teachers and the new teachers was a concern for Hemin. Although they were given the bulk of the work, the new teachers were not treated with the same respect as the experienced teachers. For example, Hemin mentioned that the different status of teachers was reflected in their language use. Thus, the director and the experienced teachers did not always use the honorific forms of language when addressing new teachers, although all teachers should typically use these forms in Korean schools. She wanted the experienced teachers to treat her as an equal and to use respectful language. She explained,

> I hope the experienced teachers respect me as a teacher because we are supposed to be equal: we have the same job title. But they don't respect me. Especially, they have a careless manner of speaking to me. You know, if we are all teachers, we need to use

respectful language[22]. Some teachers speak impolitely in that we are younger than them.

I am not their children. (Interview, 06/16/08)

The fact that Hemin was young created a tension in her relationship with the older teachers.

Hemin thought the status of the teachers' age influenced the social relationships in her school. As

a matter of fact, according to Hemin, it was like an invisible law at Sarang. The older teachers

always spoke without reservations and the younger teachers listened to them. She commented on

how the constant meddling from older teachers made her feel worn-out.

Sometimes I think that I need to work more because I am young. I have to grasp a

situation at first and to do something even if nobody tells me to do it by compulsion.

They just give me an inkling of what I needed to do because I am a newcomer. For

example, I need to clean up even if I have a lot of things to do concerning my classroom.

I think that's not fair since we are the same teachers. Whenever it happens, I think I just

have less experience, but I am still a teacher. As another example, we have a large

bulletin board that all teachers are in charge of making. That needs to be made from the

teachers' cooperating. I think we can take turns or make together for it. But, the new

teachers have always made it. Whenever I made it, I went home late. Because of that, I

felt more tired, and it influenced my students in the following day…Moreover,

sometimes they (the old teachers) criticized what we made instead of praising it or

expressing sympathy because we had to stay late to make it the night before. Probably

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[22] As footnote 7 explained, in the Korean language there are different language forms that people use according to age difference. However, generally in a formal working place, including schools, everybody uses the honorific forms. For example, even if the boss is younger than his/her subordinates, both the boss and the subordinates use respectful language to each other. Also, respectful language is used between subordinates to show respect for each other. Generally, it is considered polite for all the teachers to use the honorific forms of language regardless of age because the teachers have the same title officially.

nobody could understand how we (the new teachers) feel…One of my friends is working

in another school as an only one new teacher in her school. According to the friend, if

she makes a mistake, the others get onto her again and again. She often tells me it made

her really tired there. I think that's true. In my case, you know, teaching is the teacher's

personal thing and has no exact answer. I think it can be different based on the teacher's

belief and the most important thing is how much effort the teacher made for the

teaching. Nevertheless, the experienced teachers says, "I didn't do like you, when I was

in your age." So…is it O.K. they don't need to make effort any more and do like it

because they are not young any more? It seems to me their teaching was good all the

time. Is it really that age decides what to do and how to do? (Interview, 06/16/08)

In fact, Hemin wanted to receive praise rather than being scolded by the other teachers with

respect to her teaching. Even if the other teachers gave good advice, she wanted to hear the

advice while it was still useful to her, not when it was too late for help. She compared the old

teachers with her mother:

When I take care of my students, they (the older teachers) scold me like my mom. Oh,

my goodness! My mom sometimes gave me sweet words for me, but the old teachers

didn't. Their (the older teachers') continual nagging drove me into having less

confidence about myself and feeling more tired. Actually, they did not even give me

advice from the beginning. As soon as I finish doing something, they started scolding

me. For instance, when one of my students was sick, I was taking care of him. Observing

my caring, one of the experienced teachers said, "You had to put off his clothes first

because he looked he had a high temperature. Didn't you know that?...because you are a

'chotzza' teacher." Whenever they say, they use the term chotzza, chotzza, chotzza

(speaking loudly more and more) …It hurts me. I don't want them to ignore me because of the fact that I am the chotzza teacher. A mistake is mistake. It doesn't need to connect with what I am a chotzza teacher. You know. After I heard it, honestly, I wanted to never meet her again at school. It's like a vicious cycle. (Interview, 06/16/08)

Finally, the intervention of the old teachers damaged Hemin's relationship with them. Hemin wanted to reject being called a "chotzza" teacher. Instead, she wanted to receive positive support from the other teachers. It was for this reason that she suggested a school-based mentoring system at Sarang. Her idea about a voluntary mentoring system between teachers was that it was the best vehicle for sharing teachers' struggles and successes. She described the system she had in mind:

We need a school-based teacher support system. What I envision includes not just mentoring between the older teachers and the younger teachers. I am talking about a professional support group. We need the colleagues who can read the professional literature, develop a friendly understanding regardless of age, share our own educational philosophy, and invite a teacher as an observer to trust into my classroom. If we had such a system, it would be very helpful for every teacher. For example, the new teachers like me can benefit by having someone sharing their thoughts and the mentors also can benefit because the new teacher asks questions and brings a fresh perspective. (Interview, 06/16/08)

Hemin didn't want to have just a top-down approach in terms of the mentoring system. She believed that the role of a mentor was not just to give criticism but to help a new teacher adjust to the demanding job of teaching. Also, she believed that all teachers could benefit from sharing

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strategies as well as materials for teaching through the mentoring process. Eventually, she wanted to have a learning community of teachers at Sarang.

Theme 5: Dissonant vices: Problematic relationships with the parents.

Hemin struggled in her relationships with parents more than her relationships with children or the faculty members at Sarang. She felt nervous and uncomfortable when she communicated with the parents and this was one of her biggest challenges. She wondered why she was overwhelmed by her relationships with parents even though she had good relationships with her students.

> I don't know why I am not comfortable in the relationship with the parents. When the parents say something negative, I feel uncomfortable. For example, in a parent consultation, I said to a mother that her child was really interested in art like drawing. The mother said her child usually did that with her at home. My point was the child really enjoyed doing art activity at school and I, as a teacher, supported what the child was interested in. But the mother's point was that she already knew that. And our conversation was stopped. Also, I recommend some other special activities that her child could do at school. But the mom did not consider my opinion and said that her child needed just play and toys. I felt she ignored me as a teacher. I am not a nanny for her child. I don't want to do something like a nanny which is what the mom wanted. And she's not the only one who thinks that way. Usually, most parents don't think of me as a teacher. I mean they don't respect me as a teacher. Especially, when the children are sick or have a problem, I look like a criminal. One of the parents directly asked me, "What did you do, when my child fell down?" In my mind, I really wanted to say I am trying to do my best. If I were their child's elementary teacher, would they treat me in that way? I

have another example. One of my children often wears a diaper. One day the boy spilt

water on the diaper. Her mom assumed that I never changed his diaper that day even

though it was wet and asked me with an angry voice, "Teacher, why didn't you change

his diaper?" Whenever I faced that kind of situation, I found myself speechless.

Sometimes I feel scared. If I had more experience, I could be stronger when I talk with

them. But not right now. (Interview, 04/04/08)

Hemin faced an embarrassing situation with one of the parents at the beginning of her teaching.

It had an influence on Hemin's lack of confidence as a teacher in her relationships with the

parents. She explained,

One of my students lost his bracelet which was made from gold. According to his mom's

memo, she asked me to try to find it in the classroom. When I told her I could not find it,

she just said to keep looking for it because it was very important to her child. But, the

mom told the director to pay for it. When I heard this, I was very down. I thought,

'Should I really pay for it? It looked expensive.' When I talked about it to the peer

teachers, they told me I did not have to pay for it and who knows whether or not the boy

lost it in the classroom because the boy spent some time playing outside after the

dismissal. He could have lost it outside. But, the mom said to me he must have lost it in

school because the boy spent all day at school. I did not know what to do. Should I buy

it for him? I really wanted to ask the mom again about whether the boy really lost it at

school, on the other hand I was worried that she might think the boy lost it because I did

not look after her boy…it was very complicated. The director said I had better buy it for

him. I don't know if she was kidding or not. You know, if I kept it and lost it, I would

pay for it. But it wasn't like this. I remembered that my class went outside to take a walk

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that day. Moreover, it was difficult to find the bracelet because it was very small… I

thought the boy should not have brought it to school if it was valuable. Am I wrong?

Everybody knows children usually run and move a lot when they play. It was my first

embarrassing relationships with parents. I did not expect it to happen to me…I mean that

kind of the situation… When I asked the experienced teachers, they told me they had

similar situations when they were a baby teacher. Anyway, I was depressed a lot at that

time. Why don't the parents trust their child's teacher? Why do I feel uncomfortable

because of the situation? (Interview, 08/14/08)

Another issue that bothered Hemin was the gossip she heard, particularly parents complaining

about the school management and the quality of the faculty members. This was a problem to

Hemin because some of the parents complaining were in her classroom. The mothers really were

concerned about the management style of the director and the teachers at Sarang compared with

other schools their children had previously attended. Every teacher including the director thought

of the moms as troublemakers and exchanged whispers about the moms. When Hemin heard that

the other teachers believed that the cause of the issue was rooted in her inability as a teacher, she

felt guilty. She explained,

To be honest, I had bad relationships with the parents. But they did not tell me their

complaints directly. Why? Because they assumed it would affect their children if they

told me directly? I don't know. Anyway, their complaints were much more connected

with the school management, not with me. For example, they complained about the

format of the notes for the parents or school's construction issue. Sometimes they

complained about the careers of the teachers. First, when we (the Sarang teachers) heard

that, we were down and thought that the moms were selfish. Some days later, some

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teachers started involving me in the issue. They thought the moms were upset and started complaining to the school because I was not doing a good job. At that time I thought the moms would not have taken action like troublemakers if I had been good at talking with the parents like the experienced teachers. It seemed it was my fault. The moms are still complaining even now. I get embarrassed as a teacher whenever the moms make a new complaint. I think, *again*? (Interview, 06/16/08)

That everybody thought of particular parents as troublemakers was an added stress to Hemin. She did not want some parents from her classroom to be labeled as troublemakers, nor did she want her classroom to be the classroom of trouble makers. In a group discussion with the other participants, Hemin mentioned her feeling about the issue.

I don't want this kind of uncomfortable situation to be from my classroom. Of course I don't understand perfectly the complaining moms. But I am sure my classroom is not a classroom of troublemakers. I, as a teacher, have taken action to solve this problem. I tried to say something to one of the parents, and then I realized our school also had a problem. It is true that we are not ready to accept somebody's opinion, especially from negative perspectives. You know, one of the opinions was about making the school open to parents at all times. From the moms' perspectives, it was natural they could come in the school whenever they wanted to meet their children. But, currently, our school always keeps the door shut. One mom talked about the previous school which her children attended. The parents often visited in the school and helped the classroom teachers change diapers and feed the children because the door was open. Another reason why she was upset the first time was that the director pushed her while she was coming to the school. I could not make any sense of what she said, but anyway, she

started hating the director and complaining about this school. It seemed that she really

wanted to reform this school. That means this story will be continued and I will keep

getting stressed. (Group discussion, 05/13/08)

Her relationship with parents affected Hemin's work at Sarang. Hemin felt tired because of her

complex social relationships at the school. Sometimes she thought she might be unlucky in that

she encountered those kinds of parents in her first year of teaching. Also, Hemin found that she

paid attention to the needs of a child whose parents complained the loudest. Nevertheless, Hemin

tried to understand the perspectives of the parents. In particular, she made an effort to understand

one of the most challenging moms at Sarang.

A mom brought a format[23] to school that she wanted to implement. Generally, most

parents say what they need and don't bring a format as she did even if they have a

complaint. I realized that she wanted to reform this school. She is a very aggressive

person. Sometimes I find that she is overly aggressive. She wants to show her authority

at Sarang. When I talked with her, she was not a bad person. Just her personality is

unique. So I hope this school listens to her words with an open-mind and compromises

with her. Communication is needed at this point. When she suggested something, we

should have listened to her opinion. Because we ignored her opinion, not only she but

also other parents became involved in this issue. When I tried to say something about the

mom at first, it was problematic because the school did not listen to me. The school just

thought the mom was a complainer. The school also ignored me even though the

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[23] The mom brought a format which the teacher needed to fill out in detail about the schedule of the children. It was a checklist that included the times and frequency of diaper changes, duration of nap time, quantity of food consumed, children's emotional wellbeing and parent and teacher comments. (Researcher's observation journal, 06/12/08)

classroom teacher's opinion is most important. Now I think I don't have to be involved

in this problem. I did what I could. I don't want to hear about the problem any more. I

just want to focus on teaching my children. (Interview, 06/16/08)

The tension with the parents influenced Hemin's relationships with the other teachers as well.

Whenever the other teachers talked about the children's parents in Hemin's classroom, she

realized that they blamed her for the situation. She explained,

The parents usually told me honestly their negative views rather than their positive

views. For example, I heard from the parents that our schools had no umbrellas or shade

when the children played outside. When I presented their comments to the faculty

members, they said that I was wrong to talk with the parents and I should have told them

that the school already knew about this problem and was taking care of it. But actually, I

did not know for a fact if our playground actually had a plan. Did I have to lie to the

parents? Was that my fault? Why did they make cynical remarks about me?...I was

trying to be in the middle ground between the school and the parents because the parents

communicate what they want though me. Therefore, it seemed like I was the ball to be

kicked from both sides; they kicked me here and there. Whenever I had a situation like

this, I felt tired in my relationships with the people. It was very complicated. (Interview,

08/14/08)

Hemin believed that today's parents are very different and sometimes overly-concerned about

educating their children because they only have one or two children. According to Hemin, it was

natural that her classroom parents were concerned about what the school was doing because they

wanted their children to learn in a good environment. Obviously, Hemin struggled in

relationships with the parents, but she felt that Sarang's faculty members had ignored parents'

suggestions from the beginning, and the problem became bigger and bigger like a snowball. She thought that the school needed to have communication with the parents. She pointed out that it was important for the school to accept the parents' criticism.

I understand that it is not easy to accept the parents' suggestions because we know, if the school accepts the parents' suggestions, they will want more and more. But, the school needs to be ready to listen to criticism from the parents. Sometimes their opinions sound great. They can give us better ideas. For example, I heard from one of the parents that our school's parental education program needed to be developed. She said our program needed more interactive parent education per semester. Usually, we just gave the parent a lecture-based education program. From her viewpoint, the parental program needed more discussion instead of giving a lecture because the parents might have a lot of questions about educating their children. And she pointed out we did not provide feedback after the lecture. She criticized our school a lot in that way. It seemed to me that she had very sensitive eyes. As she mentioned, if our parent education system is more developed, it will be more valuable time for the parents who participate in the parental education program. (Interview, 08/14/08)

Hemin's problem with parents was complicated at Sarang. Her challenges in the complex social relationships were burdensome while she was teaching. She believed that everybody needed to be a good listener to solve the school's problem with the parents, and it needed to start from building mutual trust. Additionally, Hemin suggested that the new teachers should have inservice training about parent consultations.

I really wanted to learn how to communicate with the parents as a classroom teacher from the beginning of my teaching. If the school supported training for the new teachers,

that would be great. The other classroom teacher's case was different from mine. She

was not concerned about this kind of thing as much as I was since the child's parents in

her classroom were very quiet. But she told me she felt uncomfortable when she talked

with the parents, and she agreed we needed school-based training to create good

communication with the parents. Of course, I did not want to lie to the parents just to

make them happy. But I wanted to learn how to have a comfortable conversation with

them. When I asked the experienced teachers, they just said, "You will learn later when

you have more experience." However, I wanted to learn it now because I knew it was

part of the expertise of being a good teacher. So when I asked about it again, she said,

"You know what? They want to hear sweet words about the child first, and then try to

figure out what they want." I could not understand what the experienced teacher meant

exactly. But the important thing was that I needed more practice to do it. (Interview,

06/16/08)

As Hemin mentioned, she felt she needed more practice in building good communication with

the parents. However, she did not give up in the face of many challenges and tried to learn good

strategies from her school community. Above all, she really wanted to pay attention to the voices

of the parents. Also, she wanted the parents to understand and respect her because she was trying

to do the right thing.

Hemin: In Summary

The value of this research was giving the participant a comfortable atmosphere to talk frankly. It felt like a therapy session. You know, in a therapy session, a patient feels emotional support. I talked a lot because I accepted that you were a good listener. After the interview, I felt comfortable and better. Although it is difficult to talk about emotions, I had a chance to experience it. I was surprised at your competent skill in interviewing. Additionally, the chance to talk with other teachers was very helpful. Our discussion was very deep and very valuable to me. I was glad to hear the stories of other teachers. It was quite different from our regular chatting time and it was serious and honest. Especially,

when they listened to my challenge with one of the parents, I could feel they understood me as friendly colleagues. Your observations of me? It was nothing for me. Rather, I really wanted to let you know what my life was here. I loved doing a photoessay and discussing it. If we have another chance, we want to try to do it between the teachers. I have changed. I would like to disclose my life here instead of hiding it. (Interview, 08/14/08)

Hemin was a newcomer who had only a few months teaching experience at Sarang school. Like Jina and Sunny, Hemin was responsible for many extra duties as a new teacher, and it made her feel tired on a daily basis. She experienced how teachers' status, based on age, affected her relationships with other teachers. Also, she believed her identity as a new teacher influenced her social relationships in the school. Therefore, she felt that she had to act carefully so as not to make a mistake because she did not want other people to consider her as a new teacher. Her biggest struggles involved developing positive relationships with parents as well as faculty members. Hemin often felt stressed because tension with the children's parents influenced her relationships with the other teachers.

Hemin wanted to see the school become more of a learning community. She believed that every teacher needed to be a good listener to solve the school's problems. Additionally, Hemin suggested that the teachers should have various inservice training opportunities and participate in a supportive mentoring system. She believed this school-based support would create a good learning community for the teachers at Sarang.

In the next chapter, Aram, who was working in a classroom for two year old children at Sarang is introduced.

Chapter 7 - Aram's Teacher Life:"I am a troublemaker here. I am done. I am out of here."

> *"Recently some effort has been made to listen to the teacher's voice, but interestingly, little of this work has focused on the lives of preschool teachers. Preschool teachers appear to be seen either as glorified babysitters whose working lives are unrelated to the lives of other teachers, or as a subset of teachers generally, without exceptional and important characteristics of their own. In the former view, they are outside the circle of education, outside the profession of teaching, and unworthy of serious attention. In the latter view, they are an appendage of teaching generally, the poor cousins within the profession as a whole. In either case the voices of preschool teachers are even less heeded than those of teachers generally." (Ayers, 1989, p. 3)*

Aram taught the two year olds at Sarang School. Her classroom consisted of two boys and four girls, and she worked without any assistant teacher in the classroom. Primarily, Aram wanted to work for a long time in her first school as a teacher. However, she continuously struggled to stay in her job at Sarang. What caused her to face such challenges in her school? In the end, why did she decide to leave her school?

Aram's Biography

Aram was 5'5''tall, with straight hair, dyed dark brown, and brown framed glasses. Like Jina, Sunny, and Hemin, she usually wore a teacher's uniform in the school, but changed her dress when she arrived and departed each day. Aram had a regional accent and a high pitched voice, and spoke somewhat loudly and quickly. She was born in 1983 in a small city in southwestern Korea, and still lived with her family, never having lived in any other city. She was the first of two children, and her younger brother attended a university. Her mother was a housewife, and her father worked as a salesman in a company. She had a good relationship with her family who encouraged her to have a positive view about the world. Aram explained,

I love my family. My dad and mom are always supportive of me. My dad is not strict

unlike most Korean fathers. He helps my mom at home because my mom is often sick.

They had positive world view, and it influenced me and my brother. They had concerns

about educating their children because they were very poor in their youth and never had

the chance to attend university. Can I say that our education was a kind of vicarious

satisfaction for them? In my mom's case, she did not graduate from high school to

support her family even though she was very smart and had a good middle school grades.

However, her attitude is that one should learn continuously. She has learned English and

Chinese by herself—she's still learning. She likes reading books at home. I really respect

my parents. (Interview, 04/07/08)

Aram always enjoyed reading books, taking after her mother. Reading books was one of her

most joyful hobbies, and she liked sharing what she had read with others. She was also interested

in art activities involving her hands such as knitting and creating craftwork made of paper. As a

teacher, she enjoyed making special materials for her students using her adroit craftsmanship.

When she had to make hand-made teaching materials in her school, her good ideas were a good

model for the other teachers. Aram gave a lot of suggestions about making the materials to the

other teachers and she felt confident that she was good at it.

Aram's childhood memories were full of good times with her friends and teachers. She

got along well with her friends because her personality was outgoing, and she was a good student

who received much praise from her school teachers. Throughout her life as a student at her

elementary, middle and high school, she had several influential teachers. She commented that

these teachers' encouraged her to learn:

I had three teachers when I was a young student. One of my elementary teachers showed a caring attitude for students. She was very kind, and her teaching was very fun. The other one was an art teacher in my middle school. He taught me how important art is in our lives. His teaching style was very unique and made me interested in art. I think I learned from him about the importance of creativity in education. The last teacher was one of my high school teachers who taught me academics were important, but social activities with people were more valuable for the students. I remember she gave me a chance to participate in the various activities of the local student community. I learned from the activities how people thought and acted differently. (Interview, 04/07/08)

She was satisfied with her school life before she entered the university. She mentioned that her problems started when faced with choosing a major. When she explored options regarding a major, her family disagreed with her. She explained,

I love children. So I decided to choose early childhood education major. But my relatives as well as my parents disagreed with me. Actually, my cousin on the mother's side was working as preschool teacher after obtaining her teacher certification. She advised me not to choose the major of early childhood education because she experienced that her work was pretty tricky. Everybody tried to persuade me to choose another major like nursing. Nevertheless, I persisted in my decision. Of course, by choosing my major, I had a lot of conflicts with my parents and myself. It was the first hard moment in my life. At last, I could study in early childhood education. It seemed that my parents trusted me after I entered my university. Frankly speaking, when I experienced difficulties working here, I could not talk about it with my parents because it was my decision. I just rationalized my difficulties, thinking everybody could have hard time in life. But sometimes I wondered

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how my life would be if I had chosen another major. I've learned that decision making

about the job was very important. (Interview, 04/07/08)

In explaining her decision to be an early childhood teacher, Aram recalled her school life. Her

freshman year in university was not as satisfying as she had expected. She wanted something

special that would be different from her middle and high school experiences, but, at first, her

university life did not meet her expectations. She described her freshman year as follows:

When I entered the university, it was very different from what I thought. I expected

romantic time and freedom as a university student because I was only focused on

studying from morning to evening when I was a high school student. But, in a word, it

was just like high school. I attended middle school and high school for only girls. The

early childhood education department was also for women. My professors and instructors

were also women (with an indignant tone). I guessed my life would have time for reading

books, eating something delicious, and talking with my classmates on the quad. But it

wasn't. I always had to do something under the direction of my strict professors.

Compared with the other majors, early childhood education major had a lot of

requirements; taking a lot of courses, playing the piano, drawing, making teaching

materials, participating in field experience, and preparing a portfolio and presentation for

the graduation conference. I was continuously struggling about my future when I was a

freshman. (Interview, 04/07/08)

Aram pointed out how her personality changed after she entered the university. She spent much

time seriously thinking and reflecting on her future rather than going out. A turning point in her

life occurred when she met her boyfriend at the university. Spending time with her boyfriend,

who became a teacher, and hearing a lot about the difficulties and advantages in his teaching, Aram was initially anxious about her future. She recalled,

> Quite honestly, when I got to the point of meeting my boyfriend, I did not know exactly what I wanted to be. It was before I was elected as a student chair. When I met him at first, he was a senior student and was preparing for his teaching job. After he became a manual arts teacher in a high school, I could hear his challenges as a teacher. Also, I heard his salary was higher than early childhood teachers because he was a high school teacher, and his workload was not difficult as that of early childhood teachers. Those stories of his experiences caused me to struggle at that time. Moreover, I thought I had better transfer to another degree because I was not satisfied with my freshman life. However, my boyfriend gave me a lot of advice and support. He said, "Money is not everything. High school teaching is different from early childhood teaching…think about what you want to do and why you chose it at that time…" (Interview, 04/07/08)

Aram was appreciative of how her boyfriend supported her student life and her dream to become a teacher. Her boyfriend kept emotionally supporting her after she became a teacher, and they had a long distance relationship because his school was located in another city.

> I don't have many chances to see my boyfriend because he is teaching so far away. We see each other twice a month. But I still have received good support from him. When I was a university student, he taught me why I needed to choose a teaching job. He was a member of a teacher organization which had a good mission. It seemed to me that the teachers were real activists. They insisted what real teaching is and what the real role of a teacher is. Whenever I heard what he was doing in the organization, I envied him, and I wanted to be like him. I wanted to make that kind of organization for early childhood

educators in my future. I enjoyed the conversations with my boyfriend, and they

influenced my future. (Interview, 04/07/08)

Another important point of her school life occurred when she became a junior at the university

and was elected as a student representative in her department. Aram began to enjoy studying her

major and working along with her classmates. The chance to be a student representative made

Aram a more active student. In addition, Aram worked at a school as a volunteer.

> When I was a junior student, I could have a good social network with my friends,
>
> professors, and local community. One of the senior students recommended me to work at
>
> a school and I started observing classrooms and helping kindergarten teachers. It was
>
> very a helpful experience as preparation for my future student teaching. Honestly, my
>
> freshman life was boring. The courses which I took were very lecture-based and focused
>
> on learning many theories (speaking quickly). I had to memorize many theories and
>
> educational philosophers such as Froebel, Pestalozzi, Dewey, Piaget, etc. in order to pass
>
> my midterm and final exam. But junior life was different. The professors started teaching
>
> based on the practice talking about real school settings. I really enjoyed it at that time.
>
> (Interview, 04/07/08)

Aram also evaluated her senior student life in a positive way. Particularly, she was very satisfied

with her student teaching. She articulated the reasons:

> You know student teachers are usually shocked because they experienced that practice is
>
> different from the theories through student teaching time. But, my student teaching was
>
> not as challenging because I already had a field experience as a volunteer. I think that
>
> time was one of the wonderful times in my life. In particular, when I had an internship as
>
> one of the required courses officially, I met a fantastic mentor teacher. She really

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understood my status—between a student and a teacher. She advised me in many positive

ways even though she had only three years' teaching experiences. Understanding the fact

that the courses of the university were different from the real teaching, she really tried to

make her passion for teaching come true at the same time. She really focused on

understanding her four-year-old students and prepared a lot of creative activities. In fact,

I learned at that time even if a teacher has limited teaching experience, she can become a

wonderful teacher. (Interview, 04/07/08)

The meeting with a good mentor teacher gave Aram self-confidence for her future teaching.

Aram maintained contact with her mentor teacher and received support from the mentor teacher

whenever she faced difficulties in her school.

I appreciated meeting my mentor teacher at that time and keeping in touch with her.

During my student teaching, she gave me a lot of chances to think about the creative

activities and teach them in her classroom. I could apply what I learned at my university

from her class instead of just observing her class like a door keeper or cleaning her

classroom like custodian. I felt very comfortable as an intern teacher in her classroom. I

could plan and teach whatever I wanted to practice with her students. I taught many songs,

dynamic activities, and science experiments which I learned in the courses of my

university. When it did not work as I planned, the mentor teacher encouraged me a lot

and we discussed it together in a positive way. After I got the teaching job, she thought of

me as colleague and we shared our difficulties with each other. She is still my mentor and

good supporter. (Interview, 04/07/08)

Aram mentioned that her mentor teacher was very flexible in the classroom and welcomed with

an open-mind Aram's attempts in her classroom. Aram believed that student teaching could be

differentiated depending on whether or not the student teacher was fortunate to have a good mentor teacher.

> Compared with other student teachers, I was lucky in that I met a good mentor teacher. Everybody says that student teaching is different from courses offered at university. But I think if the student teacher tries to connect the courses with real teaching, it can work. My mentor teacher had the same thoughts as me. For instance, I loved my science education course. Because the course was very practice-based lecture, I could apply what I learned to my real teaching. The students really enjoyed the hands-on experiments and my mentor teacher praised me, saying that my teaching was excellent. Also, [when I was student teaching] I used a big book that I made in my reading education course. The students loved it. I thought my university courses were not detached from real teaching. They were fundamental for my teaching. (Interview, 04/07/08)

From her mentor teacher, assigned to her during her student teaching, Aram learned that a teacher could play an important role as an activist in the difficult environment of the school even in the midst of the challenges of the real teaching world. After that, she was more satisfied with her teacher education program and this understanding significantly affected her life during her final semester. She explained,

> I really want to turn my memory to the student teaching time. I learned what teacher's real role is from my mentor teacher. I respect her a lot. Actually, her school was neither famous nor did it have a good environment. The school's building looked very old and humble. Nevertheless, she (my mentor teacher) was trying whatever she wanted in her classroom. For example, when she was struggling in her teaching, she had a chance to talk with her director and peer teachers. They shared many ideas with each other in a

positive way. When I observed their sharing, their focus was always directed from the children's perspective, and their ideas intersected with what I learned in the courses at my university. My mentor teacher trusted that the director of her school had a good philosophy, and my mentor teacher respected her so much. The interesting thing was that the director shared her various teaching resources with the teachers. I felt that the director was continuously leaning about early childhood education. Of course, conflicts existed between the faculty members just as at other schools. But, it seemed that they tried to have open minds and to solve the school's problems. As far as I observed the school, every faculty member was always involved in learning and teaching to improve the school. I observed that every faculty member supported the teachers as friends when they had a problem. Such a school atmosphere gave my mentor teacher the confidence to play the role of teacher activist. After my student teaching, I wanted to become a teacher like my mentor teacher after my graduation, and I felt with confidence that my teacher education program had prepared me well. (Interview, 05/21/08)

In addition to her good memories of student teaching, Aram recalled her last semester at the university. The department of her major held a huge conference for the senior students as one of the requirements for graduation. The conference, in which she took part, gave Aram great confidence as an early childhood educator, as she explained:

When I prepared for the big conference as a senior student, I had no vacation, holiday, or weekends for several months. The conference gave me a lot of confidence as a student major in early childhood education. For the conference, all the senior students prepared a creative curriculum and teaching materials as well as demonstrations of the classroom environment based on the teaching unit we chose. And we invited many young children

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and early childhood teachers in our city and introduced what we had prepared to them for three days. The children had many good experiences based on the conference. The preparation was really hard and time-consuming. But now I think what I learned at that time has helped my current teaching. (Interview, 04/07/08)

After successfully obtaining early childhood teacher certification, she graduated from her four year university and started looking for her first teaching job. She maintained a cautious attitude in choosing the early childhood school because, through her student teaching, she had experienced how important the influence of a school's climate can be on a teacher. She explained her job search experience at that time,

My beliefs as a teacher were based on what I learned at my university. So I wanted to teach in a good school in which I could put my beliefs into practice. But, who knows? It was difficult to find such a good school for my first teaching. I asked the teachers who were working in schools, but everybody said that everywhere had the same situations. I mean every early childhood school has a challenging environment, and every teacher's work was tough. I really wanted to teach as I had learned, being a brave as a teacher as my mentor teacher told me. I did not want to be a coward teacher who just follows the opinions of the director, parents, etc. But, to tell the truth, the fact that every school had a problem made me hesitate to go into the teaching world from my starting point. Can I say that I already knew everything? Anyway, it took a lot of time to find my first job. In this school's [Sarang's] case, I had a good impression at first. The school's building looked very different from the other schools, when I came to this school for my job interview. The building looked very comfortable like a house, and it gave me a good first impression. Basically, I already knew the director. So I trusted her and I looked forward

to working with her very much. But, simultaneously, I searched for other schools and carefully compared the schools in order to choose. Working as a student representative made my application competitive, and I got many job offers from the most of schools. I was lucky. I just believed I could do all my best here [at Sarang] because I thought that Sarang School opened last year and it needed many teachers with fresh ideas. (Interview, 04/07/08)

Aram noted that her choice of school was very important and required careful consideration because she had many options to choose from. One of her considerations was economic. She wanted to support her brother because he was attending a private university. She felt that Sarang's teacher salary was more reasonable compared with other schools. In the end, she started teaching in March, 2007 at Sarang. However, after teaching for one year, she continued to contemplate about her future. She confessed,

I have not talked about this kind of my personal issue with anybody. This is the first time. To be honest, I don't want to stay in this job for a long time. I just want to stop this job for a while. I've often thought about, especially this month. I want to take a rest and have some time to think about me—just for two or three months . . . I know my duty as an adult. You know. Everybody needs a job to survive in the world. I thought about my wedding as well. Just my thought…I imagine my future. If I get married, I cannot stay here because I ought to take care of my family. I think that it is wrong for me as a wife and mom to go home late. We have some teachers who are still working after marriage. I respect them. On the other hand, I think of their children who are waiting for their mom at home. If I were them, I could not work here any more. In fact, it is very difficult for a

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working mom to hold this job because of the irregular work schedule. (Interview,

04/07/08)

Originally, Aram's dream was to become a director after some years at the school. However, she changed her mind after she worked at Sarang. She thought she could not keep her teaching job any longer. She felt very exhausted and emphasized her need for a rest. She pictured herself not as a passionate teacher but as a very tired laborer. Why did she feel that way? Why did she think and rethink her future during her first teaching position? The following analysis section focuses on various challenges and tensions Aram faced in her school.

Theme 1: Being a "prisoner" in the classroom.

Like other teachers at Sarang, Aram also worked without a break and without assistance. Aram had a duty day once a week, and on this day she came to work earlier than the other teachers, to open the main gate, and to take care of students before the other teachers arrived. Usually, her arrival time was around 8:00 a.m. and her departure time was between 8:00 p.m. or 10:00 p.m. She took care of six students in her classroom from morning to evening by herself. She explained her daily schedule,

My classroom schedule is a little bit different from the other classrooms because we have

no specials. That means I need to take care of all the classroom children all by myself.

The children usually come to the classroom around 8:30 a.m. and go to home before 7:00

p.m. There is a daily schedule for the children: a morning snack time, an afternoon snack

time, inside play time, outside play time, lunch, and dismissal. Most people think it is

easy to teach very young children because of I don't need prepare for lessons. But, that's

wrong. Instead of preparing the lessons, I prepare good teaching materials and look at

many books to take care of them. Also, I need to have common sense to take care of

things like first aid. (Interview, 05/21/08)

As Aram commented, she frequently read books about first aid during the children's nap time.

She put those books on the shelf of her classroom and read them whenever she thought that she

needed information. The books included information about emergency care from the pediatrician

and teaching guides for toddlers or very young children. She enjoyed reading the books little by

little everyday. During nap time, she always started other work after spending a little time in

reading. The following excerpt illustrates her work during the nap time.

> Aram's classroom children are asleep. In the darkness, Aram reads something very hard.
>
> The book's title is "A Siren's Wail: 911," and it is about many cases of emergency for
>
> taking care of young children. She reads a page about changing diapers. The page
>
> includes many pictures about diaper rash and some symptoms regarding side effects of
>
> diaper change. After reading the book, Aram brings the paperwork about her observations
>
> of her children and starts writing her daily notes for the parents. In the meantime, one of
>
> the children wakes up and starts crying. She goes to the child and says smiling, "Good
>
> girl, did you have a good sleep?" The child does not stop crying. Aram says, "Did you
>
> have a bad dream? That's O.K." She picks up the child and brings her to her table. She
>
> puts the child on her knee and keeps doing her paperwork. Aram says to the child,
>
> "Teacher is working here. Do you want to play here?" She gives the child one of her pens
>
> and a piece of white paper. The child stops crying little by little and plays with Aram's
>
> pen. Aram looks at the child and smiles. (Researcher's observation journal, 06/25/08)

Children's nap time was also a busy time for Aram, but she enjoyed it. Unlike the other

classroom teachers, Aram gave her children their lunch, let them sleep, and then, had her own

lunch in the classroom. She did not hurry her lunch because she had enough time to eat. In contrast, outside play time was one of her most difficult times because she had to look after all the children by herself. The following excerpt shows her challenge during outside play time.

> Aram is preparing to take her students outside. Every child waits his or her turn to put on a jacket and hat. It takes over five minutes for all the preparation to go outside. She looks very busy. Also, Aram has to help all four children—two children are absent today—put on their shoes at the main gate. Besides, Aram needs to take her students by herself because this school did not have big stroller or wagon to move the very young children conveniently. At first, she holds two children's hands and keeps watching the other children. She says, "Over here, not there. Please, come here." She finds that one boy does not listen to her and goes the other way. Aram lets go the hand of one of children and goes to the boy. She says, "Give me your hand. And come here." But the child whose hand Aram let go starts whining. Aram smiles and says, "Teacher has two hands. You can walk by yourself." She takes her children to the rabbit cage in front of the school building. Her children really like observing the rabbits. But Aram still looks very nervous and busy watching all her children. (Researcher's observation journal, 04/02/08)

In her teacher education program, Aram had learned the value of science education for young children and felt that children should have good experiences observing animals or plants surrounding the school. However, when she planned a trip outside for her two-year-old children as a group, it was an exhausting experience. Consequently, playtime was limited to the school gym and there were few outside science experiences for her children. But, simultaneously, it was a time when she felt very exhausted. She explained,

I know going outside and observing something is very helpful for my children's

development. Also, it is part of the daily schedule of my classroom. But, in reality, I have

a struggle about it. To tell the truth, when I take them in the morning, I feel more tired in

the afternoon. Because I have to watch them all by myself…You know...the security and

safety issue for very young children. So I am really nervous whenever my classroom has

outside play time. If I had an assistant, I would feel more comfortable taking them

outside. Sometimes, when I feel very tired or when I have all six children, I take them to

the school gym instead of going outside even if it is very sunny outside. But, I feel guilty

when I think about that from the children's perspectives. They (the children) need to stay

in the only school building all day long. Of course…me too. How miserable for us! You

know, for them and for me. It seems that the school is a prison. (Interview, 05/21/08)

Aram felt like she was locked up as a prisoner in her classroom and became exhausted because

of what she felt was a tiring life. To stay with six students in the small classroom all day long

without outside play time was one of Aram's challenges. Additionally, another challenge was the

need to clean up her classroom in the middle of the day. She felt sick and tired of putting toys

away. In her photoessay, she described the challenge,

I clean up the blocks over twelve times in a day. As soon as I put them away and stack

them up, my smiling students break them again and again. I know they need to do it just

for fun but I am tired of stacking them up. When the blocks are on the floor here and

there, I don't like it because it resembles my unorganized life here. However, I don't

want to hide the blocks like one of the experienced teachers does because she doesn't

want to clean up. When I take care of my six children by myself, I suffer from an

obsession— I always need to clean up. When I finish cleaning up a corner, I can see

another corner is waiting for me. I don't know why I feel pressure because of this. This is what I do over and over. Continuous working…When I am really tired, I want to raise my hands and surrender. My students are always waiting for me. One child needs a diaper change, another is crying, and another one is biting a child… I need six hands to take care of them. (Aram's photoessay in the group discussion, 06/26/08)

Aram also had the responsibility of taking phone calls from the children's parents in the middle of the day. Her school allowed parents to call the teachers in the classroom regardless of the teachers' schedules. Most of the phone calls were about the children's condition. She understood the parents' concerns about their child's welfare but felt that the frequent phone calls interrupted her teaching in that she had to take care of the six children by herself. The following excerpt highlights the situation:

Aram is changing a diaper for one of the children in the classroom. The phone rings. After Aram hurries through the diaper change and dresses the child, she runs to the phone. She answers, "Hello. Yes. (Watching a child) She was O.K. in the morning but her condition was not good when we went outside." While answering the phone call, Aram keeps watching her students. She holds the phone with her right hand and throws away the dirty diaper into the trash can. And then she finds that one of the children has poured out her yogurt and is stirring it with her hands on the floor, but Aram keeps talking on the phone. "Yes. (Smiling) Yes…She did at home." While answering the phone call, two other children come to the child who is playing with the yogurt and they touch the yogurt on the floor. Although Aram wants to say "Stop it," she keeps talking on the phone. It takes over five minutes until she hangs up the phone call. As soon as Aram hangs up, she runs to clean up the floor. (Researcher's observation journal, 04/30/08)

In addition, Aram had to attend faculty meetings after school, including the Monday evening faculty meeting, which all Sarang teachers were required to attend. It created serious tensions for her and she felt tired afterwards. In fact, she did not want to take part in the meeting. She explained,

> I hate the faculty meetings. No conversion there! I think at least our school has a good environment compared with other schools. Honestly, our salary is better than other private school. Nevertheless, every body is serious in the faculty meeting. It is a very stressful time for everybody. Because everybody has angry faces, who wants to propose a good idea? No democracy, no discussion there! You know, under a climate where everybody was ready to listen and accept others' ideas, the new teachers could speak out their fledgling ideas and the experienced teachers could propose their ideas. Not this school…Now the atmosphere is terrible. The experienced teachers lead everything in the meeting. They think their experience is everything. Ten years' experience is not everything, I think. Of course, the ten years can explain a teacher's long teaching stories. But, that's it. The time flies. Everything changes very quickly. I mean how quickly the times change. Children's characteristics change a lot, too. I don't mean they (the experienced teachers) are wrong. I mean a good balance between new things and old things is really vital. The faculty meetings always made me tired. (Interview, 08/11/08)

Every teacher as well as Aram was busy at Sarang. Teachers' tiredness stemmed from the complexity of the bad working conditions including the extra workload and solo teaching without any assistance. Initially, Aram wanted to stay for a long time at Sarang. But, she felt that she had been unsuccessful as a teacher in this, her first teaching school. She explained that she felt this way because of the very bad working conditions of her school.

When I first came here, I wanted to be a successful teacher. Furthermore, I wanted to become a good director. But the reality was different from what I expected. Now I think, 'Can it be so?' It's O.K. if I have regular work schedule. Otherwise, this job is not O.K. for me. A teacher is not superwoman. A teacher is a human being. So I am thinking about my future. This job does not even have a vacation. I can not do my personal work such as going to the bank or seeing a doctor in a hospital. Even if I go out for a second to go to the bank in the middle of the day, I feel uncomfortable. I have no time to do it while I work here. So I ask my mom to do my personal work for me. This job is very unusual. Interestingly, everybody thinks this is natural. But I don't think so. When I was a student, I had leisure time to relax. Not here. I feel tired everyday, and I really worry about my physical health because I leave my home early in the morning and go home late at night. My emotional health is worse. Is this a real world for people? Is everybody busy to survive in the real world like me? Or is my school unique? I really don't know. I am confused. Every early childhood teacher needs to survive everyday by herself rather than everybody supporting each other. How come I'm the only one that sees this? (Interview, 08/11/08)

Aram also needed to make teaching materials after school although it was very difficult and a meaningless time for her. She thought Sarang's teachers needed more teaching materials because the school had only opened a year ago and did not have enough materials. She envied the teachers who worked in schools which had many teaching materials so that the teachers did not have to make them by themselves. She commented,

When I visited a laboratory preschool last year, I was surprised that the school had a large storage room filled with many kinds of teaching materials. To be honest, at that time, I

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really wanted to teach there if I could. It seemed the materials were not hand-made and were related with the various teaching units. I thought how convenient it was for the teachers because they did not have to spend time making the teaching materials. I know that the school had been around much longer and its financial status was greater than my school. You know the reason why we need to make hand-made teaching materials in this school is because it has a short history and does not have enough materials. Furthermore, because we need to make them in a hurry, the teaching materials are not very beautiful and strong enough for the teachers to save them in storage. It is ironic: This school needs more teaching materials, but it is not filled with good teaching materials because the teachers don't have enough time and must hurry to make them. Can I say it is a vicious circle? I don't want to spend time making disposable teaching materials. When I have to work late to make the teaching materials, I am sure that it influences my students because I feel tired the next day. It is a simple principle. But why don't early childhood educators understand this point? What is best for the children? If I were the school director, I would get rid of this meaningless time from the teacher's schedule and purchase educationally good teaching materials for them. (Group discussion, 06/26/08)

Even on the days when the teachers did not make materials, Aram could not go home early. She mentioned the teachers had no set departure time and it was stressful for her. She always wanted to go home early because she believed being rested was important for the next day's teaching. She began to develop the habit of looking at the clock when she finished her day. She explained,

When I finish cleaning up my classroom, I look at the clock on the wall. I can not go home even if I finish my work. 7:10 P.M.…7:30 P.M.…7:40 P.M.…When nobody tells me to go home, sometimes I can not control my temper. (Mimicking an angry voice)

'Why doesn't anybody tell me?' And I keep waiting for somebody to tell me, all the while looking at the clock. From time to time I am angry because I am powerless. I always need permission to go home. I just hope somebody tells me quickly to go home because we have no work. (Group discussion, 05/13/08)

Besides her busy daily schedule, Aram mentioned that the location of her classroom made her irritable. Her classroom was located next to the main gate of the school, which forced her to do extra work. She often had to open the main gate if somebody knocked on her classroom window because the security system was always locked. Often somebody would push the button on the security gate and she needed to open it. She felt this repeated action interrupted her teaching in the classroom. Sometimes, when the director and the school secretary were absent from the office, Aram had to open the main gate more frequently. Even when she did paperwork during nap time, she could not focus. Nevertheless, she continued to open the gate without saying anything. She explained,

My opening the main gate is O.K. because I know that somebody needs to do it if I do not it. That's understandable. But, you know what? I have something else that I can not understand here. I think that I have terrible life here because of it. To be honest, I am sick of doing paperwork here. Usually, I take them home with me because I can not finish it. So I go to bed at 1:00 a.m. and 2:00 a.m. The next morning I feel more tired because I can not sleep well at night. Every classroom has many documents which the teacher has to complete such as teacher's lesson plan, observation notes, and parent consultation journal. These are basic, and we have many other things. Seven or eight? I am very tired because I need to turn in every document every week or every month. Of course, the director says, "Please, don't do the paperwork all at once." But, you know, I have to do

that way because I am so tired during the week. So usually, I do it all at once during weekends. I can not take a rest. If I do, who will take care of my students? Even though my class has a substitute teacher, I think she struggles because she does not really know my class. I know this is from my personality. I feel comfortable when I stay with my students. When I was sick, I went home early to take a rest. At that time, my next door classroom teacher took care of my students, and I kept thinking about them at home. I worried about them: What does the teacher think of me? How well do my students do with the teacher? Even if I am sick and take a rest, I can't feel comfortable. This is my working condition. I know elementary school teachers are different from us. They teach in better working conditions compared to us. For example, they can take a rest whenever they want because the school has enough substitute teachers. If the school policy changes, can we work in better working conditions like elementary school teachers? But, in the case of my school [Sarang School], when I take a rest, if somebody needs to take care of my students as well as her own students, it is natural to feel uncomfortable. If someone needs to do it, it will influence the relationship with the teachers because I know that every teacher is busy and doesn't want to do it for anybody. That is the reality here. (Interview, 05/21/08)

Aram's teaching at Sarang was more difficult than she expected because of what she perceived as bad working conditions and extra workload. However, in her photoessay (06/26/08), she described the thing that made her more exhausted than anything else: Aram's greatest challenge was the complex social relationships in her school.

Theme 2: "They do not believe me!": Negotiating novice teacher identity.

Aram as a novice teacher faced many challenging situations at her school like Jina, Sunny, and Hemin. The top down authority between the teachers influenced her workload and made it necessary for her to negotiate her identity as a teacher continuously. She felt lonely while she was working, and she always struggled because of the evaluations from the faculty members who had authority. She explained,

> My life as a novice teacher is awful in my school. I have a lot of things to learn and I feel
>
> tired. Even if I want to do something, I need to worry about having it approved by the
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> experienced teachers and the director. If they don't agree with me, I need to start it over.
>
> It is tough. It happens a lot. I cried whenever I faced those situations. At that time, I feel
>
> my limitation as a teacher. I knew I did not have any clue about how to solve my problem.
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> (Interview, 05/21/08)

One of the tensions related to Aram's identity came from her relationships with the parents. The parents looked at her as a young teacher and sometimes ignored her opinion as a classroom teacher. It hurt Aram. And the situation made her evaluate herself as a powerless teacher. Aram explained,

> As a matter of fact, parents know my short teaching experience even if I do not tell it. I
>
> don't know how they know. It seems I look very young? You know, the way the
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> experienced teachers tell the parents differently compared with the new teachers. The
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> experienced teachers can easily understand the parents' perspectives because they usually
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> have their own children and spend time with them. But not for the new teachers… The
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> parents often ask me, "Are you married?" or "How can you take care of such young

children even if you are not married?" I realized that they did not trust me. (Interview,

04/07/08)

Aram felt disappointed in that she as a teacher did not instill parents with confidence. She tried to

do her best because she wanted the parents to accept her as a good teacher for their children.

However, it was not easy because the parents had biased opinions about novice teachers—

believing that they were too young and not good at taking care of very young children. Aram

gave an example:

> No matter what I say, they usually do not believe me. It takes time. I mean, for the new
>
> teachers, it takes more time to be accepted by the parents. For example, one girl of the
>
> children in my classroom had the short nap time. For 20 minutes? Her mom said not to let
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> her sleep for an hour or so because she did not sleep at night if she had a long nap time at
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> school. So I said to persuade her mom, "The nap time is very important for the good
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> growth of very young children like her because she has a long schedule at school and
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> feels tired between the morning and the afternoon." However, her mom ignored me and
>
> just insisted on her opinion. It seems it is difficult to persuade the parents because of the
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> fact that I am a novice teacher. (Interview, 04/07/08)

Aram struggled in her relationships with the parents, and it influenced her relationships with the

teachers. She always paid attention to what the experienced teachers did to improve relationships

with the parents. She thought she needed more practice with parent consultations and she often

asked help of the experienced teachers. She explained,

> I struggled in my relationships with the parents because I was labeled as a novice teacher.
>
> It also affected relationships with the experienced teachers. It made me rely on the
>
> experienced teachers when I faced a challenge in the parent consultation. However, what

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I want to say is it depends on the personality of the novice teacher. Because I sometimes had a lot of questions, it seems that the experienced teachers felt annoyed. Some experienced teachers thought of me as an active teacher but other teachers thought of me as a troublemaker in the relationships with the parents. But I did not care what they thought of me. I realized that, whenever I faced the challenge in the relationships with the parents, I could find the easy way from them. It could be a tactic for the new teachers. Especially, I realized that they have expertise regarding the parent consultation. In fact, when the teacher doesn't understand the inclination of the parents, the parents don't trust the teacher. I learned that they [the experienced teachers] have different voices according to the parents. It is true that using the appropriate language is important for having a good conversation with the parents. The experienced teachers recommended that I need to call the parents frequently. So, I usually call three children's parents every day. (Interview, 04/07/08)

Aram accepted the advice of the experienced teachers in positive way. But, on the other hand, she struggled in her relationships with people until she felt confident in her teaching because of her identity as a novice teacher. She wanted to receive support from the other teachers, but she was always anxious about what the other teachers thought of her. Aram noted,

I really needed somebody's help. How I can be a good teacher? How can I improve my classroom management? I know my weakness as a classroom teacher. So I really need to practice in those parts. I know this time is very crucial for me because I can get advice and learn from other teachers. If this time passes, it seems I have to survive by myself without anybody's help. You know, the experienced teachers have no mentor and need to develop by themselves. I know I am learning and improving a lot. I feel more confident

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in my teaching. When a child is sick, I can take care of him or her by myself and I know what to say to the parents. I learned a lot from the other teachers. But at the same time, I found they thought of me as a teacher without expertise. They know my shortcomings a lot because I always shared my concerns. At this point, I want to be accepted by other people as a successful teacher with expertise. But it is impossible. They still think of me just as an immature teacher. I don't like this kind of image any more. (Interview, 05/21/08)

In fact, Aram did not want other teachers to think of her as an inexperienced teacher even though she recognized that she had a lot of things to learn as a new teacher. She believed that every person should have an equal opportunity to make the best of himself/herself. Therefore, Aram thought that the new teachers should have opportunities to acquire expertise like the experienced teachers. However, she mentioned that in Korean culture, experienced or older people always prevent the new or younger people from displaying all their abilities.

Our (Korean) culture is unique. Korean people have a great notion that something fresh is rejected first and should be delayed. It is especially difficult for conservative people to accept something new. It seems that it is very different from the western view. Usually, Korean people think what they know is the best. If we constantly retain this kind of culture, we can not expect any change and development. They (the experienced people) think what they do is always the best. If we just follow this idea, we might have no improvement. For example, in this school, some experienced teachers told the new teachers, "I went camping with my students many times…At that time I did…" And they forced us to follow them as they had to do before. It was like repetition again and again. But let me tell you an opposite example. We tried to do a new thing like parent

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involvement with the new teachers. That made a change in this school. I am sure our

school can be improved by this change. (Interview, 04/07/08)

The school's atmosphere in which the new teachers' needs were ignored depressed Aram. She

recognized that after all was said and done by the new teachers, their voices were not heard.

Rather than having more confidence the longer she worked at Sarang, she thought of herself as a

teacher without expertise. Aram tried to do her best, but the experienced teachers and the director

often criticized her. She commented that she wanted to be praised by the other teachers.

Just as the children like being praised, the new teachers also want to be praised in school.

However, I have never been praised here. The other teachers and the director always

criticize the new teachers. They look for my shortcomings rather than trying to help me. I

am a human being. Once or twice to find my shortcomings and to give me advice is O.K.

But no more…it is stressful. I think of myself as one who can not be good at doing

anything. Why don't they praise the new teachers? The new teachers need to be praised

and accepted by everybody. You know the Korean old saying, "A mean mother-in-law

gives birth to a mean mother-in-law again." One day, I said to myself: Maybe they treat

me this way because Sarang's experienced teachers had been treated in the same way

before. They often said, "When I was a new teacher like you, I did blah, blah, blah…" So

what? Do we have to do it like them? Why don't they help us even though they struggled

like us? (Interview, 05/21/08)

Aram explained that the teachers had their own status and their own roles at Sarang. The

experienced teachers supervised and criticized the new teachers, and the new teachers respected

and followed the experienced teachers. As a new teacher, Aram also abided by this invisible rule

between the teachers. She explained,

I have worked harder than the other teachers. I don't know why. I just thought that I had

to take the initiative in working because I was a new teacher. For example, when the

teachers needed to carry something from the car to the supply room, I did it. Sometimes

the other teachers and the director let the new teachers do it, but even if they did not tell

me to do it, I did it first. It was natural here. I have moved a lot of teaching resources,

boxes, etc. I look like a laborer rather than a teacher here. (Interview, 05/21/08)

At first, Aram took it for granted that she should work harder than the experienced teachers in

her school, but as time passed, she began to think that it was not fair. She wanted all of the

teachers to work together with the same status. In particular, she did not like to do chores for the

experienced teachers only because she was a young teacher. Aram commented,

To cater to the experienced teachers…I don't like this. They are not my boss. (Mimicking

the experienced teachers' voices) They say, "Young teachers, please get me a cup of

coffee." Personally, I don't enjoy drinking coffee. So I don't know why I have to do it for

them. If I enjoy drinking coffee, I might give it to them as a colleague preparing my own

coffee. However, even though I don't drink coffee, do I have to get it for them? Why me?

I am not their maid. If they want to have it, they can do it. Why do they make the young

teachers do it? How bold! Isn't it interesting? I think that it comes from one of the

Korean cultures, which is that young people always need to cater to old people. Probably

ten years ago, they (the experienced teachers) had to prepare cups of coffee for their

experienced teachers when they were new teachers like me. But not now, times have

changed. That culture is disappearing everywhere. Nevertheless, they still foist it on us to

do it here. I don't think this is right. (Interview, 05/21/08)

Aram felt dissatisfied because she felt she was treated differently among the teachers. She emphasized that she had the same official title "*classroom teacher*" and wanted to have the same opportunities as the experienced teachers at Sarang.

Theme 3: Striding forward rather than marching in place:

Epistemological tensions in teaching philosophy.

Aram had good relationships with her students. Her classroom children could not speak well yet and called Aram *mom* instead of calling her *teacher*. For the two year old children, Aram looked like a good mom. She mentioned that her classroom teaching and her relationships with the children were different from those of other classrooms because her students were very young. Whenever her students called her *mom*, Aram nicely replied, "Yes." She thought it was important to love them like their real moms. However, she needed to have flexibility because she had to take care of many children at the same time.

> I have good relationships with my children. They think of me as their mom. To build
>
> relationships, I need to have flexibility, which is the most important thing in teaching. I
>
> want to teach so that my students have a lot of fun. I want to play with them as much as
>
> possible. I don't want to be a teacher who always raises her voice to the children. When I
>
> feel tired, sometimes I speak loudly. But I know shouting is not a good way to teach.
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> Every child is different. One child in my classroom listens to me only when I shout
>
> loudly. But the other children in my classroom listen to me when I try to speak nicely. I
>
> have to teach differently according to each child. Teaching needs flexibility. Interestingly,
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> if I am angry, they understand my feelings and act differently even if they are very young
>
> (smiling). It seems they are learning flexibility from me. (Interview, 05/21/08)

Although Aram felt confident in the relationships with the children in her classroom, she always thought she needed to learn more because she had little experience teaching very young children. She mentioned that her teacher education program focused on teaching for three year old children and older even though early childhood education programs included birth to age eight. Aram felt that teaching very young children required some different aspects of educational philosophy. Aram stressed that the very young children practiced self regulation and the use of appropriate language, and respect for other people, rather than learning more focused content knowledge. She explained,

> My classroom has a huge difference because the children are very young. The children need to learn very basic discipline to survive in this world. I learned the developmental characteristics in teaching the very young from my teacher education program. But, unfortunately I did not learn how to interact with the very young children. So I was very confused when I first taught in March. After reading some books and asking some teachers and my mother, I realized I needed to be a good model for them because it was easy for them to copy everything from my table manners to how I speak. For example, I am interested in language development of my students more than anything else. I really try to be a good language user to model for them. You know, having good communication skills is very important in their future. I set up a book shelf center in my classroom and often read the books to the children, not just to make them read the book earlier. While reading books, I can teach the children how to interact with people like taking turns with each other. In addition, they can learn to put the books away after they read the book. That is one of the disciplines I focus on. Even if they are young, I think

they know everything. For instance, they know whether or not they receive good care

from an adult. I always respect my students one to one. (Interview, 05/21/08)

Above all, Aram wanted to spend a lot of time in preparing the free play time because she

believed that children's free play was very important to the daily schedule. Even when she made

her teaching materials, she tried to use many references and decided to make the best material for

her students. However, Aram struggled because she had to keep cleaning her classroom during

the free play time:

I know free play time is very important but it is also stressful at the same time. I have

been very confused about this. What is the meaning of free play? When the children play,

they use all the toys but can't put away them because my students are very young. I feel a

lot of pressure because I have to clean up alone. You know, sometimes guests visit my

classroom. And everybody can see my classroom through the window because my

classroom is near the main gate. So even though I want to play with them, I need to put

away the toys. If I don't put them away, people will think my classroom is not organized.

So even if the children want to play with me, in my mind, I am thinking 'I need to clean

up over there as soon as possible.' One day, a child said to me, "Teacher, eat this." I

remember that I honestly replied smiling, "I can't. I need to clean up. You eat it." It's true.

I know how important interaction with the children is during the free play time, but I

cannot focus on it in reality because of the cleaning up pressure. This situation is really

different from my original beliefs as a teacher. (Group discussion, 06/26/08)

Tension also existed between the children's parents and Aram because of different educational

beliefs. She believed social development was most important for the children, but the parents

were anxious about their children's academic performance. She wanted the parents to understand what was of central importance for a child of this age. She explained,

> The parents have different views of children's learning. They want their children to read
> a book and to count numbers earlier than other children. But I believe that everything
> needs to be on time. We, as adults, need to wait for them. If we hurry their growth, they
> can get stressed. Korean education…umm (with a deep sigh) is so competitive. I know
> we live and need to survive in an age of limitless competition. But I don't want my
> children to experience a competitive sprit at this point. However, the parents often
> compare their children with other children in the classroom and tell me, "My child is late
> in language development, right? What can I do? Can you give me some advice?" The
> parents look very nervous. They need to be calmed down and wait for the children.
> (Interview, 08/11/08)

Aram mentioned how some children's parents emphasized the importance of their children learning a second language, particularly English. However, Aram had a different view of teaching a second language from that of the parents. She believed second language learning was based on learning the first language, Korean. Aram explained her ideas in the group discussion.

> Some parents teach English to their children when they are young. I know there is a
> climate that maintains learning English as the second language is very important for
> everybody. I started learning English when I was a middle school student. But now there
> is a huge difference in that today's children start learning English as a subject matter
> when they are elementary school students. You know, when the upper level curriculum
> changes, it influences the lower level curriculum. Likewise, it influences the teaching of
> young children because the early childhood teachers and parents are involved in teaching

English. But I have a different view. We are Korean and our first language is Korean. Learning the second language is important, but learning the first language is more important for my students. I believe if they are good at speaking the Korean language first, they can be also super in speaking other languages when they grow up. We don't need to push these young children. (Group discussion, 05/13/08)

Aram faced a struggle when the parents and other teachers wanted her to teach English to her students. In an informal interview (05/13/08), Aram mentioned she had learned about children's language development in her university coursework. According to Aram, language teaching needed to be based on the children's interests and depended on the individual child's readiness. She believed teaching a second language should align with this educational principle. Besides language teaching, she also disagreed with the school's program of having a Monday morning meeting every week at Sarang. She did not want her two year old children to take part in the compulsory Monday morning meeting (see the footnote 1 in chapter 4). Instead of participating in the meeting, Aram wanted her students to have free play time because she thought the meeting was meaningless. She believed that her students did not understand what the meeting was for. The following excerpt describes Aram and her students in a Monday morning meeting.

All the students and the teachers gather in the gym to take part in the Monday morning meeting. When Aram opens the gym door, her students come into the gym toddling along. Aram and her students sit down on the mat at the back of the gym. While the meeting proceeds, Aram's students stay on the mat. In the meantime, suddenly, one of Aram's students stands up and runs toward the stage. After following and catching him, she takes the boy to the mat and sits him down. Most of Aram's students don't pay attention to the meeting and struggle to escape from the mat. Aram just keeps watching her students so

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that they will not run away. And she says to her students, "(Whispering) it's almost

finished. Please, sit down. Don't move." Nevertheless, the students try to move

repeatedly while Aram prevents them from moving. The students look very bored and

Aram looks very nervous while the meeting lasts for one hour. (Researcher's observation

journal, 04/12/08)

Aram was not satisfied with these kinds of school programs which the school provided because

she felt they were not age appropriate. Instead, she wanted her school to have a better child-

centered curriculum or schedule. She had continuous conflicts between what she wanted and

what the school felt was necessary. Aram thought that her school needed to change and that the

school community should help bring about this change. To do so, all the teachers needed to

discuss the problems and learn about the most important things for the students. She explained,

When I was young, I remember I had a similar type of Monday meeting. It probably

came from our traditional culture. No, probably, we learned it from the Japanese culture

when Korea was ruled by Japan in the past. However, most of the teachers including me

believe the meeting is meaningless for our students. If we think about it that way, we

need to change it. But nobody is willing to say what we think about it. I don't like this

atmosphere. This is a school for our students. If the children don't like it, we can discuss

how to change whatever. If everybody is silent, we can not expect improvements for this

school. When I said to the director that I don't want to take part in the Monday meeting

with my students, she just answered that the meeting is to create unity for every Sarang

student and objected to my opinion. Is it possible for one and two year old children to

have unity? Anyway…after that, I have not mentioned it any more. Everything is the

same. No discussion here. No opinion here. (Interview, 05/21/08)

When Aram had a different idea regarding school curriculum or policy, she tried to give her opinion. However, she felt dissatisfied and felt that other teachers thought of her as a strange person. Because Aram did not want other teachers to name her as a troublemaker in her school, sometimes she would not say anything even though she wanted to speak out. In her mind, she thought that every teacher could take part in reforming the school with her.

> As a matter of fact, when I make a teaching plan, I really try to make it reflect my educational beliefs and teaching philosophy. However, after all, it has to follow the school curriculum and policy. That means, no matter how good a plan I have, the school can object to it. It is difficult. My beliefs as a teacher have not developed after I became a teacher. Furthermore, I think they are sinking. I think it is important for the teachers and the director who are working together to have the same philosophy. If we are different, I am a stranger or a maverick here. You know, if I worked in a different school in which every teacher had the same philosophy as I do, I would not be a troublemaker but a wonderful teacher who has good and fresh ideas. To be honest, when I insisted on my ideas before, I felt that other teachers thought of me as a troublemaker. It seemed like nobody wanted to change. According to them, I was the only one who wanted to change. It seems that people are afraid of change. But, anyway, the thing that I want to say is it would not be difficult if the director and the teachers have similar educational beliefs or if they respect the different ideas of the other people. (Interview, 05/21/08)

Aram often felt disappointed with the tension caused by the philosophical differences between her and the other teachers, and sometimes it confused and stressed her. She believed her first year teaching was difficult not only because of the differences between reality and theory, but also because of the differences between acceptance and denial of school improvement. She

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believed if the school having an open-minded atmosphere rather than an inherent sense of conservatism, it would have a chance to become a better school.

<p align="center">**Theme 4: "Those teachers evaluate and criticize me.":**</p>

<p align="center">**Challenges in cooperating with other teachers.**</p>

Aram stressed how she kept building good relationships with the other teachers in her mind while working at Sarang. However, she struggled in her relationship with the next door classroom teacher, and it made her tired. The classroom next door to her was for one-year-old children. That classroom's teacher had a lot of teaching experience and was the oldest teacher at Sarang. Aram explained,

> My relationships with the other teachers are very difficult. I think there are a lot of differences between the relationships with the teachers in school and the relationships with people out of the school. For example, I am satisfied with my relationships with people out of the school. I have never worried about it. It is always smooth. On the other hand, I keep struggling in the relationships with the teachers within the school because I think those teachers evaluate and criticize me. If the teachers are older than me, I have more concerns about the relationships. I don't know why. Because of having different opinions? Because I have had many kinds of conflicts between them and me? I even have a good relationship with older people out of the school. You know, out of the working place, people are usually more comfortable and relaxed. But not in the working place… Everybody is nervous and has tensions with colleagues as well as the boss. But why? (Interview, 05/21/08)

In fact, Aram had many chances to work together with the next door classroom teacher. However, it was not really a cooperating teaching opportunity for her. She was treated like an assistant

teacher whenever she cooperated with the next door classroom teacher. The teacher didn't actually order Aram to be her assistant, but she assumed that Aram would assist her. The following excerpt shows an example.

> When Aram's classroom has play time, the next door classroom teacher comes into Aram's classroom and says to her, "Teacher, come to my classroom with your students and let's play together." Aram says to her students, "Let's move next door." Every child follows Aram and moves to the next classroom. The next door classroom teacher says to all the children, "Come and sit down here. Let's sing a song." When the children sit on the mat, the teacher starts calling the names of the children and teaches various songs. Aram observes what the teacher does and sits down behind the children. The next door classroom teacher plays the role of the lead teacher with the young children, and Aram keeps observing her children. When the singing time is finished, the next door classroom teacher says to Aram, "Let's go to the gym together. Is gym empty?" Aram answers, "O.K. Let me check" After going to the gym and checking that nobody is using the gym, Aram comes back and says, "We can use it." The next door classroom teacher says to the children, "Let's go to the gym." She leads the children to the gym and Aram follows the teacher and the children at the back of the line. (Researcher's observation journal, 04/03/08)

Aram was dissatisfied with her assistant role because she felt competitive in her relationship with this teacher, particularly because she was in charge of a similar age classroom and was an equally qualified teacher. As a matter of fact, the next door classroom teacher tried to help Aram a lot, but Aram had a different view of "help." Aram explained one of her conflicts in the relationship with the next door classroom teacher.

This school's soundproof facilities are not good. So the next door teacher can always hear what happens in my classroom. When my students cry, the next door teacher comes to my classroom and takes one or two children. I know her purpose is good. She is trying to help me. I know she is a good person and I can learn a lot from her. But, honestly her help is not helpful for me. I mean I don't want that kind of help. Nevertheless, she never asks me what my problem is in the classroom. She just takes some children from my classroom without saying anything (when my classroom has a problem). If it is repeated and repeated, how will my children and the other teachers think of my teaching? Probably the children think if they cry, they can visit the next classroom and eat some sweet snacks. And the other teachers think of her as a superior teacher. (With a strong voice) I am the teacher in this classroom. She is not. She thinks that she can do everything in my classroom. If she asked me what kind of help I needed, I would reply that I needed her help to care of my other children when I did a diaper change and washed a child's bottom in the bathroom in the hallway. Because the bathroom is located in the hallway, my children usually cry when I am in the bathroom.[24] She does not help me at that time even if it is the hardest time for me. She does not understand my situation because she has just two children. I understand the crying children, but I can do nothing about it. Nevertheless, I think it is wrong to give a snack to crying children. Whenever the next door classroom teacher does that, I don't like it. (Interview, 05/21/08)

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[24] As Aram mentioned in an informal interview, the teachers wash their children's bottoms after a diaper change to avoid diaper rash at Sarang. In particular, Aram has to use the bathroom in the hallway because her classroom has no bathroom. When Aram leaves her classroom, two children cry because they recognize the absence of the teacher in the classroom although the bathroom is in front of Aram's classroom door and they can see what Aram is doing. While washing the child's bottom, Aram keeps saying, "I am here. I will be there soon. Stop crying." (Researcher's observation journal, 04/30/08)

When the next door classroom teacher took Aram's children, the situation made her feel like an inexperienced teacher. According to Aram, the tension with the next door classroom teacher stemmed from their different views and caused her stress everyday. However, Aram could not say anything because the next door classroom teacher was older than she was and had more experience. Aram thought she could overcome the challenging situation through trial and error because she was a classroom teacher and wanted to discuss her problematic situation with the next door classroom teacher. Aram hated the atmosphere where she could not say anything and where she needed to observe what the next door classroom teacher did. Furthermore, some conversation with the other experienced teachers hurt Aram. She commented that she could not forget the conversation even if time had passed. She believed that it was very important to know how to talk with each other in a teaching community. Aram explained,

> For instance, I remember when one of the teachers in this school talked to me earlier. Using language is very important in the relationships between the teachers because language choice influences people's emotions. One day, one of the teachers talked to me very rudely as she flung papers. Was it necessary? She should have talked to me nicely and respected me as a person even if she had a higher status in this school. Her conversation style was very rude. A word in the situation hurt me…I was disappointed because of her rudeness. Everybody wants to hear encouraging words. That is what I want. I want to hear that I am doing well even if I make a mistake. I really need that kind of sweet words now. But, I have just heard here, "Don't do that" or "That is not right." Am I a troublemaker here? Whenever I hear rude words, I can not forget about it for three or four days. It seems to be difficult for the other teachers to give me compliments even though I need to hear them. (Interview, 08/11/08)

Aram also felt a tension in the faculty meetings of Sarang even though she wanted the faculty

meetings to develop as a time for all the teachers to share and discuss their own ideas. She

maintained that Sarang's faculty meetings made the teachers more stressed and made the

relationships between the faculty members worse. She believed it was because some teachers had

more authority than the others in the meetings. She mentioned her thoughts about the faculty

meetings in the group discussion:

> Usually, the teachers were criticized in the faculty meeting. Things like we made
>
> mistakes…It did not consist of sharing difficulties. Some people picked at only my
>
> shortcomings like using chopsticks and moving them on the plate. It made me feel
>
> pressured. Every teacher is not equal. The fact that some teachers can evaluate me was
>
> stressful. So faculty meetings are a much more challenging time for me than when I teach
>
> my students in the classroom. It seems the purpose of the meetings is to show who has
>
> power in this school. The teachers with power can speak up and the teachers who are
>
> powerless drop their heads and doodle on paper without saying a word. It gives me an
>
> oppressive feeling. I feel suffocated in the meetings. (Group discussion, 05/13/08)

Aram believed the atmosphere of the faculty meetings needed to change before better

relationships between the faculty members could develop. She wanted every teacher to have a

voice in the faculty meetings not just particular teachers.

<p style="text-align:center">Theme 5: "I can not even breathe in school.": Decision to leave school.</p>

 In the initial interview, Aram mentioned her concern about her unhappy life at Sarang. In

particular March, the time to begin a new academic year, was Aram's most challenging time. As

March approached, Aram began to consider leaving the school. She confessed,

March was the worst. It was the first time that I decided to quit my job. It is difficult to

say if I am happy while working here. Of course I don't mean that I never felt happy here.

Sometimes I had a moment when my job was good. But if somebody asked me, "Are you

happy as a teacher?," it was difficult to say "Yes." I realized that my feelings were related

to the people who work here. When I heard that I was doing well, I was up. For example,

when one of the parents said to me that she was satisfied with me as a teacher, I was up

all day long. Yet, when I saw that one of my children had a stronger attachment to the

previous teacher in the next door classroom, I was down. I thought of myself as a bad

teacher. (Interview, 05/21/08)

Aram's decision resulted from complex situations including many conflicts and tensions in her

school. In addition, her economic situation was related to her decision. She explained,

Also, part of the reason for my leaving was an economic issue. Usually, people have a

good image about teaching in an early childhood education setting because the teachers

stay with angelic, innocent children. But beyond the good image, they ask how we can

live on such a small salary. This early childhood teaching job is different from teaching in

other grade levels. First, our salary is very little. The teachers who work in elementary,

middle, or high school make two times more than I do. So I think early childhood

educators can not continue to do this without a sense of sacrifice. People who don't teach

think early childhood teachers have a low status in society. No matter how often we may

say we are professionals with a special certification for teaching young children, people

don't understand us. And people don't treat us well because there are many ways to get

teacher certification in early childhood education[25]. I mean, you can get certification

from a six month teacher education program to a four year university teacher education

program. It has an influence on an early childhood teacher's decision to leave. For

example, even if I leave here, it is easy to recruit another teacher because of supply and

demand. Many people think anybody can do this job. This problem is related to teacher

quality. I think there is a difference between teacher quality from a six month teacher

education program and a four year university teacher education program. Even though I

had finished the four year program, I felt I needed to learn more to teach my students.

This is one of the problems of Korean early child education. (Interview, 08/11/08)

As Aram mentioned, her economic issue was just a part of the reasons for her leaving the school.

She stressed that the most important thing for her was the need to be emotionally comfortable in

her working place. When she decided to quit the job, she experienced how powerless early

childhood teachers are when they quit as well as when they choose the job. Aram commented,

The teacher's salary is increasing in this school every year. It is true that the salary here is

better than other schools. Of course, to compare with other jobs, it is still small… But, for

the teachers, money is not everything. Repeated emotional depression was a bigger

problem than the money issue. When I went home, I thought about myself as a teacher. I

really appreciated that I was doing what I wanted, but I was depressed because of the

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[25] In Korea, there are many paths for obtaining early childhood educator certification to teach children from birth to age five. The teacher certification is issued from the Korean government. It is not difficult to meet the requirements because the child development department, early childhood care department, or social work department as well as early childhood education departments in many institutions have six month, two year, three year, or four year teacher education programs. When a preservice teacher takes required courses in one of the departments, the certification is issued on graduation day and he/she can apply immediately for an early childhood teaching job.

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complex tensions in the school. Whenever I went home, I never had a happy face. In my

mind, something difficult always existed. I expected early childhood teaching to be the

happiest job because the teacher can always stay with the children. I don't look like a

teacher. Instead, I look like a housekeeper who always needs to obey her employer: not

the children but the director, the other teachers, and the children's parents. My parents

realized that I felt very depressed with my repeated crying and they worried about me. I

frankly said to my parents that I was having a difficult time in the school. My parents

understood me and told me to leave this school. So, I told the director the following day

and she said to me that I needed to keep working until the next teacher could be recruited.

Her concern was not to look after me. I mean, she did not take care of my problems in the

school. Instead, for her, it was more important when I quit and when the new teacher

would be hired. I really wanted to quit the job at that time because I felt more

disappointed. Finally, I was supposed to work until July or August. But you know what?

An early childhood teaching job is a temporary job for the teachers. It's nothing. We are

just contracted with the school for one year or two years. We have no teachers' union and

we can not be assured of a job by law. If the boss decides to fire me, we have to follow

this decision. It is an easy system. Not only recruiting but also firing is very easy. We

have no power. Isn't it sad? I have worked in this kind of desolate place. (Interview,

08/11/08)

Aram felt disappointed when she talked to the director about leaving. In the end, she decided to

leave the school after finishing the first semester in 2008. Her decision was based on multiple

concerns about her health brought about by the tiring workload, the social relationships with

people, and her emotional struggles about her first teaching job. She wanted to spend some time thinking about and taking care of herself.

I really want to have time to take a rest for a while. I'm at my limit. I can not do this any more. I know my responsibility was to teach my students for one academic year. When I told my director I would quit this job, she said that this was not a good action from a moral perspective. She thought if I quit this job, it would influence my six children directly. Nevertheless, I decided to leave here. I can not even breathe in school. My paperwork piles up higher and higher, I am uncomfortable in the interactions with the others…When I told my decision to the director, she was just concerned about the potential parents' complaints. She did not worry about me—why I made the decision or what my problem was. It was a very disappointing moment. I thought I had better leave as soon as possible at that time. The other teachers? All the teachers were struggling because of their own concerns and they did not have time to think about anybody else. I did not expect anything because I know that. (Interview, 08/11/08)

Aram often felt she was alone in her school. She commented that the new teachers in particular felt lonely because they often had to work by themselves with nobody's help. Reflecting on her experience, she mentioned that sharing her feelings with somebody in her school made an impression on her. If she had received support from the school, she would have considered staying longer. She explained,

As a new teacher, I was always alone from morning to evening. When I struggled to feed my six children at a time, somebody helped me, the school cook who worked in the kitchen. She often asked me, "I know how tired and difficult you are feeling." And sometimes she asked me, "I have some free time now. How can I help you?" She was a

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big help to me. It seems she knew what I needed. She often listened to my difficulties in the school. It took away some of my burden. I think new teachers need those kinds of help. If I had gotten that kind of help from the other faculty in this school, I would have considered staying longer. (Interview, 08/11/08)

Aram wanted to reconsider her teaching career because she experienced more challenges as a teacher in her first school than she expected. However, she believed her school was hopeless. She wanted to make her first school the place where every faculty member made an effort to improve the lives of the students, in a close and supportive family and community. She explained,

This is not what I wanted. I expected my first school to be like a good memory of my childhood. I expected all the faculty members to be activists in making it a different school as we learned in the teacher education programs. Why do we need teachers in the school? Teachers are there for the students. The students will grow up and become wonderful people in the future. In my experience, everybody forgot why the teachers were in the school. It seemed that they forgot their important responsibilities as teachers. Even if all the teachers learned important things in their teacher education programs and they know what to do in the field, they don't want to act. This school needs to be changed a lot for our students and every teacher needs to take part in the reformation. The current school management focuses on so much for adults. The school has a new and good building but it is full of old-fashioned ideas. Every teacher needs to cooperate to make a better school. But there is no cooperation here. I realize the school's atmosphere can not be changed easily. I have been called a troublemaker because I alone insisted on changes. I don't believe I am a good match with this school. I am done here. I can no longer stay in this place. A hopeless place…Does every early childhood school in Korea have the same

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situation like this school? If it does, what do we need to learn in the teacher education programs? I learned a lot of hope in my teacher education program, but I have actually experienced hopeless situations. (With a deep sigh) I don't know. I am confused now.

Aram was a teacher who wanted her school to change and become a better school more than any other teacher in the school. She was a newcomer, but she tried to introduce her ideas. She thought it was her responsibility as a teacher, as she had learned in the university. When her ideas were rejected, she felt more disappointed and it influenced her self-esteem as a teacher in a negative way. Finally, she evaluated her first school as hopeless and decided to leave it.

Aram: In Summary

Participating in this study, I felt a little bit uncomfortable because I needed to reveal myself honestly to somebody. Other people think of me as an outgoing person, but I think of myself as a very anxious person. Through this participation, I experienced many good things. It provided me with an important time to think about myself and the school in which I work. Particularly, I had a chance to think about my engagement with the people who work with me: How they accepted me as a colleague, how I thought of them as my colleagues, and at this point how I can improve myself to build good relationships with people. It was a very valuable time for me. Unfortunately, my final decision is to leave here, but I would like to keep in touch with some teachers who listened to my words and shared our photoessay stories in the group discussion time for this study. (Interview, 08/11/08)

Aram, who was viewed as a "troublemaker" had many different views from the experienced teachers and the director at Sarang. Aram's emphasis on classroom organization, time management, and quality work reflected the values she learned at her university. In her classroom, she tried to work hard to provide an emotionally comfortable learning environment rather than academic competency for her young students. However, this emphasis did not match her school discourse, which stressed the importance of academic performance including second language learning and repeated schedules more than the children's interests. She believed that in

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order to teach from a child-centered perspective, the adults needed to keep in mind what was best for the children.

Above all, her strong focus on building a warm community in her school reflected not only her teacher education program but also her childhood in having a close and supportive family and community. She wanted to be a teacher who worked in an atmosphere where every teacher was encouraged rather than criticized. Concerned about the social relationships between the teachers, she thought her school had lost the sense of good community in many ways. And she believed it was important to establish a good rapport, in which every teacher, regardless of expertise or age, felt a sense of belonging and ownership. Aram's many challenges and repeated conflicts at Sarang made her exhausted everyday. She felt dissatisfied in that she was regarded as an inexperienced teacher rather than as an improving teacher. In the end, while Aram had many ideas for improving the school, she decided to leave in the middle of the school year.

Chapter 8 - Discussion and Implications

"Teaching must be situated in relationship to one's biography, present circumstances, deep commitments, affective investments, social context, and conflicting discourses about what it means to learn to become a teacher… The tensions among what has preceded, what is confronted, and what one desires shape the contradictory realities of learning to teach"(Britzman, 2003, p. 31).

Overview

This chapter discusses the findings and implications that can be drawn from the study. The first section is a discussion that is generated by the findings of this study, and is centered on the research questions. The second section is a discussion of the implications of the study in terms of methodology, theory, policy, and practice. In closing, the last section includes suggestions for further research.

Discussion

At the beginning of the study, four research questions were formulated to understand teacher identity and the teacher lives of Korean early childhood induction teachers. This section highlights the findings of this study based on the research questions.

Decision to Become a Professional Early Childhood Educator

The findings of this study show that various factors influenced the induction teachers' decisions to become professional early childhood teachers. All four teachers who took part in this study were unmarried women. They had early childhood teacher certification and were in their first or second year of teaching at the same school, but they had different personal backgrounds. Their personal backgrounds influenced their decision to become a teacher. As a

commonality, their childhood memories influenced their decisions to become early childhood teachers in both positive and negative ways. Their own school experiences, images of their school teachers, family relationships, and friendships were all aspects of their personal background that played a role in their decisions. Hemin, who had childhood memories about her strict and authoritative upper level teachers, and her own competitive and strong academic performance during her school years, was more interested in teaching young children in the early childhood education level as a challenge to some of her early negative experiences in education. Aram, on the other hand, had influential teachers who nurtured her. Such childhood memories about schooling affected their decisions to become early childhood educators and their own school teachers were models in this regard.

In addition, all four participants indicated a strong desire to become teachers and a passion for teaching that influenced their decision to select early childhood education as a major. Jina entered the teacher education program expressing a love for children and believing that teaching young children would be valuable in her life even though she had already obtained another degree. However, even though all four teachers wanted to study early childhood education, they faced many struggles because they perceived that other people had biased opinions about early childhood teachers. Sunny's case and Aram's case also demonstrated that early childhood teachers sometimes experience family disagreements over their job choices. Ayers (1989) claimed that people devalue early childhood teaching as a job with low salary, low dignity, and low status. However, although the induction teachers in this study knew early childhood teaching was regarded as a low status job, they were committed to their belief in the importance of being an early childhood teacher. They had enthusiasm and the passion to become teachers when they chose early childhood education as a major.

As this study suggests, teacher education programs should continue to influence induction teachers' decision making processes with respect to being and becoming a teacher. Teacher education programs embrace a powerful ideology which defines what makes a good early childhood teacher. Preservice teachers learn theories and practice associated with the profession of early childhood education in their teacher education programs sometimes long before they have solidified their choices about teaching as a profession. During student teaching, they have a chance to reconsider their ideas and images of teaching young children. In this real teaching context, they experience the gap between reality and what they have learned in their teacher education programs. In this study, Aram, who had a positive student teaching experience including a supportive and flexible mentor teacher, thought about her future teaching in a more positive way. On the other hand, Jina, Hemin and Sunny, who had negative student teaching experiences involving the school curriculum, solo teaching, mentor teachers' teaching style, and social relationships, were anxious about being classroom teachers. These negative experiences were connected to their criticisms about teacher education programs and their efforts to rethink how they would teach in the future.

These findings show how the early childhood induction teachers in this study faced challenges in linking practice and theory in the context of their existing knowledge. These challenges appear to align with Korthagen's (2001) realistic approach to teacher education which includes basic principles of experiential learning and reflection on experiences. Believing that teaching is a process of developing gestalts, Korthagen stressed that teaching is not just about applying theories from academic textbooks; they claimed that it is almost impossible for expert theories to explain teaching and learning. In this study, Jina, Hemin, and Sunny learned and reflected on their teaching through continuous experiences in practicums, during student teaching

and in their first teaching positions. Their learning and teaching was an ongoing process that shaped their identities as teachers.

Teacher Identity of an Early Childhood Education Induction Teacher: An Active "Being" Every Moment

This study sheds light on how an early childhood induction teacher as an active "Being" (Bakhtin, 1993) constructs and reconstructs teacher identity in teaching contexts. As this study illustrated, the teacher identity construction process of Jina, Sunny, Hemin, and Aram was relational in the sense that it was continually being structured out of various memories, social interactions with people, and past and present experiences. An early childhood induction teacher is surrounded by countless "events" which provide meaningful and unique teaching and learning contexts in everyday life. The ongoing events are different and unique according to the given contexts.

A teacher's daily events consist of a dynamic discourse including personal discourse, classroom discourse, and school discourse. The variety of teaching discourses of Being-as-event (Bakhtin, 1993) through actual participation influences teacher identity formation *every moment.* For example, Jina's teacher identity was reconstructed when she met her fiancé in her daily life and shared thoughts about teaching with him. Aram constructed her identity as she continuously attempted to meet her personal goals as a teacher by meeting with her mentor teacher during and after her student teaching experience. Also, the classroom and school discourse influenced the process of teacher identity construction for these early childhood induction teachers. In this study, Hemin mentioned how difficult it was to separate her negative feelings about the job from her actual classroom experience, school work and social relationships. The discourse of social relationships with other teachers made Hemin think about herself as a teacher. Aram's case

demonstrates that she, as an active "Being," used school discourse to help her decide if she would teach the following year or leave the profession. Nevertheless, Hemin did experience positive feelings as she developed confidence in her own abilities to teach the children in her classroom. As the participants described, every satisfactory moment and every demanding moment they encountered influenced their teacher identity formation. Teacher identity is never complete, and is continuously reconstituted in the discourse of experience.

Additionally, an early childhood education induction teacher experiences particular norms which are associated with the "ideological views of those who habitually use those words" (Wortham, 2001, p.147) existing in early childhood education. These norms also influenced teacher identity formation in this study. The findings of this study illustrated how the teachers experienced persuasive discourse in terms of their construction of the general image of an early childhood teacher and the notion of a novice teacher. Whenever the teachers participated in dialogues within the school context such as conversations with experienced teachers or parents, they considered themselves as an early childhood induction teacher or faced constant challenges in terms of their teacher identity. Jina's case and Sunny's case highlight how a particular norm which is habitually used within a cultural dimension influences teacher identity construction. Jina and Sunny were negotiating their teacher identity in that they were labeled with the term "chotzza" which carries with it a powerful image of an absolute beginner in Korean culture. Their personal challenges stemmed from conflicts between their own educational belief systems they hoped to actualize and the actual authoritative discourse they had to follow as "chotzza" teachers. Whenever they were recognized as an inexperienced teacher, they revisited their identity as a teacher. In other words, the individual teachers were continuously negotiating their teacher identity in every given moment.

Early Childhood Education Induction Teachers' Views of Themselves as Professionals:

Mutiple Identities

As the findings in this study suggest, early childhood induction teachers in this study were emotionally engaged in how their selves came to be constituted in their teaching contexts. They were not simply influenced by reality, knowledge, experience, or practice. Rather, they experienced power and ideology in their everyday lives and as Zembylas (2005) emphasized, this played an integral role in the dynamic discourses. For example, the individual cases in this study demonstrated how the teachers were supposed to control their emotions and behaviors "appropriately." In everyday life, each induction teacher as an agent participated in the process of adopting or resisting her appropriate roles as a teacher. Her understanding of self in the process was inextricably interwoven with her own professional vision of teaching.

The early childhood induction teachers in this study learned that good teaching focuses on child-centered pedagogy in their preservice teacher education programs. This pedagogical aspect remained an important criterion by which they evaluated themselves. For instance, Sunny believed the role of the teacher was to always stay with the children in the classroom. When she had to work as a secretary in the school office because of the absence of the director and the school secretary, she felt it was inappropriate because her students were alone without a teacher. Based on her beliefs about education, which focused on teaching from children's perspectives, she felt disappointed in herself as a teacher and regarded herself as an ineffective teacher.

Additionally, the early childhood education induction teachers experienced a positionality which Lave and Wenger (1991) would describe as legitimate peripheral participation. These teachers played a role as social negotiators and resistors of imposed criteria and labels such as "novice" or "brand new" in order to find and represent themselves in their everyday lives. This

study demonstrated the ways in which the induction teachers introduced new pedagogies and resisted the dominant thinking about children and teaching. As Sunny's case illustrated, in terms of learning and teaching, the induction teachers positioned themselves as resources, rather than apprentices or novices in the schools. They wanted to collaborate with experienced teachers and to have their new ideas accepted in the school community. This study challenged both the idea that novice teachers move in *a linear way* toward becoming expert teachers and theories that position induction teachers as "peripheral" participants in school communities. Instead, induction teachers can be seen as qualitatively different from experienced teachers with particular perspectives and experiences, but not as necessarily moving toward a "better" stage in teaching. In this study, Sunny believed that all the teachers needed to have open-minds about parental involvement for the sake of the students. As an active teacher not a marginalized one, Sunny contributed toward developing a good school community among children, parents, and faculty members.

However, Jina's case demonstrated that early childhood induction teachers as newcomers experienced *powerlessness* which stemmed from their social position and peripheral status in the real teaching world. Jina needed to accept multiple roles which she considered inappropriate early childhood teacher roles because her school community expected it. Also, Hemin could not help but play the role of teacher aide in a physical education class even though she thought the teacher-centered physical education lessons were not appropriate for such young children. She negotiated her teacher role at that moment, but had to follow the school policy. The teachers identified themselves as powerless teachers whenever they faced challenges at such demanding moments.

Tensions and Challenges in Early Childhood Induction Teachers' Lives

The findings of this study describe the extensive journey that these early childhood education induction teachers took to find their own way. From preservice teacher education, they learned many educational concepts and established their own philosophy. They already knew that theory was different from practice, but they embraced their own vision of good teaching during their first years. They experienced many challenges in overcoming their struggle in real teaching contexts. Many scholars maintain that the transition from teacher education to actual professional practice is difficult for many teachers (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002; Veenman, 1984; Huberman, 1989; Gold, 1996). Why did the teachers in this study face difficulties and what kinds of difficulties were paramount?

From Bakhtin's (1993) perspective, the tensions and challenges which the induction teachers experienced were not "universal" but "unique." Their given circumstances were endlessly constrained by structure and power relations. In this study, the individual teachers faced unique tensions and challenges in relation to participants or other people in their own teaching contexts. When they exercised the standards of competitive society in their everyday lives, they faced various conflicts in the process. This study elaborated the major kinds of tensions and struggles they experienced: realities of social context versus vision of teaching, personal ideologies versus professional expectations, individual autonomy versus cooperation in the school community, and personal life versus professional life.

Realities of social context versus vision of teaching. For these induction teachers, one of the biggest challenges stemmed from tensions between the realities of the social context and their visions as a teacher. They experienced conflicts with the complexities and responsibilities of teaching, which seemed to provoke a form of ''praxis shock'' (Gold, 1996; Veenman, 1984;

Wideen, Mayer-Smith, & Moon, 1998). According to Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002), *praxis shock* refers to the confrontation between beliefs and ideas about teaching and the realities and responsibilities of being a teacher. The early childhood induction teachers who took part in this study negotiated their vision of teaching once they were confronted with real professional life. As many scholars have argued, they experienced the 'loss' or 'washing out' of the teacher training impact in their everyday lives. (Lacey, 1977; Sikes et al., 1985; Wideen et al., 1998).

Such experiences have also been examined within social contexts that focus on *readiness,* children who need to prepare for the next level of learning (Dibello & Neuhart-Pritchett, 2008). The participants of this study—Jina, Hemin, and Aram struggled with the question, "What is more important for our children?" In their teacher education programs, they learned that adults must not hurry up children's learning from adult perspectives and that it was important to pay attention to children's interests. This child-centered vision of teaching was challenged in reality because of the school climate imposed by the social context. For example, in Jina's case, she was tired of always striving for the ideal teacher image based on what she learned in her teacher education program. She explained,

> We can see that the children's faces become very serious when they do worksheets
> because it is not interesting. If the children are not interested, they and I together can get
> stressed. What am I supposed to do? Do I need to take worksheets away from my
> children? I remember I had great enthusiasm as a teacher. But now? I don't know.
> (Interview, 08/05/08)

Jina's case demonstrated how the induction teachers struggled in relation to social context in terms of their visions of teaching. She was confused and asked, "What am I supposed to do?" in a climate in which teachers were forced to have children do worksheets in lieu of play-based

learning experiences. In addition, Hemin's case described how an induction teacher struggled with administrative busy work which (in her opinion) benefited not the children, but the school administrators. Hemin was disappointed that she did not have enough time to interact with the children due to the excessive amount of paperwork even though she knew how important interactions were between the teacher and children at that time. She said, "I feel sorry. Because I know what is more important" (Group discussion, 06/26/08). She believed the interactions with the children from the children's perspectives were more important than checking paperwork about readiness concerning language development or cognitive development. Additionally, Aram's case demonstrated conflicts between her vision of teaching and the school curriculum, which was part of the social context. Aram struggled with the situation in which children's parents emphasized the importance of their children learning a second language, particularly English. She noted,

> I know there is a climate that maintains learning English as the second language is very important for everybody…when the upper level curriculum changes, it influences the lower level curriculum…But I have a different view. We are Korean and our first language is Korean…We don't need to push young children there. (Group discussion, 05/13/08)

Aram's vision of second language teaching was different from that of the parents. She had difficulty in teaching something required from parents rather than teaching based on her vision. Her vision of second language teaching was based on her university coursework which stressed the need to focus on children's interests and depend on the individual child's readiness. On the other hand, the realities of the social context focused on proactive second language learning for young children and preparation for upper level second language curriculum.

These tensions between the realities of the social context and vision of teaching portrayed just how early childhood induction teachers negotiated the roles that they needed to follow according to the educational standards derived from the social contexts. The educational standards represented productiveness of power, and they were the fundamental precepts of pedagogical endeavors in the school. In other words, children's *readiness* as a standard and a common feature of pedagogy influenced the decision making of early childhood induction teachers as well as the school curriculum.

Individual autonomy versus a sense of belonging in the school community. The early childhood induction teachers in this study played many roles in the classroom. Ideally, they should have also played a role in creating cooperation in the teacher community. As Schempp and his colleagues (1993) observed, "The classroom responsibilities facing the inductees had less to do with teaching children and more to do with juggling the multiple demands of a functioning institution" (p. 459). In their real professional lives, the induction teachers experienced what Rust (1994) referred to as "school politics," something that they had been unaware of as student teachers. In particular, their identity as newcomers influenced power relations within the school politics. Despite what they had learned in their teacher education programs, they felt pressured to adapt their teaching practice to the real teaching context knowing that each school has institutional characteristics and different contexts for teaching. In doing so, the induction teachers learned certain normative ideas about new teachers and put these ideas into practice.

In their role as new teachers, all the participants in this study experienced certain traditions and habits that were imbued with subtle power relations between faculty members. They were autonomous teachers who needed to do everything by themselves in the classroom, but they also had to play a passive role in the teacher community. Their status as newcomers

decided their roles in the teacher community: doing chores, respecting experienced teachers and being silent. Aram and Sunny's cases demonstrated that the experienced teachers supervised and criticized the new teachers, and the new teachers were required to respect and follow the experienced teachers according to the indivisible rule between the teachers. As Aram mentioned, this was considered the "natural" way for new teachers to act in her school. In Hemin's case, she wanted to find her own way rather than ask the help of another teacher. She did not want to get instant advice from others but rather wanted to discuss her difficulties with others. Hemin explained that every classroom has a unique context which only the classroom teacher can understand and manage. She understood that experienced teachers tried to give her advice because they thought she was a baby teacher. As she stressed, "The final decision was made by me, not by them." As these examples indicate, the more experienced teachers, who might have been expected to act as mentors, did not always act in ways that supported the induction teachers.

Mentoring as a partnership between an experienced teacher and an induction teacher should support induction teachers as they explore various teaching strategies and resources (NCTAF, 2005). However, for successful mentoring to occur, as the findings in this study suggest, the most important thing is that mentoring must not be based on a top down approach. Wong (2003) explained the notion of a "study group" as a bottom up approach for induction teachers. This study reinforced the notion that early childhood education induction teachers need a learning community such as a "study group" to share their thoughts and feelings beyond just "following the manual."

Aram's case pointed to an additional question concerning what kind of mentoring an early childhood education induction teacher might need when she was "thrown into the deep end" of her first teaching context. Aram negotiated her teacher identity between personal

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autonomy and cooperation with other teachers because she was solo teaching in her first month and needed somebody's help. Many scholars have emphasized the importance of a support network for new teachers. Sabar (2004) claimed that induction teachers feel isolation and need social networks with other teachers for a school-based support system. Baldacci (2006) also stated that induction teachers want to cooperate with professional colleagues to understand the school's culture. However, this study showed that Aram faced even more struggles when she was not satisfied with the support from the other teachers. She was concerned more about how the children and other teachers thought of her teaching expertise when an experienced teacher removed some children from her classroom to help her out. Aram's case shows that it is important to provide mentoring opportunities for early childhood education induction teachers as soon as they begin teaching. However, at the same time, it is important to recognize that they can struggle with the kinds of support that are given. As Aram explained, early childhood education induction teachers might have a different view of "help." Although mentoring from their perspectives helped them understand the teaching context and begin their first job without being overwhelmed, the findings of this study suggest that a successful teacher induction needs to provide emotional support that can help teachers make connections with each other. Similar to what other researchers have noted (i.e., Wayne, Youngs, & Fleischman, 2005), the participants of this study stated that teacher induction is not a simple one-day orientation or a casual assignment of another teacher to help them. By mutually understanding each other, without fully taking the reins, they wanted to be members of the teacher learning community.

It is important to keep in mind that authority can be an issue for a teacher learning community. The participants in this study experienced *authority* in relationships with the other teachers in their teacher community. In particular, they experienced the Korean cultural myth

that older people are wiser. They saw firsthand the enactment of the myth that knowledge of older teachers or more experienced teachers should have greater power in the teacher community. The participants in this study experienced dilemmas in relationships with other teachers in their professional lives; they wanted to have individual autonomy in the teacher learning community. However, at the same time, they also wanted to create rapport with each other and receive emotional support which comes from a sense of belonging. Thus, as this study suggests, in a teacher learning community, mentoring that meets the needs of early childhood induction teachers should employ the notion not only of *authority* but also of *autonomy*.

Personal ideologies versus others' expectations. In this study, the lens of teacher identity helped to illuminate participants' multiple roles as early childhood education teachers in their first teaching years. In particular, as Jina, Sunny, Hemin, and Aram reflected on the many kinds of demanding roles in school, they consistently tried to think of themselves as teachers and to consider their future teaching careers. The findings highlight how the early childhood induction teachers negotiated their personal ideologies as newcomer teachers versus others' expectations that they would play multiple roles.

For instance, Jina's case illustrated what kinds of personal ideologies induction teachers might encounter in terms of the notion of teaching. Jina believed the teacher's role should be focused on teaching children in the classroom. The other roles she was expected to play—such as custodian, caretaker, curriculum organizer, secretary, party planner, and hair designer—were not, in Jina's opinion, appropriate teacher roles despite the fact that these roles were connected with children's welfare and learning. The other induction teachers also emphasized that the additional roles were not suitable for them as classroom teachers. In reality, Sarang's teachers had to assume additional roles due to the financial issues of the school and the demands of the parents.

The tensions between adhering to their personal ideologies and conforming to others'

expectations made the induction teachers exhausted and their lives stressful. Why then did they

believe the additional roles were not appropriate for them?

Teacher education programs often stress typical teaching roles of early childhood

education teachers and student teachers, tacitly indicating what suitable and unsuitable roles are

for a teacher. When the participants in this study obtained their first teaching job, they tried to

put their personal ideologies concerning early childhood education teacher's main roles into

practice. However, they faced overwhelming obstacles when they had to take on additional roles

required within the school context. In other words, they experienced conflicts between their own

ideologies about teaching and the expectations imposed on them by school administrators, other

teachers, and parents. As the experiences of the participants suggest, their teacher education

programs played a strong role in assisting them in developing their own ideologies about early

childhood teaching. This finding points to the need for teacher education courses to provide

opportunities for induction teachers to discuss the conflicts between personal ideologies and

others' expectations to foster a better understanding of real teaching contexts. The participants in

this study wanted a longer practicum, more discussion of critical issues, the creation of social

networks with classroom teachers, and continued interaction with instructors from their teacher

education programs. Based on these kinds of ideas, teacher education programs should be

designed in a facilitative way to help teachers feel confident, guide them as they engage in the

real teaching world, and encourage them to take on ownership of their participation.

Personal life versus professional life. In this study, all the participants had tensions in

finding a balance between their personal lives and professional lives as an early childhood

teacher. They wanted to rest more and spend some time with friends and family outside of school,

but they could not do so because of their irregular hours and continuous work at home. They had to work at school one Saturday a month. Moreover, without vacation time, Sunny and Hemin did not have a chance to recharge their energy as teachers. In this study, the early childhood education induction teachers sacrificed their personal lives to become professional teachers. How did the early childhood induction teachers in this study think of themselves everyday in relation to their excessive workloads and schedule? In this study, Aram thought of herself as a *prisoner* because she felt oppressed in school. Hemin compared her life to going round and round like a *squirrel* in a cage. Repeated late night faculty meetings and preparation of hand-made teaching materials were meaningless, time-consuming tasks for the participants. They criticized their long working hours in school and wanted to have free time outside of school. They agreed that having a more meaningful personal life was important because it influenced their physical and emotional condition for the next day's teaching. Furthermore, as Aram's case demonstrated, the imbalance between personal life and professional life was an important factor in her decision to leave the school.

As this study suggests, the early childhood education induction teachers did not want to sacrifice their personal lives continuously. Aram's case illustrated how as an early childhood induction teacher, she was conflicted about her future career in light of the tense working conditions. In particular, the induction teachers who participated in this study had many concerns about their future teaching as married women because they were all unmarried. They believed that they would not be able to continue in their jobs but would have to leave the school in order to spend time with their families if they were married. In this sense, it is critical to note that most early childhood education teachers in South Korea are unmarried women. Improvement of

working conditions could help these teachers avoid being burn-out; moreover, it could encourage induction teachers to remain in their teaching jobs for a long time.

Implications

This study is significant in several regards. In this section, the implications are discussed in terms of methodology, theory, policy, and practice.

Methodological Implications

The methodological approach of this study is significant to the work of researchers who are interested in the field of teacher education. In this study, the application of various research methods offered an alternative way to explore teacher identity and teacher life. First, the participants of this study were induction teachers who worked at the same school. This sampling supported a better understanding of individual teachers in terms of personal and social dimensions of their lives. In addition, the participants' group discussions centered around teaching "cases" and photoessays which were appropriate strategies for ensuring that they listened to each other's voices and heard each other's experiences. As the participants of the study mentioned in the informal interviews, the group discussions and the photoessay activities provided opportunities to learn about their own teaching in a teacher community. In other words, because the case-based inquiry and photoessays stemmed from their real teaching contexts, they played an important role in exploring what the induction teachers thought about their own teaching and discussing it with other colleagues. These approaches are recommended as methods for future research of a participatory nature.

Theoretical Implications

Although many educational researchers have studied teacher identity and teacher life, there are few empirical qualitative studies with specific regard to early childhood induction

teachers. This study, which attempted to investigate teacher identity and the teacher life of early childhood induction teachers, is expected to encourage early childhood teacher educators to look more deeply into the lives of early childhood induction teachers. The teachers in this study constructed and reconstructed their identities as active *Beings* in their particular professional lives. Each teacher's identity was employed to deeply and critically interrogate the power relations inherent in every moment of their lives as teachers. This perspective has implications for researchers who are considering embarking on teacher identity research by suggesting useful research frameworks to study how teacher identity and lives are interwoven with power dynamics. Additionally, the findings of this study, with respect to the contribution of the induction teachers as newcomers into the school community, have implications for researchers, who can learn from the insights of the induction teachers in their struggles to succeed.

Implications for Policymakers

The effort to investigate the epistemological beliefs and practice of the induction teachers in the teaching context might communicate to educational policy makers that traditional teacher training and support are inadequate and need to be reformed. Traditionally, there has been a need for improving teacher quality by raising qualification standards. For early childhood teachers, top-down approaches through the qualification systems have used a linear paradigm for teacher development. As Kim (1999) explained, this view was based on a step by step model which took into account years of teaching experience and supported possible solutions using a prolonged training period, an internship, or intensive practicum. However, the attempt to represent epistemological beliefs and practice through the induction teachers' lenses provides a foundation upon which newer and more applicable guidelines for the improvement of early childhood education can be implemented. Additionally, the findings of this study described the kinds of

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difficulties early childhood induction teachers faced when they entered their real teaching contexts. Most difficulties stemmed from the gap between their learning in teacher education programs and their experiences in their real professional lives. In particular, most participants insisted the amount of work made them exhausted and influenced burnout decisions. To support induction teachers in overcoming these kinds of difficulties, policymakers should make an effort to develop teacher induction programs that take into consideration the insights and recommendations of these early childhood induction teachers.

Implications for Practice

This study has implications for researchers who study the professional development of induction teachers in practice. The findings support the notion that induction teachers can be considered as qualitatively different from experienced teachers. They hold particular perspectives and experiences, but are not necessarily moving toward a "better" stage in their teaching. Therefore, this study suggests that an open-minded school environment is necessary to develop induction teachers' own expertise in their teaching contexts. In addition, the induction teachers of this study pointed out that they had not been exposed enough to a school environment on a daily basis until they entered the professional world. They learned educational theories, but they did not have critical opportunities to transform their ideas into practice. In particular, the participants struggled in building relationships with parents or their colleagues in school and stressed that they wanted to have actual experiences with these situations in their preservice teacher education. This study suggests early childhood induction teachers should have opportunities to participate in a teacher community during their teacher preparation to learn how to deal with these issues, and have opportunities to discuss and learn from the experiences of real teachers. Furthermore, the learning community of preservice teachers in teacher preparation

programs should be designed to foster positive perceptions about teaching and encourage a sense of self as a teacher.

Suggestions for Future Research

In view of the findings from this study, the following recommendations for future research are presented.

- This study investigated teacher identity and teacher life of early childhood induction teachers. For future studies, it could be beneficial to explore teacher identity and life of experienced teachers or principals as well as induction teachers. These studies may help us understand how we can better support teachers who may have different status or position.

- Additional research drawing on *power dynamics* and *teacher identity* in early childhood education is needed. Research examining both within and across power relations in diverse teaching contexts will help researchers understand individual teacher's learning and teaching, and ultimately create possibilities for better early childhood education.

- The participants of this study taught in a school with limited physical space for the teachers. For example, there were no teacher lounges, conference rooms, and offices. The induction teachers mentioned how they felt isolated in the school. Future studies are needed to look at how the physical space influences the professional lives of early childhood induction teachers.

- This study used focus group discussions as one of the methods. In these discussions, the teachers shared their thoughts and teaching experiences. They stated in their final interviews that they were very satisfied with these opportunities for discussion. For future research, it would be interesting to see how early childhood induction teachers

develop their own expertise in those kinds of teacher communities over time.

- This study was designed to investigate a teacher culture in South Korea. The results suggest that culture influences teacher identity and teacher life in South Korea. In future studies, the influence of cultural differences on teacher identity and teacher life could be studied, taking into account variables such as teacher educational background, students' ages, and students' grade level. The study could be replicated with other cultures through comparative studies.

- It would be of value to conduct long-term qualitative studies for a better understanding of teacher identity and teacher life. Long-term projects would be useful to capture in detail how teacher identity develops and changes.

- Finally, this study used a case study approach. In future research, scholars should consider various research approaches which could include new ideas and new paradigms (i.e. creative textual forms, poetry, photoethnography, and dramatic approaches, Grbich, 2004) to represent the views of early childhood induction teachers more fully.

Epilogue

For one year, four early childhood education teachers contributed to this study. They spent many hours participating in the study and sharing their ideas beliefs as member checkers, despite their busy schedules from morning to evening. When the teachers shared their critical issues with other participants and with the researcher in interviews or group discussions at times, they cried. Indeed, their voices were very vivid in representing their teacher lives. The teachers thought that their situations might be unique, but it is likely that most early childhood education induction teachers experience similar situations. They wanted their stories to be known by everybody, not only in Korea, but in other parts of the world. In the end, they all left their first teaching positions even though they wanted to remain at the school for a long time. Aram left her school in August before finishing one academic year. The other teachers, Jina, Sunny, and Hemin also left the school either to enter graduate school or to find other job positions. Nonetheless, they will remember every moment of their first years of teaching. And, somewhere in their minds, they will continue to think about themselves as early childhood educators.

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Appendix A - First Interview Guide

1. How many years have you been teaching children?

2. Tell me about your teaching career? Since you began teaching, what age group have you taught?

3. Tell me a little bit more about yourself. What perspectives do you have that are extremely important in your life?

4. Can you tell me your story about how you decided to become an early childhood education teacher?

5. Tell me about any experiences you have had with early childhood education.

   - Describe your ideas about what an early childhood teacher does in the classroom and school.

   - How do you see early childhood teaching as different from teaching in higher grade levels?

   - Tell me about your most successful teaching experience.

   - Tell me about your least successful teaching experience.

6. How would you describe the role that early childhood education plays in your life?

7. What do you want to be like as an early childhood education teacher?

8. What concerns or tensions do you currently have about yourself as an early childhood education teacher?

   - Can you talk about specific instances or dilemmas that you have experienced?

9. What factors do you consider important for an induction teacher to know in order to be an early childhood education teacher?

10. Is there anything else you want to tell me about working in early childhood education?

Appendix B – Second Interview Guide

1. Tell me about your everyday working schedule in this school.

2. What is the most important thing in working in this school?

3. Why do you consider this important?

4. What do you think you are doing well as an early childhood teacher?

    - Could you give me specific examples or incidents?

5. Tell me about your relationship with your students. What's it like?

    - Tell me about your most successful experience with your students.

    - Tell me about your least successful experience with your students.

6. Tell me about your relationship with the parents of your students. What's it like?

    - Tell me about your most successful experience with the parents of your students

    - Tell me about your least successful experience with the parents of your students

7. Tell me about your relationship with your peer teachers. What's it like?

    - Tell me about your most successful experience with your peer teachers.

    - Tell me about your least successful experience with your peer teachers.

8. Tell me about your director.

    - Tell me about your most successful experience with your director.

    - Tell me about your least successful experience with your director.

9. When you think about your interactions with your students, their parents, your peers, and your director, what difficulties have you encountered?

10. What did you feel pressured to do differently with your students, parents, peer teachers, and your director?

11. If I were interviewing your children, parents, peer teachers, and director, what do you think each of them would say about you?

12. What do you think each of them would say about early childhood teachers?

13. How would you describe the role that you play in this school?

14. What would you say you spent the most time thinking about while working in this school?

15. What do you want to be like as a teacher in this school?

16. What concerns or tensions do you currently have about yourself as a teacher in this school?

- Can you talk about specific instances or dilemmas that you have experienced?

17. Is there anything else you want to tell me about working in this school?

Appendix C – Final Interview Guide

Many open-ended questions will be based on my ongoing analysis of the data from observations, interviews, group discussions, etc. Also, in this interview, participants will have opportunities to clarify the researcher's observations and reflect on their other data sources.

1. How are things going for you right now as an early childhood teacher?

2. Tell me about moments, experiences, or events that you are most proud of.

3. Tell me about moments, experiences, or events that were most difficult for you.

4. What stands out to you about teaching young children during your induction?

5. In an ideal world, what would your ideal version of early childhood education look like?

   - Be as specific as possible.

   - Why is this important to you?

6. In your workplace, what does your teaching look like?

7. How do you want to improve as an early childhood teacher?

8. What is the ultimate goal of your teaching?

9. What is the ultimate goal of a teacher in Korean early childhood education?

10. How long do you plan to continue as an early childhood teacher?

    - Why did you decide that?

11. What do you think about Korean early childhood education?

12. Can you make a connection between Korean early childhood education and Korean society?

- If yes, what connections can be defined?

- If no, why can the connections not be defined?

13. What is the ultimate goal of your life?

14. I have several questions to clarify your perceptions related to my data sources.

- Can you take a look at it? Feel free to elaborate if you want.

- Can you tell me a little bit more about what you meant when you said . . . ?

- Can you tell me a little bit more about incidents I observed?

Appendix D – First Group Discussion Guide

1. Can you read this case story for a while?

2. How does your working practice relate to this story?

   - In what ways is your work similar to this story?

   - In what ways is your work different to this story?

3. What are the characteristics that demonstrate the expertise of the teacher in the story?

4. What are the aspects of this story that influence your working?

5. Tell me about some specific experiences that are related to this story.

6. The teacher in the story was struggling with being a kindergarten teacher. What similar things are you struggling with right now?

7. What dilemmas do you feel you're currently facing in working in this school?

8. When the dilemmas occur, how do you resolve them?

9. What are the obstacles when you work in your school?

Appendix E - Second Group Discussion Guide

1. Can you show us the photos that represent meaningful or challenging incidents that stand out to you in your school?

2. Can you write down your thoughts about the photos on the paper?

3. Can you share your thoughts based on the photo essay with us?

4. Can you give us an explanation of your photo essays?

5. Why do you consider this important?

6. The group discussion members ask probing questions of the presenter. And the group members talk with each other about the incidents presented.

   - What do we think about the incidents?

   - What might we do or try if faced with a similar incident?

   - What have we done in similar situations?

7. Is there anything else you want to tell me about your photos you took your workplace?

Appendix F - An Example of a Photoessay