EMOTIONAL LABOR, EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION, AND EMOTIONAL CONTROL IN
THE K-12 CLASSROOM

by

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For quite some time, research has shown an inclination for the portrayal of teaching as a primarily cognitive enterprise (Zembylas, 2003). Though psychological and sociological research has increasingly focused on complexities of emotion and different influences in the formation and expression of emotions, little research has centered on emotional aspects of teachers’ lives (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). Nias (1996), an educational researcher, emphasized that teacher emotions should receive considerable attention since teachers invest themselves in their work and the classroom becomes a main source of self-esteem, vulnerability, and teacher fulfillment. Education research has begun to find connections between positive and negative teacher emotions and the role these emotions play in teachers’ professional and personal development (Zembylas, 2003). This study builds upon such research by exploring teachers’ emotions in relation to their teaching.

This qualitative study took place in a small town located in northwest Georgia and was guided by the following research questions: (1) What might veteran teachers describe as emotional experiences they deem to be important to their classroom teaching practices?; (2) In what ways might a teacher’s navigation of emotional experiences contribute to their proficient classroom practices?; and, (3) How might cases of teacher emotion be useful for professional learning? The study involved three highly experienced teachers who interacted with the researcher around the generation and discussion of “cases”. The study was conducted over a 12-week period during the Spring semester of the 2010/2011 school year. The researcher worked with the three teachers to generate “cases” regarded as important portrayals of the emotional dimensions of being a teacher. Exploration of teacher emotion was extended by petitioning the participants to expound on particular “cases” to provide a deeper understanding of each teacher’s interpretations, reflections, beliefs, feelings, and subsequent reactions to each emotional episode.
(Nichols & Tippins, 2004). Results from the study contribute insights useful for the emotional preparation of teachers and insights regarding contextual dimensions of being a teacher. The study also offers guidance for emotions based research methodology. The study offers timely insights which may improve teacher retention rates.
DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to everyone who has continually helped me to reach this goal, and especially to my wonderful family; I shudder to think of where I would be without you. I love you all and it is your contribution of love and support that has always stirred in my own emotions strength enough to ‘dare to dream’.
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Though my name alone appears on the title page, this work would have never reached this point without the help, guidance, and wisdom of my advisor, Dr. Sharon Nichols. How thankful I am to have been blessed with such an encouraging advisor who had enough patience to withstand my never-ending string of needs and questions. I will be forever grateful to you, and through this process have come to cherish you as my friend.

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PREFACE

Sometimes in life we work extremely hard to reach a goal that has, forever sat just beyond the horizon. So it has been for me in pursuing my doctoral degree. As a full time teacher, an over-time mother, a cheerleading coach, and a life-long learner, being a full time student has been, at times, a harrowing endeavor, but the ultimate destination I have longingly reached out for has been my inspiration to continue putting one foot in front of the other...day after day, week after week...year after year. I have been raised to set high goals and fight with everything inside of me, refusing to quit until I am dripping with perspiration, out of breath, and ultimately victorious. As a side note, it should be said that in learning to seek out your own potential and struggle against the trials of life in order to reach personal milestones, we often miss the beauty of the journey. Many times in my own life I have trudged along through every day war...face forward...eyes fixated...mind resilient...so focused on my objective that I miss out on the wonder and joy of the voyage itself. Once I have reached an endpoint, I typically sit back and reflect on how I arrived and what it was along the way that helped to move me forward. It is in these moments that the tiny glimmers of light along the path between then and now begin to illuminate themselves. As I near the end of this expedition---this dedicated traverse toward my degree, I find myself again in this place of reflection. Like many times before, I have come to realize the bursts of motivation that have surged me toward my goal...blasts of energy that reveal themselves as kind words from a colleague encouraging me to keep pushing, a family member reminding me that they are proud, my child verbally recognizing how much time and effort I have given to this achievement, or my husband carrying an extra load of household
chores so I could concentrate my energy on moving one step closer. Similar to the rush of emotion felt as I first encountered a classroom full of students for the first time, I am overcome with emotion as I fully recognize the sacrifices I have inevitably made and the sacrifices made by others to get me to this point. One important thing I have grown to appreciate throughout this process is how the human race is so completely surrounded with intellectual stimuli. Anyone who dares to question can become a researcher and anyone who allows their mind to wonder can learn.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

“Emotion turning back on itself, and not leading on to thought or action, is the element of madness.”
(John Sterling)

Currently, there is a call to increase technological and scientific awareness to facilitate training of American citizens entering the workforce. The demand for global minded citizens extends to a vast array of careers and the teaching profession is no exception. Standardization measures and legislation are attempting to strengthen our educational institutions by prescribing specific materials and methods of instruction for teachers. In the field of education, such attempts at defining a one size fits all process, added to an increasingly large number of specific objectives required to be taught in each course, can dishearten teachers and water down curriculum. Often the results of decisions made by executives and politicians concerning how and what teachers should teach de-professionalize those who have been entrusted with the day to day education (and care) of our nation’s youth. According to the Committee on Science, Engineering, and Public Policy (2007),

Undergraduate institutions and community colleges train the technical support personnel who will keep our technological society functioning smoothly in the years ahead. And colleges and universities prepare the elementary and secondary teachers who impart lifelong knowledge and attitudes about science and mathematics to their students. For many, the undergraduate years are the last opportunity for rigorous academic study of these subjects.

Precollege education needs to include quality instruction in standards-based classrooms and a clear awareness that achievement in science and mathematics will be expected for admission to college. In addition, faculty in these disciplines should assume greater responsibility for the pre-service and in-service education of K–12 teachers. (pp. 346-347)
Teacher training in America attempts to communicate the importance of the profession while taking great care to instill ‘autonomic professionalism’ among pre-service teachers despite the fact that continuously established mandates and regulations can de-humanize and disappoint educators at all levels. In this way, the field of education has become synonymous with any other ‘workforce’ and methods of teacher preparation could be equated with ‘assembly line production’. With such a rigid and definable method of ‘teacher production’, it is no wonder that teachers instinctively act on a similar basis once employed. According to Oliver (2010),

The traditional high school structure emerged as a parallel to the factory model that saw a division of labor, mechanical routines and large-scale production as the most efficient way to make things -- whether the products were steel beams, automobiles or productive citizens. (p1)

Despite an incalculably changing society, daily functional and operational frameworks of traditional schools have exhibited little change since initiation of formalized schools in America (Marsh & Codding, 1999). Understandably within such learning conditions, the “products” of our ‘industrial-era’ schools often lack characteristics needed for successful collaboration with others and skills necessary for critical analysis in a complex and changing society. A majority of young people are expected to transition from the highly controlled environments of our current school organizations to a world they fail to understand with a deficit of skills needed to influence or affect change (Oliver, 2010).

We must begin to scrutinize the depth of assembly-line concepts embedded in our current schools. Typical organizational models encourage teachers to contribute a small part to the final product---with the ultimate goal of consistently producing well-rounded individuals (or products). This method of instruction is out-dated and less than beneficial for a modern, technological, global society that requires its members to multi-task, collaborate, and think critically. Re-conception of current educational methods requires moving from industrial,
mechanical approaches to more organic, cellular, and biological processes of schooling (Senge, 2000). We must re-think our perception of teachers as assembly-line workers and recognize teachers as living beings---emotional beings. The assembly-line structure of schools ignores that learning is extremely relational and that teachers must learn to become experts in developing relationships (Oliver, 2010). If we can begin to think about teachers as complex emotional beings, we can begin to understand the complexities associated with the practice of teaching---that is, how teachers think about and reflect on their profession, cope with occupational stressors, and how they make sense of their own practices.

Teaching is a profession that is well known for frequent occurrences of occupational stress (Mintz, 2007). Significant amounts of research have focused on connections between stress factors, teacher retention, teacher effectiveness, and increasing levels of teacher turn-over. The majority of the research however focuses on stress factors that result from within the educational system including student behavior, and system/school demands (Jepson & Forrest, 2006). In addition to internal organizational stressors, teachers must also cope with stresses that are generated from outside the work environment. Regardless of the source, teacher stress should not be overlooked. High levels of stress over a long period of time can result in teacher ‘burnout’---feelings of physical, mental, and emotional exhaustion (Jepson & Forrest, 2006). Research surrounding teacher emotion is becoming increasingly important since the level of stress in educational occupations has become a more focused concern. It has been suggested that teachers who maintain a more positive classroom climate tend to be more successful in controlling their own emotions (NEA Today, 2007). While some may argue that the emotions of the teacher should not be a part of the profession, other researchers would say that a failure to
emotionally engage with students is ‘dangerous’ and results in a lack of passion needed for optimal student learning to occur (Palmer, 1997).

With the idea of teacher emotion playing such a role in so many aspects of teachers’ work, we must begin to consider the emotional labor associated with the teaching profession. ‘Emotional labor’ can be defined as the display of feelings as a result of the packaging of personal emotion to fit organizational norms (Tracy, 2005). In human service occupations, such as education, the management of emotion has a major impact on employee and client well-being (Bolton, 2001). Emotionally-charged human service occupations often require that the employee ‘labor’ to manage their own emotions as well as the emotions of their clients in an attempt to solicit cooperation and compliance and provide the service for which they are employed (Scott & Myers, 2005). Since the early 1980s, questions have surfaced concerning factors that either ease emotional labor or make it more difficult (Tracy, 2005). Teaching is a profession that is full of increasing levels of emotional drama and how beginning teachers learn to negotiate the ‘emotional terrain’ is critical to their ongoing performance (Intrator, 2006). Teachers must be equipped with emotional strength, flexibility, and coping strategies that will guide their actions and behaviors in the classroom and help to minimize the effects of stress and emotional drama that may contribute to teachers leaving this professional field.

For several decades now, teacher education literature has focused on improving metacognitive dimensions of teacher thinking (Shulman, 1987)---teachers as ‘decision makers’ (VanSlyke-Briggs, 2010), ‘reflective practitioners’ (Taggart & Wilson, 1998), etc. But emotions focused research recognizes that teachers’ experiences and actions are more than rationalized processes of cognition (Zembylas, 2005). For centuries, human reason and control in the scientific pursuit of knowledge has been regarded with a special status over other ‘non-rational’
means of learning--artful, emotional sense-making (Lee, 2008). Correspondingly, people have pondered about what constitutes ‘emotion’ in learning. It is not the intent of this study to bring a definitive resolution to philosophical debates about what “emotion” is; the literature review will present various frameworks by researchers to characterize “emotion” as a complex phenomenon. Accordingly, recognizing emotion in teaching may improve our understanding of teachers’ practices and what it means to be a teacher—and a ‘professional’ one at that. Insights from this study may enable improved teacher preparation and ongoing professional development in ways that better support the persons who become and hope to maintain professionalism as a teacher.

**Statement of the Problem**

It has been estimated that as many as 50% of teachers ultimately leave the profession within the first five years (Greiner & Smith, 2009). Accordingly, a majority of those leaving the teaching field report that emotional demands, stress, and a lack of support constitute their decisions to seek other career avenues (Billingsley, 2004). A report published by the National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future (2009) argued that “no recruitment strategy can capture and distribute the wisdom and collective knowledge of successful dedicated veteran teachers” (p. 22). Despite some progress within educational research over the last few decades in identifying significant emotional aspects of teaching and learning situations (Zembylas, 2008), minute attention has been given to emotional preparation strategies involving prospective and newly employed teachers. Moreover there is little research regarding teacher emotions in and beyond the classroom (Pekrun, Goetz, Titz, & Perry, 2002). Hargreaves (1998) argued that teaching and learning were *irretrievably* emotional practices, and that an understanding of the role of teacher emotion in the educational process is crucial to understanding teaching practices. Accordingly, this study addressed the problematic gap formed by a lack of research recognizing
teacher emotions, and re-presenting how teachers’ emotions play into teachers’ thinking, learning, practice, and professional development.

**Study Purpose**

The purpose of this study was to explore ways to learn about emotional dimensions and emotional practices of experienced, successful teachers. According to Lieberman and Mace (2009), a signature role can be played by experienced teachers in professional learning communities by sharing accomplished practices with other practitioners. Throughout history, many reform efforts have been implemented in an attempt to facilitate the creation of better schools. Such efforts are not without cost, and the majority of the responsibility for educational reform efforts generally falls on the shoulders of practicing teachers. Increases in accountability and heightened teacher responsibility often force educators to control or suppress emotional expression (Sachs & Blackmore, 1998). It is common knowledge that current movements toward educational reform have resulted in greater teacher responsibility and increased workloads. Research (van Veen & Sleegers, 2006) suggests that emotional strain on practitioners has greatly increased with the implementation of such educational mandates and legislature as the *No Child Left Behind Act* [NCLB] (NCLB Act, 2002).

Often teacher burnout is equated with the term emotional exhaustion and results from greater accountability coupled with what teachers perceive as a never-ending list of responsibilities and a lack of control and autonomy (Wallbott & Scherer, 1986). The often dehumanizing reform efforts referenced above have greatly increased the number of teachers expressing heightened levels of burnout. Van Manen (1990) speaks to this as he discusses the nature of the language used in many of the governmental mandates impeding practicing teachers,

The point is not that the curricular language of educational aims, objectives, or instructional intentions is wrong. Seen in proper perspective this language is an
administrative convenience…The problem is that in an age in which the administrative and technological influences have penetrated into the very blood of our lifeworld, teachers and even parents seem to have forgotten a certain kind of understanding: what it means to bear children, to hope for children entrusted to their care. Recalling what thus seems to be forgotten is a kind of recollecting of what belongs to the being of parenting and of what belongs to the being of teaching as in loco parentis.

The nihilistic forgetfulness of the essence of our being as teachers curiously turns loose a certain self-destructiveness. This is evident in…teacher burnout…the modern case of the enduring problem of nihililism: the higher values are losing their value. …Teacher burnout is not necessarily a symptom of excessive output of effort, of being over-worked. It may be the condition that ensues when as teachers we no longer know why we are doing what we are doing. Teacher burn-out is hopeless in that nobody can make us believe there is an answer to the sigh, “What’s the use?” The only way such teacher burn-out can be overcome is by recapturing in ourselves the knowledge that life is bearable – not in the sense that we can bear it, as we bear a burden which weighs us down, but in the sense that we know that life is there to bear us – as in the living with hope. We can do this, once again, by seeing the child as child, by giving birth and bearing children, rather than aborting the child in the middle of the abstracted rhetoric of our theorizing. (pp. 123-124)

The ways in which emotional labor and emotional exhaustion affect the lives of practicing teachers should receive more consideration in professional literature (Plutchik, 2001; Zembylas, 2005). When organizational pressures stimulate a negative emotional state among teachers, the result is very often a decline of intrinsic teacher motivation that deeply hinders efficacy and morale. In turn, the teachers’ responses toward students and choices of teaching strategies will be affected--- likely in a negative way (Sutton & Wheatly, 2003).

A deeper understanding of the ways teachers perceive relationships with students and teaching environments is needed because teaching is not simply a technical process, but rather a place where personal and professional aspects of teachers’ lives are merged (Zembylas, 2005). Many researchers have submitted the argument that affective issues associated with emotional development in teaching have been underrepresented in educational research for some time. Based on studies that connected teacher experience with emotion, research guided by the reflections of teachers has become increasingly significant. According to Zembylas (2005),
“Teacher knowledge is located in the lived lives of teachers, in the values, beliefs, and deep convictions enacted in practice, and in the social relationships that enliven the teaching and learning encounter” (p. 467). This study is needed to further the investigation of teacher emotions and its effects on the ways current teachers might be better supported in endeavors of learning about the emotional dimensions of teaching practices.

**Research Study Questions**

The overarching focus of this study explored learning about teacher’s emotions and practices. The following sub-questions more specifically guided this investigation:

1) What might veteran teachers describe as emotional experiences they deem to be important to their classroom teaching practices?

2) In what ways might a teacher’s navigation of emotional experiences contribute to their proficient classroom practices?, and,

3) How might cases of teacher emotion be useful for professional teacher learning?

To address the principal questions, three participants were selected based on level and range of experience in K-12 classrooms. ‘Successfulness’ in teaching was identified for the purposes of this study as the evidence of nominative success in a teacher’s career. Evidence of ‘success’ included the increasing amount of responsibility afforded to an individual through their teaching experience, the multiplicity of roles in which each was able to navigate their professionalism, recognition by colleagues and others for good qualities, extensive years of dedicated teaching experience, and the clear communication of their own interpretations of what it means to be a successful teacher.

A narrative research approach (Connelly & Clandinin, 2000) was used for this investigation in order to interpret participant dialogue concerning significant cases of emotional
teaching incidents into transmissible information. The use of narrative methodology provides an avenue for the researcher to communicate the ‘stories’ of each participating teacher as witnessed through formal and informal discussions, interviews, written and spoken ‘cases’, and research journal writings. Accordingly, this study was designed to facilitate discussion concerning emotional aspects of the teaching profession and solicit recommendations for the creation of community among new and veteran teachers. The insights gained through this inquiry can edify professional development efforts and teacher training programs through the knowledge and experience of successfully practicing educators in order to inspire the generation of alternative emotional responses and practices in the teaching field. Additionally, narrative methods were selected due to the development of relationships between concepts and substantive theory that often characterizes narrative research (Arellano, Barcenal, Bilbao, Castellano, Nichols, & Tippins, 2001). The study was designed to communicate the voices and perspectives of the participating teachers---narratives that will re-present ways of knowing which are integral to understanding the substance of ideas reflected in the research questions. Furthermore, the study intends to provide cognitive contributions and practical applications for preparation and ongoing support of teacher learning endeavors.

**Significance of the Study**

As discussed by Zembylas (2004; 2005), though little investigation into teacher emotion (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003) has been conducted, its significance is probably mentioned more frequently than any other aspect of teaching. Research has begun to look at how a teacher’s positive or negative emotions contribute to how the ‘teacher self’ is constructed and reconstructed within different contexts. Personal and professional teacher identity is greatly influenced by the teacher’s emotions. These emotions are reflective of socio-cultural, historical,
and institutional influences (Zembylas, 2003). Minimal understanding of interactions between learning and emotion are currently recognized by adult educators (Ria, Seve, Saury, Theureau, & Durand, 2003; Zembylas, 2008). Furthermore, a relatively low number of scholars and practitioners in higher education have recognized emotions as an integral component of the learning process (Dirkx, 2001; 2006) though some literature has connected the emotional state of the teacher and the established classroom climate (Zembylas, 2002). This study could provide significant contributions toward a deeper understanding of aspects of teachers’ emotions and how these emotions might be addressed as a matter of teachers’ ongoing learning and practices.

In relation to improving both pre-service training for teachers and professional progression of practitioners, the importance of contextual, situational, social, and emotional components has begun to be recognized in teacher learning. Convergence of a predominantly cognitive approach to teaching and an understanding of afore mentioned influences has initially been accepted by many educators at all levels, but little has been done to improve our approach to teacher education programs or supported K-12 teaching practices (Lee, 2008). According to Cole (2007), we have yet to successfully articulate any theory that unifies culture and human development. In a sense, we have continued to ‘mass produce’ teachers with similar views, approaches, and strategies for the professional realm while expecting these teachers to singularly adapt to the individual contexts and varying emotional settings in which they will be employed. As a whole, we seem to rely on a natural development of “teacher self” rather than supporting a development equally determined by both cognitive abilities and emotional and social interactions (Lee, 2008). Furthermore, this research suggests that a society that attempts to adopt any unifying theory concerning emotional issues associated with teachers is probably working in vain. Rather than expending so much time and energy on the pursuit of this ‘unified theory’,
greater impact on educational systems and the professionalism of teachers can be embodied through a more situational approach toward an understanding of the nature of what it means to be a real teacher in a very real classroom today.

New teachers may particularly benefit from this study given the dramatic range of emotion and passion they tend to experience as they begin to work in the field (Intrator, 2006). Based on a social constructionist theory of emotions, emotions are highly relational and emerge from interactions with one’s world and surroundings. In this way, each beginning teacher will experience different combinations of emotions during the first few classroom experiences and interactions with students (Ria, et al., 2003). Since novice teachers are less skilled, they will less likely feel the emotional satisfaction of competence as often as those with more experience (Zembylas, 2003). Coping with personal emotion and the manipulation of the emotional setting in a classroom is certainly a contributing factor to teacher stress and burn out (Crute, 2007). Perhaps increased attention to affective and emotional aspects of teaching should begin at the teacher preparation level (Hodgen, & Askew, 2007). Beginning with pre-service training and continuing through professional practice, a realization must be reached that seeks to communicate the emotional intensity of teaching (Jepson & Forrest, 2006) Thus, insights gained from this study may be especially significant for improvement of the preparation of pre-service and beginning educators and encourage their longer termed contributions to the teaching profession.

This study may be significant to guide teacher professional learning and the design of teacher communities. By sharing personal cases and situations, teachers may learn to work collaboratively to better understand the nature of teaching, emotional implications of the profession, and common strategies used by successful teachers to cope with ever increasing
levels of emotional labor in the classroom. Sharing successful coping strategies can induce greater preparedness among less experienced teachers and solicit an increase in the emotional strength of all practicing educators.

Finally, insights gained from this study aim to communicate a need for understanding emotional convergence that occurs among colleagues working together. Interactions among people often result in the exchange of emotions. When there is any interaction between people, the constant passing of emotions will occur. Research suggests that regardless of the business at hand, emotions resonate back and forth between individuals and these emotions may cause the other person to feel better or worse (Goleman, 2006). Accordingly, due to increasing interests in creation of professional learning communities among teachers it is important to consider how emotions can be shared among colleagues.

**Philosophical Orientation**

This research, similar to all qualitative studies does not claim that a uniformed set of research steps can be adopted for the purposes of inquiry, data collection, or interpretive outcomes. Rather, it is the understanding of the researcher that our world is, in essence, a fragmented society. Due to this fragmentation, there is, without doubt an impossibility to ‘know it all’. At best, the hope in any research endeavor should be that we can simply learn. Though learning from ‘everyone’ is obviously not possible, the fact is, we can learn from anyone. Each attempt at qualitative research is decidedly situational.

Due to the philosophical stance concerning emotion, teacher emotions, and emotions research embraced in this study, the most obvious limitation others might recognize is the situation, culture, location, and ethnic factors associated with the teacher-participants and the highly contextual nature of the research. In such cases of investigation that speak from a
situational perspective, generalizable outcomes are rarely the goal. Hence, the aim of this study is to provide a voice for those teachers contributing to the research and in this way, establish an avenue of learning that can be travelled again and again from other situations and perspectives.

According to Rogoff (2002), several orienting concepts can be used to help an individual locate the cultural and situational components in any research study. Among these concepts, he offers that we should understand that both individuals and their cultural commonalities are always changing, and that we should additionally accept that there isn’t likely to be one best practice, one best way, or even one best outcome (Delpit, 1995; Furman, 2002; Rogoff, 2002). Since this research was navigated through the lens or viewpoint of the researcher (based on characteristics of the nature of qualitative studies), several important variables that the researcher was incapable of including became visible. One such variable is that of race. Hence, the variables that will remain invisible throughout this study will be readdressed during the preparation of the final research report as a means of spring boarding this crucial topic of inquiry into a more widespread area of professional attention and investigation.

Limitations

1. This research takes place among a small number of individual teachers who live in one rural community in Alabama and work in another similarly rural community in Georgia.

2. The assumption must be made that the statements related to each emotional experience are accurate.

3. The role of the researcher is a critical component and all instances of bias cannot be wholly removed. Any such instances of bias should, therefore, be taken into account (Thompson, 2006).
4. The participating teachers were selected by the researcher based on several common professional characteristics as well as researcher access and familiarity, and the long-established relationships among the group.

5. All participants are white southern females. Though each teacher has extensive experience in multiple situations, the current professional circumstances for all of the participants occurs within a school and school system that is also predominantly white and located in the southern portion of the United States.

**Definition of Terms**

1. *Emotion* is a complicated term to define and depends greatly on the theoretical thought of the researcher (Zembylas, 2004). This study diverges from traditionally cognitive frameworks toward a more holistic view of teacher emotions. “Emotion” and “emotional expression” are terms describing feelings and actions constructed and reconstructed through multiple social contexts and experiences.

2. *Emotional Labor* can be defined as “the requirement on workers to regulate both feelings and the expressions of these feelings for organizational goals” (Riddell et. al., 2008).

3. *Emotional Convergence* refers to the ways in which emotions ripple down (converge) among members interacting within a group (Goleman, 2006).
**Summary**

Chapter I provided an overview of research related to teacher emotions as well as the study foundation based on researcher assumptions, experiences, and observations as a classroom teacher. Furthermore, the importance of emotions research, specifically teacher emotions research, was described. Chapter II will provide a review of teacher emotion literature and will summarize the existing knowledge pool and theory communicated from scholarly publications, followed by Chapter III which will discuss research methodology and methods of this study.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

“It is not our biological nature alone, but our biological nature together with our social organization that “set the stage for our loving”, and this, I presume, holds for our other emotions as well.”

(Lilli Alanen, 2003)

Introduction

Expressed emotion is one way that we, as concurrently biological and social beings, engage with the world (Solomon, 2006). Philosophy, psychology, and biology research has attempted to define “emotion” since the beginning of recorded scholarship yet the disagreement associated with emotion is staggering. How one defines the term depends greatly on the individual’s perspective, professional discipline, and theoretical orientation (Kagan, 2007). In any case, emotion has a signifying function of telling us about our own physiological state, about the people and events with which we are associated---with telling us how the world matters to us (Solomon, 2006). Emotion can be seen as the root of human behavior and the essence of what stimulates our outward action and reactions. Human emotion and emotional interaction within a group are complex issues but still important aspects that should receive greater amounts of scholarly attention. As stated by Alanen (2003), “The range of our emotions indicates constant dimensions of the human condition, and so the multidimensional nature of what has value for us…Our good is as richly structured as our emotions are varied, and is as historically conditioned as the emotions that recognize it, from their own special angles” (p.334). This chapter will provide a foundation for the study by summarizing related literature.
Emotions Research: Locating Emotion Philosophically

Within the last three decades, numerous theories about emotions have been recognized that are synonymous with a range of theoretical camps (Turner, Stets, Cook, & Massey, 2006). Many attempts to segregate theories of emotions have been made, and one could rightfully accept any categorical supposition. For some, emotion can be addressed as controlled or uncontrolled. For Winkielman and Berridge (2004), though all emotion is cognitive, both conscious and unconscious affective states exist. Alanen (2003) identified three general philosophical accounts of emotions: (1) the cognitivist (emotion is a purely cognitive structure based solely on judgment and rationality), (2) the emotivist (emotions are subjective sentiments resulting in non-intentional bodily sensations and physiological states) and (3) the moral phenomenologist (a combination of the first two).

A majority of contemporary literature on emotion shares the assumption that emotion is a conscious, cognitive structure (Oatley, 2004; Solomon, 1993; Spackman & Miller, 2008; Winkielman & Berridge, 2004). Even some of the most influential psychologists were supporters of cognitive perspectives concerning emotion. For Freud (1950), emotions were always conscious even when the causal situation was not. Even James (1884), in his famous article, “What is an Emotion?” presented emotion as the outcome of perceptions of bodily change resulting in conscious feelings---a necessary ingredient for both simple emotions (pleasure/pain) and more complex affective states (love/hate). Typically, cognitive theorists largely ignore the role of experience in emotional development and expression (Spackman & Miller, 2008). An opposing view (such as ‘emotivists’) credits emotion to the subconscious and suggests that emotional processes can remain completely implicit (without attention or intention). Such theories, also referred to as ‘feeling-centered’ emotional theories, posit that even when these
emotions remain inaccessible to conscious awareness, they remain the driving force that controls the person’s behavior and physiological reactions (Winkielman & Berridge, 2004).

In addition to cognitive emotional theories and the opposing (subconscious/feeling-centered/implicit) theories, a third class of emotion theories includes components from each side of the debate. Alanen (2003) calls this view the moral phenomenologist perspective. Proponents of such do not reduce emotions and emotional expression to either strictly cognitive processes or uncontrolled representations of feelings. Rather, this philosophical stance recognizes the complexities involved with both the psycho-physical and the socio-cultural approaches (Alanen, 2003). Psychophysics deals with relationships between the behavioral responses of humans in association with physically recognized stimuli. Socio-cultural approaches are more focused on a variety of social and cultural factors that influence an individual’s emotional state and subsequent behaviors. With such incongruities in research concerning the origin and substance of emotions, it is no wonder that there is a lack of research surrounding the role of emotion in education or the impact of the emotional labor associated with the teaching profession.

**Teacher Emotion**

For quite some time, research has shown an inclination for the portrayal of teaching as a primarily cognitive enterprise (Zembylas, 2003). Though psychological and sociological research has increasingly focused on the complexities of emotions and the many different influences in the formation and expression of different emotions, very little research has centered on the emotional aspects of teachers’ lives (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). In part, educational research has largely ignored teacher emotion because ‘emotion’ has generally been viewed as a substance generated within an individual and governed by brain function and personality differences.
Thankfully, educational research is beginning to see a connection between the positive and negative emotions of teachers and the role such emotions play in a teacher’s professional and personal development (Zembylas, 2003). Educational researchers such as Nias (1996) suggest that affective issues such as teacher emotion should receive considerable attention because teachers invest themselves in their work and the classroom becomes a main source of self-esteem, vulnerability, and personal fulfillment. Nias goes on to say that an almost singular identity, composed of professional and personal identities, begins to form as the result of such tight knitting between teaching and emotion. Nias’ language reflects traditional ways of thinking about teachers which are very mechanical and reductionist. Her language such as ‘personal’ and ‘professional’ and others who might contrast cognitive to affective domains of teacher thinking -- suggests that teachers can be reduced into parts and pieces. Might there be other ways to holistically understand teachers as persons?

Emotion has an impact on the classroom environment. Both teachers and students are emotional beings. Interactions occurring in the teacher/learner relationship and the space in which learning occurs are factors to be considered. The interactions that occur in the classroom will shape attitudes and values about the educational environment and, in turn, influence the learning that takes place (Vrasidas, Zembylas, Evagorou, Avraamidou, & Aravi, 2007). Hence, the emotions of teachers will influence the teachers’ actions and the ways that the educators interact with students. These interactions build capital within each student and persuade the students’ value of what is being taught. Furthermore, a teacher’s felt emotions influence the teacher’s beliefs and subsequent behaviors; behaviors that will recur throughout the continuation of the teacher’s career. In looking at the affective domain within a classroom, we can gather a great deal of information about the formation of teacher agency, beliefs about teaching,
professional and personal values, and the successful learning processes of the students (Zembylas, Espinet, Milane, & Scantlebury, 2006). Pressure, stress, and strain originating from within the educational organization or the personal life of a teacher does result in negative affect, and can inherently change an individual in negative ways. In contrast, positive influences, whether internal or external to the professional environment will positively influence affect within the teacher and assist in the formation of positive self-esteem and fulfillment as an individual (Nelson, 1990).

Beyond the impact of emotions on the immediate classroom climate, there are additional associations between teacher emotions and longer term perceptions of professional viability. Once employed, intrinsic motivational factors and job satisfaction (closely related to emotion) can be associated with teacher retention. Teacher job satisfaction can be defined as the affective relationship existing between a teacher and the teacher’s role as an educator. Ideally, there should be a close fit in the relationship between what is expected from a profession and the beliefs about what a profession can be. Stress and the emotional factors due to a response syndrome of negative affects are now seen as one of the most important factors associated with human behavior (Jepson & Forrest, 2006). Given the shift toward recognizing ways emotional factors play into a teacher’s sense of identity and teachers’ personal considerations of practice, the contribution of teacher emotions to productive teaching and learning in the classroom must be considered.

**Teacher Self Efficacy**

The development of *teacher self*, also referred to as *teacher efficacy*, serves as a vehicle for a teacher’s self-confidence in personal abilities to effectively perform functions associated with teaching (Watson, 2006). Teacher efficacy greatly influences motivation levels and directly
associates with a teacher’s persistence to engage in specific behaviors and multiple instructional
practices that best meet the needs of students and effectively help students learn (Bandura, 2006).
We must begin to look at ways that increasing demands influence the development of teacher-
self and how such demands alter the emotional state of the teacher (Zembylas, 2002). We should
further investigate the influence of emotional labor and self-efficacy formed in the professional
setting as it relates to teachers’ practices. With the proliferation of educational mandates,
accountability, and standardized testing on the rise, the profession of teaching continues to
evolve into a more stressful and emotional occupation. The associated emotional aspect of
education can interfere with a teacher’s ability to self-reflect, accept criticism and suggestions
from others, and effectively alter pedagogical practices in order to improve classroom instruction
(Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). There is little research on teacher emotions and the implications
such emotions may have on the success or failure of teachers (Zembylas, 2003). Accordingly,
this study calls for turning from technical conceptions of teachers’ professional development as a
matter of providing better teacher training toward understanding emotional narratives of teachers
as critical to teacher learning and practice as means for reinvigorating this professional career-
way.

**Emotional Labor and Emotional Intelligence**

Laborious emotions can be quite costly to teaching practices. Emotional labor is
discussed as “the requirement of workers to regulate both feelings and the expressions of these
feelings for organizational goals” (Riddell et al., 2008). Stated differently, emotional labor is
“the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and body display” (Hoschild,
1993). Recent recognition has been given to the importance of emotional regulation and control
in many professions (Diefendorff & Gosserand, 2003). Ekman (1973) suggested that within an
organization, there are specifications concerning ‘display rules’ that identify and govern acceptable employee emotions as well as the ways in which these acceptable emotions should be displayed in varying situations. Such rules for emotional expression may be implicit or explicit and exist to influence the feelings, attitudes, and behaviors of clients and thereby contribute to organizational outcome improvement (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Martinez-Inigo, Totterdell, Alcover, & Holman, 2007). Following these rules may entail the suppression of undesirable emotional expression (even when the emotion is felt by the person) and the display of an alternate, acceptable, and desirable emotion (Gross, 1998). Emotional labor, also referred to as “emotional work” or “emotional management” has been conceptualized as the culmination of multiple processes including emotional display rules, emotional dissonance, internal process, and emotional regulation (Cukur, 2009). Accordingly, classroom teachers may need assistance navigating emotional rules as these are integral to their professional productivity and performance.

Teaching is a profession that is full of emotion both for the teacher and among the students (Intrator, 2006). Successful teachers must be equipped with the skills needed for “discerning one’s emotional make-up, reading emotional cues, responding to charged emotional situations, monitoring personal, fluid emotional cartography, and managing the emotions of others” (Goleman, 1995). Though teaching includes a great deal of emotional labor, the ability of teachers to regulate their own (and other’s) emotions while maintaining an atmosphere supportive of student social and academic growth goes largely unnoticed and unrewarded (Bellas, 1999). Understanding the emotional drama associated with the profession of teaching and learning ways to regulate and respond to the emotional climate of the classroom is a primary component of successful teaching practices (Bullough & Draper, 2004). Teachers must
additionally deal with the emotions associated with teaching, which Zembylas and Papanastasiou (2006) acknowledge as situational teacher perceptions. A teacher’s intellectual capacity to manage emotional dimensions is a professional knowledge domain largely overlooked.

Emotional intelligence (related to emotional labor) was first defined as “a type of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one’s own and other’s emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and action” (Richburg & Fletcher, 2002). According to Goleman (2006), emotional intelligence (EQ) is “the ability one has to control his/her emotions as well as the emotions of others in order to reach personal goals”. Goleman continues to describe emotional intelligence as one’s mental character and the behaviors that communicate that character. Emotional intelligence, in this respect, brings to the forefront the importance of any teachers’ ability to regulate their own emotions while teaching to a class full of students with their own distinct set of emotional characteristics. Van Bockern (2006) suggested that “success in teaching is not merely an attempt to nurture the intelligence of the students but also to teach to the emotional quotient (EQ)” (p. 220) or emotional intelligence of the students.

Such ideas as emotional intelligence, emotional labor, and the emotional quotient are important since emotional knowledge is used in almost every aspect of human existence. When we read a book, talk, send and receive e-mail, write, and participate in all manners of interactions with others, our emotional knowledge is what guides us in making sense of our own emotions and the emotions of others (Oosterwijk, Roteteveel, Fischer, & Hess, 2008). Ideal teachers are those that display feelings associated with happiness, enthusiasm, self-confidence, and passion for the profession (Winograd, 2005). Teaching can been viewed as a “front-line profession” in
which those who will ultimately show success and feel satisfaction are those who find ways to manage emotion and in doing so increase personal teaching effectiveness (Schmisseur, 2003).

**Emotions and Learning**

Though defining the term ‘emotion’ is complicated and depends greatly on the theoretical thought of the researcher (Zembylas, 2004), emotion is central to one’s life. Emotional experience is a regulation of feelings and subsequent actions to meet the norms of the society with which one is associated and can affect functioning and behavior in both positive and negative ways (Nezlek & Keppens, 2008). Emotions play an integral role in management, and at times people may allow their personal emotions to overshadow the initial goal for an organization…however, research suggests that individuals can use their emotions as a channel for positive change in an organizational setting (Ohrberg, 2005).

According to Palmer (2007), philosophy does not seek to define conflict between human subjectivity and objective knowledge, but knowledge emerges within an individual through a complex duality of inner and outer worlds. Alternatively stated, emotions are an important part of the learning process since they can serve to either motivate or discourage learning (Dirkx, 2001). With increasing research on the relationship between the cognitive and the emotional, a shift of acceptance has materialized that supports the study of the influence of emotion on the learning process. No longer can emotion and emotional expression be ignored by scholars who are attempting to understand the complexities of teaching and learning (Zembylas, 2002). In order to teach effectively, one must understand and encourage healthy emotional expression. This emotion will shape and guide the context of the learning experience for the students (Dirkx, 2006). By shaping the context of learning, emotion plays a crucial role in the process for both school age students as well as for adult learners (Shuck, Albornoz, & Winberg, 2007). Teacher’s
emotions and their influence on the classroom, though important enough, should stimulate researchers to consider yet another important aspect of teacher emotion, emotional convergence.

**Emotional Convergence (Emotional Contagion) in Organizational Settings**

Psychologists have long since understood that emotions ripple down (converge) when individuals interact within a group (Goleman, 2006). Many studies have begun to illustrate emotional convergence in the workplace. A field study conducted by Totterdell, Kellet, Teuchmann and Briner (1998) demonstrated mood transfer among nurses and accountants even after controlling for shared work problems. Totterdell (2000) found that regardless of a team’s performance or status in a game, mood was transmitted and shared by team members. Additionally, Bartel and Saavedra (2000) found that mood convergence or emotional transmission not only occurred between individuals in the workplace, but with external observers as well. Other instances of professional literature also suggest that individuals who socially interact will, over time, experience ‘emotional convergence’ or begin to share similar feelings and emotions (Barsade, 2002; Goleman, 2006; Hatfield, Cacioppo & Rapson, 1994; Matthews, Roberts, & Zeidner, 2004; Totterdell, 2000). Schoenwolf (1990) defines emotional contagion as "a process in which a person or group influences the emotions or behavior of another person or group through the conscious or unconscious induction of emotion states and behavioral attitudes” (p.50). In other words, emotional convergence or emotional contagion is a social process in which social influences alter moods, feelings, and emotions of individuals at both a conscience and subconscious level (Barsade, 2002).

What is now referred to as the ‘social brain’ contains what are frequently called ‘mirror neurons’. These mirror neurons attune themselves (often automatically) to the perceptions of the person with whom they are interacting. In turn, the mirror neurons line themselves up to get in
sync with the other person. When there is any interaction between people, the constant passing of emotions will occur and research suggests that regardless of the business at hand, emotions will continue to bounce back and forth between parties. These emotions can/will make organizational members feel better or worse (Goleman, 2006).

In addition to the convergence of mood and emotional expression shared by members of a group, significant findings also suggest that emotional convergence can be beneficial to both the organization and the individual (Barsade, 2002). Emotional convergence is deepened when more time is spent together, when similar beliefs and feelings are shared, and when prolonged engagement in a relationship has occurred (Anderson, Dacher, & Oliver, 2003). It is no secret that individuals are more likely to enter a relationship with those who are emotionally similar (Gibbons, 1986). These similarities will stimulate conversation among members of a group and prolonged communication coupled with experiential commonalities almost always results in emotional convergence (Barsade, 2002). Some scholars have gone so far as to suggest that the establishment of group emotion is the very characteristic that defines and distinguishes a group from a collection of individuals (George, 2002).

**Emotional Energy**

In association with emotional convergence/contagion, some association with emotional energy has been established in the literature (Wallbot & Scherer, 1986). Those that express their emotions with greater force, greater volume, or more animated facial and body expressions are more likely to transfer their emotions to others (Sullins, 1991). Such instances of research convey the idea that individuals with higher emotional energy typically receive more attention and therefore have a greater opportunity for emotional contagion. Those who exhibit higher
emotional energy will always transfer their emotions to others more easily than those with characteristically low emotional energy (Barsade, 2002; Robinson & McArthur, 1982).

**Emotional Valence**

Research has demonstrated differences in reactions to negative stimuli as opposed to reactions to positive stimuli. Negative events more readily elicit an emotional, behavioral, and cognitive response than positive events (Cacioppo, Gardner, & Berntson, 1997). People also tend to place more weight on negative information than positive (Kanouse & Hanson, 1972). Bartel and Saavedra (2000) found that emotional convergence takes place more often and more quickly when the emotions are negative. Based on previous findings and personal research, Barsade (2002) proposed that unpleasant emotional contagion was more likely than convergence of pleasant emotions.

**Benefits of Emotional Convergence**

Studies of emotional convergence have shown that the presence of group emotions will add to the dynamics of a group as well as influence organizational outcomes (George, 1989; George & Brief, 1992). Further investigation has demonstrated that shared emotions (among other affective characteristics) can foster the coordination of thoughts and behaviors, help establish relational cohesion, and increase mutual understanding (Anderson, Dacher, & Oliver, 2003). Often the sharing of experiences and emotional situations related to the workplace provides a place where self-assurance and shared empathy can be found. Individuals can use such relationships with others to seek advice, to confirm personal actions, and to establish a pool of experience that will contribute to work related success and satisfaction (Barsade, 2002). Though such transfers of emotion can be positive or negative, the convergence can still add to the experience and resources from which he/she can draw when facing new situations.
The Social Construction of Emotion – A Theoretical Framework

“...individual behavior is strongly influenced by the environment, especially the social environment. The person does not function in an individualistic vacuum, but in a social context that influences thought, feeling, and action” (Taylor, 1998)

Generally speaking, academic investigation of emotion has typically fallen into two categories or positions: social construction and naturalism (Ratner, 1989). As discussed earlier, this research will approach emotion from a somewhat social constructionist perspective. The framework for the study is drawn from the research that suggests a connection between experiences of teachers and teacher emotions. Emotion as a social construction focuses on how individuals and groups make sense of emotional experiences (Zembylas, 2004) and embraces ideas that a co-construction of knowledge occurs as the result of an interdependence of social and cultural experiences (Palincsar, 1998). Such research is often described as phenomenological and supports the notion that though meaning occurs socially, we make meaning of a situation individually (Van Manen, 1990). This study presupposes that social interactions, cultural characteristics and norms, biological response mechanisms, and cognition all interact in complex ways in order to produce emotions and subsequent emotional expressions.

Teaching is a profession that is highly charged with emotion and intense social interactions. Furthermore, an individual teacher will form beliefs, views, and passions based on professional and personal interactions associated with the teaching profession. In response to pre-service training and preparation as well as professional experience, teachers develop a deeply emotional relationship with their work (Nias, 1996). Hargreaves (1998) argues that teaching and learning are irretrievably emotional operations resulting from complex interactions among cultural, social, biological, and cognitive structures. According to Veenman (1984), experienced
problems and pressures are subjectively perceived by teachers and result in highly situational emotional experiences.

Even with the social nature of education professions, governmental mandates aim to standardize classrooms across the country. The result of such standardization is, in a sense, dehumanizing the schools, the classrooms, and the teachers. Van Manen (1990) speaks to this dehumanization as he writes,

…the language by way of which teachers are encouraged to interpret themselves and reflect on themselves living with children is thoroughly imbued by hope, and yet it is almost exclusively a language of doing – it lacks being. We do not know how to talk of our being with children as a being present with hope for these children. The language of objectives, aims, teacher expectations, intended learning outcomes, goals, or ends in view is a language of hope out of which hope itself has been systematically purged. The language of aims and objectives, therefore, is a language of hopeless hope. (pp. 122-123)

Rather than conformity to a specific theoretical philosophy of teaching, learning, and associated affective issues, this study will be guided by a ‘situative’ perspective. The term situative is discussed by Borko (2004) as in relation to learning as the “changes in participation in socially organized activities, and individuals’ use of knowledge as an aspect of their participation in social practices” (pg. 4). Using a situative perspective toward research will allows for multiple conceptual perspectives and multiple units of analysis. An individual teacher can be used as a unit of analysis and a group of associated individuals can be examined from a specific social context for the purpose of understanding influencing social factors (Borko, 2004). In reference to teacher emotion, an argument can be made for the highly situational aspect of the profession, and the deeply subjective nature of subsequent emotional expression. A plethora of factors (cultural, contextual, cognitive, social, and biological) can interact to shape the emotional experiences and emotional demonstrations (Emotional intelligence, EQ) of any practicing teacher.
Summary

One primary function of emotion is the way an individual coordinates social interactions (Anderson, Dacher, & Oliver, 2003). Individuals use social experiences to construct and re-construct personal interpretations of the world and develop mechanisms for managing the emotional terrain of educational organizations. Through a complex association of cognitive and social processes, teachers must manipulate their own emotions while effectively controlling the emotions of the student (Palmer, 1997). Research of human emotion has increased over the past three decades, yet the amount of professional literature relating emotion to the teaching profession is still lacking (Zembylas, 2004). This chapter summarized the research related to characterizations of ‘emotion’, presenting possibilities to learn about and support teachers’ emotions in their professional practices.

On the one hand, it is challenging to describe the nature of “emotion” as a research phenomenon. Just as ‘emotion’ is a difficult thing to describe, it is accordingly a challenging phenomenon to research. Notwithstanding, Chapter III presents the research methodology and methods of this study.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

“…life – as we come to it and as it comes to others – is filled with narrative fragments, enacted stories, moments of time and space, and reflected upon and understood in terms of narrative unities and discontinuities.”
(Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; p.17)

Introduction

“Methodology” is defined in the Merriam-Webster online dictionary (2010) as “a body of methods, rules, and postulates employed by a discipline; a particular procedure or set of procedures; the analysis of the principles or procedures of inquiry in a particular field”. The methodology used for this study is qualitative in nature. Differences between qualitative and quantitative methodologies are clear. According to Bogdan and Biklen (2003), qualitative inquiry offers a range of alternative methods that can solicit a range of cultural and intellectual resources from teachers and students. While quantitative methods focus on causal relationships, qualitative methods focus on the exploration of human behaviors for the purpose of understanding human actions through observational data collection and interpretive philosophy (Ryans-Nicholls & Will, 2009). Granting that such significant variations exist between qualitative and quantitative studies, the distinction between qualitative methods often seem less conspicuous. These subtle yet important discrepancies in methodology communicate the underlying assumptions of the researcher (Arellano, et. al., 2001). Based on the nature of the research questions and a belief that cultural, historical, experiential, and contextual influences all contribute to an individual’s sense of meaning and perspective, a narrative approach was used in
order to communicate the viewpoints of the participating teachers as accurately and contextually as possible.

The qualitative narrative research methods at the heart of this research are founded on an interpretive philosophical approach and based on a social constructivist framework. Interpretive philosophy encompasses a broad range of paradigms concerned with the personal experiences of humans and the ways in which these experiences influence subjective interpretations of the world (Williamson, 2006). Constructivism, the epistemological paradigms underpinning interpretivist philosophy, suggests that individuals construct meaning through social interactions with others. Personal meanings and understandings can be negotiated socially and historically through the combination of previous and present experiences (Creswell, 2007). Narrative inquiry as the research methodology was chosen in order to depict more accurate and contextualized ‘stories’ of the experienced participants as they communicate ‘cases’ of teacher emotion and their associated actions and reactions in addition to personal reflections and possible coping strategies. Thus, narrative methodology is central to the study methodology in several ways: it reflects an epistemological constructivist assumption in that teacher learning, as is all learning, is regarded as storied, research data and analysis is generated from the storied position of the researcher, and the desire to readily engage audiences in learning with/from teachers through cases as storied forms.

Drawing from multiple data sources helped the researcher to articulate the views and experiences of the participants concerning emotional labor and emotional situations in the classroom. Multiple data sources were utilized in order to triangulate data and limit bias and subjectivity on the part of the researcher. Though the theoretical stance of the researcher and the very nature of qualitative research methods imply a certain unavoidable level of subjective
interpretation, every attempt was made to minimize the personal perceptions of the researcher and more accurately depict those of the participants.

**Narrative Research Methods**

According to Czarniawska (2004), a narrative can be defined as “a spoken or written text giving an account of an event/action, or series of events/actions, chronologically connected” (p.17). Narrative research originates in literature, history, sociology, anthropology, education, and sociolinguistics, but related methodology has been adopted by and adapted for a multitude of fields (Creswell, 2005). The narrative approach for data collection and analysis is typically far from an ordination of pre-planned steps defining common systematic studies. The processes of data generation and interpretation related to narrative research generally occurs through the elicitation, analysis and crafting of narrative re-presentations. The progression is ongoing—what Clandinin and Connelly (2000) regard as wakefulness inquiry (p. 184). The re-presentations or “study findings” are generated throughout the data collection and analyses are a result of the reflexive nature of narrative analysis --a storied and storying process of meaning making, and as a holistic human experience having a dynamic and fluid wholeness organized in the researcher’s consciousness (Zeller, 1995).

**Context of the Study**

The context of this study is outlined below including the geographical and educational setting, researcher background as relevant to this research, and descriptions of the participating teachers. The study will begin by working with three teachers to generate “cases” of emotion, which will be used to generate discussion of the impact of the unavoidable emotional terrain and associated emotional labor within educational organizations. Accordingly, the setting where the teachers currently work is described first.
Geographic Setting of the Researcher and Teachers

The study will begin by drawing on the stories of teachers employed in the town of “Karylston”. Karylston is a small town located in “Plane County” in the southeastern state of Georgia. Though a relatively small metro area of a much larger nearby city, Karylston is the county seat. Karylston has an estimated population of 2,122 with approximately 800 households and an estimated average of 2.39 members per household. The ethnic make-up of Karylston is predominantly White, having populations of nearly 98.6% Caucasian, 1.4% Hispanic or Latino, 0.4% Black or African American, and nearly absent representations of “other”.

The median household income of Karylston is $34,612.00 which is just over $8,000.00 below the median household income for the state. Estimations of household values suggest that Karylston’s median home cost is $71,300.00 (approximately $30,000.00 below the state median). 62.8% of Karylston’s population is in the labor force, and an estimated 10.5% are classified at living below poverty level. Of people residing in Karylston who are 25 years of age or older, 34.0% have a high school diploma, 4.5% hold an associate’s degree, 6.7% have attained a bachelor’s degree, and 3.8% hold a graduate level or professional degree.

Plane County (where Karylston is located) is one of 159 counties in the state. In 2004 the population of Plane County was estimated to be 16,233. The population of Plane County has increased by 5.53% over the last 3 years. The median household income for the entire county is $35,259.00. In 2002, the per capita personal income in Plane County was $21,463. This was an increase of 21.6% from 1997. The 2002 figure was 69% of the national per capita income, which was $30,906 (ePodunk, 2010; U.S. Census Bureau, 2011; Georgia Department of Education, 2010).

1 Pseudonyms are used through this study to protect the identities of study participants and associated institutions.
The numerical re-presentations of Karylston and the larger region of Plane County provided above fall short of characterizing the context of life in this area. Photos taken in the Plane County area would likely feature images of rolling hills and mountain landscapes. The town, and even the county, is known by characteristics similarly found in many small, rural, southern areas. If you were to speak with residents, a majority would probably say they had lived in Karylston all of their life and planned to remain there. Located in close proximity to two bordering states, a multitude of advertisements encourage travelers to stop and purchase lottery tickets. A great deal of history is displayed on monuments and historical markers throughout the area suggesting a sense of community and pride associated with the town’s past. Many local residents can be found operating small businesses that have often been handed down through multiple generations. Children and adolescents can frequently be found talking or playing at a local park featuring several baseball fields and a playground. Typically, such social congregating is lacking adult supervision suggesting feelings of security. The majority of dwellings in the area are modest in appearance yet well maintained. Reports of those visiting or passing through would propose that Karylston is a “friendly” and “welcoming” town.

**Education Contexts of the Teachers’ School**

The Plane County School System consists of two elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. There are approximately 2,456 students enrolled in Plane County in grades PK-12. Between 2001 and 2005, the system reported a 4.2% high school drop-out rate. During the 2007-2008 school year, Plane County met 7 of 9 performance indicators and failed to reach adequate yearly progress (AYP). The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) certified 4 of 4 schools in Plane County as ‘accredited with quality’. Approximately 500 student
families were identified as needing governmental assistance with purchasing lunches and/or food for the home (Georgia Department of Education, 2010).

Plane County maintains a 9:1 teacher/administrator ratio, a 9:1 teacher/support personnel ratio, a 4:1 teacher/staff ratio, and a 15:1 student/all teacher ratio. The average experience of Plane County administrators is 23.5 years, average experience level of teachers is 15.03 years, and the average experience of support personnel is 17.79 years. Average annual salaries for administrators and teachers in Plane County are $72,528.22 and $55,293.95 respectively (ePodunk, 2010; U.S. Census Bureau, 2011; Georgia Department of Education, 2010).

**Researcher Background Relevant to the Study**

I have been teaching in public schools for eleven years. I began my undergraduate training at a small Junior College neighboring my hometown. After earning an Associate’s Degree in Secondary Education in 1997, I achieved my Bachelor of Science in Education from Northsouth State University in 2001-- a relatively small four-year institution, also located reasonably close to my home, with a long history for teacher training in the state. I subsequently worked as a teacher for five years before beginning graduate level study at the University of Southeastern USA-- one of my home state’s top tier research institutions. In 2006 I completed the requirements for a Master of Art degree in education and quickly earned the degree of Educational Specialist in 2007. In 2008 I achieved certification in Educational Leadership and have since worked toward my Doctorate of Philosophy in Curriculum and Instruction.

Throughout my time in the field of education I have worked at both the middle and high school levels and have taught a wide range of students varying from academically disabled to gifted. My career consists of experience in three separate and very different educational settings. My initial employment was in an extremely low income area. The school was very small, housed
grades kindergarten through eight, and was labeled as an “elementary school” by the school system. My second experience was in a school housing only grades 6 through 8 and was in all respects a “middle school”. This school was located in one of the most prosperous areas of our county and the majority of the student population came from families who were financially stable and emotionally supportive. The third school with which I have experience is of medium size and includes students in grade seven through twelve. Categorized as a “high school”, the experiences encountered in this setting differ significantly from the previously mentioned school organizations.

While experiencing three very different teaching situations (including grade levels, socio-economic status, and organizational differences) I began to notice similarities in the emotional aspects of teaching. Emotional factors seemed to be a concern for all teachers in all subject areas and at all grade levels. While my experiences of learning to teach through the university teacher education program are somewhat more distant to my memories, I can readily recall the emotions of uncertainty, fear, anxiety, confusion, and overwhelm that characterized my initial steps into the classroom as “teacher”. My range of experiences is related to the proposed study and will be reflected in the initiation of data generation and interpretation. The location of the study and the selection of teacher participants reflect the strengths for conducting a “trustworthy” qualitative study, which addresses the following criteria: prolonged engagement, peer debriefing, member checks, triangulation, and audit trail (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, Allen, 1993; Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p.105-117).

Accordingly, classroom teachers considered for this study were teachers whom I have known for 30-35 years. Prolonged relationships with each of the participants essentially proved to create a more relaxed atmosphere and solicit more accurate descriptions of emotional
experiences due to the trust already established. This research was aimed at gaining authentic insights of the participants through informal interviews conducted in the home or work place of the participant, or another mutually agreed upon location comfortable for the participant. Additionally, flexibility in scheduling observations, interviews, and informal discussions helped ensure that each teacher-participant felt comfortable sharing the intimate details of emotional experiences (both past and present) encountered during their career.

**Study Participants—Purposeful Samples**

McMillan (1995) described *purposeful sampling* as the selection of a small number of information-rich individuals based on the researcher’s interests and the questions guiding the study. Creswell (2005) identified four techniques of purposeful sampling: (1) extreme/deviant: selection of exaggerated examples of a phenomenon; (2) intensity: cases may or may not be severe representations of a phenomenon, but participants are chosen based on deep and extensive experience; (3) maximum variety: selection of participants or cases attempts to identify commonalities among a varying degree of perspectives; and (4) critical cases: cases are initially included based on experience and additional cases are added as data is analyzed in order to confirm or contrast research findings. Such qualitative methods of selecting participants or cases are not random and do not claim to produce highly generalizable outcomes but rather aim to communicate the *lived experiences* of a small number of individuals studied in-depth (Connelly & Clandinin, 2000; Creswell, 2007, Creswell, 2005). Consequently, the participants for this study were three highly experienced, practicing teachers. These participants were not regarded as a *sample* (a positivistic assumption), rather they “purposefully selected”, due to the range of experience among the three, the multiple educational settings in which the participants have worked, and the success of each career as teachers (intensive purposeful selection).
The selection of participants was purposeful. Emerging from a phenomenological foundation, the researcher attempted to solicit participation from those who may have had the most extensive experience from which to ultimately develop narrative based stories. Participant selection was based on the following conditions: (1) the teachers had to have extensive experience in the teaching profession (preferably more than 30 years) in order to demonstrate the desire for a continual career in education, (2) the participating teachers must have experience with a wide range of students at the elementary, middle, and high school levels, (3) the participants must have had experience with a varying degree of student achievement levels from those labeled as ‘gifted’ to those categorized as severe and profound, (4) participants must not have spent the totality of their careers employed by a single school or school system, (5) all participating teachers must be willing to participate in interview sessions, follow up interviews, group discussions, and multiple observations by the research, (6) participants should have a prolonged relationship with the researcher in order to establish trust and ease of discussion, and (7) the teachers must be accessible to the researcher for an extended period of time in order to deeply investigate the practices, experiences, and reflections related to the study (Conciecao-Runlee, 2001). Knowing that social, cultural, biological, ethnic, and geographical realities combine and influence a person’s reality, the selection criteria for this study aimed to limit participation to those with the potential for sharing the greatest amount of emotional experiences based on a varying degree of professional teaching experience over the greatest amount of time.

In order to implore participating teachers meeting the selection criteria for this investigation, solicitation flyers providing an overview of the study purpose, research questions, and general methodology were distributed in teacher mailboxes located in several schools within the target geographical range. Solicitation flyers contained researcher contact information and
instructions for communicating an interest in participation. Teachers responding to the flyer were then screened in order to confirm that selection criteria had been met. Eventually, the emergence of a group of three veteran teachers who currently lived near the researcher and travelled together daily to work became an important and identified community recognized by the researcher as a worthy area of research. Upon final selection of the three teacher participants, each was personally contacted by the researcher to secure participation in the study.

As the methods of data generation were considered and re-considered for this investigation, the decision was made to include the stories of the three selected teachers based on a number of factors. Each was initially chosen due to a willingness to participate and extensive professional experience. Due to the highly personal and emotional nature of the research topic, prolonged association with the researcher was essential to the trust that must have been established between the researcher and the participating teachers. Furthermore, the relationships that had long since been established among the three teachers offered the possibility for a deeper understanding of the coping strategies these teachers had adopted in their careers and the importance of a support network that can help individual teachers endure the changing and evolving characteristics that are a signature of American public educational organizations.

The extensive experience represented by the three participating teachers offered reflections and insights from both past and current operations of school organizations. Additionally, the three participants for this study were selected based on researcher access. The researcher became interested in the ways this small ‘community’ collectively and individually navigated the emotional terrain of their educational career-ways. All three teachers have worked in at least two different school systems and in two different states throughout the course of their
careers in education. Currently, all three are employed by the same school system though in different types of positions and at different grade levels.

**Participant 1: Emory.** The first participant, Emory, has been teaching for 34 years and has taught at every grade level and every subject area from pre-K to 12\textsuperscript{th} grade. Additionally, Emory has worked with a wide range of students from ‘gifted’ to those classified as ‘severe and profound’. Working as a classroom teacher for 28 years, she has experienced full inclusion, pull-out programs, self-containment, and team teaching. In addition to Emory’s experience as a classroom teacher, she has also worked in direct supervision of other teachers. Emory is currently employed as a Transition and Intervention Specialist. Upon taking this position, she moved from one state to another and was required to learn a different set of state guidelines and laws associated with public education. She has been in her current position for 6 years and is required to serve as a system director for credit recovery, transition programs, and as graduation coach among other responsibilities. She serves students from age three through age twenty-one. In addition to daily interactions with students, Emory also works closely with teachers and provides an avenue of communication between the Special Education Coordinator and the Special Education Teachers. She often directs training and professional development for teachers and oversees the new teacher mentoring program within her school system.

**Participant 2: Lily.** Lily is the second participant selected for this research. Lily has been working in education for 37 years and also has experience teaching students at multiple grade levels and in multiple subject areas. Like Emory, Lily also has experience with students with varying degrees of intelligence. She spent many years as an elementary classroom teacher before obtaining her certification and subsequent employment as a school counselor. She currently works as a liaison within a large school system encompassing two elementary schools,
one middle school and one high school. She travels between the schools and assists teachers with
the implementation of curriculum.

**Participant 3: Jaye.** The third participant, Jaye has worked in the field of education for
34 years. She began her career as an itinerant homebound teacher where she worked for 5 years.
This experience taught Jaye a lot of things about the education profession since no true
guidelines governed the position and she regularly moved from classroom, to home, to hospitals
depending on the needs of the individual students. Jaye’s desire was to work with students who
had communicative disorders. This led to her second professional position as a resource teacher
for deaf/hearing impaired and multi-handicapped preschoolers. This position required that she
teach all developmental levels of academics as well as Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy,
and Adaptive Physical Education. After 3 years, Jaye transferred to a small school in a rural area
of the county in which she lived. She had become a mother and wanted to work in a ‘less
stressful situation’. Similar to both Emory and Lily, Jaye has worked at all grade levels and in
every subject area throughout her career. She was raised by two deaf parents and learned to sign
before she learned to talk. This has equipped her to work in her current position as an educator of
hearing impaired students. She works closely with other teachers in order to maximize the
educational experience for the students.

Each participant is currently employed by the Plane County School System, which is
approximately 100 miles from my current residence and place of employment. Though I have
known the participants for many years, I have never worked with any of them. The teacher-
participants, though all employed in different positions, travel quite a distance to work each day
and have established ‘car-pool’ practices in order to share responsibility for the transportation to
and from work. During the data collection process, I will spend some time travelling to and from
work with the participants, making observations throughout the course of a day with each of them, and schedule meeting times after work hours for interviews, discussions, and subsequent inquiries. The time spent travelling to and from work with the participants, the researcher will simply conform to the role of silent observer.

**Study Methods**

**Data Generation for Triangulation**

Narrative research provides an avenue for investigation and reflection on one or multiple situations that emerge as a result of inquiry (Creswell, 2007). Yin (1987), defines “case study research” as an empirical inquiry investigating a complex phenomenon in real-life contexts using multiple sources of data. Planning for multiple methods of data generation and analysis was desired as this would better enable the rendering of deeply descriptive narratives of multiple perspectives that could be represented and would add to the current body of knowledge concerning teacher emotions and educational emotional labor.

As suggested by Creswell (2007), multiple types of data were generated to support interpretive data *triangulation*—substantiating the researcher’s insights through multiple vantage points and enriching the quality of the study. A data matrix (Figure 1) indicates the multiple data sources generated and their relevance to the study questions. A brief description of each data sources is provided, with further description about process for generating data in a following section.
### Researcher Journal

An interpretive journal was maintained by the researcher throughout the entire study. The journal included field note entries, reflections, impressions, and other information pertinent to my research questions. The purpose of the researcher’s journal was to record initial observations and notes for more in-depth narrative writing at a later time. This journal was also used as a way to record “memos” of personal observations throughout the process of data generation. Additionally, the researcher journal was a place to record additional documental findings (e.g., written accounts of instruction standards guiding the teaching practices of the participants, policies and procedures associated with the professional positions of the participants) and personal impressions of such. Finally, the researcher journal was a tool for quickly recording of observable, unspoken communication (e.g., notable utterance styles, body movement, and facial expressions).

### Figure 1: Data Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guiding Study Questions:</th>
<th>Data Sources:</th>
<th>Researcher’s Journal</th>
<th>Teacher’s Case Writing Journal</th>
<th>Individual Teacher Meeting Transcripts</th>
<th>Teacher Group Meeting Transcripts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) What might veteran teachers describe as emotional experiences they deem to be important to their classroom teaching practices?</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) In what ways might a teacher’s navigation of emotional experiences contribute to their proficient classroom practices?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) How might cases of teacher emotion be useful for professional teacher learning?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Case-based Journal Writing

Teachers were provided writing guidelines (Appendix C) for composing “open” and “closed” cases. Teachers were encouraged to use any means of writing in their journal writing about impressions and experiences they saw as emotionally significant to their teaching practices. They could have written in a diary format, composed poems, drawn schematic diagrams, created sketches, etc. The only “constraint” they were given was to focus entries on issues they saw as relevant to their “emotions”. They were encouraged use their journal entries to translate these into open or closed emotion cases.

Audio Journaling

In addition to a written journal, each participant was given an audio recorder to use in situations for which an immediate emotional reaction or experience should have been recorded due to the benefit in situ responses could provide to this study. Teachers were encouraged to later use audio tapes as a basis for their written case compositions; these tapes were not transcribed for use by the researcher. Though the audio journals were an attempt at capturing emotion in the present sense (as it occurred), this particular attempt of data generation proved to be a less than productive method of information gathering. The purpose of including this type of data collection instrument was to establish the differences in emotional expressions, control, and reactions as they occurred rather than how participants might present the same occurrence through a more reflective lens once the individual teacher’s situation had changed and they were able to employ reason and thought more readily than when involved directly in an emotionally charged situation. This of inquiry remains a supported method of data generation in future studies that may be of similar nature, but more care should be taken to ensure the participants utilize this
form of apprehension in order to quickly record emotional reactions and thoughts surrounding specific situations within the professional realm as quickly as possible following the event.

**Group Meeting Transcripts**

All group discussions were audio recorded to enable transcript analysis. There are two types of recorded group meetings. The first type involved only the researcher and three classroom teachers. The second type of group recording collected occurred during commute time from the teachers’ home communities to their current work community. Though the researcher was present during the recording of the conversations during commuting times, the role of the researcher was always ‘silent observer’. The nature of discussions with the classroom teachers during regular group meetings focused on case writings as well as analytical aspects, clarification of data already collected, and peer-debriefing.

**Study Phases of Data Generation**

This study featured two major phases as summarized in Figure 2. Phase 1 involved working with classroom teachers to generate emotion cases, and Phase 2 provided opportunity to solicit additional information concerning specific situations and instances noted during data collection and to engage in peer-debriefing with the three classroom teachers to gain their insights and responses to the researcher’s draft interpretation of the overall study. Each phase is described in the following section in terms of how participants were involved in data generation; while description of data analysis procedures is presented in a following section, data analysis was an ongoing process throughout the study.
Phase 1: Generating Emotion Cases with Classroom Teachers

One of the challenges of the study was to consider how to work with teachers to generate cases about their emotions. Given the emotional basis of this study, consideration was given to provide support to the teachers as they would be writing and talking about their emotions. The creative composition of writing cases also needed support in terms of encouraging topics teachers might consider and their capacity to look back in time and/or within their present and emerging circumstances. Accordingly, Phase 1 was designed with the intent to inspire teachers’ authorship of cases and foster collegial support for their personal and group reflective experiences.

Classroom Teacher Historical/Background Interview and Observations. Following the implementation of procedures to recruit study participants and obtain proper human consent documentation; an individual meeting with each of the experienced teachers was scheduled in order to further communicate methods of data collection and analysis. A time (approximately 15-
20 minutes) convenient for each participant was scheduled for the initial interview session. The goal of the interview session was to establish participant’s historical and biographical information pertinent to the focus of this study. For this reason, an interview protocol was provided for the participants approximately a week before the actual interview. Sample questions for the initial/historical interview session can be found in Appendix A.

After the Initial Interview, short informal observations of professional activities of each participant were made throughout the day. The purpose of the observations was to gain a better conceptual understanding of the context of the participants’ professional responsibilities, and to establish a visualization of the physical environment(s) with which each participant was associated. During the observational process, interesting encounters that may have been relevant to the research questions were recorded in the researcher’s journal. Such encounters occurred with students, other teachers, administrators, parents, or other stakeholders. Careful attention was given to physical gestures, facial expressions, voice fluctuations, and body cues exhibited by the participants. A record was kept of the physical environment, schedule/routine of the participant, and observed professional responsibilities of each teacher. Throughout the observation, the initial impressions, interpretations, and thoughts of the researcher were included in the research journal.

During each observation, any reference material available was being collected/reviewed in relation to the guiding research questions. For example, State course of study standards, and evaluation documents associated with performance expectations placed on teachers. Other data sources provided broader contextual insights were also collected, including: school handbooks, various education system policies, student regulations, initiatives and programs embraced by the school or system
Teacher Meeting 1: Introduction to Emotion Case Writing and Group Discussion. Following the initial interview and completion of informal observations, the researcher scheduled a time to meet informally with all three teachers. The goal of the first group meeting was to introduce teachers to case-based pedagogy (Arrellano, Barcenal, Bilbao, Castellano, Nichols, & Tippins, 2001; Nichols & Tippins, 2004). A model of a teacher written ‘case’ (See Appendix B) was shared, followed by nearly 20 minutes of group discussion of the case. The case discussions had a basic 3-part structure:

1) Identification of dilemma(s) in the case
2) Exploration of ways teachers could deal with the issue(s)
3) Consideration about how the case reflection process was important to their professional success.

This activity in the first meeting served as a means for supporting participants in writing their own ‘emotion cases’ –stories featuring specific emotional instances each participant deemed significant in their successful teaching career. Each teacher was encouraged to compose at least 5 emotion cases in a written journal; one case would be selected by the researcher (case facilitator) to be shared at the group meetings. The group discussions were recorded to enable transcript analysis. Two more group meetings lasting approximately one hour each were conducted for case-based sharing.

Phase 2: Study Closure and Peer Debriefing

The final phase involved meeting with the three classroom teachers to discuss the researcher’s study –a narrative draft interpretation. The meeting was oriented for debriefing peers to ascertain the extent to which they deemed the study as having ‘plausibility’. As well, the group explored concerns and issues associated with the emotional aspects of the teaching
profession as they pertained to the study research questions to capture the suggestions and reflections of the participating teachers concerning case-based pedagogy and implications for professional training and development. A small portion of the meeting time was reserved for clarification as needed concerning the selected narratives used for the initial narrative draft interpretation presented by the researcher.

**Qualitative Paradigms - Guided by Emergent Methods**

The specific questions and/or methods of generating data were further determined based on the results of initial observations and identification of areas in need of clarification. Due to the nature of narrative research and case-based pedagogy (Arrellano, et al, 2001, Nichols & Tippins, 2004) investigation, such data collection methods and questions cannot be explicitly described prior to the beginning of the study (Rosenberg & Yates, 2007). According to Patton (1990), the emergent nature of qualitative research and the goal of observing and interpreting in context imply that attempts to finalize research strategies prior to data collection are both impossible and inappropriate. Though there seems to be a pull toward scientifically based research in education resulting from legislation such as No Child Left Behind (NCLB), this study could not conform to the regulatory hypothesis-testing models distinctive of quantitative research. Unlike “scientific research”, the qualitative methods used for this research called for the investigation of emergent themes rather than the deductive testing of a particular and often well-defined hypothesis (Kleining & Witt, 2001). It is upon these themes that the researcher developed additional interview questions and data generation methods in order to fully understand and respond to the guiding research questions (Bogdon, R.C. & Biklin, S.K., 1982).

Many scholars are calling for research methodologies that are appropriate to understand contextualized aspects of teacher’s practices and professional development (Borko, 2004).
Though the research methods are somewhat pre-designed to ensure study validity and ethical practices, the nature of the inquiry remained “emergent” to allow for -in-situ sense making by the researcher and participants. In this way, the researcher could provide a more accurate description of the lived experiences of the participants. The theories or insights gained through the research as well as specific methods for data generation were emergent from the initial phases of data collection/generation (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

**Risks and Ethical Concerns**

Anonymity is a concern raised again and again with qualitative research. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) suggest that with narrative writing and case study research (as with all qualitative designs) the researcher becomes visible in the “told stories” and indicates the possibility of the appearance of own “unnamed and sometimes secret stories” in the description of the participant experiences. The researcher assumed that the information gained from participating teachers was truthful and accurate. Knowing full well that reality is experienced individually, accurate depiction of lived experience is subjective in nature. Every attempt was made to secure the anonymity of the participants, and whenever possible, participant information was verified.

**Data Analysis and Interpretation**

A ‘constant comparison method’ for qualitative analysis was used for this study (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Such a procedure for analysis is typically used to promote the generation of a novel theory by taking data and breaking it down into more manageable pieces. These pieces are then organized, over time, into larger categories or dimensions based on emergent themes (as discussed in the previous section (Keckler, Moriarty, and Blagen, 2008)).
The data analysis in this study was divided into four stages, the first being initial analysis followed by three levels of coding. Analysis began with the first interviews and subsequent meetings and observations. This phase of analysis was in the form of field notes and the general interpretations of the researcher as the interviews/observations/discussions took place. Similar analysis procedures were used for each data set. The results of the first level of analysis were used during phase two to assist with the development of specific codes (or categories of information). Additional interpretations were made during this level of analysis using field notes, audio recordings, and interview transcription. During the transcription process, comments about certain responses, specific journal entries, or observational experiences were written in the margin of the transcript, and the field notes collected during the interview were added to the comments on the transcript.

The second phase of the analysis process is often called, ‘open coding’. Open coding includes identifying and assigning categorical titles to emerging information (Creswell, 2007). Through this process, key information was assigned a ‘title’ or ‘category’. These codes were then used during phase three of the analysis process, axial coding. During this phase, the identified codes were pulled together into more inclusive categories. This level of analysis attempted to pull together the themes of each interview, observation, journal, and audio file in an effort to identify commonalities.

The final level of data analysis was selective coding. During this phase, the qualitative researcher generally takes the codes generated during axial coding and begins piecing the themes together (Creswell, 2007). In this study, selective coding began by sketching a concept map of codes and ideas previously identified. Once connections between the data were made, a more linear representation could be created. This allowed the researcher to focus more clearly on the
selected themes and begin exploration of the information as it related to the initial research questions and purpose of the study. Data was organized according to broader themes or ideas that emerged. In some cases, a sub-category was assigned for clarification purposes and certain instances were identified as variations of the initial codes assigned.

The analysis process began as soon as the data collection phase was initiated. Analysis continued throughout the course of the study. Once data collection was completed, an additional semester was used for further analysis, triangulation, and writing of the research report. The extra time allotted for further analysis procedures provided the time needed to insure that the interpretations and conclusions drawn from the data were (as much as is possible) solely generated from the perceptions of the participants.

Creditability/Dependability of the Study

Qualitative research, in all forms, accepts the subjective nature of any study. Knowing that the researcher can never be fully ‘removed’ from the research, as discussed in previous sections, attempts were made throughout the study to recognize and separate the expressions and reflections of the participants from the interpretations of the researcher. It would be impossible to claim disconnect between the researcher interpretations and the research findings. Consequently, several methods were used throughout the data collection and analysis to increase credibility/dependability, while remaining conscious of the inevitable intermingling of perceptions (those of the teacher participants, the researcher, the pre-service teachers, and the reader).

First, during the transcription process, field notes and personal interpretations of the researcher were included (bracketed) on the transcripts. By recognizing the interpretations of the researcher up-front, this served as an attempt to distinguish actual data from personal
interpretations of the researcher. A set of guiding “symbols” was established and he included with the transcript. Open coding was conducted multiple times for each piece of collected datum and each occurred independently of the other attempting to utilize different “coding symbols” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Creswell, 2005).

The researcher and three participating teachers spent a portion of each meeting time discussing emotional issues and implications these issues may have for teachers. During the final stage of data generation and analysis, the group met for a “peer debriefing” session. A narrative draft was presented to the participating teachers in order to stimulate further discussion and suggestions or future professional development and teacher training. Additionally, this time was used to ensure that the narrative draft accurately communicated the teachers’ own experienced emotions, reflections, and reactions.

Other methods of increasing dependability included rereading important portions of the interview sessions, field notes, journal entries, and transcripts multiple times and communicating with the participants in order to ensure that the conclusions drawn were not generated in the mind of the researcher. Such methods are suggested by Corbin and Strauss (2008). The organized data from each observation, interview session, or other alternate account of data generation were returned to the participants for review and subsequent alterations were made as needed. Though qualitative research by nature carries with it a certain level of personal interpretation on the part of the researcher, every attempt was made to ensure that each “case” was communicated accurately from the lived experiences of the participants. Copies of resulting narratives were provided for the practicing teachers contributing to the study for additional review and validation. During the composition phase of this research careful attention was given to the communication of the implications for future research, significant limitations identified
during the study, and possible conclusions to be tested for accurate generalizations (where possible) to multiple contexts (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

**Transferability**

Qualitative research is not typically approached with intent for generalization since qualitative studies (and more specifically case studies) are purposed for communicating lived experiences within highly contextual situations. Though generalizability may not apply, *transferability* of study insights is certainly a goal of this research. Van Manen (1990), speaks to the transferability of phenomenological studies by proclaiming, “…research is a caring act…we want to know that which is most essential to being” (p.5). It was the hope of the researcher that the development of a novel theory will be the result of this research. The insights gained through the research may be useful for beginning teachers and teacher preparation programs. The discoveries of the study may be of importance for the development of ‘teacher communities’ and aid in professional development for practitioners. With the ultimate aim of providing a ‘voice’ for the participants and communicating as clearly and accurately as possible the stories associated with the emotional experiences of the participating teachers the interpretations and insights will be discussed in relation to any possible implications for current practice and future research endeavors.

**Summary**

Chapter III has provided an overview of the proposed research design (as much as can be provided given the nature of qualitative case study research), methods of data collection and analysis, distinguishing characteristics of the research, and possible outcomes that may emerge during the research experience. Common to constructivist research, Chapter IV will communicate the insights gained though the study. Such insights will be a re-presentation of
interpretations of the data generated during collection and analysis. Chapter 5 will summarize the study and specific insights gained in retrospect of the initial guiding research questions, include discussions of the conduct of the research experience, and provide implications for application and future research.
CHAPTER IV
NARRATIVES OF TEACHER EMOTION

Introduction

“There is a new attention across disciplines to narrative knowing-the impulse to story life events into order and meaning.” (Sandelowski, 1991)

Billingley (2004) discussed issues associated with increasing numbers of teachers leaving the profession of education that has become the trend in American schools of all levels. Professional demands, emotional strain, and decreasing amounts of administrative support were among the most commonly expressed motives of those who ultimately pursued alternative career pathways out of teaching. Through narrative reflection, the purpose of this study was to explore ways to learn about emotional dimensions and emotional practices of experienced, successful teachers. As with a majority of qualitative studies, the aim of this research was to acquire in-depth understandings; intimate portraits of information, from a small group of persons rather than drawing from a large, representative sample of a whole population. Furthermore, this study maintained a focus on how and why the participating teachers behave, think, and make meaning as they do rather than what people commonly do and believe on a large scale (Maines, 1983).

Van Manen’s (1990) ‘hermeneutic phenomenological’ approach to human science has been key to the development of methodological framework for this investigation. Such a perspective on re-presentation of human experience subsumes a valid justification for the methods chosen. As mentioned earlier, the collective knowledge—re-presented in this study as narratives—of successful and dedicated veteran teachers, is “far more valuable than any
professional development endeavor or teacher recruitment effort” (National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future, 2009; p.22). Van Manen suggests,

...when we raise questions, gather data, describe phenomenon, and construct textual interpretations, we do so as researchers who stand in the world in a pedagogic way...pedagogy requires a phenomenological sensitivity to lived experience...a hermeneutic ability to make interpretive sense of the phenomena of the lifeworld...[and]...play with language in order to allow the research process of textual reflection to contribute to one’s pedagogical thoughtfulness and tact. (pp.1-2)

According to Van Manen (1990), we study others in order to learn from their experiences. The lives of individuals are stories. “Humans are storytelling organisms who, individually and collectively, lead storied lives. Thus, the study of narrative is the study of the ways humans experience the world” (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; p. 23). Polkinghorne (1998) suggested that information gathered through narratives and subsequently re-presented in narrative forms can be one of the most effective ways to conduct research; especially in the social sciences because human beings are “immersed in narrative”, “telling themselves stories in a virtually uninterrupted monologue” (p. 160) while listening to and recognizing the stories of others within their own story. Sandelowski (1991) established that narratives assume a multitude of forms. “They are heard, seen and read; they are told, performed, painted, sculpted and written. They are international, trans-historical and trans-cultural: simply there, like life itself” (p.162).

Polkinghorne (1988) categorizes narrative research as either descriptive or explanatory. Use of explanatory narrative research, aims to render an account of why something happened. In using descriptive narratives, the researcher seeks to describe a) individual and group narratives of particular life episodes b) conditions under which one storyline prevails over, or coheres or conflicts with another, c) relationships between individual stories and available cultural stock of stories, and d) the role that specific life episodes serve in one’s emplotment of their life. In essence, “lives can be understood, revealed, and transformed, in stories and by the very act of
storytelling” (Sandelowski, 1991; p. 163). The narratives of the participating teachers, as witnessed by the researcher, have been constructed through the amalgamation of interviews, observations, formal and informal discussions with the teachers, journal notes (from both the researcher and the participants), and participant case stories submitted either in writing or orally to the researcher. According to Sears (1991), Narrative inquiry is a method of information gathering both through storytelling and for the purpose of storytelling. Hence, this research is a genuinely narrative representation of three teachers’ experiences with emotional situations associated with their profession.

Moving from Narrative Data Analysis to Re-Presentation

Historical and Specific Narratives

Though the initial time scheduled for the first interview was 15-20 minutes, the time needed for each interview was significantly longer. All three teachers arrived at the interview with pre-planned ideas for discussion based on the protocol they had received. Once each teacher began to describe their own background and experiences in relation to their responses to the interview questions, it seemed as though they began to recognize this as an opportunity to finally discuss their own frustrations, joys, and concerns as educators. A picture of a continually evolving system found within public schools was quickly apparent. It soon became clear that the participants found the involvement of sharing with the researcher as a way of voicing their personal opinions that had for so long been a private part of their lives. Each interview varied in the actual amount of time needed, with Jaye needing the most time (around 1 ½ hours). The opportunity to speak individually with each of the participants prior to the solicitation of specific data proved to be an invaluable resource of foundational information related to this study.
The collective experiences of the three teachers participating in this study provided a volume of valuable insights into the emotional realm of teaching. Each teacher has a record of professional practice in multiple organizational settings and with a wide range of student backgrounds and levels. As with any individual, reflections about personal feelings, actions, and behaviors communicated by the participants almost always occurred following a specific life episode. In selecting participants for this study, the most obvious method of selection may have been to choose teachers with varying degrees of professional experience and employment, however, the expanse of information would have certainly been different.

For the purposes of data presentation, a narrative highlighting and briefly discussing the historical circumstances of each participating teacher prior to any professional experience is given first. The ‘stories’ of the lives of these teachers is important to this research because the way we are raised and the place we experience childhood greatly mediate our emotions. Certainly the life experiences encountered before becoming a teacher will have some impact on the strategies we use to navigate the emotional terrain of the classroom. Following the participant background narratives, specific emotional aspects of the teaching field are addressed through the ‘stories’ or ‘cases’ shared by the teachers over the course of data generation. These specific narratives have been, in some instances, told to the researcher by one of the teachers. On other occasions, insights gained through the case writings, journals, observations, and interviews were compiled to construct a presentable narrative. According to Shulman (1992), teacher cases are a type of narrative used often in teacher education research. These stories typically revolve around some classroom or professional dilemma and have no simple solution; instead, they reflect the complexities and multiple truths of the multifarious social interactions associated with the teaching field. Regardless of the origination of information, each ‘story’ has been verified for
accuracy with the participants. Selection of which discernments to be included in this study was dependent on recurring themes of emotional labor, emotional encounters, and sources of emotional strain associated with the profession of teaching as identified by the participants.

**Schematic Narrative Templates**

Following the specific narratives of the participating teachers, two schematic narrative templates are presented to further address the guiding research questions (Nichols, Tippins, & Morano, 2006). Wertsch (2002) describes schematic narrative templates as those narratives generalizing characteristics from a broad range of narratives---stories that encompass shared, recurring constants found across specific narratives. Wertsch explains that narrative templates are schematic by nature because they are concerned with more abstract and generalized insights. Furthermore, the notion of template is included in Wertsch’s writings because such abstract structures tend to be the underlying theme of multiple specific narratives. Inherently, schematic narrative templates are “not readily available to consciousness” (Wertsch, 2002; p. 62).

Initially, the underlying themes associated with the emotional experiences of the participating teachers were difficult to understand. As a teacher, emotional engagement with each story told and each experience described was inevitable for the researcher, but returning to the analysis process and attempting to pull the individual specific narratives together to address the guiding research questions posed a new problem. By re-reading each narrative and concurrently looking at the many other instances of generated data, recognition of more complex and abstract patterns within the stories of the three teachers became more apparent (Nichols, Tippins, & Morano, 2006).

The development of the schematic narrative templates ensued as the stories and touchstone events were compared both to each other and to the interim data associated with this
study (e.g., researcher notes, interview transcripts, recorded discussions). The comparison process was an attempt to simulate a cross-case (cross-story) analysis as described by Merriam (1998). The cross-case analysis was aimed at the discovery of patterns within cases and across events. Reading and re-reading the stories of the participating teachers and the interim texts that were not included in the final research report allowed the researcher to more specifically address the remaining research questions guiding this study.

**Historical Life Narratives of the Participating Teachers**

**Participant 1: Emory**

Emory was raised in an extremely rural part of Alabama and spent the majority of her childhood on a farm. She was the youngest of seven children born to parents who worked hard each day in order to maintain a 70+ acre farm consisting of cotton, dairy cows, pigs, vegetables, corn, & a saw mill. Farming was the primary source of family income but the saw mill provided a means of generating extra income during tough economic times and throughout the Great Depression. Emory’s four oldest siblings were, like many other young adults growing up in the area at the time, unable to complete high school due to the family’s need for extra help with the labor at home. Emory and her two immediately older siblings considered themselves very fortunate to obtain their high school diplomas.

Emory’s father was shot and subsequently died when she was only three months old leaving her mother alone to manage the farm and the remaining five children still at home. Less than a year after the death of her father, Emory’s mom was forced to go to work for a local spinning mill in order to survive. Emory’s maternal grandmother moved into the home to help care for the children. The oldest children still at home successfully kept the farm functional for about two years before being forced to reduce both size and diversity of the family plantation.
Some of Emory’s childhood memories include spending a great deal of each day outside playing with brothers, sisters, cousins, nieces, nephews, and other children from the surrounding community. Emory does not look back at her childhood and remember being ‘poor’ but rather that she always had what she needed and was well taken care of. She always felt loved and the support of her family is something she still considers to be one of the greatest influences on who she is today.

Once she finished high school, Emory went to work for about a year as she struggled to decide the direction her life should take. Feeling as if college was not the best option for her, she made the ultimate decision to join the Air Force a little over a year after graduation. This choice took Emory all over the world, led her to meet the man she would marry and form a family with, and helped her develop a vision of what she wanted for her own life. While still enlisted, Emory married her husband, Sam while stationed in Misawa, Japan. After the wedding they began their life together in California where they resided for about 2 years having the first of two daughters. Quickly after the birth of their first daughter, the couple moved to Florida for a couple of years before returning to Emory’s hometown in Alabama where they still live today. Emory and Sam have currently been married for 38 years and have two grown daughters and four grandchildren.

While living in Florida, Emory initially had a desire to be a Biologist and began her first semester of college. To help with their expenses, she began working at a private school for exceptional preschoolers. Among her students were children classified as ‘mentally retarded’, in addition to those who were blind and/or deaf. This experience was instrumental in Emory’s decision to become a special education teacher. After moving back to Alabama, Emory finished her Bachelor’s degree, got her first teaching job, and continued to go to college until she obtained a double Master’s degree. She worked for the same school system in Alabama for 26 ½
years before retiring. During this time, she worked as a classroom teacher in a small elementary school and later transferred to the central office and initiated the first transition program for the school system. Working in transition allowed her to gain experience with older students and helped her build her knowledge base of the technical/career focused aspects of public education. Following her retirement in Alabama, Emory went to work in Georgia where she spent the first two years as a classroom teacher in a middle school setting. For the last four years, she has worked as her school system’s intervention and transition specialist. She still lives in her hometown in Alabama but commutes each day to her job in Georgia. Surprising to some, Emory still loves teaching and remains satisfied with her choice to enter the education profession so many years ago.

Participant 2: Lily

Lily was also born in a rural community in Alabama. Lily is the youngest of three children and the only daughter her parents ever had. Lily’s mother stayed at home throughout her childhood to care for her and her two older brothers while her father worked in manufacturing for the entire course of his career. If compared to other families during this time in her community, Lily’s family would have been considered to live slightly above middle class so Lily did not experience many of the hardships that other children, such as Emory, experienced while growing up.

As a child, Lily could often be found playing with dolls, having a tea party in her room, or expressing her vivid imagination in the playhouse built by her father. Most of Lily’s memories of growing up are pleasant as she was always ‘the baby’ of the family. Being the only girl, she remembers that her brothers often pampered her as did her parents. Lily’s parents are both still living and remain married today.
Lily’s formal education began in the local city school system where she attended grade school. Once she reached middle school, her family moved approximately 30 miles away to a slightly more rural area and Lily transferred to the county school system where she finished high school. Lily married her high school sweetheart quickly after graduation and they immediately purchased their first home in a neighboring community. Lily and her husband, Carl are still happily married and have one grown son and one grandson. They still reside in their hometown though they have moved residences several times throughout their life together. According to most accounts, including her own, Lily’s personal life has always been one of happiness and love.

Soon after marrying Carl, Lily began to attend college at a nearby university having a well-regarded teacher education program. Lily dreamed of becoming an elementary teacher and successfully achieved the goal of receiving her Bachelor’s degree in elementary education. Lily immediately gained employment as a fourth grade teacher, but after one year she transferred to a neighboring school system closer to her home where she taught third grade. Lily felt sure about her teacher training and was confident in the classroom even as a new teacher. As her career began, Lily continued her own education and earned her Master’s degree within the first three years of her teaching experience. Lily taught in the same school for 15 years. First, Lily taught third grade for ten years followed by three years as a second grade teacher, and finally as the third through sixth grade English language arts teacher for two years. During this time, she began working toward certification as a guidance counselor. The rurally located elementary school she had called home for so long prepared students to enter the local high school which was also populated with students from another elementary school in the area. It was this elementary school that first extended the opportunity for Lily to work as a counselor. After 15 years in an
environment she loved, Lily changed schools and worked for ten years as the only guidance
counselor serving around 450 students ranging in age from kindergarten to sixth grade. Finally,
Lily made the decision to retire from this school system after 25 years of service (a total of 26
years in Alabama). In part, Lily’s decision to retire at this time was due to finding a job in
Georgia that was close enough for her to comfortably make the commute each day. Lily has been
a middle school guidance counselor in this system for eleven years now. If you ask Lily how she
has been able to stay in education for thirty seven years she will sweetly smile as she announces
without hesitation, “I still LOVE it!”

**Participant 3: Jaye**

Jaye’s parents were both born completely deaf. As a child, Jaye recalls that she conducted
several experiments to determine if this was true. After standing behind them and screaming at
the top of her lungs several times and finding no reaction from either of them, she eventually
accepted her parent’s reality. Jaye remembers both of her grandmothers discussing their
experience with the measles while pregnant and the family assumption is that Rubella was the
culprit that rendered her mom and dad to a life of silence. This is pure speculation, but since
there are no other family members on either side with hearing impairments and since neither her
mom nor her dad were ever afraid they would have a child with such, Rubella is as good a
conclusion as any other. They met on a train that took children to the Tennessee School for the
Deaf in one of the cars reserved for hearing impaired children and their chaperones. At this time,
one a student enrolled at this school, they were required to stay an entire year before returning
home for a visit. This initial separation requirement was in place to decrease the number of
children who would not return (either because they hated it or because their parents couldn’t bear
to send them back). Jaye’s father continued his education at the Tennessee School for the Deaf
until he graduated but her mom’s family was unable to continue to send her to school once the 1930s Great Depression began due to the cost of transportation from their hometown. The two married quickly after Jaye’s dad graduated and bravely moved to Alabama and purchased a home of their own. Jaye continues to hold a great deal of respect and admiration for her parents because they were able to move so far away from anyone they knew. They had many deaf friends at this time and it seemed as if the more common way of life was to live with or near family members. Once Jaye’s father found a house he liked, he asked Jaye’s grandfather to come and take a look. Jaye’s grandfather had worked in construction and though he thought the house needed a lot of work, he was extremely pleased with the neighborhood and offered his blessings for the purchase of the house because the location seemed like a great place to raise children. Jaye’s parents continued to live in this home until the death of her father just under thirty years ago.

Recalling her childhood memories, Jaye is very thankful that her grandfather recommended the home where she grew up. Jaye remembers that she was deeply dependent on her community. She was often embarrassed by her parents and their impairment. She spent a lot of time with other families and often the majority of her day was spent outside with other children from the neighborhood. One family in particular was instrumental in helping Jaye learn about social skills. Jaye and her family would typically eat dinner before this family and after having her meal, she would visit with her neighbors as they had dinner. She remained an almost silent observer as she was always fascinated by the interactions that took place. Jaye remembers being captivated by conversations, in which the parents spoke quietly to one another, expectantly asked the kids about their day, and listened as the children noisily told of adventures good and bad. She longed to be a part of such spontaneous conversations with her own family. Very often,
Jaye played school with neighborhood children in order to try to learn the ‘normal’ way to form relationships and how to successfully participate in the educational process.

From a very early age, Jaye felt largely burdened with the responsibility of serving as an interpreter for her parents. A child who learned to sign before she learned to speak, who as a baby, used a tiny leg through the bars of her crib to shake the bed of her parents when she needed something, felt as if she was the only social connection her parents had with the world. This, of course, was Jaye’s own thinking and through the process of relating information from her parents to teachers, insurance salesmen, and car dealers, Jaye oppressed her parents’ right and ability to ‘be parents’. At the same time, Jaye began to harbor resentment in her own mind because she alone felt the weight of maintaining a family connection. Jaye had one older brother but as soon as Jaye was able to fill the ‘interpreter role’ he proclaimed that she would have to handle this part of their family life because he was no longer willing to serve that role. Both Jaye and her brother always wanted to be out of the house. They wanted to be with other people---to learn how ‘normal people’ lived.

Jaye discussed being five years old the first time her family got a telephone in the home. It was the first time an answering machine was used in their town to help a deaf person. The machine was equipped with a light that would flash when there was a call and was to be placed in the cradle so the caller could leave a message. If her father saw the light, he would go to the front porch and fold his arms as if rocking a baby. This would signal the neighbors to yell from their back porch for Jaye or her brother to come answer the phone. Of course, once inside, the phone never seemed to ring again. The machine became too expensive for Jaye’s family, but when they came to get the phone, they left the light, which continued to work for over 30 years.
Later, Jay used the light to let her parents know she was ready for them to come and pick her up. This wasn’t 100% effective, but did work at times.

As a child, Jaye was the voice and ears for her parents, and by the time she started school, she realized how difficult her family situation could be. She struggled in school, but she worked very hard. Her parents would try to help but studying spelling words is hard when no one can call them out to you. Jaye was always afraid she would do or say something to embarrass herself, so she worked even harder to be a good student and stay out of trouble. Jaye remembers always feeling ‘different’. Though she has no memories of feeling pitied, she did feel ‘tolerated’. She attended two years of kindergarten and assumes her parents did this to help her improve her language skills before she began grade school. As she began elementary school, she remembers how other mothers would walk with their children. Jaye allowed her mom to walk her during first grade before insisting she would be fine on her own---she did not tell her that she was too embarrassed for others to see her with her mother.

As an adult, Jaye regrets interfering with her parents’ privilege to be her parents. She still feels ‘different’ because she carries with her many elements she attributes to her childhood. Her parents wanted her to live normally in society so they sheltered her from the ‘deaf culture’---however, Jaye still recognizes the amplification of her senses of taste, touch, and sight (common among those with hearing impairments). While she was never fully acquainted with the way of life for deaf people, she continues to be inquisitive of others, not fully feeling accepted into a hearing society either. Jaye still feels as if she should be an interpreter for those around her. Often she tries to clarify what one friend is saying to another. Sometimes she is right and sometimes she is wrong. Jaye still spends a great deal of time observing others and loves to talk and ask questions. She continues to be fascinated with the ways people communicate. Sometimes
other people tend to see her behaviors and expressions as strange, but Jaye is truly a life-long learner seeking understanding at every moment.

The experiences Jaye had growing up in a home with two deaf parents largely contributed to her choice of career. She has a genuine desire to help children with hearing impairments. After graduating high school, Jaye began college and immediately decided to become a teacher. True to form, she worked hard and attended college year-round in order to finish quickly. After graduation with a Bachelor’s degree in Elementary Education, Jaye moved to a larger school with a program that would prepare her for teaching students living with hearing impairments. She got a graduate assistantship as she worked toward her Master’s degree in Special Education. This allowed her some needed experience such as practical experience teaching in a clinic, in the homes of students, and in a classroom. Jaye also collaborated to write a handbook for the university’s Commutative Disorders department. She graduated with her Master’s in Special Education and certification as a teacher of the deaf and quickly began her career. Jaye’s first job was as a system-wide itinerate home-bound teacher. This was a relatively new position and Jaye was the major contributor to the programs’ guidelines. She remained in this position for five years before moving into a position as the system-wide resource teacher for deaf/hearing impaired (HI) students. This new position required Jaye to teach all academic areas as well as provide physical and occupational therapy and provide daily opportunities for adaptive physical education for each student. After three years, and the birth of her children, Jaye decided that the demands associated with her job were too heavy to carry while being a mother and wife so she transferred to a small elementary school within her school system and began teaching regular education. Jaye worked at this school for 19 years and served in a variety of capacities including reading and math remediation teacher, reading and math inclusion teacher, general classroom
teacher, librarian, reading recovery teacher, and computer lab teacher. Jaye retired from Alabama with 30 years of service at the age of 50. Since she felt that she could not live solely on her retirement income, she accepted a job in a small rural school system in Georgia. Jaye has worked in her current position as deaf/Hi facilitator and itinerate special education facilitator for the past seven years. Still living in Alabama with her husband, she has two grown children and commutes approximately one and one half hours each morning and afternoon. She now works with students at all grade levels from kindergarten through the 12th grade. When asked about her training in relation to her professional experience, Jaye will tell you that college did not prepare her for the classroom. Rather, Jaye feels that her own life experiences were the best preparation for the journey she has travelled thus far. I asked her how she has continued to work as a teacher for 37 years and still be successful.

Jaye still enjoys teaching and feels like she is spending her life in the way she has always been meant to spend it. She is happy to still be in the field and helping children and families who struggle with the often overlooked implications associated with hearing impairments.

**Emotional Narratives of Real Teachers**

**Worry, Worry, and More Worry…Who’s Responsible for Less Fortunate Children - described by Jaye**

As a new teacher serving homebound students, I had been assigned one student who had severe attendance problems. I called and called but was always unable to contact the parents. Finally I was instructed to make a home visit, given some directions, and set out to find out what was going on with this student. As I arrived, there was a small set of buildings that were supposed to be houses. They were more like run down shacks---dark and dirty and I am not even

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2 Throughout the specific narratives, verbatim statements from participating teachers were incorporated; the researcher chose not to utilize the typical notation of [sic] in an attempt to maintain the ‘author voice’ of the participants’ local talk and to alleviate visual disruption.
sure there was electricity or running water. The buildings looked empty. Then someone peered out from a broken window and I waved. I waited for someone to come outside. From behind the house, an old sickly dog with no fur and covered with mange ambled out. Behind him appeared an old woman. She walked to my car and I explained that I was here to help her with school for her son. We talked for a little while and eventually the little boy wandered from one of the buildings. He did not seem to be happy about a teacher visiting to discuss his school attendance. With his mom, we devised a plan to have school in my car each day. She was too embarrassed to allow me to enter the home, and I really did not want to be near that mangy dog. So each day, I would drive up and the boy would come and sit in my car as I helped him with his lessons. This worked pretty well for a few days until one morning as I arrived at the home; I realized that the family had moved. There are a world of students like this...they live in substandard housing in deplorable conditions and people expect them to come to school every day and act and learn like everyone else. How can they do it? Obviously, it was too much for this young man...he would rather stay in the squalor.

**Emotional Resistance – As Described by Lily**

Several years after I began working in the educational field and had secured my first job as a counselor, I began to quickly realize that the emotional terrain associated with teaching was often amplified for school counselors. Many situations during my time as a counselor at this school were quite upsetting. As a guidance counselor, I found myself in the position of comforter, analyzer, justifier, teacher, and every other possible “hat” for education---except, I tried not to be the disciplinarian though this was difficult to avoid at times. One instance I will always remember involved a little girl who was beginning kindergarten at the young age of four. Her older brothers were students at the school but absolutely nothing would stop this child from
crying every day. She cried and cried…finally, I let her crawl up in my lap and she stopped crying for a time. I called her home to speak with a parent and her mom insisted that she should stay at school, even stay with me in my office if that was what it would take for her to stay. I had grown to truly love this child, and on one hand, I also wanted her to stay at school, but on the other hand, this may mean a string of ongoing emotional outbursts that would certainly render a negative impact for the student, her mother, her teacher, and for me. However, the wishes of the student’s mom were honored and she continued to cry each day for several years. As she grew older, she would have days without the “emotional breakdowns”, but many days she would still show up at my office door with tears in her eyes. I will forever look back and wonder why keeping such a young child at school was so important and if our actions as teachers, administrators, and school personnel might have caused more harm than good. It was such an emotional experience for everyone involved.

Heart Strings – A Narrative of a Teacher Making a Difference- through the eyes of Emory

I had been teaching for a few years and was beginning to feel the success associated with a child learning a new skill or a new word. Since I worked in such a small rural school, the poverty level of families within the community was high. In the area of special education, it seemed I faced students with the most difficult situations at home. Over the years, many of my students would come to school embarrassed because their parents could not afford to get their hair cut. This is when I learned to cut hair. I can remember many early mornings and late afternoons that one or two students would come by for a free haircut. Haircuts always took place before or after the other students arrived in order to avoid embarrassment. It was something I did because I have always been motivated to reach each student individually and to truly make a difference in their lives. Haircuts were only one service of a thousand other little things I did
daily for students. I hoped (and still hope) that as each child becomes an adult; they will somehow remember that a teacher was kind to them once.

I will always remember one student, in particular, and to this day, I still can’t seem to talk about this young man without crying. Alan’s family was extremely poor. He had been placed in the special education program at an early age and after about a year with Alan, I had come to love him. Alan was also very withdrawn and kept to himself so sometimes getting him to communicate his needs and the areas where he struggled was a difficult task. I wanted to help Alan. In the beginning, I would have never guessed the impact I would make in the life of this child---or what an impression he would leave on my heart. I soon came to understand Alan’s tendencies for isolation as I learned about his home life. His parents were rarely able to find work, and the family resources were certainly lacking. Their home was in terrible condition and more often than not, Alan went home to a place without electrical service or running water. A great majority of the time, Alan was unable to even bathe at home and his clothes were always dirty. I had begun teaching my students about personal hygiene early on, and by the time the students reached the third or fourth grade I usually discussed issues of bathing, deodorant, and such with them. Alan had gotten to the age that his lack of hygiene was becoming noticeable so I sat down one day with him to talk. After the conversation with Alan and upon a little more inquiry, I learned of the harsh environment that Alan went home to each day. This information was devastating to me. The next week, I came to school armed with a care package full of soap, washcloths, and deodorant. I explained to Alan that he could come to my room each morning, get the bag, head to the restroom to clean up and no one had to know. This ritual continued for several years until Alan reached the age that he had to go to high school.
I can remember worrying about Alan often. I found that even when I was home with my family, I couldn’t keep this sweet young man off my mind and my worry continued. At some point I finally talked to Alan about whether or not his family had enough to eat. I learned that the only meal Alan ever ate was his free school lunch. A couple of sleepless nights later, I had another idea. I could not stand to think about Alan going home and being hungry every night so I spoke with the lunchroom ladies and began to sneak some food from the lunchroom for Alan to take home each day. Sometimes it was a roll, sometimes a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, but the important thing was that at night, Alan had dinner. When he left the elementary school, I worried and wondered what ever became of this sweet young man that life had so bitterly seemed to attack.

Many years later I received a call from the office at school announcing that I had a visitor. The man standing at the office door did not appear at all familiar but he took one look at me and immediately pulled me into a huge hug. A little confused, I took another look at the man’s face. He was wearing a police uniform and was a very clean cut young man, but I still did not recognize him. He finally began to speak and said, “You don’t know me, do you? Quite a long time ago, you took the time to get to know me. You helped me to learn when everyone thought I couldn’t. You allowed me a safe place to take care of personal needs, and you kept me fed.” Well of course, I started to cry again because I realized who he was. He told me that he wanted to come by to let me know that without my rolls and sandwiches, without my clean washcloths and soap, he may have never been able to rise above his circumstances. He had graduated high school and completed police academy and was living a successful and happy life. This will always be something that keeps me motivated to work with students. Even when I am
exhausted and feel like I cannot teach another day, I try to remember that we never know what kind of influence we are having on the children we teach.

The Emotional Pull Between Frustration, Anger, & Sadness – A Narrative Told by Jaye

There was a new student at the school I was working in many years ago who was beginning kindergarten. Now, the kindergarten students often presented a challenge for us, but this young man took me for a ride emotionally! From the very first day of school, I was torn between feeling sorry for him and being angry about the way the situation was being handled. The decisions concerning his behavior were beyond my control but they deeply involved me and I was not sure I agreed with them. His mom brought him to school on the first day, but she could not get him out of the car. Every day as she would drive up, the little boy (Tommy) could be heard yelling expletives at his mother. Tommy had severe separation anxiety and did not want to leave his mother. Because of the laws associated with truancy, we had to figure out a way to get Tommy to come into the school and stay for the day. At first, his mom would drive up (as Tommy yelled loud enough for God to hear) and she would jump out of the car in order to run around and pull him out. Tommy quickly realized the routine and began jumping from door to door slamming down the lock buttons and then waiting to see which adult was smart enough to discover a way to remove him from the car. Our principal decided that we needed a plan. Two teachers would wait for this car each morning and the mom would call a few minutes before arriving to let us know it was time. When she would pull into the parking lot, the two assigned teachers were to “gently” remove Tommy from the car. If trouble followed, he was to be taken to the gym until he calmed down. We even had a mat to put him on so the damage he could do to himself and others was minimized. I remember that pulling him from that car was like applying “the jaws of life” and then taking him to the gym was like entering the world street fighting
competition. He would scream and cuss and kick and slap until he was successfully on his mat in
the gym. Once he realized that his tantrums were not working, he would usually calm down and
seemed to be fine for the rest of the day. This continued for a couple of years and was a daily
occurrence! The poor teachers assigned had to deal with the ear-splitting screams of the child,
the mom had to reluctantly allow other adults to physically haul her kid into the school building
each day, and Tommy had to overcome extreme emotional turmoil before beginning a “day of
learning”…talk about an emotional experience!

**Incitement for Negativity – Trouble with Colleagues (Lily)**

When I was hired as a guidance counselor, the school had no room for an additional
office except in a little room behind the desk of our librarian. This little room had been the
librarian’s office for some time, but with the school systems insistence on hiring a counselor at
each school, she was forced to give up this space in order to provide a place for me to meet with
one or more students in a private setting. Because the librarian was upset about losing her office,
she moved her desk directly in front of my door. This made things extremely difficult and the
students had to walk around her huge desk to even visit my office. After a while, she would
complain to our administrators about kids prancing through her space and behind her desk all
day long. Of course I tried to smooth things over at first, but eventually, the situation became
terrible. She was very hateful and said many things that hurt me deeply! I discussed the situation
with our principal and she said we should come up with a solution. Some of my teacher friends
and I decided the only solution was to move her desk to the other side of my office door. The
principal told us that would be fine. Once the librarian came in and saw that we had moved her
desk, she went crazy! The sad part is that when we were called into the principal’s office to
discuss the situation, the principal gave me instructions to move her desk back and acted as if she
had never heard of our idea previously. I was the one in trouble, it seemed…and things were
never positive again between the librarian and me. I really feel like our principal should have
taken more responsibility and shown more leadership in this situation instead of simply placing
the blame on her teachers. That is the trouble with school leaders. Often it is easier to avoid
conflict than to try to solve possible problems before they become uncontrollable. I think if you
are going to work as an administrator, you should be a daily leader and do what you can to
maintain positive relationships between those who work for you.

Good Job…or Bad? – A Story of Feeling Unappreciated – Described by Emory

I had spent 23 years of my life and had devoted everything I had inside of me to my job
at one small school in a rural area of our county school system in Alabama. I had sacrificed time
with my own husband and children, used my own personal resources, and felt that I had gone
many extra miles to be a good teacher and make connections with the students. You see, I had
begun my career in special education during a time when special education was in the initiation
phase. We did not even have a bus, we had a station wagon. Anyway, my career took me to the
county vocational and technical school where I continued to serve the students, parents, and
administrators of my school system. I worked there for five more years, and felt that again, I had
devoted a big part of my life to doing a good job. I was comfortable in my professional position
and knew in my heart I had served my kids well. I had devoted my life to this school system.
When I decided to make another career change and begin teaching in Georgia, I notified the
central office of my intentions to retire from Alabama. This was one of the biggest and most
difficult decisions I had (and have ever) made. I cried and worried and thought out this decision
absorbedly. Finally, as the resolution to retire was made, I felt that I was closing one chapter of
my life and opening a new one with a confidence that I had been an asset to my students and to
the school system. Apparently, the system did not think my decision to change jobs was such a big thing. I did not receive a cake, or a card, and no one even said “good-bye”. It seemed as if no one even cared and it really hurt my feelings! I had to survive in my position in Georgia with the worry that maybe the school system in Alabama didn’t think I had done as good of a job as I had thought I had done. Eventually, my maturity and experience kicked in and I convinced myself that it didn’t matter. I knew I had been a great teacher and that they were at a loss without me in that system. I think I had to rely on my own knowledge, experiences, and feelings in order to get to that place in my life because I was devastated. I am finally confident that I am still doing a good job and helping students in my current position, but I can certainly see why so many teachers either leave the teaching field or end up feeling defeated in their jobs because those in charge so often fail to demonstrate any appreciation or recognition for a job well done.

A Nurturing Situation – Through the Eyes of Lily

When I got my first job as a teacher, it was a wonderful situation. I truly felt that I had the support I needed to be successful. I only taught at this particular school for one year, but the principal was very nice. He and his wife loved me, and I grew to love them as well. He was so sorry I was losing my job, and his genuine concern for me was a huge comfort. He said he would help me to find another job. Luckily, I found and accepted my next position, but I look back and can clearly see how important it is to feel supported by your superiors. I had an emotional support system during my first year that many new teachers never experience. I didn’t feel like I needed to worry about having a job. I also knew from the words and actions of that principal that he thought I was doing a good job. This is so much more important than most teachers and administrators realize!
You Can’t Fix Stupid; but it Can be Transferred – A Narrative of Ongoing Frustration by Jaye

There is a great amount of frustration among teachers when incompetence is passed from one grade level to another or from one school to another in order to avoid directly dealing with the incompetence issues at hand. It happens with students that have trouble learning---instead of reaching out to meet the needs of an individual student; many teachers will just pass the child along because they refuse to do what they were hired to do. The problem is only amplified with the next teacher because he or she then has to make up for time lost and catch the student up to others at the same grade level. It also happens with teachers. Many times, teachers who fail to perform in appropriate ways, do not teach the kids the things they should, or act in ways that should clearly tell administrators that they are not capable of performing the highly important act of teaching today’s children are passed to new schools or other positions. It seems that we have the common mindset that says “if I can just get through this year, it will be someone else’s problem next year”. This is so frustrating and wrong. First of all, we are hired to TEACH. If we do not do our job well, we are passing along even bigger problems to a colleague. If those in positions of power, such as principals and superintendents, do not help struggling teachers and continue the employment of those who do not show improvements---if they do not employ consistent standards for the quality of teaching provided and suitable implications for inappropriate actions and behaviors, how can our schools be expected to produce students capable of contributing to our technological and global society. The failures and lack of concern exhibited by so many educational professionals only adds to the stress and frustration of others who enter the teaching field with a genuine desire to make a difference. If you teach for long, it will become apparent that it is easier to pass a problem to someone else than it is to address specific situations before they spiral into much more difficult conditions. It will also be easy to
see how personal connections play into the selection of personnel. The nepotism, favoritism, and “can’t get rid of stupidism” that has fueled the irrational hiring and firing of teachers causes great emotional stress. Logically, in business, the weak link is let go, but this does not happen in education and those working closely with incompetent teachers, paraprofessionals, and staff are faced with an even higher stress level. It is no wonder that so many teachers experience ‘burnout’.

**Things Will Only Get Worse – A Story of Stifled Expectations Explained by Emory**

As I completed my teacher preparation program and attained my first teaching position, I had the highest expectations for a successful career. I knew I had a desire and a heart that would drive me to reach children. I was excited about diving into a school and getting to know the kids. I was to be the special education teacher and thought my training and enthusiasm would allow me to achieve things other teacher may not have been able to achieve. I was going to change the world---one kid at a time! I was hired to fill a leave position for the remaining part of the school year while the regular teacher was unable to work. On the first day, I was all dressed up and came prepared to begin my career. The school principal met me at the door and offered to show me to my new room. I was grateful…until we had walked past the last ‘normal classroom’ and through the back doors. He pointed to a broken down van that had two flat tires on one side so it was sitting unlevelled and rusty behind the building where I had believed I would work. Really? That is my classroom? The answer was clear. I was to take my students out behind the school and attempt to teach in a van that had certainly seen its last day on the road. Pencils would not even lie silently on the desks because the flat tires made them roll off onto the floor. I had no supplies, no support, and I was isolated from the rest of the school. I can’t even imagine how the students felt! But that was not even the most unbelievable part. After ‘showing me to my room’
the principal stopped me and said, “Let me just tell you what I think about special education so we are clear from the start. If we could take one of those kids out back each morning and shoot them, the problem would go away”. I was left with my mouth wide open. Now, this principal was most certainly making a joke and would have never really hurt a child, nor would he have made such a statement where a student or parent could hear, but little did he realize that he was actively throwing water on the burning flames of an excited and motivated new teacher. I completed my time in that position and moved on to another school. Thankfully, I did not conform to his opinions of special education and worked hard to do my job in spite of his attitude. I wonder, though, how many new teachers would have reacted in a different way or would have begun to feel differently about the role they serve? I cannot tell you how many times similar situations have occurred throughout my career. Another teacher, a parent, an administrator makes a statement that either targets you as the problem or aims to slap you in the face with the reality that you are unappreciated, unneeded, and probably incapable of ever changing anything. If teachers feel as if the work they do is unnecessary, why would they strive to work harder, try harder, or be better?

**Pushed Aside – A Narrative of Feeling Incapable of Becoming a Change Agent – by Emory**

I remember when I had my second child. My husband and I had waited ten years between our first and second daughters for many reasons including my career and the fear that needing maternity leave might affect my employment status. Finally as we planned the birth of our second daughter, I reported that I would work right up until the time she was born in order to have as much time as possible at home with her after her birth. She was born in early May, so I missed the last few weeks of the school year, and stayed home with her for the first couple of months after school resumed in the fall. When I returned to work, I quickly realized how things
had changed since I had been gone. Apparently we had been in need of another teacher as the new school year began. This would mean finding a place for a new classroom. The solution was apparently my classroom. The new teacher was at home in my room and it seemed I had nowhere to go. The principal informed me that all of my things were moved to the lunchroom. I was to use bookshelves (which were about waist-high to an adult) to construct “walls” around my classroom. You can imagine how difficult it was that year to teach children who already had difficulties learning in an environment filled with noise for almost half of the day. If you have ever been in a school cafeteria for the one and a half to two hours in which they serve meals, you know how chaotic things can be. Once again, I was made to feel like my job did not matter or worse I did not matter to this school. In turn, I tried to work harder so my students would not feel the pain associated with the reality of the fact that obviously, they did not matter either.

Schematic Narrative Templates

Introduction: A Research Interest is Born…

During the initiation of this research, I found myself drawn to the emotional terrain associated with the teaching profession because of my own experiences. As I began my career as a teacher, I had completed the teacher preparation program with a feeling of confidence. I had completed every assignment, questioned areas that were of concern for me and began my first job with assurance that I was prepared to face the students, teach the content, and make a difference. Though I was thoroughly trained in methods of instruction, discipline, policy, law, and a thousand other fundamental, systematic areas associated with the daily act of ‘being a teacher’ the reality of the first day of school hit me hard. Suddenly, I was in a room of children, each with their own set of circumstances, individual needs, cultural and social characteristics, and a plethora of influencing factors largely unrelated to the lesson of the day. That first year was
grueling for me. The demands associated with my choice of career almost consumed me. Some of my students came from abusive homes, families living well below the poverty level, a family history of drug and alcohol abuse, unemployed parents, and the list could go on forever. Though I was teaching middle school students, many couldn’t read or struggled with a range of other learning disabilities. As if this were not enough, the different personalities, beliefs, emotions, and confidence levels in my room alone was enough to cause your head to spin.

The students were only the beginning. Very quickly I was faced with parental demands. I cannot even begin to describe the stress I endured due to parents that first year. Some thought I was teaching the wrong content while others complained that I was moving too quickly. Still others suggested I was not challenging enough for their gifted child and was not covering the required objectives for my course. Some days I was accused of failing to control my classroom and on other days I was informed that my disciplinary tactics were entirely too tough for the school setting. I remember many evenings I would leave the school feeling like an emotional wreck.

Beyond the students and the parents, there was also a whole world of administrators who all seemed to want something different from me. My lesson plans were not detailed enough, I needed to use more hands-on teaching strategies, I needed to keep a record of every parent conference, every objective covered, every individual student discussion, every grade, work samples for every child, daily attendance, and on and on. In my spare time, I was to learn some new program or attend some new conference. I needed to continually increase my own knowledge of both pedagogical practices and content. I was being asked to love these kids, have empathy for them, discipline them, hold high expectations but understand when they were unable to do their homework. I needed to attend random faculty meetings, grade level meetings, data
meetings, Individualized Educational Program (IEP) meetings, and training sessions. I couldn’t provide feedback for the students quick enough, return calls from parents quick enough, complete my paperwork fast enough…I was completely and utterly exhausted!

I began to wonder what happened to the confidence I had originally carried into that classroom on the first day of school. Why was I struggling so hard to complete my required tasks and do what I had been trained to do? The answer was a simple one: I was not trained for this. I knew how to teach and I knew the logistics of the job I had been hired to do but preparing a group of different individuals to enter different classrooms in different schools, different cultural and geographic settings with different groups of students is a difficult thing to accomplish. Somewhere along the way I had missed the class that readied me for the emotional labor of teaching. In reality, the blame could not be placed on my ability to teach or my content knowledge. I also cannot point a finger at my teacher training program or at the people in administrative positions. The parents were not at fault and it certainly was not a mistake of the students. The trouble in any human service occupation is that real world situations are hard to pre-define. The task of empowering new teachers to be emotionally ready for the job they have chosen may be daunting and may never be an entirely attainable goal, but there has to be a way to come closer than we have in the past. We must begin to address the emotional issues associated with any educational organization. Somehow, we must find a way to better equip our teachers for the emotional drama they are called to face each day.

**Template One: Become Your Own Inspiration**

One major idea that seemed to appear again and again throughout the process of this research was teacher inspiration. My experiences as a new teacher are not an isolated occurrence. In reality, the teacher retention rate continues to rise, teacher salaries remain at an extreme
minimum, the stress and emotional strain associated with teaching is evident in every school and felt by every teacher. Rarely do teachers talk about appreciative students and parents or thankful superiors. If you were to ask practicing educators if they feel needed and appreciated a vast majority would quickly shout, “NO!” So what inspires some teachers to continue in a successful, life-long career while others throw in the towel and quit? The answer seems to be related to the individual’s ability to self-motivate.

In Chapter Two the notion of teacher self-efficacy was introduced. The development of ‘teacher self’ is the driving force for any teacher’s self-confidence in their personal abilities to effectively perform the vast array of functions associated with teaching (Watson, 2006). Teacher self-efficacy greatly influences a teacher’s desire to try multiple teaching strategies when current practices do not seem to be working. It is the voice that continually encourages an educator to keep trying until student learning has taken place (Zembylas, 2002). Another idea discussed earlier is the notion of ‘emotional labor’. Emotional labor related to teaching is the ability to control emotions (both personal emotions and the emotions of others) in order to maintain a climate that is conducive to the teaching-learning process. Both self-efficacy and emotional labor are extremely important for a teacher to become successful in the classroom.

This idea of a need for self-efficacy and emotional labor was communicated multiple times throughout the data generation phase of this research. Emory’s story of the student in need of food and basic hygiene items describes the need for a teacher to care enough to go beyond the “paper and pencil tasks” of the classroom. This story occurred more than 20 years ago yet as Emory talked about this little boy, she still fought the tears. First she had tears of sorrow for this young man who had no control over his own situation and was in great need of help and then tears of joy and self-satisfaction as she realized the impact her actions had played in the young
man’s life. Likewise, Lily discussed the way she had personally felt during a time of conflict with her coworker. Both she and the other educator must have felt as if their personal space was being violated and the natural human tendency was to strike out at each other. In truth, the trouble was with the school’s lack of space and the growing number of faculty members in need of a place to work. In talking with Lily, she said,

I remember that my feelings were hurt so badly. I went from upset to fighting mad almost every day for over a month! I couldn’t believe how selfish she was being and I really needed to have a place to do my job. Eventually, though, I guess I just began to lean on my own maturity and held up my head. I knew I was doing what I was supposed to and that I was not intentionally the one in her space. I figured she could either grow up too or just sit out there mad all day. I really didn’t care either way, I had finally decided I was not going to allow her to ruin every day for me. What was most important was that I was doing the job I knew God had called me to do…and I was good at it, by the way.

The most definite instance in the specific narratives that defines a need for self-efficacy and emotional labor is the narrative that discusses Emory’s retirement. She was devastated by the seemingly complacent reaction to her announcement of leaving the school system. After a long career in which she deeply felt she had made a difference for so many and had repeatedly made a positive impact on the students, the parents, and the schools she had served, she was confronted with the fact that no one seemed to care that she was leaving her position. In talking with Emory, I learned that over the years she had personally witnessed many retirement parties and even helped to fund expensive gifts for others who had chosen to retire. When there was no party and no farewell gift, she felt as if she had been wrong to believe in the impact she had made. The following exert was taken from a taped discussion with Emory concerning the emotional turmoil she felt.

Leaving my job in Alabama was the most difficult decision I had ever made up until that point in my life. When nobody seemed to even notice…let alone, care, I was totally devastated. I mean, I didn’t get a cake…no party…not even a stupid card. They actually gave me a $25.00 gift certificate to the mall. What a bunch of
shit! I mean, I had given every part of myself…the best years of my life to that
damn school system, and did they even say thanks, absolutely not. I actually
thought maybe they didn’t believe I had done as good of a job as I had believed I
had done over the years. I started to question whether or not I was really a good
teacher. But then I just started to lean on my own experiences and what I knew to
be the truth. I went ot work in Georgia and for the first year it was hard. Finally I
just said…to hell with them…I knew I was a good teacher and I had done a good
job. I knew I had touched the lives of so many people. I didn’t care what they
thought. Now I am working in Georgia and I am still doing a good job. I am
spreading my ability with a new community of people and I am helping kids and
families. That is all I ever wanted to do anyway. Who cares if I am the only one
who notices?

In reading through other notes from my researcher journal and transcripts of
meetings with the participants, many other discussions supported the idea that a strong
sense of teacher self was the driving force behind the successful careers of all three of the
participants. In an informal interview with Jaye, she answers a question about her advice
for new teachers,

Know your own strengths and build on them…be the teacher you know you can
be and do what you love because you love it. If you wait for someone else to say
you are doing a good job…you’ll probably quit!

Similarly, Emory said,

I think I have had a long and happy career because I am good at what I do! I am
still a teacher after all these years because I love it! When you find that you don’t
love it anymore…it is time to get out!

Lily was also asked why she had remained in the teaching profession for well over 30
years.

That is simple. I have never been able to see myself doing anything else. I know I
am in the career I was meant to be in. I am still working because I still love it!
Some days are harder than others and I wonder…what in the world am I still
doing…but overall I know that I would be lost if I were not in some sort of
educational position. Yea, I still love it!

Each instance communicates some form of self-motivated performance. All three
of the participating teachers describe feelings of self-worth, emotional engagement in
their work, and a love for what they do. It was clearly evident throughout this research that these women believed in themselves and their ability to teach any student in any situation.

**Template Two: Learning to Lean While Holding Your Own ---Becoming the Emotionally Smart Teacher**

Similar to the ideas of teacher-self, teacher self-efficacy, emotional labor, and emotional control, the ideas of emotional convergence (contagion), emotional valence, and emotional energy were introduced in Chapter Two. In situations that require people to frequently interact socially and professionally such as in a school setting, emotional convergence will certainly occur (Barsade, 2002; Goleman, 2006; Totterdell, 2000). Simply stated, when people share time and place and spend their days working together, the emotions and feelings of those with which one interacts will eventually begin to influence the emotions and feelings of the individual (Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1994; Matthews, Roberts, & Zeidner, 2004). Today, insights gained through professional literature have laid claim to the thought of a ‘social brain’ containing ‘mirror neurons’. The literature addressing such ideas suggests that these mirror neurons attune and align themselves to another person with whom someone is frequently interacting (Barsade, 2002; Goleman, 2006; Schoenwolf, 1990). Such occasions of this transfer of emotional state became apparent in two differing aspects throughout this study.

First, it seems that in moments when one teacher is engaging with another, the feelings, frustrations, excitements, and other conveyed emotions of one teacher can serve as an altering and even defining source of the emotional state of the other teacher. Lily seems to speak to this idea as she discusses her first job as a teacher and the influence her first administrator had on her professional decisions and actions since that time. The first
administrator that hired Lily left a strong impression as a compassionate and nurturing educational leader. From this experience, Lily became more confident in her abilities and subsequently developed a more empathetic attitude toward other educators. This influence still impresses and inspires the professional actions and decisions Lily makes today, so many years later. A quote from an informal discussion with Lily stands out in my mind as a summation of how important the actions of her first principal have been to her throughout her career,

That man and his wife really took me under their wings and were so nice to me. He had a way of making me believe that I was doing a great job. In the end, I was the one who secured my next position, but knowing that I could call on him for help finding a job if I needed to was a huge comfort to me. You know, lots of principals aren’t worried about where the teachers will go next when budget cuts and political pull force them to make hard personnel decisions, but this man was very concerned. I have always, and will always think about his kindness as something that probably laid the entire foundation for my life as an educator. I really try to consider the way he treated me when I am dealing with others in my field…even now.

Similarly, Emory was deeply affected by the words and actions of her first principal, but in an extremely contrasting way. As a new graduate, she entered her first position with great anticipation and excitement. Though she walked into the job on the first day with such a positive emotional spirit, she had not even found her desk when the administrator stifled her positivity.

Let me just tell you what I think about special education so we are clear from the start. If we could take one of those kids out back each morning and shoot them, the problem would go away.

In one sentence, this principal, who had an opportunity to impact his school by encouraging a new teacher and helping her to find her place in the profession, deeply affected the emotional beliefs and aspirations she had. As we train teachers to enter the classroom, it is common to emphasize the importance of the job, the amount of
determination needed to reach some children, and the irreplaceable role of the teacher. Without such training efforts, it is likely that no teacher would begin a career with the intensely needed belief in the possibilities of their influence on students. Emory was able to overcome the attitude of this principal and his failure to guide her instructional practices, but for quite some time, she questioned whether she had been wrong to become a teacher and believe in the importance of the occupation she had chosen and worked hard to initiate. Many others may not have been able to move past such a blatant disregard for the role she was about to fill.

In both of the situations above, the actions (agreeably guided by the supervising principals’ emotions, beliefs, and feelings) made major impacts on the teachers who, over 30 years later are recalling their very first experience with the teaching profession. Lily experienced the transfer of the positive attitude and emotions of her principal while Emory was forced to face the negativity of a less than desirable set of emotions from her superior.

This emotional convergence or transfer of emotion doesn’t always occur between educational leaders and teachers, similarly, emotions can be transferred between students and teachers, parents and teachers, or among colleagues. Jaye most effectively spoke to the large amounts of frustration or encouragement that can take place among teachers working together in one of her specific narratives. She particularly addresses the often common practice of teachers who “pass along” struggling students from one grade to the next in order to avoid having to address the issue. The feelings of frustration were obvious in Jaye’s body language and facial expression as she said,

You can’t fix stupid!...and I am not talking about the kids! So many times I have been called to intervene when a student is WELL below grade level because a
whole string of lazy teachers have refused to do their damn jobs! It is easier to ignore the individual needs of the students and, in some cases, the learning disabilities and just pretend that the folks in those desks will catch up later. I wonder why some people even call themselves teachers. You cannot help a child if you refuse to dig into the underlying issues that affect the way the child learns. Some of these kids have horrible home lives and some are being abused. Others may have never been taught to read or genuinely have a learning disability that prevents them from succeeding in school in the same way other students succeed. Still others have physical disabilities that interfere with their performance in class…yet a common reaction to all of this is to pass them along so someone else can do the work…let someone else deal with this problem…few things make me more upset or mad than poor teachers refusing to even try to become better.

After speaking about this with Jaye, I later returned to the topic in one of the group discussions with all three of the participating teachers. I asked their opinions concerning why some teachers seemed to avoid problems rather than targeting ways to help the struggling students. Lily’s response came quickly,

Well, we really can’t blame the teachers. We don’t set the highest examples in the way we allow our school systems to run either…what is the saying?...”Screw up and move up?”…How many times have we all seen really bad teachers get promoted to the central office? Or how frequently do we stand by as the most incompetent and ineffective teachers become our bosses in a principal’s position? The best way to get rid of a terrible teacher, I guess, is to make them a terrible principal!

To this, all three joined in on a discussion that continued for several minutes. Jaye offered,

Sometimes I am just glad that they are no longer working with kids on a one on one basis…at least they can’t keep screwing up the education of children…I guess we believe that the adults should be able to handle their incompetence better.

Emory added,

I guess, but it is really sad that it seems to be more common to have the very worst educators leading our schools and our systems. There are lots of fantastic teachers who dream of moving into administrative roles but will probably never get there because either we are afraid of losing their ability in the classroom or because we have to move someone into those higher position that no school wants anymore. No wonder teachers feel suppressed…if you do a good job, you are
never rewarded but you can get a front row seat to watch as those who continually screw up get hired into the very job you were working so hard to get!

The negative convergence of emotions that these teachers are talking about is more commonplace than we would often like to admit. What each teacher was saying is that educational organizations should function in a way that rewards those teachers who work hard every day and have aspirations of moving up the ranks in the field. In both situations of low performing students and low performing teachers, all participants strongly agreed that the norm was to ignore the problem and pass it along for the next person to deal with.

This topic returns us to the thought of emotional convergence. In the first template, the overarching idea presented was one of teacher independence—support for becoming your own person and knowing the difference between what you are doing well and which practices need to be improved. It seems that all of the participants agree that in order to be a successful teacher who continues to a life-long career you must maintain a certain level of internal emotional strength. Those in positions of power and even those who we are working with each day may never recognize the ability we have as educators, and we may never receive any reward for our energies but we can continue our efforts if we rely more on the intrinsic rewards we know to be the reality of the teaching profession. At the same time, this idea of emotional convergence brings about the second template. Although internal strength and a strong sense of teacher-self are essential to a successful teaching career, we cannot pretend that negative attitudes and negative behaviors do not exist in our schools. There are days (and sometimes entire school years) when the students seem to always speak and act in deleterious ways. Likewise, administrators and fellow teachers will say and do things that are not in line with the
goals we should have for the students and the overall direction of education in America. As humans, we are social beings and our common tendency is to allow such influences to impact our own emotions in a way that puts our own attitudes, beliefs, and emotions ‘in tune’ with those we are perceiving. If these are positive influencing factors, and our emotions converge, the result is a positive emotional energy and climate, but when the influencing behaviors, actions, and emotional statements of other educators, students and parents are negative, the result can be detrimental to our own emotional state and, in turn, our teaching practices. So, it seems that successful teachers are, in part, successful navigators of deeply felt emotions and have a resourcefulness that allows them to stand firm on what they know to be true---even in the face of unsatisfactory circumstances.

This leads to the second way emotional convergence affects teachers. Just as negative emotions tend to ‘bounce back and forth’ between individuals as they interact, affirmative emotional support among colleagues can be instrumental to the success and overall emotional energy of teachers. This is to say, that the importance of a teacher’s support base or the ability to establish a pool of fellow experienced professional educators that can offer guidance and support on a daily basis should not be overlooked. Since all of the participants and I are currently practicing educators, finding time for interviews, observations, discussions, and case writing was sometimes difficult to discover. On several occasions, we used the driving time during the commute from Alabama to Georgia as a resource for data generation. During several of these occasions, I clarified that I would be a silent observer during the ride and simply spent the hour and a half drive recording and making notes about the conversations that ensued. Such times proved to be an invaluable source of information as often the participating teachers
seemed to ‘forget’ I was in the car. On one occasion, we were returning to Alabama after a day of informal classroom observations and I silently listened as the teachers rehashed their day to one another. Emory had spent her day trying to calm a situation in which a teacher had been speaking of confidential student information outside of school. This teacher had spoken about the behavior of a student (calling his name) while watching her child play baseball at a local city park and again at the grocery store. The day before, the same teacher was heard making similar comments about the student to another teacher (who did not have the student in class) in the hallway. The behavior of this particular student was due to his diagnosis of autism, and some of the statements made by the teacher were extremely embarrassing for the associated family. Emory was extremely upset and had called the teacher in to discuss the issue of confidentiality and the possible repercussions that could occur if members of the student’s family discovered that she had been discussing such issues with people who shouldn’t have access to this type of information.

I listened as Emory told of how the teacher first denied that she has been discussing the child and how she became suddenly defensive and almost aggressive about being called in for, what seemed to her, a reprimand. Eventually the teacher began to sob uncontrollably as the realization of her actions resonated. Emory appeared emotionally exhausted as she described her meeting with this teacher,

She was very sorry…but was she really?…I think she was just fighting mad at first that I was even questioning her at all. Apparently she couldn’t understand that I was trying to protect her before she ended up in a lawsuit. After a few minutes of listening to me explain the rights of the child and his family is when she started to cry…you know if his mother decided to strike back because she was running her mouth…that stupid woman could lose her job, her house…everything she has! I do not know if I was more aggravated at her for being a loud mouth or because she was so ignorant of the law that governs her job! She really acted as if she had
never heard the word confidentiality! Now I am faced with the problem of the others she has been talking to. There is nothing I can do about the grocery store or the ball field, but I had to go address the other teacher she talked to in the hall. The Superintendent told me to handle the situation...great! So this woman is mad before I can even get a word out of my mouth! She spit insults and accusation at me and would not listen to anything I said!

Lily, who is often the most soft spoken of the three tried to lead Emory to evaluate her own actions to be sure she was not the one causing the teacher to become offensive,

Well, Emory, were you being ugly? I mean, did you at least try to be positive about something or did you just call them in and start crawling them about this? Emory’s reply was,

No, I actually started to feel sorry for them...especially the one who’d been doing the talking. You know, she has only been teaching for two or three years...maybe she really didn’t understand what a big deal this is...she was finally receptive to my advice, I think, but the other one...she never stopped long enough to have a civilized conversation.

Jaye quickly added her thoughts,

Well the one who was hearing this should have known better. She’s been teaching over 20 years. She is often hateful though so I guess your questioning her in any way offended her and astonished her...to hear her talk, she never does anything wrong. Funny how I walk by her room sometimes and she actually has her feet up on her desk and the students are bouncing off the walls!

The conversation continued for a great deal of the ride home. This was only one of several instances in which I witnessed a time of what appeared to be a ‘deprogramming session’. These teachers had become friends and their relationship had become a source of strength and support for one another. When one had a bad day or a difficult experience, it seemed that the others would offer support, encouragement, an experienced ear, or advice. Sometimes this meant quietly listening as the teacher experiencing the dilemma fumed on and on and eventually talked until she had reached
her own conclusion about the situation. Other times, one would be in genuine need of help from the others. Either way, the base of support that existed between the three was an important resource for all of their emotional well-beings.

Because there are so many facets of emotional drama associated with the profession of teaching, the information I gained from this study seemed to suggest that the answer to becoming an emotionally smart teacher was not a simple one. Characteristics of those with successful teaching careers include an ability to self-motivate, awareness of fruitful methods of emotional labor in spite of surrounding emotional turmoil, the emotional stamina to both admit your own frustration, anger, excitement, hopes, fear, and hurt and the resourcefulness to identify and establish people and places that can help ease the tension of destructive emotional states. Somehow, an emotionally smart teacher has to be internally driven yet socially engaged with the emotions of those around them—this means finding support and offering support—standing on your own, yet learning to lean on the experiences of others.

**Specific Narratives vs. Schematic Narrative Templates**

The specific narratives presented thus far have been developed from the real life stories and cases of the participating teachers and represent the thoughts and reflections of the participants in relation to the emotional aspects of the field of education. Throughout the process of data generation and analysis, each narrative was reviewed and reread by both the researcher and the participants and the narratives included in this research evolved to reflect the most accurate depiction of each emotional experience possible. These narratives tell stories of particular instances that stand out as deeply emotional events occurring in the participants’ careers as teachers. By presenting these narratives through the eyes of the individual, greater
voice is given to the educator who witnessed and experienced the emotional event. Each experience detailed in the specific narratives was included in this research in order to address the researcher’s first research question: What might successful teachers describe as emotional experiences they deem to be important to their classroom practices?

In order to speak to the remaining research questions, a more complex connection had to be identified across the specific narratives offered by the participating teachers. It was through this phase of analysis and re-analysis of the many data sources that the schematic narrative templates were developed and associated themes began to emerge. Van Manen (1990) suggested that such emergent themes resulting from qualitative phenomenology are, “the stars that make up the universe of meaning we live through…around which certain lived experiences are spun and thus lived through as meaningful wholes” (p.90). The narrative templates more specifically address research questions two and three: In what ways might a teacher’s navigation of emotional experiences contribute to their successful classroom practices?, and, How might cases of teacher emotion be useful for professional teacher learning?

Summary

Chapter IV presented the stories (specific narratives) as told by the participating teachers and schematic narrative template developed by the researcher. In some instances, the specific narratives were written exactly as they were told to the researcher. At other times, information from multiple sources (e.g., interviews, observations, written journal entries and teacher case writings) in order to present a narrative associated with an issue that seemed to be of importance to those participating in this research. The schematic narrative templates were the culmination of a vast amount of data generated throughout the study and the insights concerning recurrent themes that became evident through the analysis phase of the research. Chapter V will
summarize and reference the information presented in this chapter, present the researcher’s interpretations and conclusions, and offer suggestions and implications for future research.
CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION, REFLECTION, AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

The present study originated through the overwhelming flood of emotion that consumed me many years ago as I began my career as a teacher. As briefly described in Chapter Four, the first year of my teaching career left me feeling unsure about whether or not I could continue to teach. Though I knew my content and I knew how to deliver it in what seemed like a hundred ways, the turmoil that caused my stomach to ache each night as I recounted the day and each morning as I forced myself to return to work was indescribable. I questioned my choice of career, I questioned my abilities, I questioned everything related to my position as a teacher, and I felt like a failure. Somehow, the confidence I had as my heels tapped the floor on that first morning making the way to my classroom was gone as I made the drive home on the first afternoon. The students were not very welcoming and my feelings were hurt because they were not enthralled by my overwhelming wisdom. As the weeks passed by, attacks from parents, disrespectful students, cruel words from other teachers (likely full of their own emotional turmoil), and a growing list of undone tasks nearly succeeded at breaking my spirit. Reflecting back, I am unsure why I chose to stick it out and try to survive the second year, but I did. Eventually, things got easier and I became confident in my teaching practices. Even still, those first few years sparked in me a longing to understand why it is that some of us make it and some of us do not.
I remain fascinated as I observe an educational system that has been evaluated, defined, and re-defined again and again until the result is something so complex and multifaceted that even the brightest scholars struggle to pinpoint the weakest points or the areas that should receive our greatest attention. What is it that we are lacking? Where should reform efforts focus? Turning to the teachers, who can determine why so many choose to leave the profession? Why is it so difficult to even articulate what it means to be a successful teacher? Perhaps the downfall lies in the continued dehumanization of our educational systems. With so many reform efforts targeting our schools, the result seems to be the creation of a place in which the humanness of the teachers has been forgotten.

Recently, I found myself one evening sitting behind the cheerleading table at a football game. I was watching my youngest son as he played on the field and, at the same time, attempting to sell spirit items to raise money for my cheerleading team. My thoughts were anywhere but on my dissertation, though I was in the final stages of editing and preparing for my defense. A couple colleagues walked up to the table and extended a friendly greeting as they selected items from the table for purchase. Our lighthearted conversation included a concerned question from one who asked how the dissertation was coming. I consider her a dear friend and she has been one of many sources of encouragement as I have travelled the paths of graduate studies. After offering her a quick reply, she began to share with me a story that resonated with the purpose of this study.

You know, my oldest son is in college, and he was home this weekend. There is so much going on with him right now. You know, I have been trying to talk him out of becoming a teacher. He just doesn’t seem to understand. He has watched me and knows how much I love what I do, and he asked me why in the world I would discourage his decision to do the very thing that had brought such joy to my own life. I tried to explain that I do love teaching, and I have never regretted the decision I made to become a teacher, but the reality is that too many people become teachers because their parents were teachers or they want summers off or the hours were more conducive to raising a
family. Some even make the choice because they have spent their whole lives in the school setting and when forced to become an adult, everything else is foreign and seeking to work in the school is the easiest choice because it is familiar. I just don’t want him to be disappointed when he realizes that he is working more hours than he believed possible for a salary that will never be sufficient and that no one will seem to appreciate his efforts. There is only one reason anyone should become a teacher and that is if they really want to teach. Most days I am emotionally, physically, and mentally exhausted as I find my way home. I am often awake with worry about one student or another and my heart remains crippled with fear, frustration, anger, and disappointment most of the time. I feel like I meet a new challenge every day. I am challenged intellectually, spiritually, and emotionally. You know, there are mountains of resistance when we try to make a difference, and everything we do to help students seems to be met with a lack of effort on the part of the kids. Then there are the times that good teachers are accused of terrible things and their lives are ruined in the process. I know he was thinking I was crazy, but I just want to make sure he understands that teaching is truly a calling and there is no other way around it. Only those who become teachers because they possess the deepest desire within their hearts to teach will make it to retirement.

The thoughts of my friend could be used as a great summation of the insights gained through this research. Though difficult to conceptualize and articulate to others, there is a certain \textit{something} that characterizes truly successful and fulfilled teachers. This \textit{something} is so important that if present, it will sustain a life-long career and motivate a person to dedicate their existence to the profession of teaching. It is so essential that when absent, few will be able to continue as practicing teachers. There is an internal drive---an intrinsic motivation---a deep desire to become a classroom teacher that must be embodied if one is to continue in the profession. It is this ‘undefined’ \textit{something} that enables a teacher to build the strong emotional capacity that will show itself in the actions and reactions of those choosing to give their lives to such an emotionally chaotic human service occupation.

\textbf{Discussion}

One of the aims of this study was to listen to the emotional experiences that teachers see as important to their teaching practices. The importance of communicating emotional experiences of teachers should not be overlooked, yet educational research is largely silent on
this matter. The specific and schematic narratives shared in Chapter Four characterize ways teachers experience emotion, which in turn mediates what they do in their classroom. The purpose of this Discussion is to connect the specific and template narratives and to make a scholarly turn to conjoin our narratives to those of high concern in the educational research community, namely those concerning, (a) student relationships, (b) colleagues and associated relational situations, and (c) administrative support and reassurance.

**Student Relationships**

All three of the participating teachers initially chose to share some emotional story concerning a student in need. As all data sources were read and reread, multiple situations were identified as student-teacher relational instances. It has been known for some time that social interactions between teachers and students deeply influences the classroom climate, the teaching/learning process, and a plethora of other aspects associated with both the teacher’s practices and the students’ performance (Bullough & Draper, 2004; Zembylas, 2002). Emory demonstrated the profundness of the teacher student relationship while discussing the child who lived in such terrible conditions and relied on the school as his only source of food and means of personal hygiene. As she discussed the memory of the young man, Emory was still emotionally connected to that particular situation and felt that the experience greatly influenced her in her future teaching practices. Jaye also exhibited the robust and complex emotional feelings teachers often have for students as she discussed teaching a young man in her car as she parked outside his home, in such an impoverished part of the community. Likewise, talking with Lily about how she consoled the four year old girl who cried because she did not want to leave her mother created yet another picture of the importance of the relationships formed between educators and
the students they care for each day. Each story was told with such profound feeling that the researcher, herself, personally felt the emotional ties even today, so many years later.

Hamre and Pianta (2006) discuss the importance of supportive and positive relationships between teachers and students and suggest that the formation of such relationships allows the student to feel safe and secure in the school setting, increases the student’s feelings of competency, assists the student with making positive connections with peers, and increases student academic gains. Positive teacher-student relationships are based on mutual respect and can greatly influence the student’s performance and behavior during the school day. Such positive relationships also provide an important positive reinforcement for teachers (Pianta, 1999). It was evident that all of the participating teachers identified with the students and felt a great deal of empathy for each situation. It was further evident that as each teacher related to the situation, they found some source of pride in the way they handled such an emotionally charged situation that could have otherwise been traumatic. Such pride and satisfaction in their own response to each situation continues to be a dynamic element in the continuation of their own careers as educators.

Additional sources of data revealed suggestions from the participating teachers concerning teacher-student emotional relationships. In an interview with Lily, she says,

If I could tell new teachers one thing to help them increase their chances of establishing a long and successful career, it would be that they recognize the need to KNOW their students. So many times, teachers become overwhelmed with teaching the course of study and completing the millions of tasks that are related to our position as teacher that the reason we are in the classroom in the first place is forgotten…and once it is lost, few teachers ever get that back. Yes, we should teach content, and yes, we should do a good job with the functional part of our chosen profession, but the most important thing is to get to know those kids. They are the reason we are there. Once you get to know them, you can open your heart and love them…once you love them, you can really help them!
Likewise, in talking with Jaye, thoughts concerning relationship building with students were quickly forthcoming. Jaye explained,

Many kids come to school from homes that have no example of a healthy relationship. These kids don’t even know how to trust an adult. It is the hand of many adults that have caused them not to trust anyone. The first step in becoming a successful teacher is to reach out and gain their trust and respect. In most cases, this mutual respect is the only source of gratitude a teacher feels. If you lose the relational part of the job, I think you may never fully realize the importance of the position. Teachers quit because the pay is poor, the work is hard, and the rewards are few and far between…but when you get on a child’s level and actually find yourself influencing that child in a positive way that will move them forward in life…well, that is the reward for the teacher…that is how you know you chose the right job and that you did it well.

It is clear from these statements that the participants consider relational experiences as one of the greatest sources of job satisfaction. Certainly witnessing the positive outcome of personal efforts with a student is likely to fuel internal motivation to continue teaching to the child and reaching out to those in need. Since a great majority of teachers leaving the field reference a lack of incentives and recognition as a reason for changing careers (Zembylas, 2002), it should be apparent that we are not preparing individuals for the connections that must be made emotionally with the students. According to Klem and Connell (2004), students need to know and feel that the teacher is involved with them and suggest that higher levels of teacher-student emotional and social engagement can be linked to higher student academic success. Often it is easy to get caught up in the operational duties of teaching, but we should never forget that the students, themselves are emotional, social creatures with their own feelings, emotions, needs, and troubles. It seems that recognition of such may be the pathway to successfully opening the minds of the students and preparing them to accept the content as it is delivered.
Colleagues and Associated Relational Situations

Next, the narratives presented communicate the highly influential emotions surrounding the relationships existing among professional colleagues. Each participant mentioned at least one situation in which the actions or statements of another teacher or coworker either positively or negatively affected the way they saw themselves as teachers. Emory discussed leaving the school system after many years of service and the length of time she dealt with the feeling of not being appreciated or wanted. It was through her own maturity and experience that she was able to realize her own abilities and regain her self-efficacy in order to continue serving students in her current position. Likewise Lily discussed the positive influence the actions and words of her first principal. His influence made Lily feel secure about securing a job and also contributed to her own efficacy and belief in her teaching abilities.

The schematic narrative templates presented in Chapter Four particularly spoke to the complex social interactions of individuals working together on a daily basis. It is the researcher’s opinion, based on this inquiry, that relationships with colleagues can affect a teacher in two very different but similarly important and profound ways. First, negative attitudes and emotions from those in the job place can negatively influence the teacher (Anderson, Dacher, & Oliver, 2033). Professional literature so frequently speaks to the less than positive attitudes of many educational professionals. Causes of negative teacher attitudes generate from increased workloads, rising demands, greater accountability, bureaucratic and governmental standards and control, legislative mandates and statutes, low salaries, large class sizes, and list goes on and on (Borg, 1990; Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Cain & Cain, 2001; Erb, 2004; Marsh & Codding, 1999; Nias, 1996; Schutz & Pekrun, 2007; Zembylas, 2002; Zebbylas, 2006; Zembylas, 2008). The notion of emotional convergence discussed throughout this report suggests that when a person is
faced with the ongoing negativity of one or more people, those negative emotions can and will make one feel worse and begin to influence the overall attitude of the individual (Barsade, 2002).

Secondly, the emotional climate in which a teacher works can be a foundational means of support for the teacher. Observational data from this study indicates that the participants used time together to ‘talk out’ professional situations that frustrated them, made them mad, encouraged them, or puzzled them. At times it seemed that these small group, informal discussions were aimed at soliciting feedback and advice, but at other times, the teachers seemed to simply need an environment and audience to ‘verbally vent’. The relationships existing between the teachers were apparently a source of encouragement and a place to confide and unwind when there was an emotionally stressful day.

**Administrative Support and Reassurance**

Finally, the participants each seemed to communicate an instance involving their feelings of the support they were receiving from their superiors. Emory discussed her first experience in a classroom and how she felt when she realized her classroom was in a broken down van. In addition, her principal’s attitude toward the teaching of special education students was a disheartening if not a shocking exhibition of the reality of the administrative support existing in many public schools today. It seems that we (as a nation) are quick to increase the accountability placed on teachers while intensified demands or expectations are hastily placed on the shoulders of these professionals. In light of this, does our current public school system offer enough positive reinforcement for practicing teachers? Since student academic performance has been linked to positive relational and emotional experiences (Klem & Connell, 2004), why would we fail to consider the positive implications for teaching practices in light of encouragement and sound administrative support? Such support will result in increased self-efficacy and studies have
shown that when there is a lack of administrative support, the teachers are less likely to remain motivated and are more likely to leave the teaching field (Zembylas, Espinet, Milane, & Scantlebury, 2006).

The notion of poor leadership in the schools and school systems was an idea that presented itself multiple times throughout the course of this research. In one of Jaye’s narratives, the belief that professional promotion is more quickly attained when one is a poor teacher or engages in behaviors worthy of reprimand is introduced. Regardless of the truth behind the belief in “screw up and move up”, the fact is that all three of the participating teachers believed that those in leadership roles within their educational organizations reached this level of superiority because they were terrible teachers or because they had to be removed from the classroom for some negative act of behavior. Such a process for promotion may be solely generated within the minds of the teachers, but what a disheartening belief to have! We must stop to realize that what a teacher experiences and witnesses in the educational setting will, in turn, alter the teacher’s belief in and emotional ties to the profession. Emory discussed a specific situation briefly one day during an informal meeting with all three teachers,

Don’t you remember why he got moved to the central office in the first place? He had an affair with that other teacher and his wife, who was working at the elementary school, called the superintendent and demanded that he be transferred. Anyway, he had to finish the year at the school before he was moved, but the talk about the affair was all over the place…teachers---even the students were talking about it…finally, they just put him in a job at the board to keep him from screwing up as a teacher again and to shut up all the talk about his affair.

Lily added,

Isn’t that how it works, though? The ones in the classroom that have no idea how to teach or the ones that end up messing around with a student, or paddling too hard, or making a parent mad enough to sue---those are our bosses---or they will be one day.
This brief conversation was only one of several instances in which problems associated with the hierarchy in educational systems was addressed. On a different occasion, Emory was upset and spoke of a meeting with her principal and a parent,

The dad was so mad that he threatened to file a lawsuit…I knew he didn’t have a lawsuit and so I was not scared, but the reality was that his kid had cheated. My policy says that a child caught cheating gets a zero. Anyway, the dad looks at Mr. ---- and says, can’t you do something about this? And Mr. --- says, sir, I will continue to discuss this with Emory and we will work it out somehow. HUH?!? I guess it is easier to just talk around a subject than it would be to grow a backbone and stand up for your teacher. I waited until the parent left and then I said my peace!

Often, a cause of teacher dissatisfaction can be traced back through a chain of poor administrative decisions. Some principals are simply not good instructional leaders. Others do not have the confidence to stand up to adversity and risk the possibility of negative implications. Still others, sadly enough, have been placed in a higher position in order to remove them from the classroom because they were unable to make academic gains with the students (Bulach, Boothe, and Pickett, 1997; Davis, 1997; Hogan, Raskin, and Fazzini, 1990). According to Bulach, Pickett, and Boothe (1997), fifteen categories of mistakes made by school administrators have been identified including:

- poor human-relations skills,
- poor interpersonal-communication skills,
- a lack of vision,
- failure to lead,
- avoidance of conflict,
- lack of knowledge about instruction/curriculum,
- a control orientation,
- lack of ethics or character,
- forgetting what it is like to be a teacher,
- inconsistency,
- showing favoritism,
- failure to hold staff accountable,
- failure to follow through,
- snap judgments,
- and interrupting instruction with public-address-system announcements. (p.1)

This particular research cannot possibly attempt to identify problems affecting administrative-teacher relationships or propose the solutions, but the narratives and additional data generated throughout this inquiry indicate that a lack of administrative support, weak teacher-administrative relationships, negative emotions, and undesirable views of administrators can be identified as contributory influences on the emotional state of the teachers themselves.
Study Reflection

The term “reflection” has been used in place of a word more likely used at this point, that of “conclusion”, in keeping with the ongoing nature of narrative learning. Emotions research evokes our past, present, and forward insights. Certainly, the idea of defining the term ‘emotion’ is difficult at best. In light of the numerous definitions of emotion, this study was designed on a belief in the social constructivist theory of the origination of emotions. Teacher emotions are no exception, and this research suggests that social interactions are fundamental to the emotional expression, emotional control, and inevitably the emotional stamina of each individual teacher. This inquiry was instigated due to the personal experiences of the researcher as a practicing classroom teacher. Personal experiences with teacher training and ongoing professional development stimulated the researcher to question why emotional issues were rarely addressed in the professional literature. Further investigation revealed that a majority of textbooks and coursework related to teacher methods fail to discuss the emotional terrain of the public classroom setting. The data generated in this study confirmed that other teachers agree that the emotional labor associated with teaching is the source of a large amount of stress and strain placed on practicing educators and quite likely contributes to the rising number of individuals who decide to leave the teaching field.

Legislation continues to intervene in our public school on an increasingly frequent basis and offers guidelines, demands, statutes, objectives, and suggestions for not only what students should learn but how they should be taught. It is easy to understand the call for intervention in today’s educational system if one simply compares American student performance with that of other countries around the globe or looks to the rising high school drop-out rate and the number of illiterate American citizens. However, such legislative pieces fail to recognize or even
mention the quickly rising amounts of emotional stress facing teachers every day in our schools. This study looks to an aspect of teaching often left unaddressed: emotion.

Governmental legislation such as No Child Left Behind (2002), addresses a plethora of important influences within the public school setting. Following suit with similar mandates of past generations, teachers are categorized as highly qualified or unqualified, specific course objectives are pre-defined for a nation of schools regardless of their location, cultural setting, and the individualized characteristics of each student population. Demands continue to reach down from the top of our nation’s government to the very desks in rural classrooms, but not one time does any such mandate address the overwhelming influence of emotion in the classroom. No one can deny that as humans, teachers are both social and emotional beings and their individual personality, beliefs, attitudes, and emotions play a huge role in the classroom and school climate. Likewise, a whole room full of human students with varying beliefs, attitudes, and emotions must all join together to reach one goal – student learning. As if this is not enough, add in the principals and central office personnel that govern our schools and systems, and you have now created an emotional arena so massive that there is little room to wonder why such issues are not addressed in reform bills and governmental directives. Consequently, this study calls for focused attention on the emotional labor of classroom teachers. The reality of human service occupations will always be an emotionally charged environment. Since each teacher---each classroom---each school presents a differing web of social and emotional intricacies, this research is not calling for a solution to a problem that can be “fixed”, but rather demands a recognition and awareness of the significant emotional impact of the teaching profession on individual educators.

One complication that results from a continuing trend of hiding emotional labor in our schools is that teachers enter these emotionally charged atmospheres with an enormous lacking
in preparedness for what they are about to face. Similar to K-12 public schools, institutions of higher education are required to follow standardized training and learning objectives as they prepare pre-service teachers to enter the field. While teacher training programs seem to be doing a good job of cognitively producing teachers, we are missing an important aspect of what teacher training should be. This study suggests that as a whole, we are failing to bring sentience to those aspiring to become teachers. Beginning teachers often begin their careers highly knowledgeable in their prospective content areas, full of ideas concerning instructional practices, and excited about passing along their knowledge to a room full of children. We seem to be efficient at equipping teachers with a range of delivery methods, the best tools for teaching to diverse ability levels, and a wide array of ideas concerning pedagogy. Today’s teacher preparation programs communicate the need for an ability to recognize when one method of instruction is failing and the quick-mindedness to switch instructional strategies in order to best meet the learning needs of the individuals that occupy the desks in each classroom. Certainly the pre-service training our teachers are currently receiving has made great strides in the cognitive training of teachers, but still, we fail to discuss the harsh and inevitable certainty of the emotional drama associated with the profession. Even as new teachers, we should be aware that situations will arise in which we will feel deeply hurt by the actions and words of others, some days there will be unimaginable frustration when nothing seems to go as expected, at times we will become extremely angry, and as my dear friend so nicely described, some nights we will lie awake worried or crying, or afraid— all of these feelings are not only normal, they should be expected. A teacher who is prepared for such an emotional avalanche will be better equipped to respond to such emotional strain, will be ready to ask for help, and will be informed about where they can find such help when needed.
Implications for Future Research

As stated earlier, this study aimed to give a voice to individual teachers regarding the emotional aspects of the teaching profession. Subsequently, the specific narratives were generated from the contributing information shared by each participant based on personal experiences. As is true with any human profession, there will never be an “answer” that can be applied to every teacher in every classroom throughout our country or across the globe, but with a greater recognition of the emotional terrain of teaching and ongoing discussion with prospective teachers, we can better prepare those entering the educational field of practice. This study provides many implications for future research.

It can be easily recognized from the research report that the location and demographic make-up of the school system in which the three participating teachers were employed was a predominantly Caucasian community. This particular research study did not attempt to speak to the issue of race or the cultural differences among teachers, students, and families associated with public education today or to the subsequent relational emotions situations that arise in that respect. How might the study insights have been different if the three teachers (who were all white southern women) had been African American? In other systems with a more diversified population, how might the emotional issues presented by the teachers have differed? It would be prudent for research endeavors to address the possible commonalities and variances that may exist among teachers with divergent backgrounds as well as within schools and systems with varying degrees of diversity. Continued research in the area of teacher emotions should continue to allow teachers to express and discuss the emotional terrain of the teaching profession as it is socially developed and individually experienced based on each distinct teacher situation. Extensions of the current study could serve as a beneficial contributory source of added
understanding if the ethnic, cultural, and social backgrounds of both the schools and the participating teachers were addressed in such a way as to speak to the related emotional issues facing the teachers.

The method of generating emotion cases from the participating teachers proved to be a valuable source of information and served to stimulate numerous discussions throughout the entire investigation. One possible research initiative that could further the insights of this study would include a closer evaluation of the possible use of such cases to inform pre-service teachers prior to the internship phase of their teacher preparation program. Use of emotional case writing activities could help to enlighten pre-service teachers about real-life situations encountered by more experienced teachers and facilitate connections between more experienced educators and those newly hired. Furthermore, by presenting such situations in a case-written format, prospective teachers can contemplate and discuss possible ways each dilemma could be handled. Further research would be required to determine if such efforts could positively influence the preparedness of those about to enter the teaching profession.

Another possible implication for research concerns current teacher evaluation methods. Presently, our educational system requires an evaluation of teachers both prior to professional teaching and throughout the career of a practicing educator. Research efforts should target the tools associated with such evaluations. For instance, one common association with teacher attrition is classroom management. Often the behaviors of the students are cited as a motivating factor in the decision to leave the teaching field, and certainly administrators and higher education professionals are asked to evaluate a teacher’s ability to control the classroom climate and the students’ behavior effectively. Since such emphasis is placed on behavioral issues, there is a need for evaluation of the observational tools used in teacher evaluations to determine if the
indications truly reflect the teacher’s ability to manage the classroom or if they are actually a measure of instances of undesirable student behavior. As society continues to change, our students continue to change. Few would argue that many behaviors exhibited in today’s public schools would have never been commonplace in schools 20 years ago. This poses several questions concerning teacher evaluations. If teachers are asked to control more behavioral issues with fewer options of disciplinary measures, should we still evaluate the skills of a practitioner based on classroom management? Should other methods of controlling the overall classroom climate be initiated to decrease instances of behavioral issues?

Similarly, further investigation should seek to uncover the experiences of successful, experienced classroom teachers. Future research should continue to focus on such emotional experiences in order to increase awareness of the emotional aspects associated with the teaching profession. In relation to teacher evaluations, research that attempts to recognize ways of measuring the emotional stamina of teachers seems a more appropriate tool of evaluation. Additionally, some inquiry should be targeted at helping individuals recognize early on in their pursuit of higher education whether or not they are well suited to become a successful teacher. This study proposes that characteristics of a successful educator are not common to everyone. Just as some people are more skilled in the area of mathematics and will be successful as an engineer while others are not equipped to pursue that career-way, everyone does not possess the capabilities of becoming a successful teacher. Research efforts must begin to identify ways of helping those considering a teaching career determine if becoming a teacher is the right choice for them.

Further investigation of this subject can certainly serve to solicit attention from educational leaders and government agencies and possibly contribute to the facilitation of the
inclusion of emotion in teacher preparation programs, professional development efforts for practitioners, and educational reform actions. Once we realize the importance of one’s ability to navigate the emotional terrain associated with teaching, we will be taking a step toward battling the teacher attrition rate in our country. If no other implication exists, the simple act of recognizing the depth of emotional dynamics in the classroom and discussing the importance of emotional impacts and other affective issues in our schools is certainly worth the attention of professional researchers.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

Initial/Historical Background Interview Session

Sample Interview Questions
Researcher: Kary Roberts

1. Tell me about your pre-service training/education/preparation to become a teacher (Which college(s) did you attended?, What degrees/certifications do you hold?, etc…)

2. Please discuss your experience in the teaching profession. (Where have you worked?, In What positions, types of schools/systems?, How long have you been working in education?)

3. What thoughts do you have about your pre-service training compared with the actual experiences you faced during your first year or two of employment? (Did you feel prepared? Why or Why not?)

4. Could you describe the role that you feel your emotions play in your ability to effectively teach? What role do student emotions play in then teaching/learning process?

5. Describe an experience during your career that you will always remember as a deeply emotional experience (this could be a positive or negative emotional experience).

6. What are the biggest changes in our profession that you have witnessed during the course of your career? (In your opinion, were these changes good or bad?, Why do you feel that way?)

7. Is there anything else you would like to share with me about your educational career, experiences, or views of education? Do you have any questions for me?
APPENDIX B

Example of an Emotion Case

A Life Changing Decision

Today, in our current public schools, teachers are often overwhelmed by a huge number of situations and demands that seemingly pull us in multiple directions. Coupled with such a rigorous profession is the moral and ethical aspect of educating our youth. I believe that it is true that teachers must have a ‘heart that is special’ in order to survive a teaching career, but sometimes such a caring nature can pose a problem with decision making in very real and serious situations.

I had been teaching for about 3 years and absolutely loved what I did each day! I enjoyed my students, and though I never perceived my job as “easy”…I knew I was doing exactly what I was meant to do with my life. I have always been characterized as a person with a big heart and my parents often joke about all the stray animals I allowed to follow me home.

There was a young lady who entered my science class when she reached the 6th grade. Since I was the only Science teacher in a very small school, I remained her teacher until she finished the 8th grade. Her mother has died from cancer when she was 2 years old, and though her father had remarried many years ago, she had a home life that was anything but perfect. More than once she had moved in with her grandmother or another relative because of the verbal abuse she felt she received from her dad and step-mother. She often stayed in my room for most of the day crying and confiding in me. We became close and I genuinely loved her.

After a while, I began trying to counsel her about the opportunities she should grasp and how she could improve her life through education, etc…until one day when she asked if she could come and live with me. Now, she was not flippantly asking, she was whole-heartedly begging for someone to love her. My experience with her had been that she never acted disrespectfully, she always tried her best, and I do not ever remember her breaking a rule or speaking with any other tone than one of respect.

My question…Do I allow this child to enter my family (with my own children) and try to help her like my heart was trying to lead me to do?...What issues will that cause me to confront with the school, my family, her parents and family?...Am I asking for disaster?...or do I say no and take a chance of her getting hurt or becoming bitter and ultimately failing to become the...
adult I KNEW she was capable of becoming? Could I live with myself if I followed “policy” and something terrible happened to this child I had grown to love?...Could I really help her anyway?
APPENDIX C

Open and Closed Cases: Writing Guidelines

WRITING AN OPEN CASE

For each journal entry, you should write a “case”—a short story that features a problem or dilemma to your teaching. Try to focus your case writing by describing an emotional experience, situation, or instance that has occurred in the classroom or within other professional settings (relevant to the teaching profession). By writing in ‘case’ format, you will be providing short narratives of each situation, the influencing factors associated with the experience, your personal emotions and reactions to the events, and your thoughts related to each occurrence.

Try to use real events in each journal/case writing entry. Your case should include the following components:

• brief statement about the work context associated with the experience
• a clear description of the problem
• your thoughts and reactions as well as the thoughts and reactions of others involved (as you witness and perceive them)
• close with a question you would like to hear other colleagues’ help you think about

Your case may include any or all of the following components:

• description of the teacher(s), student(s), administrator(s), etc…
• background experiences that may have contributed to the events being discussed
• description of school/community
• your ideas about feelings and intentions of those involved
• dialogue
• description of other relevant parties (e.g., parents, principals, other teachers)

Do not include a solution, outcomes or “morals of the story”. You may use as many or as few of these components and you may arrange them in any order. There is no “correct” way to write an open case study.

WRITING A CLOSED CASE

A “closed” case is similar to an “open case” except a closed case tells how a teacher resolved the dilemma. In simple terms, this type of case has an “ending”. Again, try to focus your case
writing by describing an emotional experience, situation, or instance, but in this case you should
tell how you solved your dilemma. So, a close case would have the following components:

- brief statement about your work context
- a clear description of the problem
- close with a question you would like to hear other colleagues’ help you think about
- outcomes(s), solutions, etc… (how did this work)
- lessons or morals of this case
- your personal reflections about the situation from beginning to end (do you feel that you
handled this well, what could have been done differently, if given the opportunity would you
change any of your own behaviors and reactions?)

You may use as many or as few of these components as you like and you may arrange them in
any order.

The following is an example of a general journal entry written in ‘open case format’ (it is not
specifically associated with teaching and emotion but will provide some assistance in clarifying
the journal writing format):

Example of an Open Case

A Testy Test!

(From Nichols & Tippins, 2004)

The Context… I’m a student teacher of grade 8. As a teacher in science, there are times
when unexpected situations will occur inside the classroom which create dilemmas. My
dilemma is not really a big one, but when you look at it deeply; such a dilemma can
create a serious situation that is hard to deal with in science teaching.

The Case… One day, I taught a lesson about places where plants grow. I first
presented places where specific plants grow — in soil, water, air, wet and dry places.
The plants I used as examples were taken from the science book that we were using in
class. The pupils were confused about whether the water and wet places were the same?
In real life situation there are plants that can grow in both places — in wet and aquatic
places. On a test, I asked students to list 2 examples of plants that grow in soil, water,
air, dry, and wet places. One child wrote “Kangkong” plant under “wet” places; I
marked it wrong because the book implied that Kangkong would be an “aquatic” plant
since it grows in water.
The mother of one of our pupils came to the school. She had a correction for an answer her child had written that I had marked wrong. The mother protested saying that Kangkong *can* grow also in wet places. Because I followed what is written in the book, I marked it wrong. Besides, most of my pupils believed that the book is the source of knowledge. So, if I checked or accepted other answers that are not found in the book pupils will conclude that books can’t be trusted.

Actually, I believe that books are not the only source of knowledge. You can gain knowledge from other people, and also from real life situations. Answers that can be found in the book are also correct, but they are limited in the sense that other answers can also be found in other books.

**My question is…** Am I going to stick to the book or consider other answers which are based on real life situation? What will happen if I stick or depend only on the book? What should I do to help my pupils understand our lesson?
APPENDIX D

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL AND PARTICIPANT CONSENT
February 23, 2011

Kary Roberts
Department of Curriculum & Instruction
College of Education
The University of Alabama

Re: IRB # 11-OR-051 "Emotional Labor, Emotional Expression, and Emotional Control in the K-12 Classroom"

Dear Ms. Roberts,

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board has granted approval for your proposed research.

Your application has been given expedited approval according to 45 CFR part 46. Approval has been given under expedited review category 7 as outlined below:

(7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

Your application will expire on February 22, 2012. If your research will continue beyond this date, complete the relevant portions of Continuing Review and Closure Form. If you wish to modify the application, complete the Modification of an Approved Protocol Form. When the study closes, complete the appropriate portions of FORM: Continuing Review and Closure.

Please use reproductions of the IRB approved informed consent form to obtain consent from your participants.

Should you need to submit any further correspondence regarding this proposal, please include the above application number.

Good luck with your research.

Sincerely,
UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA
HUMAN RESEARCH PROTECTION PROGRAM

Informed Consent for a Non-Medical Study

Study title: Emotional Labor, Emotional Expression, and Emotional Control in the K-12 Classroom

Investigator’s Name, Position, Faculty or Student Status: Kary Roberts; Doctoral Student

Institution if other than or collaborating with UA: University of Alabama

This study is called Emotional Labor, Emotional Expression, and Emotional Control in the K-12 Classroom. The study is being done by Kary Roberts, who is a doctoral student at the University of Alabama. Ms. Roberts is being supervised by Dr. Sharon Nichols, who is a professor of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Alabama.

Is the researcher being paid for this study?

No

Is this research developing a product that will be sold, and if so, will the investigator profit from it?

No

Does the investigator have any conflict of interest in this study?

No

What is this study about? What is the investigator trying to learn?

The project’s goal is to investigate teacher emotions and explore ways that teacher control emotions and navigate the emotional terrain of the classroom setting.

Why is this study important or useful?

The information gained from this study will help to inform current and future teacher preparation programs. The results of this study will help new teachers better understand the emotional terrain of the classroom.

Why have I been asked to be in this study?

You have been asked to be in this study because you responded to a flyer that was distributed at your school. You indicated in your response to the flyer that you were currently a teacher with a minimum of 30 years of experience in the teaching profession, that you had professional experience in more than one position and/or more than one school setting, and that you had worked with students at multiple grade and achievement levels.

How many people will be in this study?

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The research aims to communicate the "stories" of three currently practicing teachers in the southeastern portion of the US.

**What will I be asked to do in this study?**

If you meet the criteria and agree to be in this study, you will be asked to do these things:

1. Complete a minimum of three case-based journal entries
2. Participate in several informal interviews
3. Participate in three discussion sessions with the investigator and other participants

**How much time will I spend being in this study?**

The writing and reflection related to the participant journals should take no longer than 30 minutes per instance. The initial meeting will last no longer than one hour. Individual interview and discussion sessions (maximum of three per participant) will last approximately 30 to 45 minutes each. One final group meeting will be conducted to present researcher interpretations and sample narrative writings and discuss concerns and questions of the teachers will be scheduled to last no longer than one hour. The actual amount of "clock time" each participant dedicates to the research will vary but should not exceed 6 hours of your time over the next three (3)- four (4) weeks.

**Will being in this study cost me anything?**

The only cost to you from this study is your time.

**Will I be compensated for being in this study?**

You will not be compensated for being in this study.

**Can the investigator take me out of this study?**

The investigator may take you out of the study if she feels that the study is upsetting you.

**What are the risks (dangers or harms) to me if I am in this study?**

There are no known risks associated with this study, and your identity will be protected. All identifying information (i.e. your name, school, school system, and town) will be changed to ensure that readers will not be able to recognize you as a participant of the study.

**What are the benefits (good things) that may happen if I am in this study?**

There are no direct benefits for you, but you may feel good about helping to inform the teaching field and better prepare pre-service and newly employed teachers.

**What are the benefits to science or society?**

This study will help practicing teachers improve their teaching practices. Teacher training programs may benefit future teachers through better preparation for the emotional aspects of being a teacher.
How will my privacy be protected?

Every effort will be made to ensure your privacy. Interviews, group discussions, and meetings will be conducted in a location that is comfortable for you and will provide privacy during instances in which you may be discussing information you do not wish to share with others. You will receive a list of possible questions prior to every interview, and you will be made aware of discussion topics prior to each meeting time.

How will my confidentiality be protected?

During the data generation phase of the study, all documents, journal writings, records of observations, etc... will be kept in the home of the investigator. This information will remain locked inside a cabinet and will only be accessible by the researcher. During observations, meetings/discussions, and interview sessions, the investigator will use audio recordings to more accurately capture what is being said. All digital media and/or audio tapes will also be kept in a locked cabinet in the home of the researcher and will remain inaccessible to others. Any writing associated with this study will be done on the researcher's personal computer and will only be saved to that hard drive. All files will be password protected.

During "group meeting" times, all participants will be asked to keep any information discussed private. All documents, journal writings, investigation notes, case entries, audio recordings, and other records of collected data will be destroyed no later than December of 2011.

What are the alternatives to being in this study? Do I have other choices?

The alternative to being in this study is not to participate.

What are my rights as a participant in this study?

Taking part in this study is voluntary. It is your free choice. You can refuse to be in it at all. If you start the study, you can stop at any time. There will be no effect on your relations with the University of Alabama.

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board ("the IRB") is the committee that protects the rights of people in research studies. The IRB may review study records from time to time to be sure that people in research studies are being treated fairly and that the study is being carried out as planned.

Who do I call if I have questions or problems?

If you have questions about the study right now, please ask them. If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about the study later on, please call the investigator, Kary Roberts at 256-302-0184.

If you have questions about your rights as a person in a research study, call Ms. Tanta Myles, the Research Compliance Officer of the University, at 205-348-8461 or toll-free at 1-877-820-3066.
You may also ask questions, make suggestions, or file complaints and concerns through the IRB Outreach website at http://osp.ua.edu/site/PRCO_Welcome.html or email us at participantoutreach@bama.ua.edu.

After you participate, you are encouraged to complete the survey for research participants that is online at the outreach website or you may ask the investigator for a copy of it and mail it to the University Office for Research Compliance, Box 870104, 152 Rose Administration Building, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0104.

I have read this consent form. I have had a chance to ask questions. I agree to take part in it.

I will receive a copy of this consent form to keep.

__________________________  __________________________
Signature of Research Participant  Date

__________________________  __________________________
Signature of Investigator  Date

Audio Taping Consent

As mentioned above, the individual qualitative interviews (and possibly discussion sessions) will be audio recorded for research purposes to Kary Roberts. These tapes will be stored in a locked file cabinet in a locked room and only available to Kary Roberts and her supervising professor, Dr. Sharon Nichols. We will only keep these tapes for no more than 3 months, and will destroy them after they have been transcribed.

I understand that part of my participation in this research study will be audiotaped and I give my permission to the research team to record the interview(s) and/or discussion session(s).

______ Yes, my participation in interviews/discussions can be audiotaped.

______ No, I do not want my participation in interviews/discussions to be audiotaped.

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CONSENT FORM APPROVED: 2-27-16
EXPIRATION DATE: 2-27-18