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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

**Development and testing an Authentic Dialogue Training Program on Pre-service Kindergarten
Teachers Social and Emotional Competencies**

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Introduction

Background

This doctoral research aims to characterize the type of discourse teachers conduct in their classrooms, by focusing on the pre-service teacher's (PST) role perception and social-emotional competencies in engaging in dialogue with preschoolers. A topic of research that has yet to be examined is the association between PSTs social-emotional competence (SEC) and their ability to conduct authentic dialogue (AD) with preschoolers. Furthermore, the teaching practices that promote dialogical processes in preschool settings, i.e., an environment where the teacher's role is of utter importance in supporting dialogical interaction, have not yet been explored. McMullen (1999) has shown that the beliefs a teacher holds before entering training programs will directly affect their pedagogical practices in the classroom.

Problem Statement

I have decided to address the pre-service early education teacher as the focus of my research because the quality of teacher-child interactions can enormously impact children's social and emotional well-being, directly affecting their abilities to learn and in turn, their future academic development. In my opinion, for a teacher, the ability to conduct AD, to take an interest in what the child wants or needs, is something that is not always inherent but must be learned. The current doctoral research focuses on conceptual change in PSTs that engage in personal dialogues with preschoolers and aims to identify and characterize the types of discourse they conduct. A dialogical-based training program was developed and implemented in an attempt to change their perceptions as well as raise their own SEC. This was done by providing them with skills that will enhance their interactions with the children.

Gap in Knowledge- Identified Research Needs

Previous studies were conducted in the field of conceptual change in PSTs with respect to their beliefs regarding their *own* personal and professional development, as well as the way they perceive the teacher's role in advancing children's academic success (Zinsser et al., 2014; Manuel & Hughes, 2006; Macedo & Freire, 2005). In addition, there are studies that measured the effects that teachers' conceptual changes had on scholastic abilities in children (Duit, 1995; Vosniadou, 2003; Yaman, 2004).

From the moment they are born, children begin a learning process that will continue throughout their life span. The provision of stimulative environments, developmentally appropriate practices and quality care will enable them to prosper. Therefore, there is a need

for preschool educators to be trained professionally in all aspects of child development as well as understand the importance that their dialogic interactions have in creating secure personal relationships in these formidable years and the effects it has on their future relationships with others.

To our knowledge, no research was found in the literature on educational practices that promote dialogical processes in a preschool setting. Similarly, no research was found on the effects that dialogue training has on conceptual changes and in turn on teacher-child interactions. As already mentioned above, Shulman (1997) and Lortie (2020) indicate that PSTs entering training programs with prior beliefs might affect their ability to reconstruct conceptual beliefs that are taught as they enter their training programs .

Little is known about the effects that both verbal and nonverbal communication has on young children's social and emotional well-being. Moreover, no literature was found regarding the use of dialogic-based intervention programs as part of in-service training for PSTs, in an effort to help them improve the quality of their interactions with children through emotional support for them. Therefore, a gap in knowledge was identified regarding the provision of open spaces for authentic dialogue between preschool teachers and children based on their abilities to identify inherent educational beliefs and envision a conceptual change. In order to fill in the gap in knowledge identified above, the doctoral research is organized into the four studies presented in the methodology chapter.

Research Goals

The goal of this doctoral research is to investigate PSTs abilities to acquire AD skills through an intervention program administered in a teacher's training college in Israel and their attempt to implement the acquired knowledge and skills in the preschools.

CHAPTER 1. THEORETICAL FUNDAMNETS

Theoretical Foundation

Six theories make up the theoretical framework for this research. Two grounded theories are (1) The Social Developmental Constructivism Theory of Vygotsky (1978) and (2) the Theory of Dialogue and Dialogic Pedagogy by Bakhtin (1990) and Alexander (2020), respectively. Additional theories included in the thesis are; The Information Processing Theory by Atkinson & Shiffrin (1968), Bowlby's Attachment Theory (2004), Bronfenbrenner Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), The Conceptual Change Theory by Strike & Posner (1982), Dialogue-based teacher training programs in Israel. The following sections will begin with the main theories and then the following theories.

1.1 The Social Development Constructivism Theory

Lev Vygotsky, a developmental psychologist, researched the ways in which people acquire knowledge and learn. His theory is rooted in a socio-cultural theory, known as the social constructivist theory, and it is one of the most fundamental theories in the educational field (Vygotsky, 1978). It places a deep connection between speaking, thinking and learning. Wink & Putney (2002) point out the following main principles of the theory: learning occurs as a result of social interactions. These lead to cognitive development and the use of symbols to gain a more complex method of thinking. The authors go on to explain that since individuals are in a constant process of cognitive development, it is important that their learning environments support the process rather than promote the result.

Peled-Elhanan and Blum-Kukla (2006) explain that there are two aspects that affect the extent to which learning takes place. First, things a child inherits from their cultures such as language and their ability to use it in the thinking process, will determine what and how they will learn. Second, the social interactions a child has with knowledgeable members of their community; there they learn how to use the cultural symbols they inherited; these experiences then lead to significant learning.

Suizzo (2000) states that in order to adequately assess a child's ability to complete a cognitive task, one needs to measure the social support they were given in the learning process. The support team in a child's world are usually parents, teachers and peers. They all need to promote and encourage the child to use past experiences in order to better develop thinking skills, enabling them to achieve higher capabilities rather than just perform at a functional level.

1.2 Theory of Dialogism

Hamston (2006) states that genuine dialogue transpires when two people are in communion, giving and receiving messages for the purpose of interacting. Inclusion occurs when those engaged in dialogue acknowledge all perspectives while asking open-ended questions to gain more information about the speaker's thoughts and feelings. Language is an important factor in communicating in a dialogue, however, it is not the only one that matters. Bakhtin (1981) proposes that dialogism should be viewed as a social interaction where all interested parties bring multiple voices and that incorporate various thoughts, emotions and desires .

Authentic dialogue is about opening spaces for all questions to be examined, leading to the formation of new questions. Strickland & Marinak (2016) state that through this type of dialogue, there is room for self-expression, allowing all voices to be heard and valued. Authentic dialogue takes place when the adult is aware of what their role in the dialogue is, and in their ability to be emotionally present for the child (Katznelson, 2005). The dialogue is considered authentic because it is child-centered and revolves around what interests them. The teacher's role is to listen attentively and ask open questions that will help the child reflect on their experiences and problem-solve if necessary. They will provide their undivided attention, express empathetic responses and display an undeniable understanding in the child's needs.

1.3 The Information Processing Theory

Kandarakis & Poulos (2008) claim that the major contribution of this theory is in the fact that it examines the possibilities of increasing the ability to store information in one's memory. This theory is rooted in constructivism as it attempts to understand how and why people learn on the basis of memory recall. Stimuli received through one's senses are constantly being processed and turned into information by the human mind. Wolfe (2010) claims that when children are interacting with their surroundings, they are constantly absorbing new stimuli. They will give these stimuli meaning if it was acquired through active participation and rests on previous knowledge they have. The learning environments, as well as the interest that the teacher displays in the children's needs, will in turn lead the children to act and react to the stimuli.

Chambers (2010) stipulates that when preservice teachers are acquiring new information in training programs, this information can be placed in long-term memory and used when needed in the classroom. This will occur only if it was acquired in an active manner. Classroom simulations are a perfect way to achieve this and make learning significant which

then will aid in proper storage for future use (De Jong et al., 2012). Simulations allow PSTs to make the connection between theory and practice because they are participating in dramatic role-playing and by doing so, they can feel better about what it is like to be in a real-life classroom situation.

1.4 The Attachment Theory

Throughout his years of research, Bowlby (1982) found that when a mother is sensitive and responsive to the infant's needs, they grow up with a sense of security and self-worth. This enables the child to trust others and regulate their emotions in any given situation during their life span. This is the essence of his attachment theory.

Sessa et al. (2020) found correlations between a child's ability to trust others and their communication capabilities while basing these findings on the attachment theory. They described the different types of attachments that infants develop with their caregivers in an attempt to feel close to them, in particular the way that they use these relationships when they feel threatened. As children grow, they begin to internalize the primary caregiver as their attachment figure having an effect on all their future adult relationships, including teachers.

1.5 The Ecological Systems Theory

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems model describes the way that a child is affected by their surroundings. It rests on the idea that a child's development is influenced by a range of environmental factors that are organized into different systems and the interactions between these systems. It also recognizes that each child's development is unique and influenced by a variety of different factors. Dialogue may prove a significant factor in empowering and enabling them to navigate their way through the systems.

1.6 The Conceptual Change Theory

Linder (1993) and Marton (1981) discuss conceptual change as the expansion of already-existing concepts rather than the creation of new ones. This is able to be done because the context in which the new concepts are acquired is familiar. Duschl and Jimenez-Alexandre (2012) claim that when an individual gives a different meaning to a certain concept, conceptual change will occur rather than the concept receiving a varied context.

Casey (2016) explains that pre-service teachers enter training programs with memories of past experiences as students and have conceptions of what they believe the role of a teacher is. Some of these experiences can be positive, some negative and some are a combination of

both. The experiences were shaped by interactions with people they encountered in the educational system and in their own social networks. Their prior beliefs can have effects on their abilities to acquire new knowledge as well as use the existing knowledge in a classroom setting when interacting with children.

The following chapter begins with an overview of the research design followed by a detailed description of the research tools, participants and ethical considerations.

CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH DESIGN and METHODOLOGY

2.1 Overview of the Research Design according to the studies

Table 2.2 A detailed research design, the process and its methodology

Study	Aim	Participants	Research question	Research hypothesis	Tools	Analyses
Study 1 Systematic Literature Review	To examine existing dialogue approaches in classrooms and preschool				Method: A systematic review of the literature	Systematic analysis of the literature
Study 2 Validation of research questionnaire Teacher's role perception in conducting authentic dialogue questionnaire (TRPADQ) (Quantitative study)		N = 217	Will the factors in the Teachers Role Perception in Conducting Authentic Dialogue Questionnaire (TRPADQ) withstand structure validity?	The factors identified in the TRPADQ will be confirmed by the structure validity analysis.	Method: Expert review EFA CFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted using the Varimax rotation in order to construct orthogonal factors, as a sample size of 217 is considered large enough for EFA when there are no missing values (McNeish, 2017). Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated to further establish structure validity of the TRPADQ measure Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted for the five-factor model utilizing several goodness of fit indices.
Study 3A A. PSTs role perception and social-emotional competence on conducting authentic dialogue in classroom pre and post-		N = 80 40 PSTs that participated in the program (Experimental group) 40 PSTs that did not	Will a dialogue-based training program impact the PSTs role perceptions regarding their ability to conduct authentic dialogue AD with children as well	Significant improvements will be found in the PSTs perceptions regarding the teacher's role in conducting authentic dialogue with children and their perceptions regarding their social emotional competence.	Method: 2 Closed questionnaires: 1. Teachers' role perception in conducting authentic dialogue Questionnaire (TRPADQ) created	In order to examine whether the dependent variables were normally distributed, Shapiro-Wilk tests were conducted for each study group. Wilcoxon and the Mann-Whitney tests as non-parametric analyses. The Wilcoxon tests examined the differences between the two time points in each

<p>pedagogical authentic dialogic intervention program (PADIP); control and experimental groups</p> <p>(Quantitative study)</p>		<p>participate in the program (Control group)</p>	<p>as their social and emotional competence?</p>	<p>PSTs participating in the experimental group will exhibit a deeper understanding of their role in conducting authentic dialogue with children and in their social-emotional competence to conduct authentic dialogue compared to the PSTs assigned to the control group. Following the PSTs participation in the intervention program, they will exhibit higher self-efficacy to promote an authentic dialogue with children and perceive the authentic dialogue with children as more important than before the intervention. In addition, they will exhibit higher social-emotional competence compared to the time point before the intervention program.</p>	<p>by the researcher. Based on Wubbels, Brekelmans and Hooymaayer (1991) <i>Questionnaire on Teacher Interaction</i> (QTI) Questionnaire A</p> <p>2. PSTs Social Emotional Competence Questionnaire (PTSECQ) based on CASEL (Elias et al., 2000) Questionnaire B</p>	<p>study group and the Mann-Whitney test examined the differences between the two study groups in each time point. In order to examine whether significant differences would be found in the participants' scores on the TRPADQ and SECQ according to the study group and time point, two-way (2x2) mixed ANOVA analyses were conducted.</p> <p>In order to examine the contribution of the participant's demographic characteristics to the EPV of the TRPADQ scores and the scores on the Perception of PTSECQ at T1, multiple regression analyses were conducted.</p> <p>In order to examine the contribution of the participant's demographic characteristics and the grouping assignment to the EPV of the TRPADQ scores and the scores on the PTSECQ at T2. T-tests for two independent samples were conducted</p>
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<p>3B Effects of demographic characteristics on Teacher's role perception and social-emotional competence</p> <p>(Quantitative Study)</p>	<p>1. To examine correlations between the PSTs perceptions regarding a teacher's role in conducting authentic dialogue and their social-emotional competence</p>		<p>Whether significant associations will be found between the PSTs' perceptions of the role of teachers regarding authentic dialogue and their social-emotional competence</p>	<p>Significant positive correlation would be found between the PSTs perceptions regarding a teacher's role in conducting authentic dialogue and their social-emotional competence with children in both study groups</p> <p>Significant differences would be found between the two study groups in the value of the correlation coefficient.</p>		<p>Pearson correlation analyses will be conducted for the two groups and for each group separately</p> <p>Fischer r to z transformation</p>
	<p>2. To examine the contribution of demographic characteristics to the explained variance (EPV) regarding the perceptions of a teacher's role in conducting authentic dialogue and their social-emotional competence with children in each time point</p>		<p>Are there demographic characteristics that can explain the variance of the perceptions of a teacher's role in conducting authentic dialogue and their social-emotional competence in each time point?</p>	<p>Significant contribution would be found for the PSTs demographic characteristics to the explained variance (EPV) of their perceptions of a teacher's role in conducting authentic dialogue and their social-emotional competencies at each time point.</p>		<p>Multiple regression analyses</p>

<p>Study 4 Contribution of PADIP to the participants (Qualitative study)</p>	<p>To perform an in-depth examination of the contribution a dialogic-based training program has on the participants.</p>	<p>N= 10 participants from the Experimental group</p>	<p>Will the reflections of the PST's indicate that the PADIP had an impact on their perceptions of a teacher's role of conducting authentic dialogue with preschoolers?</p> <p>Will the reflections of the PST's indicate an impact of the PADIP on their abilities to use authentic dialogue in their preschools?</p>	<p>PSTs will better understand that providing opening spaces for conducting authentic dialogue that is child-centered is part of a teacher's role in a preschool after participating in the PADIP.</p> <p>PSTs will acknowledge that after participating in the PADIP, their dialogue with the preschooler will be longer, and will consist of more open questions and more responsiveness.</p>	<p>Semi-structured interview</p> <p>Transcript analyses</p>	<p>Content analysis based on categorization</p>
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2.2 Research Tools

2.2.1 Research Tools for Study 1 - A systematic literature review examining the existing dialogue approaches in classrooms and preschools

The tool used for the systematic literature review was based on the eight stages of Uman (2011): 1. The formulation of review questions; 2. Defining and specifying the inclusion and exclusion criteria for the studies; 3. Developing a personal style of search strategies in order to locate the studies in an orderly fashion; 4. The selection process of the pertinent studies; 5. The creation of a table that includes information extracted from each study; 6. The assessment of the quality of each study found and its relevance to the current research; 7. The analysis and interpretation of the results found from the various studies; 8. The publication of the findings.

2.2.2 Research Tools for Study 2 - A Pilot Study to validate the Teacher's Role Perception of conducting an Authentic Dialogue Questionnaire (TRPADQ)

The validation process consisted of three methodological tools. The first, an expert validation to assess the questionnaire's item's compatibility with the topic and its relevance to the theoretical framework. The second was an Explanatory Factor Analysis of the five factors established in the questionnaire and the third was a Confirmatory Factor Analysis to verify the factor structure and test the research hypothesis.

2.2.3 Research Tools for Study 3. The assessment of the intervention program

Two closed questionnaires were chosen to assess the PSTs role perception of their ability to conduct authentic dialogue (tool #1, TRPADQ Questionnaire A) with preschoolers as well as their social-emotional competencies (tool #2, PTSECQ, Questionnaire B). Both instruments were based on existing questionnaires in the literature, which were revised in order to address the research questions.

Tool #1. Teachers' Role Perception in Conducting Authentic Dialogue Questionnaire

This instrument was developed by the researcher, aiming to examine the PSTs perceptions regarding their ability to conduct authentic dialogue in the classroom. It is based on Wubbels, Brekelmans and Hooymaayer (1991) Questionnaire on Teacher Interaction (QTI). The questionnaire consisted of 21 items divided into two dimensions: The importance a preschool teacher sees in classroom dialogue and the ability to promote dialogue in a classroom setting. These were the two topics tested in the following study, the qualitative one.

Tool #2. Preservice Teachers Social Emotional Competence Questionnaire

PTSECS was based on the model of Collaboration for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning, CASEL (Elias et al., 2000) The questionnaire consisted of 23 items intended to measure an individual's perception of their own social-emotional competence. It was divided into five dimensions; identifying and managing emotions, self-management in challenging situations, awareness of other's feelings, ability to create positive relationships and taking responsibility for decisions made.

Four tools were chosen to determine the contribution the Preservice teachers Authentic Dialogue Intervention Program (PADIP) had on the PSTs role perception on their ability to conduct AD: two closed questionnaires. Pearson correlation analysis to examine the correlations between their perceptions and their SEC, and multiple regression analysis to examine demographic characteristics for the variance between TRPADQ and PTSECQ.

2.2.4 Research Tools for Study 4- The qualitative examination of the impact that a PADIP had on the teacher's role perception and their ability to implement AD in the classroom.

Tool #1. Semi-structured interview

At the end of the intervention program, the PSTs were interviewed by the researcher in a semi-structured interview. They were asked five open-ended questions regarding the intervention program and their responses were categorized in a qualitative content analysis form. The questions were; (1) *"What is your personal experience regarding the participation in the intervention program?"* (2) *"At what point in the intervention program did you begin to understand the topic of authentic dialogue?"* (3) *"Please describe two important things you learned about authentic dialogue and how would you define it from your own perspective"* (4) *"Do you think you will be able to practice authentic dialogue with children in preschool, if yes, are you expecting any challenges?"* (5) *"Would you recommend the intervention program to other pre-service teachers or preschool teachers and why"?*

Tool #2 Discourse analyses method – Transcripts from PSTs dialogues with the preschoolers were analyzed in a search for the implementation of authentic dialogic characteristics. In addition, participants' reflections from their interviews were analyzed in search of recurring themes.

2.3 Research Population

2.3.1 Characteristics of the Participants in Study 2

The pilot study comprised 217 students, whose ages ranged between 22 to 40 years. A number of 100 of the students worked as kindergarten managers (46.1%), 23 of the students worked as complementary kindergarten teachers (10.6%) and 94 of the students have not begun working in kindergartens. A number of 82 students were single (37.8%), 97 were married (44.7%), 25 were in a relationship (11.5%) and 13 were divorced (6.0%). Almost half of the students had children (114 students, 52.5%).

2.3.2 Characteristics of the Participants in Study 3

The sample comprised 80 PSTs studying in a four-year training program at universities or teacher's colleges in Israel, and are in their third or fourth year of their Bachelor of Education degree majoring in Early Childhood Education.

The mean age of the students who participated in the current study was 26.24 years with a standard deviation of 2.47. The students were assigned to two study groups: 40 PSTs were assigned to the control group who attended universities or colleges that follow a standard curriculum and 40 PSTs in the experimental group that were chosen from Kaye Academic College in the southern part of the country of Israel to participate in an intervention program that aimed to provide them with knowledge and practical tools in order to manage personal, emotional authentic dialogue with preschoolers.

2.3.3 Characteristics of Participants in Study 4

A number of 10 volunteers from within the experimental group of the study 3 were included in the qualitative study.

2.4 Ethical Considerations

All proper forms were signed and approved by the requirements of the Board of Education for Higher Academic Studies in Israel and the Ethical Committee at Kaye College in Israel, where the research was conducted in order to guarantee that the research proposal met proper ethical standards. The document includes the research's goals, methodology and an affirmation of the participants.

All of the participants signed written consent forms prior to the research that stated that all the data will be collected anonymously in order to protect their rights. Names, places and any other personal information were deleted from any transcripts.

In addition, ethical boundaries were set prior to the implementation of the intervention program, due to the fact that the researcher was a staff member in the college where the intervention program took place.

The participants from the experimental group agreed to be interviewed at the summation of the PADIP on a voluntary basis. If at any point in the program, any of the interviewees decided that they do not want to participate in the interview, they would immediately be released and stand-by volunteers would be contacted.

CHAPTER3. ORIGINAL RESEARCH CONTRIBUTIONS

3.1 Findings from Study 1

3.1.1 Examining existing research-informed dialogic approaches in preschools and classrooms, a systematic literature review.

All of the studies reviewed addressed classroom dialogue, however, there was diversity in the research population. Specific categories of learners and teachers were noted, from preschoolers to university students, most research is done on primary school children. With regard to the research paradigm, more than half used qualitative tools rather than quantitative ones. The most common tools were; observations, recordings and interviews. Finally, eight dimensions of dialogic pedagogy were discovered; Inclusion, communication, diversity, knowledge-building and identification.

3.1.2 Discussion and Conclusions

The systematic literature review revealed the need for more pedagogical intervention programs in preschools and classrooms at the pre-service level of training, as well as in-service training, in order to help teachers, get a better understanding of the ways to create child-centered equalitarian dialogue. In addition, the review showed that marginalized children and multicultural classrooms can benefit from open dialogic spaces that teachers create in order for the classrooms to be more inclusive, promoting multiple voices and perspectives.

3.2 Findings of Study 2

3.2.1 Development and Validation of research questionnaire - Teacher's Role Perception in conducting Authentic Dialogue Questionnaire (TRPADQ) - a pilot study

Expert validation proved essential for the validity and reliability of the items on the questionnaire. 4 items out of 25 were removed from the original questionnaire as they were found incompatible with the topic and irrelevant to preschool environments. The Varimax rotation in the EFA, showed that all indicators have factor loadings higher than .70. Pearson correlations were then done to further establish validity. The correlations supported the structure validity all positively correlating, with coefficients ranging from .31 to .56. Finally, a Confirmatory Factor Analysis was done after adding correlations between measurement errors amongst the five pairs of items, each belonging to the same factor, and a very good fit index was found. To summarize, the questionnaire was proven both valid and reliable through extensive in-depth qualitative analysis and served the purpose of being used in the 3rd study of this research.

3.2.2 Discussion and Conclusions

Based on the systematic review in Study 1, a questionnaire was developed by the researcher for the needs of this research. The existing questionnaires in the literature did not cover all the dimensions needed for assessing the impact of authentic dialogue-based training in relation to the teacher's role perceptions in conducting AD. The questionnaire was designed to measure the PSTs role perceptions regarding conducting AD in preschools. This questionnaire was created for PSTs in Israel, but it can be used in any country that feels the need for it with an ability to be adjusted for cultural sensitivity.

3.3 Findings of Study 3

3.3.1 Quantitative investigation of perceptions of pre-service teachers regarding their role in conducting AD with children and their social and emotional competencies

Three important findings are presented in this section. First, the experimental group scored higher in all measures on both questionnaires, TRPADQ and PTSECQ compared to the control group post-intervention program, showing the impact the program had on the PSTs role perception and SEC with regard to conducting AD in the

classroom. In order to examine the contribution of the participants' background characteristics and the grouping assignment to the EPV of the TRPADQ scores and the scores on the PTSECQ post-intervention program, hierarchical regression analyses were conducted. Table 1 represents whether the participant was assigned to the experiment or to the control group contributed significantly to the EPV of all measures (between 8.0%-35.3%) with the positive β coefficients.

Table 1 Hierarchical regressions result for TRPADQ and the PTSECQ for participants' background characteristics and the grouping variable ($N = 80$)

Explained variables	Steps	Explanatory variables	B	SE. B	β	R^2	ΔR^2
Improvement rate in the TRPADQ scales							
TRPADQ – Total score	1	Study group ¹	.53	.10	.51***	.265***	.265***
Impact on child's dialogue	1	Study group ¹	.51	.13	.40***	.157***	.157***
Kindergarten teacher's ability to promote dialogue	1	Study group ¹	.42	.14	.31**	.097**	.097**
Dialogue barriers	1	Study group ¹	.88	.13	.59***	.353***	.353***
Fear of losing control	1	Study group ¹	.47	.15	.34**	.118**	.118**
Importance a teacher gives to use of dialogue as a teaching method	1	Study group ¹	.33	.13	.28**	.080**	.080**
PTSECQ							
Total score	1	Study group ¹	.21	.07	.34**	.114**	.114**

** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$; ¹Study group: 0 = Control, 1 = Experiment.

Second, the PSTs perception of their SEC, whether the participant is single or is married/in a relationship, contributed significantly 5.1% to the EPV of the total score on the PTSECQ with a positive β coefficient. Third, participants that have children scored significantly higher on TRPADQ than those that do not. These two latter ones can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2 Results of multiple regressions for the TRPADQ and PTSECQ at T1 by the participants' background characteristics ($N = 80$)

Explained variables	Steps	Explanatory variables	B	SE. B	β	R^2	ΔR^2
Improvement rate in the TRPADQ scales							
TRPADQ – Total score	1	Study group ¹	.53	.10	.51***	.265***	.265***
Impact on child's dialogue	1	Study group ¹	.51	.13	.40***	.157***	.157***
Kindergarten teacher's ability to promote dialogue	1	Study group ¹	.42	.14	.31**	.097**	.097**
Dialogue barriers	1	Study group ¹	.88	.13	.59***	.353***	.353***
Fear of losing control	1	Study group ¹	.47	.15	.34**	.118**	.118**
Importance a teacher gives to use of dialogue as a teaching method	1	Study group ¹	.33	.13	.28**	.080**	.080**
Perception of Teacher's Social Emotional Competence scale							
Total score	1	Study group ¹	.21	.07	.34**	.114**	.114**

p* < .05, *p* < .01; ¹Children: 0 = Does not have children, 1 = Have children; ²Marital status: 0 = Single, 1 = Married/in a relationship

3.3.2 Discussion and Conclusions

The findings showed a high consistency of Cronbach's alpha for all items in the TRPADQ, indicating that the items were closely related as a group and individually. This questionnaire may help in the future to investigate whether teachers that perceive dialogue as a pedagogical tool, will strive to incorporate authentic dialogic characteristics as part of their classroom talk. In turn, the children will imitate these dialogic skills they experience with their teachers and will have the ability to converse in a similar manner with their peers. This may improve classroom climate, with more social interactions where children take the lead in the topics being learned and feel as though they are equal partners in the dialogue (Holden, 2006). The validated questionnaire created by the researcher can be used in future research on classroom dialogue, as well as research on PSTs universally as well as in other cultures.

The insights that teachers that have children, are more accepting of a child lead dialogue and provide open space for more equality turn-taking, an additional authentic dialogue characteristic, than those that do not. In addition, PSTs that are married or in a relationship scored higher on the PTSECQ than teachers that were not in a relationship. One can conclude that stability in an intrapersonal relationship can contribute to a stronger sense of social and emotional competencies. Hen and Goroshit (2016) state that teachers that are able to show a true emotional interest in others, and express empathy and caring in their personal lives will bring those competencies into their teacher-child relationships in a classroom.

3.4 Findings of Study 4

3.4.1 Qualitative study on the reflections of the participants to the PADIP regarding their role perceptions of conducting AD

Through a qualitative analysis targeting the reflections of the participants in the intervention program, the findings depict an overall positive feeling towards the intervention program as can be seen in their responses to the interview questions. Findings indicate that the program has changed their perceptions regarding a teacher's

role in classroom dialogue and a better understanding that open, child-centered dialogue that welcomes multiple voices contribute to the development of a positive, empathetic educational classroom climate.

Their responses noted that the program helped them understand that dialogue can be used as a tool to help children develop social and emotional competencies and build their self-confidence. In addition, the program improved their own social and emotional competencies on a personal level as they began using authentic dialogic characteristics in conversations with friends and family.

The impact that the program had on the participant's ability to implement AD characteristics was proven through an analysis of the two dialogues conducted with the preschoolers, pre and post-intervention program. The 2nd dialogue consisted of characteristics they learned and felt most capable of implementing because they practiced them with other PSTs in the intervention program. The characteristics were explained thoroughly; therefore, it can be ascertained that they acquired new conceptual knowledge and were able to implement it.

The PSTs reflections that were analyzed from their interview responses portrayed the need and desire for preservice training in order to learn how to improve interactions with children. The PSTs were able to make the correlation between their feelings of higher emotional competencies and being able to promote dialogue with a child due to their participation in the intervention program.

3.4.2 Discussion and Conclusions

Many themes and categories arose from the data analysis as can be seen in Figure 1

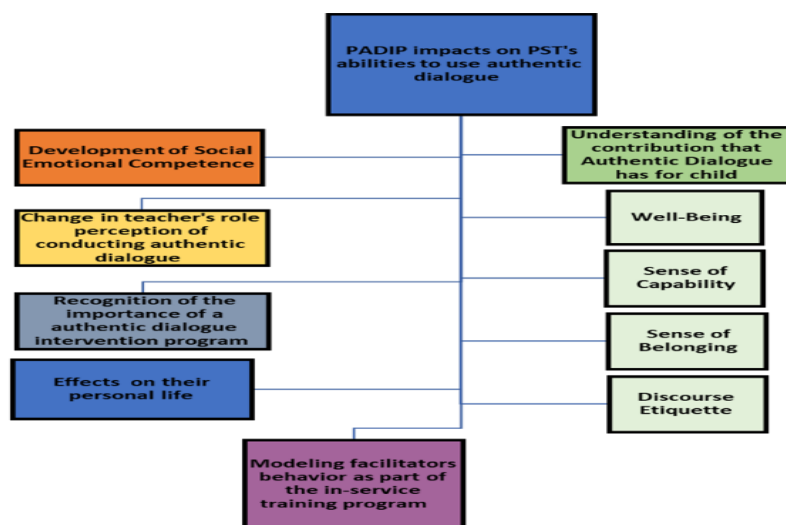


Figure 1 Themes from the interview analysis

The study revealed that the intervention program enabled them to view the teacher's role as different than what they thought. In addition, they acquired a tool that will help guide them in authentic dialogic characteristics during their professional careers. The use of the discourse coder during the intervention program enabled them to familiarize themselves with the characteristics and implement them in their dialogues. This tool can be used universally, adapting to the respective language as well as being readily used in elementary and high school children.

CHAPTER 4. DISCUSSION AND GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Theoretical implications

The theoretical implications will be summarized for all four studies together. Through the literature review, it was discovered that dialogic teaching is not related to the dialogic structure but rather to discourse functioning, meaning the way teachers and children use dialogue to interact and make meaning out of classroom learning. This changes teacher's perceptions that classroom dialogue is all about teaching content matter alone rather, it enables them to provide open spaces for children to express their thoughts and their feelings without being judged. Children will thrive emotionally because their teachers are more attentive to their needs through active listening.

In order to be able to examine the PSTs perceptions regarding their ability to conduct AD in the classroom, questionnaires were needed for pre and post the intervention program. Several questionnaires were found that measure teacher's role perception with regard to a child's academic success such as Questionnaire on Teacher Interaction - QTI (Wubbels, Brekelmans and Hoomayers (1991). However, it was insufficient, due to the fact that there was no mention of dialogue or authentic dialogue, which is the basis for this research. In addition, none were found to target preschool teachers, which is the population of interest to the researcher. Therefore, it was essential for a new questionnaire to be developed in order to answer the research questions.

The higher scores that the participants in the experimental group received over the control group, on both questionnaires at the two-time points clearly attested to the contribution of the intervention program and their motivation to incorporate AD characteristics. Researchers are showing a true interest in the dialogic patterns between teachers and students, focusing on the types of questions being asked and how they reflect children's interests, if at all (Lefstein et al., 2011). The questionnaire findings

truly support a need for change as to the purpose these questions have on children's personal and academic success.

An interesting and original result with regard to the demographic background of the married PST or those with children led to the conclusion that they were better able to promote dialogue and use it as a teaching method as opposed to those that were not in a relationship or without children. Ribar (2015) explains that people that are married have a greater sense of emotional security and they project that security into their relationships with their children, promoting cognitive and emotional development.

In summation, the questionnaires, interviews and transcript analysis created an opportunity for the researcher to apply her understanding from the theoretical framework to the results received. The participants were able to "tell their story" regarding their professional choices and pedagogical fears while being supported with practical tools.

4.2 Methodological implications

The methodological implications will be summarized for all four studies together. With regard to methodological paradigms used in research of classroom dialogue, almost twice the number of qualitative methods were used as opposed to quantitative or mixed methods. Understandably so, as the tools used to analyze classroom dialogue are qualitative in nature; interviews, observations, video recordings, diaries and discourse analysis. These seemed most appropriate because dialogue needs to be analyzed by what the researcher sees and hears in order to get a full understanding of the verbal and nonverbal classroom communication. The questionnaire developed and validated through statistical analysis proved appropriate for the research questions and hypotheses.

To summarize, both the quantitative and the qualitative tools used gave the researcher a large amount of data that proved valuable and will enable other researchers to use these methods.

4.3 Practical Implications

The practical implications will be summarized for all four studies together. The systematic literature review revealed that teachers use dialogue in order to advance children's academic achievements (Boyd & Markarian, 2015; Sverdlov & Aram, 2016)

through content-based approaches (Manuel & Hughes, 2006, Rasku-Puttonen et al., 2012; Zinsser et al., 2014).

PST's ability to learn in pre-service or in-service training programs, and the importance that classroom dialogue has on children's social-emotional skills, will enable them to implement dialogic practices. Hence, there is a need to examine teachers' perceptions with regard to classroom talk. The knowledge acquired from this study may enable policymakers in teacher colleges to add to their curriculum dialogic programs. These programs can facilitate the PSTs to understand the connection between their own role perceptions as to classroom dialogue and their practices in the classroom. The research sheds light on the significance of AD to communication strategies and skills between teachers and their students. In addition, reflective thinking, such as through interviews and transcript analysis, prove to be a valuable tool for teacher development. Authentic dialogue requires active listening, open-mindedness, and a willingness to engage in meaningful conversations. Teachers that are taught to reflect on their dialogic interactions with children in their classrooms, will be better able to implement authentic dialogic characteristics.

PSTs that are given an opportunity to work on their pedagogical skills through intervention programs are not only taught new methods and skills but are able to speak of challenges they face in their classrooms. A qualified moderator, through support for their emotional needs, may bring a change to their pedagogy style.

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