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Children's representations of parenting behaviors, basic negative emotions, and negative self-conscious emotions in the Narrative Story Stem Technique

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CHILDREN'S REPRESENTATIONS OF PARENTING BEHAVIORS, BASIC NEGATIVE
EMOTIONS, AND NEGATIVE SELF-CONSCIOUS EMOTIONS
IN THE NARRATIVE STORY STEM TECHNIQUE

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor in Philosophy

In

The School of Human Ecology

By
Loredana Apavaloaie
B.A., Alexandru Ioan Cuza, Romania, 2000
M.S., Louisiana State University, 2008
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“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose.”

Romans 8:28 (NIV)

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ABSTRACT

The current study examined middle childhood aged Romanian children's representations of parenting behaviors, basic negative emotions, and negative self-conscious emotions in the Narrative Story Stem Technique (NSST; Bretherton, Ridgeway, & Cassidy, 1990). More specifically, the research objectives of the study were a) to identify the frequency of the representations that were reflected in children's narratives, b) to identify the specific stories that elicited the greatest number of representations, c) to identify possible relationships among children's representations, their age, and amount of time that parents spend with their children, d) to identify gender differences in representations, and e) to evaluate the usefulness of the NSST to assess children's representations. Data were collected from 52 Romanian children aged between 6 and 11-years old. Assessments were made using the NSST, a parent consent form, and a general questionnaire. The findings showed that the frequency of representations was identified. The stories varied widely in their power to elicit children's representations. Correlations among the variables of interest showed some statistically significant relationships in the expected directions. Gender differences in representations of parenting behaviors and narrative coherence were identified. At last, the findings showed that the NSST could be a useful instrument to identify and assess children's representations.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of the Research Problem

Research has documented children's representations of parenting behaviors in story stems (e.g., Laible, Carlo, Torquati, & Ontai, 2004; Oppenheim, Emde, & Warren, 1997; Page & Bretherton, 2001; Solomon, George, & De Jong, 1995). More specifically, most previous research has examined preschool and early school age children's representations of parenting behaviors in Western populations such as U.S.A. (e.g., Bretherton, Prentiss, & Ridgeway, 1990b; Laible et al., 2004; Oppenheim et al., 1997), Canada (e.g., Comtois & Moss, 2008), or Switzerland (e.g., Stadelmann, Perren, Groeben, & von Klitzing, 2010), but almost no research has investigated representations of parenting behaviors in Eastern European populations such as Romania. Thus, the first main purpose of the present study was to explore the Romanian children's representations of parenting behaviors using the Narrative Story Stem Technique (NSST; Bretherton et al., 1990).

The research instruments that have been frequently used to study children's expressions of negative emotions tend to focus on physiological or behavioral indicators (e.g., Kochanska, 2001), patterns of language usage (e.g., Melzi & Fernandez, 2004), or parental reports (e.g., Lagace-Seguin & d'Entremont, 2006). In relation to children's representations of negative emotions in narratives, Wan and Green (2010) used The Manchester Child Attachment Story Task (MCAST; Green, Stanley, Smith, & Goldwyn, 2000) to assess the negative and atypical story content themes depicted by children with behavior problems. Therefore, the second main

purpose of the study was to explore the children's representations of negative emotions in the Romanian context by using the NSST, a research protocol that has been widely used to assess attachment constructs (Page & Bretherton, 2001), but not negative emotions specifically.

The self-report measures and the nonverbal behavior measures (Tracy, Robins, & Tangney, 2007) have been widely used to assess negative self-conscious emotions. With reference to children's representations of self-conscious emotions in narratives, Luby et al. (2009) used the MacArthur Story Stem Battery (MSSB; Bretherton, Oppenheim, Buchsbaum, Emde, & The MacArthur Transition Network Narrative Group, 1990) to assess a sample of clinically depressed European-American preschoolers. However, no research has addressed children's expressions of self-conscious emotions using story stems in the Romanian population. Thus, the third main purpose of the study was to examine the children's representations of shame and guilt in the NSST also in the understudied population, the Romanian children.

1.2 Rationale for the Study

A large body of scientific research has established strong relationships between high levels of early caregiver sensitivity and positive representations of parenting behaviors and, conversely, low levels of early caregiver sensitivity and negative representations of parenting behaviors in story stems in child development research of Western populations (e.g., Bretherton et al., 1990; Laible et al., 2004; Oppenheim et al., 1997). However, almost nothing is known about the Romanian children's representations of parenting behaviors as a result of their early caregiver sensitivity. Therefore, the study of Romanian children's narrative representations of

parenting behaviors can contribute to the investigation of the relationship between early caregiver sensitivity and children's later representations of parenting behaviors.

Research has documented that there is a strong relationship between early attachment histories and children's emotional development (Cassidy, 1994; Contreras & Kerns, 2000; Sroufe & Waters, 1977). However, scientific evidence is needed to describe and support possible associations between children's representations of negative emotions in story stems and their early caregiver sensitivity. Consequently, the study of the Romanian children's representations of negative emotions can add to the study of the association between early attachment histories and children's later negative emotionality development.

In the same line with children's expression of negative emotionality, scientific research is needed to depict possible associations between children's representations of self-conscious emotions in narratives and the quality of early caregiver-child interactions. Accordingly, the examination of the children's representations of self-conscious emotions in the Romanian context can contribute to the research of the connection between early attachment histories and children's representations of self-conscious emotions.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for the current study was Bowlby's (1969/1982, 1979) and Ainsworth's (1978) attachment theory. In accord with attachment theory, it is through early experiences with primary caregivers that children are thought to develop complex cognitive structures, typically referred to as *representational models*, *schemata*, or *internal working models* (Bowlby, 1988; Bretherton, 1991, 1992; Cassidy, 1990; Main, Kaplan, & Cassidy, 1985; Sroufe

& Fleeon, 1986) of self, others, and the self in relation to others. According to Belsky and Pensky (1988), internal working models are “mental representations derived from interactional experiences” (p. 198). The internal working models function unconsciously to direct interpersonal relationships. Thus, if primary caregivers have been warm and sensitive to children’s needs, the children will perceive the primary caregivers as available, responsive, and supportive (Atkinson et al., 2005; Biringen, Matheny, Bretherton, Renouf, & Sherman, 2000), and develop a *secure attachment*. If primary caregivers have repeatedly been insensitive to the children’s needs for comfort and exploration, the children will perceive the primary caregivers as unavailable, unresponsive, or rejecting (Trapolini, Ungerer, & McMahon, 2008), and will develop an *insecure attachment*. Thus, securely attached children, who developed positive internal working models of early relationships with their primary caregivers, were more likely to have positive narrative representations of parenting behaviors than insecurely attached children, who developed negative internal working models of early relationships with their primary caregivers. In the same vein, securely attached children, who developed positive internal working models of early relationships with their primary caregivers, were more likely to have lower levels of representations of negative emotions and self-conscious emotions than insecurely attached children, who developed negative internal working models of early relationships with their primary caregivers.

1.4 Objectives

The objectives of the study were: a) to identify the frequency of the representations of parenting behaviors, basic negative emotions, and negative self-conscious emotions that were

reflected in children's narratives, b) to identify the specific stories that elicited the greatest number of representations of parenting behaviors, basic negative emotions, and negative self-conscious emotions, c) to identify possible relationships among children's representations of parenting behaviors, basic negative emotions, negative self-conscious emotions, and children's age and amount of time that parents spend with their children, d) to identify gender differences in representations of parenting behaviors, basic negative emotions, and negative self-conscious emotions, and e) to evaluate the usefulness of the NSST to assess children's representations of basic negative emotions and negative self-conscious emotions.

The current study added to the existing body of research by examining middle childhood aged Romanian children's representations of parenting behaviors, basic negative emotions, and negative self-conscious emotions using the NSST. Understanding these narrative enactments promised to contribute to understanding of how 6-11 year old Romanian children mentally represented the parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions.

1.5 Hypotheses

The investigation was guided by the following hypotheses:

- a. The frequency of the representations of parenting behaviors, basic negative emotions, and negative self-conscious emotions that were reflected in the Romanian children's narratives would be identified.
- b. The specific stories that elicited the greatest number of representations of parenting behaviors, basic negative emotions, and negative self-conscious emotions would be identified.

- c. Possible relationships among children's representations of parenting behaviors, negative emotions, self-conscious emotions and children's age, and amount of time that parents spend with their children would be identified.
- d. Possible gender differences in representations of parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions would be identified.
- e. The usefulness of the NSST to assess children's expression of negative emotions and self-conscious emotions would be evaluated.

1.6 Limitations

- a. The sample was limited to 6-11 year old Romanian children who attended a private Christian school in a university city, Iasi, in northeastern Romania, which is not representative of schools in other parts of Romania or in other Eastern European countries.
- b. Children's representations were coded on a 3-point scale with 0 representing no display of representations, 1 representing minimal display of representations, and 2 representing elaborate display of representations. A larger continuous scale would have had the advantage of a more complex statistical approach.
- c. The selection of the story-stems that the candidate asked the children to complete could have been more deliberate. It is difficult to know whether some stories pertained to attachment or to the parent-child relationship in general.

1.7 Constructs and Definitions

Constructs	Definitions
Representations of Parenting Behaviors	Beliefs or expectations of family relationships that originate from histories of experience with family interactions (Bretherton, 1985)
Representations of Negative Emotions	The child's tendency to react to stressors with high degrees of emotionality, including anger, fear, or sadness (Rothbart, Ahadi, & Hershey, 1994)
Representations of Self-Conscious Emotions	The child's tendency to be negatively judged by himself or others as a result of being unsuccessful in meeting the social norms (Lewis, 1971)

1.8 Assumptions

1. The NSST reliably measures children's representations of parenting behaviors (Page, 2001).
2. Children's representations of parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions are an indication of their own experiences or are somehow derived from their own experiences, even if they are not totally accurate indications of their experiences.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Normative children's representations of parenting behaviors in play narratives have been an active topic of research in Western developmental psychology literature in the last decade. Among the many characteristics of children's narrative representations of parenting behaviors, the relationship between attachment and representational development of self and others has been the most studied (e.g., Bretherton & Oppenheim, 2003; Laible et al., 2004; Solomonica-Levi, Yirmiya, Erel, Samet, & Oppenheim, 2010).

Young children's representations of specific negative emotions have been a focus in developmental psychological literature with research assessments concentrated on physiological or behavioral indicators (e.g., Kochanska, 2001), patterns of language usage (e.g., Melzi & Fernandez, 2004), or parental reports (e.g., Lagace-Seguin & d'Entremont, 2006). The narrative research assessment has been used to assess children's negative and atypical story content themes, and consequently, their expressions of negative emotions, in a study conducted by Wan and Green (2010) in a sample of 77 eight year old children from a clinical sample living in a large British urban area. Among the many characteristics of children's representations of negative emotions, the relationship between attachment and representational development of negative emotionality, and the relationship between parent-child talk about past negative emotions and children's emotional understanding, have been the most studied (Fivush & Wang, 2005).

The study of young children's representations of negative self-conscious emotions has been increasing during the past three decades due to the recent number of new assessments. The widely used assessments for measuring self-conscious emotions are the self-report assessments with categories such as shame- versus guilt-inducing situations, global adjective checklists, scenario-based assessments, and statement-based assessments, and nonverbal behavior assessments (Tracy et al., 2007). The narrative assessment has also been used to measure children's expressions of shame and guilt in a study conducted by Luby et al. (2009) in a sample of European-American preschoolers between 3 and 5.11 years of age. Among the many characteristics of children's representations of self-conscious emotions, the association between attachment and representational development of self and others has been the most studied.

In order to examine Romanian children's representations of parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions in story-stems, first, the investigator provides a description of the background of the study by reviewing briefly the geographical, historical, and political context in Romania. Second, the investigator will present the theoretical account of how representations develop in infancy and childhood, and the literature on the development of children's representations of parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions.

2.1 Geographical, Historical, and Political Context in Romania

Romania is a country located at the crossroads of Central and Southeastern Europe, north of the Balkan Peninsula, on the western shores of the Black Sea. Romania shares borders with Ukraine and Moldova to the northeast, Bulgaria to the south, Serbia to the southwest, and

Hungary to the northwest. With a population of 22 million people (National Institute of Statistics of Romania, 2010), Romania is the twelfth largest country of Europe and almost the size of Oregon, or New York and Pennsylvania combined.

Following Roman occupation and the invasions of migratory tribes, Romania was fragmented between the Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian, and Russian Empires (Iorga, 1970). For more than 50 years following World War II, Romania was ruled by a succession of Communist leaders under the sphere of influence of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). Romania began the transition from communism almost 23 years ago when the communism fell in a revolution in 1989 (Watts, 2010). After more than two decades of post-revolution economic problems, Romania made economic reforms and joined the European Union (EU) in 2007. At present, Romania is a democracy, committed to a free market economy, and civil rights and freedom for all citizens.

2.2 Attachment

The attachment theory of John Bowlby (1969/1982, 1979), a British psychiatrist at the Tavistock Clinic in London, suggests that the quality of children's relationships with their primary caregivers has a significant impact on the children's social and emotional development. Thus, attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969/1982, 1979) can be used to explain the core process in the construction of children's mental representations of parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions. According to Bowlby (1973, 1980, 1982), attachment originates in infancy with an instinct to seek proximity with the primary caregiver in times of distress and later develops into emotional ties that are derived from the caregiver-child interactions.

Attachment, one of the most investigated topics in children's social development (Kerns, Abraham, Schlegelmilch, & Morgan, 2007), is a powerful developmental process because of the relatively lasting nature of one's representations about social relationships (Page & Bretherton, 2001).

The research of Mary Ainsworth (1978), an American developmental psychologist, provided the first empirical support of Bowlby's theory with her home observational studies in Uganda and later in the U.S.A., in her landmark Baltimore study. Based on her home observations of caregiver-child interactions (i.e., how a caregiver responds to a child's needs and expectations, and how a child's needs are met), Ainsworth proposed three main attachment classifications: secure, insecure-avoidant, and insecure-ambivalent (McAdams, 1994). Thus, Ainsworth provided an empirical basis for Bowlby's theoretical construction of attachment in humans. Main and Solomon (1990), and Crittenden (1985) added a fourth main attachment classification to Ainsworth's original formulation, the insecure-disorganized/disoriented category.

If a caregiver responds to a child's needs immediately, regularly, and stimulates exploration, the child develops a securely attached style. A child with a secure attachment style explores freely while the caregiver is present, becomes upset when the caregiver leaves, but is easily soothed upon his/her return, accepts his/her affection and attention, returns to exploration after having brief contact with him/her, and uses his/her caregiver as a secure base. A securely attached child's communication style is characterized by affective openness and mutuality (Ainsworth et al., 1978). If a caregiver does not respond to a child's needs consistently or at all,

does not stimulate exploration, and prohibits crying, the child develops an insecurely-avoidant attachment style. A child with an insecure-avoidant attachment style is often comfortable exploring, does not appear distressed at caregiver's leaving, does not respond to his/her return, and refuses to be soothed upon his/her return or may ignore him/her by turning his/her back. An insecurely-avoidant attached child's communication style is marked by affective restriction (Ainsworth et al., 1978). If the caregiver responds to a child's need inconsistently, and does not stimulate exploration, the child may develop an insecurely-ambivalent attachment style. A child with an insecure-ambivalent attachment style is distressed at caregiver's leaving, hesitates about exploration, shows ambivalence, dissatisfaction, and anger in soothing upon his/her return, but seeks proximity to him/her. Also, an insecure-ambivalent attached child does not use his/her caregiver as a secure base for exploration due to the child's preoccupation with his/her caregiver's availability. An insecure-ambivalent attached child's communication style is typically disregulated and hostile (Ainsworth et al., 1978). If a caregiver responds to a child's needs inconsistently and confusingly, establishes boundaries with his/her child, and sometimes becomes abusive, the child may develop a disorganized attachment style. The disorganized attachment classification was originally developed to categorize the unclassifiable children whose behaviors did not fit in any of the three original attachment classifications. A child with a disorganized attachment style shows lack of coping strategies by exhibiting a mixture of avoidant, resistant, and disorientation behaviors upon the mother's return. A disorganized attached child's communication style is characterized by contradiction in physical movement and emotional expression (Main & Solomon, 1990).

Thus, based on the early experiences with his/her caregiver, the child can develop representational models of his/her caregiver, the self, and the self in relation to others (Bretherton, 1991, 1992; Cassidy, 1990; Sroufe & Fleeson, 1986). More specifically, the child constructs complex mental structures referred to as the child's representations, schemata, or internal working models (Bowlby, 1982, 1988; Bretherton, 1991, 1992).

2.3 Internal Working Models

Bowlby (1969/1982, 1979) and Ainsworth (1973) suggested that the quality of caregiver-child interactions, especially during children's first three years of life, is the major factor in the construction of the child's internal working models. According to Belsky and Pensky (1988), internal working models, terms first used by the philosopher and cognitive psychologist Kenneth Craik, are "affectively-laden mental representations of self, other, and of relationships, derived from interactional experiences, which function (outside of conscious awareness) to direct attention and organize memory in a way that guides interpersonal behavior and the interpretation of social experience" (p. 198). Based on the interactions that the child experiences with his/her caregiver, the child develops not only secure base patterns of behavior, but the child extracts assumptions and expectations about his/her worthiness and competence, and about others' availability and supportiveness that serve as an unconscious "lens" or cognitive filter through which the child views himself/herself, others, and relations with others (Bretherton, 1990).

Thus, developmental research shows that if the caregiver has been warm and sensitive to a child's needs for comfort and exploration, the child will construct a complex and coherent internal working model of himself/herself and will have positive representations of self (Bohlin,

Hagekull, & Rydell, 2000; Clark & Symons, 2000; Harter, 1986, 1990) as lovable, competent, and self-reliant, and will represent the caregiver and/or others as available, responsive, and supportive (Atkinson et al., 2005; Biringen, Matheny, Bretherton, Renouf, & Sherman, 2000) and consequently, develop a secure attachment style. Conversely, research shows that if a caregiver has been insensitive to a child's needs for comfort and exploration, the child will construct an incoherent internal working model of himself/herself and will have negative representations of self as unlovable, incompetent, and not self-reliant, and will represent the caregiver and/or others as unavailable, unresponsive, and rejecting (Blatt, 2004; Main et al., 1985; Sroufe & Fleeson, 1988; Trapolini et al., 2008; Waniel, Besser, & Priel, 2006), and thus, develop an insecure attachment.

Consequently, securely attached children, who have developed secure internal working models of early relationships with their caregivers, are more likely to have warm narrative representations of parenting behaviors in middle childhood, in comparison with insecurely attached children, who have developed insecure internal working models of early relationships with their caregivers and who are more likely to have harsh narrative representations of parenting behaviors (e.g., Laible et al., 2006; Oppenheim et al., 1997).

In the same line, Cassidy (1994) proposed that children with secure, avoidant, and ambivalent early attachment histories develop different systems of emotion regulation within the attachment relationship. Securely attached children, in comparison with insecurely attached children, know how to improve their abilities for dealing with negative emotions (Contreras & Kerns, 2000) and self-conscious emotions, and have better comprehension of negative emotions

(Laible & Thompson, 1998) and self-conscious emotions during the interactions with their caregivers. Avoidant children tend to develop a pattern of minimized negative emotions, such as sadness, fear, or anger (Cassidy, 1994) except in peer contexts when they develop considerable negative emotions, predominantly anger (Berlin & Cassidy, 1999). On the other hand, ambivalent children tend to develop a pattern of heightened negative emotions (Cassidy, 1994; Kochanska, 1998). Children who normally show more heightened negative emotions tend to cause more negative reactions from caregivers such as high amounts of minimizing, punitive, distress, and discouraging reactions. In sum, securely attached children are more likely to develop fewer representations of negative emotions and self-conscious emotions than insecurely attached children. Moreover, although the early relationships with their caregivers are the primary factors that influence children's representations, the family context also contributes to the quality of children's understanding of parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions.

2.4 Attachment and Family Context

Developmental psychology literature has suggested that children's internal working models are constructed not only by the quality of child-caregiver interactions, but also by the quality of child-whole family context interactions (i.e., child-parent, mother-father, sibling-parent, and/or sibling-sibling) (Bowlby, 1969/1982; Marvin & Stewart, 1990; Mayseless, 2005; Rothbaum, Rosen, Ujjiie, & Uchida, 2002; Waters & Cummings, 2000). The theoretical justification that the family system as a whole is more important than the sum of its parts (Marvin & Stewart, 1990) can be used to explain the development of children's representations

of parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions in the whole family context. More specifically, the quality of family members' interactions as the ability of family members to be sensitive to the needs of its members in different situations (Dubois-Comtois & Moss, 2008; White & Klein, 2002) can support the quality of children's internal working models in caregiver-child interactions. For instance, a grandparent or one of the older siblings can function as a caregiver when the primary caregiver, usually the mother, is not available (Stewart & Marvin, 1984).

Consequently, the family - as a holistic context - can have an impact on the quality of children's attachment representations (Dubois-Comtois & Moss, 2008). In addition, middle childhood is an interesting cognitive and social developmental period due to the child's ability to become separated from the caregiver-child interactions and to become attached to the "group" (Dubois-Comtois & Moss, 2008). Thus, middle childhood aged period can be used to explain the development of children's narrative representations of parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions in the whole family context due to its particular characteristics. In order to define and emphasize the particular characteristics of this age period for a better understanding of children's representations of parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions, the investigator will approach Erikson's stage differential theory of psychosocial development (Erikson, 1968) and Piaget's stage theory of cognitive development (Piaget, 1983).

2.4.1 The Normative Development of Representations during Middle Childhood Aged Period

According to Erikson (1968), middle childhood is the fourth stage of development and includes children with ages between 6 and 12 years old. In line with Erikson (1968), it is the *industrial age* which is the school-going phase. The school-going phase, first, involves children's interactions with their peers in social or academic activities. Then, children begin to compare their social, academic, or aesthetic characteristics to those of their peers because they want to be accepted and appreciated not only by their family members, but also by their peers. Thus, successful experiences with their peers give the children a sense of industry, whereas unsuccessful events bring a sense of inferiority. For example, negative interactions with their peers give the children a sense of inferiority and consequently, they are more likely to display more shame and guilt (Tracy et al., 2007).

However, the quality of the family environment may have a significant impact for school age children on acquiring a sense of industry (Erikson, 1968). More specifically, sensitive parent-child interactions are associated with the development of a positive feeling of competence in children's abilities and thus, industry may result. Consequently, children may represent warm/positive parenting behaviors with dimensions such as attention, encouragement, support, protection, availability, and competence to provide sensitive caregiving. In the same vein, children may represent low levels of negative emotions and self-conscious emotions. On the other hand, unresponsive parent-child interactions are associated with the development of a negative feeling of competence in children's abilities and thus, the development of a sense of

doubt to be successful and feelings of inferiority may arise. As a result, children may represent harsh/negative parenting behaviors with dimensions such as neglect, unresponsiveness, and incompetence to provide sensitive caregiving (Bornstein, 2002). Similarly, children may represent high levels of negative emotions and self-conscious emotions.

Erikson's view of school age child development is an ongoing interaction between the child and the environment (Newman & Newman, 2007). Piaget's stage theory of cognitive development (Piaget, 1983), which emphasizes the central role of cognition on children's development, may be also relevant for understanding children's representations of parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions in middle childhood because it yields an alternative and a broader philosophical framework.

According to Piaget's theory (Piaget, 1960), middle childhood is the third stage of development called the *concrete operational stage* and includes children with ages between 7 and 12 years old. During middle childhood, children begin to represent objects concretely at an abstract level (Piaget 1955, 1962). This process has a direct effect on the quality of children's internal model of the caregiver (Waniel, Besser, & Priel, 2008), and consequently on children's representations of parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions.

The concrete operational stage is characterized by a decrease in egocentrism and an increasing ability of cognitive perspective taking. Children can deal with an action, whether it is directly experienced or only observed, and can form a hypothesis (Piaget, 1983). For example, children's representations of their parenting behaviors are related not only to instances of parental behavior toward them (e.g., "Mom was still sad because Uncle Peter died and little John

tried to cheer her up. Mom was cheered up and then, she hugged little John very hard and thanked him”¹), but also to the children’s observations of their parents’ behaviors towards others (Bretherton & Watson, 1990) (e.g., “And the father stopped suddenly and collided with a car. Mother said: ‘You should drive slower! Look what you did! You collided with a car!’”). Furthermore, children’s representations of negative emotions are related not only to instances of anger, fear, or sadness experienced by themselves (e.g., “Little John [the protagonist] felt very sad because he spilled the juice”), but also to the children’s observations of their parents or peers’ experiences of negative emotions (e.g., “Amy [the protagonist’s sister] was very sad because it was her favorite pitcher and she was very sad because she didn’t even start drinking a little bit of juice”). Finally, children’s representations of self-conscious emotions are related not only to instances of shame and guilt experienced by themselves (e.g., “When mom saw what happened, she told little Mary not to do that anymore some other time. Little Mary felt guilty but she didn’t do that thing anymore”), but also to the parents’ evaluations of their children’s behaviors in relation to normative standards (e.g., “Little Mary: ‘Well, mom, I cut my finger and I told Amy to give me a bandaid from the shelf.’ Mom: ‘You both are guilty: you, because you were not obedient, and you, because you agreed with that’”).

Children at this stage also become skilled at considering multiple dimensions of a problem at the same time (Piaget, 1952). For example, when concrete operational children represent parenting behaviors, they have the abilities to bring into discussion both warm and

¹ The examples in this section were extracted from the primary data collected by the investigator.

harsh representations (e.g., “Mother, father, and Paul are coming immediately and asking little John: ‘Why did you do that?’ Then, father is hitting Paul and telling him: ‘Don’t ever do like that anymore!’ You saw what happened to Paul!’ When father hit Paul, he began to cry and he went to his room. And mom hugged him and told him not to cry anymore. And mom talked to father and asked him why he had hit him”). When they represent negative emotions, they also have the abilities to feel different negative emotions (e.g., “Mom is telling little John: ‘Little John, why did you touch the juice?’ Little John is answering that he was thirsty and he liked the juice. But mom is telling him: ‘Little John, you could ask for my permission because I was giving that to you. You don’t have to climb the table and turn the juice over!’ And Little John got very upset and went to his room angrily”). Furthermore, when children experience shame, they have the abilities to recognize their failure to meet social norms and the presence of others who witness and acknowledge their failure (Griffin, 1995) (e.g., “They turned the volume higher and mother bear could hear, and when she came, she saw that his friend was watching TV together with little John. And then, his mother got upset, but she didn’t want him to be ashamed in front of his friends. And she waited for little John’s friends to leave, although she had a headache, and after that to scold him because he was not obedient”).

Children who can use concrete operations also have the cognitive abilities to *classify* objects. They can understand that objects can belong to more than one class. For example, they are able to classify their parents’ behaviors in the NSST as caring (e.g., “Mom is coming to help him. Mom is bandaging him and putting some ice above his knee”), reasoning (e.g., “Mom is taking little John to bed and telling him: ‘Let me take you to bed because you saw what

happened in the morning! You woke up too late”), affectionate (e.g., “The parents hugged their children and thanked the aunt because she stayed with them”), helpful (e.g., “Little Mary, Amy, mother, and father went to the park again. Amy wanted to swing. Of course that she couldn’t climb. She asked her mom to help her climb [and mom helped her]”), directive (e.g., “Then, mom is coming and telling her to let her younger sister as well. And the younger sister is coming and playing, too”), punishable without any reason (e.g., “Little John felt that he wanted to jump on the sofa. Mom: ‘Little John, don’t jump anymore!’ Little John: ‘Why, mom?’ Mom: ‘Because I told you so!’”), verbal and/or physical hostility (e.g., “Mom: ‘You are not shameful! I’m your mom. I saved you out of fire because otherwise, you could have burnt. Are you not shameful a little bit? Little Mary, get out!’ [mom is kicking her out]”), or ignoring (e.g., “Mom: ‘Why did you spill the juice?’ Little Mary: ‘Forgive me, mom! I spilled it on the floor by mistake.’ Father: ‘Leave her alone to do what she wants!’”). Correspondingly, they have the ability to classify the representations of negative emotions as anger (e.g., “But mom is telling him: ‘Little John, you could ask for my permission because I was giving that to you.’ And little John got very upset and went to his room angrily”), fear (e.g., “They played. After that, he told his friend: ‘I’m afraid here!’ Friend: ‘C’mon! I’m also afraid when I’m by myself’”), and sadness (e.g., “Little John played football with his mom, but after that, mom was still sad because Uncle Peter died”). At last, concrete operational children are able to classify the representations of self-conscious emotions as negative self-evaluations and global self-worth (e.g., “Mom: ‘What have you done? I told you not to touch it!’ Paul: ‘Mom, you said it was good to help people.’ Mom: ‘Well, but you could find it [the bandaid] in another place.’ Paul:

‘You’re right! But it was the closest one and I was lazy’”), negative observations about another character (e.g., “Amy: ‘You should know that I don’t like it at all. Go home! I’m not going to be your friend anymore. My sister is more important than you. Why are you so bad?’”), repairing feelings (e.g., “Little John: ‘OK, father! Next time, I’m more careful. And now, I want to repair ... to solve the problem. I want all of us to think of what we can do to repair the trouble’”), apologizing feelings (e.g., “Mom is saying: ‘Little John, why did you spill the juice on the floor?’ Little John: ‘I didn’t want, mom. I wanted to take some juice because I was thirsty, but I want to apologize’”), and guilt feelings following some transgression (e.g., “When mom saw what happened, she told little Mary not to do that some other time and she didn’t scold her badly. Little Mary felt guilty, but she didn’t do that thing anymore”). The ability to classify objects leads to summary representations of objects (Farrar, Raney, & Boyer, 1992). Thus, children’s narrative representations of parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions could be summary representations based on inferences that have been made on what is known about family or peer relationships from their own past experiences.

The choice of Piaget’s theory of cognitive development is also important to the current study because it provides a cognitive perspective for understanding children’s narrative representations of parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions in middle childhood. In addition to that, other significant qualitative changes that describe the middle-childhood aged period are considered further because they offer insights that can enhance our understanding of children’s representations of parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions.

The early sensorimotor caregiver-child interactions are the foundation of the construction of children's representations of self and others in middle childhood aged period. In middle childhood, the linguistic and symbolic forms of representations improve (Appelman, 2000; Bowlby, 1969/1982; Bretherton, 1985; Harter, 1999; Lewis, 1994; Main et al., 1985; Piaget, 1954; Sroufe, 1990; Stern, 1985). Moreover, the shift in attachment behavior from proximity of the attachment figure in early childhood to availability of the attachment figure in middle childhood (Ainsworth, 1990) also characterizes the school age period. In addition, middle childhood aged children are characterized by their linguistic and symbolic abilities to incorporate past attachment experiences into a major attachment representation that is the manifestation of different past attachment representations (Kerns, Schlegelmich, Morgan, & Abraham, 2005; Mayseless, 2005; Raikes & Thompson, 2005). Thus, because of these qualitative changes that describe middle childhood aged period, an adequate assessment technique is required to move to the level of representation in order to explore children's internal working models of self and others (Main et al., 1985). Thus, by middle childhood, attachment assessments typically have targeted children's representations of the attachment relationship and caregiver availability, rather than directly assessing secure base behavior. Accumulated evidence has established that the NSST accesses children's internal working models (Bretherton et al., 1990; Cassidy, 1988; Main, 1995; Page & Bretherton, 2003; Robinson, Herot, Haynes, & Mantz-Simmons, 2000; Verschueren, Marcoen, & Schoefs, 1996; Woolgar, 1999) through the use of family figurines.

As a conclusion, there are major cognitive advances at this developmental level that have an influence on children's representations of parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-

conscious emotions. Furthermore, both caregivers and peers' responses to children's actions work together to facilitate the understanding of normal development of such representations in middle childhood. Finally, the narrative technique can investigate the inner world of children for a better understanding of their representational world.

2.4.2 The Narrative Story Stem Technique

The NSST, developed by Bretherton and her colleagues in 1990, is a representational attachment technique primarily designed to assess young children's internal working models of attachment, caregiving relationships, or close relationships (Bretherton et al., 1990; Buchsbaum, Toth, Clyman, Cicchetti, & Emde, 1992; Main et al., 1985; Page, 2001). The NSST originated from the Attachment Story Completion Task (ASCT; Bretherton et al., 1990) and the MacArthur Story-Stem Battery (MSSB; Bretherton, Oppenheim, Prentiss, & The MacArthur Narrative Working Group, 1990a). The NSST differs from the ASCT (Bretherton et al., 1990) and the MSSB (Bretherton et al., 1990a) in the story stems that are provided to the children.

In the NSST, children are presented with incomplete, brief story-stems that depict a highly emotional, moral, and relationship-oriented situation that often features conflict that is intended to elicit children's narrative responses. The story-stems are enacted with the aid of props, bear family figurines, and several play furniture items to facilitate the children's comprehension of the story-stem (Page & Bretherton, 2001). The story stems may elicit children's understanding of family roles (Bretherton et al., 1990) or children's authentic personal family experiences (Bretherton et al., 1990b).

The NSST asks children to complete story stems about story characters and not about

themselves or their family members directly. Thus, the NSST enables the children, even with somewhat low self-communication abilities, with the opportunity to share both their positive and negative personal past emotional experiences in an indirect way (Buchsbaum et al., 1992; Stern, 1985). Children may be reluctant to share their perceptions and experiences when asked about them directly, especially if these experiences are negative (Buchsbaum et al., 1992). Therefore, the NSST has the advantage of allowing children to detach themselves from experiences that have been too emotional with the help of a sensitive, well-trained story stem administrator who supports the children's choices to avoid or address such experiences, thus lessening the level of stress imposed on children. Finally, in spite of the extent to which children reveal real lived experiences, the investigator considers children's narrative responses as representations of children's internal working models of relationships (see a full description of the NSST in Chapter 3, Methods, under Measures of Constructs section).

Consequently, the NSST is a symbolic play narrative procedure, elicited by story stems that reflect socio-emotional dilemmas, that has been devised for investigating the inner world of children (i.e., thoughts and feelings) regarding emotionally significant relationships (Bretherton & Oppenheim, 2003). The symbolic play, the conceptual framework for gaining a window into the representational world of children, is considered further.

2.4.3 Symbolic Play in Middle Childhood

Symbolic play, also known as *pretend play*, *fantasy play*, *socio-dramatic play*, or *role play* (Sawyer, 1997), provides “a window to the child's mind” (Rubin, Fein, & Vandenberg, 1983, p. 756) and allows the development of representational thought (Smith, 1993). Play is a

medium for children, age three or older, to create imaginary situations (Franklin, 1983; Vygotsky, 1978) from real experiences, not feelings or fantasies, in a space where it is appropriate to pretend identities (Dyson, 1997).

Stories are a play procedure through which children can continually organize and interpret their personal life experiences (Cazden, 1994) and represent who they are in relation to others (Dyson, 1997; Heath, 1983). The representational world

might be compared to a stage set within a theater. The characters on the stage represent the child's various objects, as well as the child himself. ... Whereas the characters on this stage correspond, in this model, to self- and object-*representations*, their particular form and expression at any one point in the play corresponds to self- and object-*images* (Sandler, 1987, p. 63).

Sandler (1987) states that young children play as the protagonists in their *performances* and portray other characters in those stories that involve *other-representations*. The term *objects* is Sandler's term for significant others in one's life and so, we describe them as *other-representations* (Mueller & Tingley, 1990). Consistent with attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969), *significant other* refers to the child's primary caregiver. Consequently, the representational world that children develop in the play procedure with the bear toy figurines in the NSST (Bretherton et al., 1990) process can be representations of their parenting behaviors. In the same vein, the representational world in the story stem play process can be the child protagonist's representations of his/her negative emotions and self-conscious emotions. Further, the investigator will consider the preliminary research on children's representations of parenting behaviors for a better understanding of the inner world of children regarding emotionally significant family relationships.

2.5 Narrative Research on Children's Representations of Parenting Behaviors

The preliminary work that has been done supports the idea that children's responses to the story stem procedure might tap their representations of parenting behaviors (e.g., Shields, Ryan, & Cicchetti, 2001; Solomon et al., 1995; Westen et al., 1991) as well as the description's degree of coherence (Westen et al., 1991). In research based on Western samples, investigators have identified two primary dimensions in children's perceptions of parents: warm/positive parenting and harsh/negative parenting, with specific behaviors for each dimension. For example, Bretherton et al. (1990b) examined family relationships as represented in a story completion task at 37- and 54-months-of-age, and coded narrative responses to obtain positive and negative scores. Children's perceptions of parents were identified as positive when children depicted the parents as caring, addressed the issues of the stories openly, and provided resolutions to the conflicts. Children's perceptions of parents were identified as negative when children depicted the parents as unresponsive, did not address the issues of the stories openly, and did not provide resolutions to the conflicts. The authors concluded that children's positive and/or negative perceptions of parents in narratives and measures of attachment were related in expected directions. Oppenheim et al. (1997) used the MSSB (Bretherton et al., 1990) to assess how children between the ages of four and five years view their mothers. The results show that children's views of mothers replicate the findings from the previous research. More specifically, the three dimensions that emerged in the study (i.e., positive, negative, and disciplinary representations) resemble the dimensions reviewed by Goldin (1969) (i.e., love, punishment, and demanding). Laible et al. (2004) obtained empirical support for the association between the

quality of family functioning and children's representations of parenting behaviors in the ASCT (Bretherton et al., 1990) in a sample of preschool through second grade children. Their study demonstrated that parental warmth predicted children's representations of prosocial themes (e.g., empathy/helping, reparation/guilt, affiliation) in their stories, whereas harsh parenting predicted children's use of aggressive themes (e.g., punishment, personal injury, atypical negative responses).

Further support for examining children's representations of parenting behaviors derives from studies indicating early childhood and play aged children's narratives, and their actual attachment relationship (Bretherton et al., 1990; Cassidy, 1988; Oppenheim, 1997). Securely attached children's responses to the story stems, in comparison with insecurely attached children, highlighted the significance of the relationship with the mother. More specifically, securely attached children represented mothers as positive and caring whereas insecurely attached children omitted the parental figure in their narrative responses.

Solomonica-Levi et al. (2010) examined the relationship between mothers' observed behaviors toward preschool children and children's representations of their mothers in the MSSB (Bretherton et al., 1990) following Oppenheim and colleagues' (1997) coding system. The results of the study showed associations between maternal styles characterized by sensitivity to the child's needs, support, and moderate levels of control, and children's representations of mothers as loving, helping, and forgiving in comparison with maternal styles characterized by insensitivity to the child's needs, inconsistency, and over-control.

Shamir, Schudlich, and Cummings (2001) examined marital conflict, parenting styles, and children's narrative representations of multiple family systems such as dyadic relationships (i.e., father-child, mother-child) and triadic relationships, (i.e., child-mother-father) in a sample of 47 5- to 8-year-old children. The results indicated that both mothers' and fathers' marital conflict strategies were related to children's representations of multiple family systems. More specifically, the results indicated that for both parents, negative marital conflict strategies were linked with negative representations of family relationships (e.g., avoidance-capitulation, intervention in others' interactions, verbal aggression, physical aggression, stalemating, ignoring, inconsistency, nagging, rejection, neglect, harsh discipline, hostility, helplessness, and blaming), whereas for fathers, positive parenting styles were associated with positive representations of family relationships (e.g., sharing, caregiving, affection, helpfulness, forgiving, instructiveness, collaboration, and conflict resolution). Coding of children's positive and negative representations of family relationships can be seen as consistent with the notion that children's emotional security is reflected in the relative positivity versus negativity of representations of family relationships (Davies & Cummings, 1994; Waters & Cummings, 2000).

In summary, research indicates that the quality of child-caregiving interactions is crucial in the development of children's internal working models and thus, it contributes significantly to children's constructions of representations of parenting behaviors (e.g., Bretherton et al., 1990; Comtois & Moss, 2008). Also, the quality of child-caregiving interactions is important in the development of children's narrative skills (e.g., Bretherton & Oppenheim, 2003; Peterson, Jesso, & McCabe, 1999). Beginning with pioneering work on representations (Bretherton et al., 1990),

research using story stems based on Western samples has documented children's representations of parenting behaviors as a reflection of their attachment quality. However, it is unclear whether these findings can be generalized to Eastern European cultures. In addition, the NSST has been used in several studies mostly with preschoolers and early school age children to examine representations of parenting behaviors, and few studies have examined such representations at older ages (e.g., Wan & Green, 2010). Thus, the present study examined this gap by examining middle childhood aged Romanian children's prospective representations of parenting behaviors. In addition to representations of parenting behaviors, the study also explored middle childhood aged Romanian children's representations of basic negative emotions.

2.6 Basic Negative Emotionality

Paul Ekman, one of the most influential researchers in the field of emotional facial expression and the theory of basic emotions, has suggested that humans, like nonhuman primates, express negative emotions. Negative emotions reveal that the present circumstances are not perfect and they prepare individuals to act properly to improve the circumstances (Rutherford, Chattha, & Krysko, 2008). According to Nesse (1990), "There are more negative than positive emotions because there are more different kinds of threats than opportunities" (p. 280). Also, negative emotions function differently than positive emotions due to their dissimilar neurobiological localization (Cacioppo & Berntson, 1994; Cacioppo & Gardner, 1999; Damasio, 2004; Ekman & Davidson, 1994; Le Douarin, 1996). The neuro-biological localization of the negative emotions is in the right hemisphere of the brain (Jansari, Tranel, & Adolphs, 2000). The right hemisphere perceives the relationship between the individual and environment. It is the half of

the brain that senses the basic elements of the environment, including the individual's presence and the individual's feelings, and incorporates those sensations into one subjectively perceived representation (Davidson & Fox, 1982). According to the psychological findings, many negative emotions tend to function in terms of the right hemisphere, without mediation of reasoned cognizant insight and full consideration (LeDoux, 1996).

Ekman (1992, 1999) proposed three specific negative emotions that are also called primary aversive emotions (i.e., *anger*, *fear*, and *sadness*). The negative emotions are expressed universally in all humans via facial expressions, regardless of race, culture, sex, ethnicity, or national origin (Ekman, 2003). They appear within the first nine months of life (Campos, Barrett, Lamb, Goldsmith, & Stenberg, 1983), and they have a significant role in child's development (Izard, 1992). For those reasons, they have been labeled *basic* negative emotions (Johnson-Laird & Oatley, 1989).

2.6.1 Anger

Anger is a motivational negative emotion. It focuses the individual cognitively on a particular goal, the cause of goal failure, with an expectation of goal reinstatement, such as getting back a desired thing taken away by another individual (Wang, 2003), and prepares the individual for revenge. Therefore, anger is viewed as a distinctive intense negative emotion because the individual seeks help upon the thing (s)he has been deprived of unfairly, instead of avoiding the situation (Aristotle, 1984). On the other hand, anger can be “sweeter it is by far than the honeycomb dripping with sweetness, and spreads through the hearts of men” (Aristotle, 1984, p. 92). More specifically, anger can lead to pleasure when the individual desires revenge.

As a result, anger is considered an intense and dangerous emotional state because of its association with other emotions (Berkowitz, 1989).

2.6.2 Fear

Fear is a strongly unpleasant negative emotion that the individual perceives when (s)he is aware of that (Snyder, 2000a). Fear develops in inevitable situations of threat, danger, or harm and prepares the individual to respond to them adaptively (Gray, 1989). For example, in the situation of facing a peril, the individual may adopt a protective action such as running away and thus, (s)he can increase his/her chances for survival. Frijda (1986) describes such protective actions in front of threat peril such as “forceful eye closure, frowning by drawing the eyebrows together, bending the head, hunching the shoulders, bending the trunk and knees” (p. 16).

2.6.3 Sadness

Sadness is a moderately strong negative emotion developed when the individual is deprived of a goal (Lazarus, 2001) and considers the deprivation as permanent (Stein & Levine, 1990) such as the loss of a relationship (Stein, Wade, & Liwag, 1996). Sadness is an emotion that is linked to internalization of negative affects, and may be linked to rumination and depression (Fivush & Buckner, 2000). Sadness causes the individual to consume energy. According to Fivush and his colleagues (2003), the individual needs to promote social and emotional interaction with others in order to resolve sadness.

Frijda (1986) describes the individual’s behavior when facing sadness such as “absence of interest” or “null state,” or “closing the curtains, taking to one’s bed, and pulling up the covers” (pp. 22-23). More specifically, when the individual does not consider to regain the

desired goal (s)he has been deprived of, (s)he detaches from the action that has a negative impact on himself/herself. Moreover, emotion researchers state that sadness is not just an absence of interest or null state, but leads the person to focus on self (Stein & Jewett, 1986) and thus, to blame his/her self for the deprivation of the desired goal.

As a conclusion, anger, fear, and sadness are a special class of negative emotions that may have a significant role on children's emotional development. In addition, the preliminary research on parent-child talk about past negative emotions may also have an important role on children's emotion understanding and expression.

2.7 Parent-Child Talk about Past Negative Emotions and Children's Emotion Understanding

Parent-child talking styles about past events are associated with a range of socio-emotional constructs, such as children's emotion understanding and expression (Laible, 2004). During parent-child talk, children learn to organize their lived experiences into a coherent narrative of self, weaving factual information with their subjective understanding of the experience. Fivush (1993) argued that the subjective or evaluative aspect of narratives provides the "critical link between personal memories and self-concept" (Fivush, 1993, p. 44). Not only do discussions of past emotions afford children with the opportunity to explore and develop critical aspects of the self, but these discussions also provide parents with a medium through which they can transmit important messages about emotions to their children (Fivush, 1993).

Parents who express an emotionally open communication style allow the child to process both positive and negative emotions and, conversely, parents who do not adopt an emotionally

open communication style tend to have children who have a limited range of emotional expression. In a parent-child emotionally open communication style, the parent helps the child contain negative emotions, provides structure and organization, encourages the child's involvement, and ensures that the child completes the task feeling successful and confident (Koren-Karie, Oppenheim, Haimovich, & Etzion-Carasso, 2003).

When parents and children reminisce about past experiences, they more often talk about negative than about positive emotional experiences (Brown, 1995). Thus, children and parents talk about past emotions, the causes of emotions, and connections between emotions and other mental states at high rates during conversations about negative emotions (Lagattuta & Wellman, 2002). Children prefer to discuss negative emotions during parent-child talk because experiences that elicit negative emotions are more salient in children's memories than are experiences that elicit positive emotions (Burger & Miller, 1999). When children introduce negative emotions, parents respond by introducing positive emotions or by exploring the causes and consequences of the negative emotions. Exploring the causes and consequences of the negative emotions might help children understand the interpersonal contexts in which negative emotions occur and provide them with the necessary knowledge to handle negative emotions in future experiences. In contrast, some parents may prefer to de-emphasize the negative emotions introduced by their children, which might be an attempt to shield their children from dwelling on negative experiences.

Consequently, during conversations about past negative emotions with their children, parents tend to convey significant messages about emotions. Besides, the cultural differences

between parent-child conversations about past negative emotions are likely to have a significant impact on children's emotion expression.

2.8 Cultural Differences between Parent-Child Talk about Past Negative Emotions

Some studies have found cultural differences between parent-child conversations about negative emotions. For example, Chinese mothers and their children tend to use more negative emotion words than do U.S. mothers and their children (Fivush & Wang, 2005). Moreover, Chinese mothers are more concerned with socializing their children into appropriate display and regulation of negative emotions. On the other hand, U.S. mothers and their children are more likely to discuss emotional experiences (Fivush & Wang, 2005). Thus, U.S. mothers seem to be more focused on understanding their children's emotional experiences and discussing their children's feelings more elaborately (Fivush & Wang, 2005).

U.S. and Chinese mother-child conversations focus on different negative emotions (Fivush & Wang, 2005). Whereas sadness is the most frequent negative emotion in the U.S. mother-child conversations, sadness is rarely discussed in Chinese mother-child conversations (Fivush & Wang, 2005). Fivush and her colleagues (2003) have proposed that in U.S. culture, in comparison with Chinese culture, it is more important to resolve sadness by sharing it with other individuals for social and emotional support. Chinese mother-child conversations focus more on anger than on sadness. Talking about anger helps children understand and unravel interpersonal conflicts which are central in Chinese culture. In the same line, Bear, Uribe-Zarain, Manning, and Shiomi (2009), investigated cultural differences in anger in fourth and fifth graders from the United States and from Japan. Consistent with predictions, compared to American children,

Japanese children were more likely to experience anger.

In sum, the preliminary work on parent-child conversations about past negative emotions suggests that cultural differences may influence children's representations of negative emotionality. In addition, children's understanding and expression of negative emotionality is provided by various assessment procedures. Thus, the investigator will further explore the possibilities of assessing children's representations of anger, fear, and sadness.

2.9 The Assessment of Basic Negative Emotions

Findings from empirical studies have documented the direct assessment of children's negative emotionality through the child's observation techniques (see Table 1), the mother-child conversation techniques (see Table 2), and parental reports (see Table 3).

Table 1

Empirical Studies that Have Documented the Direct Assessment of Children's Negative Emotionality through Child's Observation Technique

Observations of Child	What Was Measured	Emotions Measured	How It Was Measured	Children's Age
Kochanska, G. (2001). Emotional development in children with different attachment histories: The first three years. <i>Child Development</i> , 72(2), 474-490.	The development of fear, anger, and joy	fear anger joy	The Laboratory Temperament Assessment Battery (LAB-TAB, Goldsmith & Rothbart, 1996) –	9, 14, 22, and 33 months

(table cont.)

(table cont.)

<p>Levine, L. J., Stein, N., & Liwag, M. D. (1995). Remembering children's emotions: Sources of concordant and discordant accounts between parents and children. <i>Developmental Psychology</i>, 35(3), 790-801.</p>	<p>Parents' and children's memories for children's emotional experiences</p>	<p>happiness sadness anger fear</p>	<p>standard laboratory episodes designed to elicit fear, anger, and joy – also Risk Room paradigm (Kagan, Reznick, & Gibbons, 1989)</p> <p>Interviews with parents (they were asked to remember instances during the previous week in which they had observed their children experience happiness, sadness, anger, and fear)</p> <p>Interviews with children (only the events described by parents were presented)</p>	<p>4- and 6-year-old</p>
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Table 2

Empirical Studies that Have Documented the Direct Assessment of Children's Negative Emotionality through Mother-Child Conversation Technique

Mother-Child Conversations	What Was Measured	Emotions Measured	How It Was Measured	Children's Age
Fivush, R. (1989). Exploring	Sex differences	Emotion	Videotaped	30-35-

(table cont.)

(table cont.)

sex differences in the emotional content of mother-child talk about the past. <i>Sex Roles</i> , 20, 675-691.	in mother-child emotional past conversations	words (e.g., happy, liking, scared)	mother-child conversations about past emotional experiences	month-old
Fivush, R., Brotman, M., Buckner, J. P., & Goodman, S. (2000). Gender differences in parent-child emotion narratives. <i>Sex Roles</i> , 42, 233-254.	Gender differences in parent-child emotion narratives	Emotion words (e.g., happy, frightened, cried)	Videotaped parent-child conversations about past emotional experiences	40- to 45-month-old
Fivush, R., & Wang, Q. (2005). Emotion talk in mother-child conversations of the shared past: The effects of culture, gender, and event valence. <i>Journal of Cognition and Development</i> , 6(4), 489-506.	Mother-child emotional reminiscing	Emotion words (e.g., happy, scared, upset)	Videotaped mother-child conversations about past emotional experiences	3-year-old
Lagattuta, K. H., & Wellman, H. M. (2002). Differences in early parent-child conversations about negative versus positive emotions: Implications for the development of psychological understanding. <i>Developmental Psychology</i> , 38(4), 564-580.	Differences in early parent-child conversations about negative versus positive emotions	Emotion words	Videotaped parent-child conversations about positive and negative emotions	2 and 5 years of age

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Melzi, G., & Fernandez, C. (2004). Talking about past emotions: Conversations between Peruvian mothers and their preschool children. <i>Sex Roles</i> , 50(9/10), 641-657.	Gender and age variations in the use of emotion words	love pleasure surprise sympathy anger contempt displeasure fear sadness shame	Videotaped mother-child conversations about past emotional experiences – mothers, children	3- and 5-year-old
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Table 3

Empirical Studies that Have Documented the Indirect Assessment of Children's Negative Emotionality through Parental Report

Parental Report	What Was Measured	Emotions Measured	How It Was Measured	Children's Age
Eisenberg, N., Fabes, R.A., & Murphy, B.C. (1996). Parents' reactions to children's negative emotions: Relations to children's social competence and comforting behavior. <i>Child Development</i> , 67, 2227-2247.	The relations of mothers' and fathers' reported emotion-related practices to parents' and teachers' reports of third- to sixth-grade children's social skills, popularity, and	negative arousal fear sadness anxiety	Mothers, fathers, and teachers completed items adapted from Derryberry and Rothbart's (1988) temperament measure to assess children's dispositional emotionality.	3 rd , 4 th , 5 th , 6 th grades

(table cont.)

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	coping, as well as the quantity and quality of children's comforting of an infant.	emotional intensity	Affective Intensity Scale (Eisenberg et al., 1993)	
Kerns, K. A., Abraham, M. M., Schlegelmilch, A., & Morgan, T. A. (2007). Mother-child attachment in later middle childhood: Assessment approaches and associations with mood and emotion regulation.	Negative emotionality was used as a control variable in the examination of the relation between attachment and, mood and emotion regulation.	e.g., irritability, fear	Mothers completed the Child Reactions: Parent Report, a shortened version of the Affective Intensity Scale (Eisenberg et al., 1993).	9 to 11 year-old
<i>Attachment and Human Development</i> , 9(1), 33-53. Lagace-Seguin, D. G., & d'Entremont, M. R. L. (2006). The role of child negative affect in the relations between parenting styles and play. <i>Early Child Development and Care</i> , 176(5), 461-477.	Children's negative affect	e.g., hostility scariness	Mothers completed the negative affect subscale of the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (Watson, Clark, & Carey, 1988) which is a self-reported measure.	

The child's observation techniques provide a rich environment to determine the nature of the emotion reported, children's justifications for reporting the emotion, the meaning of the emotional experience to them, their understanding of emotions, and the way of dealing with the

emotion. The parent-child conversation techniques about children's experiences (parent-child emotional reminiscing) and parental reports also provide a rich environment for children's understanding and expression of emotions (Lagacé-Séguin & d'Entremont, 2006; Melzi & Fernandez, 2004).

Taken together, the existing evidence, although sparse and not overly strong, supports the expectation of different assessments of children's negative emotionality. Consequently, specific negative emotions such as anger, fear, and sadness, and specific negative self-conscious emotions such as shame and guilt, may be assessed with the NSST. Negative emotionality has been one of the most investigated topics in emotional development. However, certain questions and certain developmental periods have not received much attention, despite their theoretical significance. Thus, the second main goal of the present study was to extend research on measures to assess negative emotionality in middle childhood, an age period that has not been studied extensively. Besides, the present study extended research on measures to assess negative self-affects. Before discussing the gap on measures to assess children's expression of negative affective representations, the investigator will review the literature on children's representations of negative self-conscious emotions.

2.10 Negative Self-Conscious Emotions

In addition to the basic negative emotions, children develop negative affective representations also known under the names of negative self-affects or self-conscious emotions (Lewis, 1994). Self-conscious emotions emerge from how the children evaluate their actions in connection to social norms or from how the children think others will evaluate their actions.

Thus, self-conscious emotions are a unique class of emotions because they involve connections between self and others (Bretherton, Fritz, Zahn-Waxler, & Ridgeway, 1986). In comparison with negative emotions which occur when the children attribute actions to external causes (Russell & McAuley, 1986), self-conscious emotions occur when the children attribute actions to internal causes (Lewis, 2000; Tangney & Dearing, 2002). The negative actions to internal causes that the children experience are shame and guilt (Lewis, 1994). According to Lewis (1994), shame and guilt are the two negative self-conscious emotions. Emotion researchers termed shame and guilt self-conscious emotions because they involve the perception of the self (Lewis, 1994). The cognitive ability to develop a sense of shame and guilt emerges early in childhood during interactions with caregivers (Cooley, 1902). If the caregivers convey shame or guilt in the children due to some wrongdoings on the children's part, the children internalize the caregiver's reaction and thus, they can experience shame or guilt even in the absence of the reactions of their caregivers or others. The cognitive ability to verbally express shame and guilt represents a developmental acquisition dependent upon socialization experiences.

According to Tangney and Dearing (2002), self-conscious emotions are characterized by five major features. First, self-conscious emotions require self-awareness (the *I* self) and self-representations (the *me* self) (James, 1890). Both self-awareness and self-representations contribute to the process of self-evaluations and consequently, to the process of representations of self-conscious emotions (Tracy et al., 2007). Second, representations of self-conscious emotions emerge late in childhood. According to Izard, Ackerman, and Schultz (1999), they possibly emerge by the end of the child's third year of life. Self-conscious emotions emerge to

facilitate survival goals. Thus, the third feature of self-conscious emotions is assisting the children in achieving their social goals like prevention of peer rejection or improvement of status (Tracy & Robins, 2004b). Forth, self-conscious emotions do not have distinct, universally recognized facial expressions (Tracy et al., 2007). However, they have distinct expressions that include bodily posture or head movement combined with facial expression for shame (Izard, 1971; Tracy & Robins, 2004b). Guilt, in comparison with shame, seems to lack any kind of recognizable nonverbal expression and shows little evidence of universality (Haidt & Keltner, 1999). Finally, self-conscious emotions are cognitively complex (Lewis, 2000). More specifically, to experience shame, the children must have the capacity to form stable self-representations and to consciously self-reflect.

2.10.1 Shame

According to Lewis (1971), “The experience of the shame is directly about the *self*, which is the focus of evaluation” (p. 30). Shame is a very painful emotion that is characterized by lack of power and worth, and by feelings of being small and exposed to the *social mirrors* (Tracy et al., 2007). The self is passive in an effort *to hide - to sink into the floor* in order to avoid the negative evaluations of others (Tangney & Dearing, 2002).

The individual experiences shame following some wrongdoings or failures to accomplish his/her objectives or others’ expectations for his/her self (Lewis, 2000), or to meet social norms (e.g., competence, moral principles, aesthetics) (Tracy & Robins, 2004b). With shame, therefore, the focus is on the I-self as the agent of negative actions against significant others.

Although shame does not involve real others to observe the individual's failures, there is always the image of how others perceive the individual's self negatively (Tangney & Dearing, 2002).

Shame, in comparison with guilt, is a stronger and a more painful emotion. If in shame the primary condemnation is the self, in guilt, the primary condemnation is a particular behavior (Lewis, 1971).

2.10.2 Guilt

According to Lewis (1971), "In guilt, the self is not the central object of negative evaluation, but rather the *thing* done or undone is the focus. In guilt, the self is negatively evaluated in connection with something but is not itself the focus of the experience" (p. 30). Although guilt emotion is not as painful as shame emotion because it does not have an impact on the self, it is also characterized by negative feelings about a specific behavior or action taken by the self such as remorse, anxiety, or irritation (Lewis, 1971). The individual in the midst of guilt experience thinks of his/her wrongdoing over and over again and wishes (s)he could have acted in that specific situation differently (Tangney & Dearing, 2002). Consequently, the I-self is generally active to engage in acts of control in the form of confession and/or reparation for the interpersonal damage caused. The significant others are the passive victims and become the center of attention of the individual's guilty thoughts.

The individual experiences guilt following the violations of his/her moral standards for how (s)he ought to behave toward others. The individual attributes responsibility for the violation to himself/herself (Eisenberg, 2000; Hoffman, 2000; Tangney et al., 2007). With guilt, therefore, the focus is on the significant others who are hurt by the actions of the self.

As a conclusion, shame and guilt are cognitively complex negative self-conscious emotions because they require the capacity of self-reflect, make causal attributions, and serve important social functions (Tracy et al., 2007). Understanding the complexity of shame and guilt is an important step in understanding the influence of parent-child talk and cultural differences in expressing self-conscious emotions.

2.11 Parent-Child Talk and Cultural Differences in Expressing Self-Conscious Emotions

During everyday communication with their children, parents transmit their cultural beliefs and expectations for behavior and accomplishments. Therefore, children's representations of self-conscious emotions are based on their interpretations of their parents' cultural beliefs and expectations. In a study conducted by Fung, Lieber, and Leung (2003), the findings showed that Chinese parents, in comparison with American parents, supported shame as a means of educating their children in order to respond to social standards.

Cultural beliefs and expectations in individualistic versus collectivistic societies also have an influence upon the development of self, and consequently, on children's understanding of self-conscious emotions (Kitayama, Markus, & Matsumoto, 1995). More specifically, collectivistic societies do not completely distinguish between self and others. Thus, children's displays of self-conscious emotions can be embedded in others' actions. For example, Chinese children, in comparison with American children, tended to represent self-conscious emotions as a consequence of a relative's misbehavior (Stipek, 1988).

In conclusion, parent-child talk and cultural differences influence children's understanding of shame and guilt. In addition, children's communication of negative self-affects

is provided by various assessment procedures. Thus, the investigator will explore the possibilities of assessing children's representations of shame and guilt.

2.12 The Assessment of Negative Self-Conscious Emotions

Findings from empirical studies have documented the assessment of children's self-conscious emotions through shame- versus guilt- inducing situations, global adjective checklists, scenario-based assessments, statement-based assessments, and nonverbal behavior assessments (Tracy et al., 2007) (see Table 4).

Table 4

Various Approaches to Measuring Shame and Guilt

Approaches to Measuring Shame and Guilt	Relevant References	Description of the Measurement
Situation-based measures	Sabini, J., Garvey, B., & Hall, A. L. (2001). Shame and embarrassment revisited. <i>Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin</i> , 27, 104-117.	Children read some situations and then, they evaluate the degree to which they feel a specific emotion in each situation.
Global adjective checklist	Watson, D. (2000). <i>Mood and temperament</i> . New York: Guilford Press.	Children read some adjectives that denote different feelings and then, they evaluate the degree to which they experience them.
Scenario-based measures	Elison, J., Lennon, R., & Pulos, S. (2006). Investigating the compass of shame: The development of the Compass of Shame Scale. <i>Social Behavior and Personality</i> , 34, 221-	Children read some scenarios and then, they select the thoughts and feelings, and behaviors they consider they may perform in those situations from a set of multiple choice

(table cont.)

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	238.	responses.
Statement-based measures	Andrews, B., Qian, M., & Valentine, J. D. (2002). Predicting depressive symptoms with a new measure of shame: The Experience of Shame Scale. <i>British Journal of Clinical Psychology</i> , 41, 29-42.	Children read some statements or phrases and then, they evaluate the degree to which they feel a specific emotion in each situation.
Nonverbal behavior measures	Tracy, J. L., & Robins, R. W. (2006b). Appraisal antecedents of shame and guilt: Support for a theoretical model. <i>Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin</i> , 32, 1339-1351.	The researcher evaluates the degree to which children express facial and nonfacial emotions in their actions.

Note: The information in Table 4 is drawn from Tracy et al. (2007).

Unlike the basic negative emotions, shame and guilt are internal affective states that do not involve clearly definable, codable facial expressions (Izard, 1977). Thus, it is difficult to assess them directly (Tangney & Dearing, 2002). Although interest in self-conscious emotions has grown dramatically over the last two decades (Tracy et al., 2007), researchers know relatively little about their representations in story stems. New methodologies are needed to tap into young children's knowledge about self-conscious emotions (Tracy et al., 2007). Thus, the third main goal of the current study was to extend research on measures to assess self-conscious emotions in middle childhood.

CHAPTER 3 METHODS

The present study examined children's representations of parenting behaviors, basic negative emotions, and negative self-conscious emotions using the Narrative Story-Stem Technique (NSST; Bretherton et al., 1990). The study involved a cross-sectional observational interview with Romanian children.

3.1 Recruitment of Participants

The investigator recruited first through fourth grade participants who attended a private Christian school, also known as Richard Wurmbrand College², in Iasi, Romania. The participants were recruited from the school's four first- through fourth-grade classes. There were 16 to 28 children in each class. The recruitment procedure took place in several steps. First, the study's use of human subjects was approved by the Louisiana State University Institutional Review Board, No. 3012 (see Appendix A). Second, the investigator obtained permission to conduct the study from the local school board. Third, the investigator delivered the parent consent forms (see Appendix B) and a parenting questionnaire to the local school board. Fourth, the school board distributed the parent consent forms and the parenting questionnaires to the teachers during a regular faculty meeting of the fall semester, 2009. Finally, the teachers gave the consent forms and the parenting questionnaires to the parents of all first through fourth graders. Interested parents returned the consent forms and the parenting questionnaires either to

² Richard Wurmbrand College is one of the first private Christian K-12 schools in Romania. According to the Romanian Ministry of Education and Research statistics (MER, 2010), less than 2% of elementary school students attend private schools in Romania.

the teachers or to the investigator. The participants were 52 children, 32 boys and 20 girls, ages 6 to 11 years, with a mean age of 8 years and 5 months. Eight children were in the first grade, 15 children were in the second grade, 16 children were in the third grade, and 13 children were in the fourth grade.

3.2 Assessments of Children's Representations of Parenting Behaviors, Basic Negative Emotions, and Negative Self-Conscious Emotions

Children's mental representations of parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions were assessed with the NSST. In the NSST, stories are enacted with animal family figurines, dressed in simple clothing, that include a mother, a father, an older sibling, a younger sibling, a friend of the older sibling, a grandmother, and several furniture play items that correspond to the elements of the story-stem to assist the children's understanding of the story-stems (Page & Bretherton, 2001). The investigator enacted the stories with bear family figurines because she considered bear figurines attractive to children. The siblings and friend figurines are of the same gender as the subject child. The child is presented with a short story-stem that portrays a somewhat stressful experience. The 10 specific story-stems that were employed in the reported study were *Spilled juice*, *Hurt knee*, *Monster in the bedroom*, *Departure*, *Reunion*, *Headache*, *Bathroom shelf*, *Uncle Fred*, *Three's a crowd*, and *Ball play* (see Table 5 for a short description of the stories and Appendix C for the scripts).

Table 5

Short Descriptions of the Story Stems

Story Stem	Story Description
Birthday party	Warm-up: The mother calls everyone to the table to have a birthday party. The younger child has a birthday (not coded).
Spilled juice	The family of four (a younger sibling, an older sibling, a mother, and a father) is sitting around the dinner table, and the younger sibling reaches across the table for some juice and accidentally spills the pitcher of juice. ¹
Hurt knee	The two siblings and the parents go to the park. The younger sibling sees a rock and wants to climb it. On the way up, the child falls down and cries out that he has hurt his knee. ¹
Monster	The mother tells the older child that it is time to go to bed. The child goes into the bed room and reports seeing a monster. ¹
Departure	The parents tell the children that they are going on a trip over night and that the grandma will stay with them. The child is asked to physically make the car, which carries the parents, drive away. ¹
Reunion	The investigator drives the car back onto the table, and leaves the parents in the car and says that the parents are back from their trip over night. ¹
Headache	The mother and younger child are sitting on the couch with the TV on. Mother turns off the TV and asks for quiet, saying she has a headache. The child's friend comes and asks to play inside. ²
Bathroom shelf	The mother goes briefly to the neighbor's, telling both children not to touch anything on the bathroom shelf while she is away. After the mother leaves, the younger child cuts his/her finger on the toy box and asks the older for a band aid. ²
Uncle Peter	The mother is sitting on the couch, crying. The mother tells the younger child

(table cont.)

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	that she is sad because Uncle Peter has died. ³
Three's a crowd	The older child and friend are playing in the wagon. When the younger child enters the scene and asks to join them, the friend tells the older child that if (s)he allow the younger child to play, (s)he will not be his/her friend anymore. ²
Ball play	The older sibling and his friend are playing with the ball. Suddenly, the older sibling cries, "Ouch! That hurt my hand!" ⁴
Family fun	Wind-down (not coded)

¹ From the Attachment Story Completion Task (ASCT; Bretherton et al., 1990)

² From the MacArthur Story-Stem Battery (MSSB; Bretherton et al., 1990)

³ From Zahn-Waxler et al. (1994)

⁴ From Warren et al. (2000)

Most story stem researchers have used all the stories, except Ball play, with the Attachment Story Completion Task (ASCT; Bretherton et al., 1990). Ball play is an adaptation of a story from Warren, Emde, and Sroufe (2000) that is intended to assess representations of confusing actions during interactions with peers. A beginning story, Birthday party, is used so that the child can become familiar with the protocol. An ending story, Family fun, is used to detach the child from the protocol. Both beginning and ending stories are positive emotionally charged, and are not included in coding or data analyses.

Each story is begun by the interviewer by moving the bear family figurines and furniture play items, and altering the tone of his/her voice to match the bear character. Once the story is begun, the child is asked by the interviewer, "Please, show and tell me what happens next!" In order to indicate that the child should continue or end the story, the interviewer uses some

prompts throughout the protocol (e.g., “Does anything else happen in the story?” or “Is that the end of the story?”) Indications of the end of each story are when the child addresses the main point, signals that (s)he ends the story, or does not continue the story after the prompts. For example, in the Bathroom shelf story stem, the older sibling is confronted by a conflict between the desire to pick up a band aid from the bathroom shelf (because the younger sibling hurt a finger and it is bleeding) and the prohibition by the mother not to touch the bathroom shelf while she is visiting a neighbor. If the child moves the older sibling bear or the younger sibling bear to touch the bathroom shelf without any explanation, the interviewer will respond, “But what about mom? She said not to touch anything on the bathroom shelf.” On the other hand, if none of the children touches the bathroom shelf, the interviewer will make the younger sibling bear say, “Oh, come on! I know you can help me.” The child completes the story using his/her own statements and actions with the bear family figurines and furniture play items. The interviewer videotapes children’s responses, and (s)he labels the videotapes and stores them for future coding.

3.2.1 Reliability of the data collected with the NSST

Cassidy (1988) examined the reliability of the attachment classifications assessed with the NSST by re-administering one of the stories of the protocol one month after the first administration. Ratings from the two times were highly correlated, $r = .63$, $p < .001$; identical attachment classifications derived from the two administrations were assigned in 73% of cases ($\Delta = .28$).

3.3 Assessment of Children's Demographic Information and Time Spent with Parents

The information to assess the children's ages, grades, and the number of hours per day that they spend with their parents was collected from the parent consent form and a general questionnaire. The consent form included both the description of the study and children's demographic information.

3.4 Procedures

3.4.1 Administering the NSST

- Training the investigator to administer the NSST. Dr. Timothy Page, Ph.D., School of Social Work, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA, trained the investigator to administer the NSST. The investigator practiced administering the NSST to two American middle childhood-aged children in one session. The investigator invited the children, one at a time, to a testing room where she administered and videotaped the story stem battery. Both Dr. Page and the investigator watched the videotapes while Dr. Page critically reviewed the researcher's strengths and weaknesses in administering the protocol, and provided feedback.
- Translation of the NSST. The investigator, a native speaker of Romanian, translated the NSST from English into Romanian. A second native Romanian speaker checked the translation of the script for accuracy.

- Administration of the NSST. The investigator administered the NSST to the Romanian children at the beginning of the spring 2010 semester. The investigator spent several hours in the participating classrooms before administering the protocol so that the children could become familiar with her. The investigator interviewed the children at their school, during their regular school hours, in one session per child. The investigator invited each child out of the classroom to an experimental psychology laboratory where she sat across a little table from the child to administer the story stems. Each individually videotaped session lasted about 40 minutes. The investigator followed the standard protocol for the administration of the story stems. Both parent and grandmother figurines were present for each story-stem in order to indicate the typical family structure common to the children in the study.

In the present study, the investigator used 12 story-stems in the following order: Birthday party, Spilled juice, Hurt knee, Monster in the bedroom, Departure, Reunion, Headache, Bathroom shelf, Uncle Peter³, Three's a crowd, Ball play, Family fun (see Appendix C for a full description of the stories). After the investigator had administered the stories and the child had completed them, the investigator thanked the child and returned him/her to his/her classroom where she thanked the child's teacher as well.

³ The investigator changed the story character's name from Fred to Peter to have a similar meaning in both languages.

- Transcribing the NSST responses. To examine the Romanian children's representations of parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions using the NSST, the investigator first transcribed the children's responses to the story stems verbatim, in Romanian, from the videotapes. The investigator also included a summary of all nonverbal actions that the children made with the bear family figurines (e.g., younger sibling and mother hugging, mother spanking younger sibling). Second, the investigator translated the Romanian transcripts into English. A second native Romanian speaker checked the transcripts and translations for accuracy.

3.4.2 Coding the NSST responses

- Training the investigator to code the NSST responses. Dr. Sarah Pierce, Ph.D., School of Human Ecology, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA, trained the investigator to code the videotaped story-stem completions for representations of parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions. The investigator practiced coding three transcripts, out of the total of 52, in one session. Both Dr. Pierce and the investigator checked the transcripts for accuracy in coding while Dr. Pierce critically reviewed the investigator's strengths and weaknesses in coding the story stems.

- Coding children's representations of parenting behaviors. To identify the children's representations of parenting behaviors, the investigator used a three-step process. First, the investigator constructed a list of eight content themes based on previous research. Six themes - *caregiving*, *pleasant family interaction*, *use of reasoning*, *affection*, *helpfulness*, and *use of physical punishment* – were adapted from Oppenheim et al. (1997). Several of the six themes were further elaborated with material from other researchers in the following manner: pleasant family interaction was enriched from Laible et al. (2004), Page (2007), and Robinson, Mandelco, Frost Olsen, and Hart (2001); use of reasoning was enriched from Robinson et al. (2001); affection was enriched from Laible et al. (2004). Two additional themes – democratic participation and use of non-reasoning punishment – were adapted from Robinson et al. (2001). See Table 6 for a summary description of the content themes and the sources of the contributions of each theme's definition.

Table 6

Summary Descriptions of the Content Themes of Children's Representations of Parenting Behaviors

Parenting Behaviors	Descriptions
Caregiving	Parent is described as taking care of child, protecting, soothing, feeding, comforting, housekeeping (Oppenheim et al., 1997).
Pleasant family interaction	Parent interacts with the child in different family activities such as playing or joking (Page, 2007); other pleasant family interactions are not included in affectionate theme. It includes general affirmation of child's value, and forgiving, complimenting, interacting warmly with child (Laible et al., 2004; Oppenheim et al., 1997), sweet names (Robinson et al., 1995).
Reasoning	Parent is described as providing explanations for discipline, following discipline (adapted from Oppenheim et al., 1997). Parent is also described as providing reasons for why things happen and reasons for why the children need to do something (other than "because I said so") (Robinson et al., 1995).
Democratic participation	Parent considers children's desires, thoughts and feelings when making family decisions; parent allows child's input in family decisions; parent asks child for information about his behavior or feelings (Robinson et al., 1995).
Affection	Parent is described as kissing, hugging (Laible et al., 2004; Oppenheim et al., 1997).
Helpfulness	Parent is described as helping child with a task (Oppenheim et al., 1997).
Physical punishment	Parent is described as punitive and physically hostile toward child (Oppenheim et al., 1977).
Nonreasoning punishment	Parent is described as providing no explanations following punishment (Robinson et al., 1995).

Second, the investigator read the transcripts of the children's story-stem completions and identified all instances of the children's descriptions of parenting behaviors. Finally, the investigator coded each identified representation with one of the eight content themes. See Table 7 for examples of each of the eight content themes extracted from the participating children's transcripts.

Table 7

Examples of Representations of Parenting Behaviors

Parenting Behaviors	Story Stem	Children's Verbal and Nonverbal Responses
Caregiving	Hurt knee	<i>"Mom bear is helping him, putting the bandaid, doing massage."</i>
Pleasant family interaction	Monster	<i>"Mom turned the lights on again by wondering what was going on, but Little John told her that there was something scary. His mom told him if he wanted to sleep with father bear and mother bear. Little John was very glad."</i>
Reasoning	Hurt knee	<i>"Father: 'Little John, you are young. You cannot climb. Maybe your brother is able, but don't try to do like him. He's older than you. He grew up. But you should wait to be like him for a couple of years.'"</i>
Democratic participation	Spilled juice	<i>"And after that, his mom said: 'Why did you break it? Why did you spill the juice? Now, it's all over the parquet.' And Little John is saying: 'I'm sorry, mom! I didn't want.'"</i>
Affection	Departure	<i>"Mom: 'Let mom kiss you! And behave yourself; obey your</i>

(table cont.)

(table cont.)

		grandma as I've asked you, ok?' Children: 'OK, mom!' [father is kissing the kids]"
Helpfulness	Hurt knee	"Father: 'Well, why did you climb?' Little John: 'Well, I wanted to show that to you.' Father: 'But you don't have to boast in front of us. You are our child.' Little John: 'OK, father! Help me stand!' And <i>he's helping him stand ...</i> "
Physical punishment	Bathroom shelf	"Little John ... is telling his mom everything. Mom got upset ... <i>Mom is hitting Little John</i> but Little John didn't even care about that. <i>Mom hit him once again</i> and it was hurting Little John now. Mom asked Little John: 'Now, it's hurting you ... you deserve the beating ...'"
Nonreasoning punishment	Uncle Peter	"Little John is jumping very high on the sofa. Mom: 'Little John, don't jump anymore!' Little John: 'Why, mom?' Mom: ' <i>Because I told you so.</i> Behave yourself!' Little John: 'OK! If mom is saying so ...'"

Note: Representations of parenting behaviors are italicized.

Each of the 10 story-stem narratives was scored for each of the 8 content themes per child. Each of the content themes was scored on a 3-point scale, with 0 representing *none* (i.e., there was no indication of a representation of parenting behavior), 1 representing *minimal* (i.e., there was one indication of a representation of parenting behavior), and 2 representing *elaborate* (i.e., there was more than one indication of a representation of parenting behavior) (see Table 8 for examples of representations of caregiving from the Hurt knee story for a better clarification of the 3-point scale coding system).

Table 8

Examples of the Use of the 3-Point Scale in Coding Caregiving in the Hurt Knee Narratives

Codes	Children's Verbal Responses
None (0)	"Little John: 'Mom, my knee is hurting me!' Mom: 'You're right, little John! You should be more careful next time!' Little John: 'Thank you for telling me!'"
Minimal (1)	"Little John: 'I hurt my knee!' Mom: 'Little John, what did you do?' Little John: 'I climbed that rock.' Mom: <i>'Let me take you to the doctor!'</i> "
Elaborate (2)	"Father: 'What's going on? What's going on?' <i>Father bear went and took Little John in his arms. And he put him on the grass where he tried to heal him ... Then, they went and called for an ambulance. And mom, father, and the big brother, Paul went to the hospital. And then, they hospitalized Little John.</i> "

Note: Caregiving responses are italicized.

Eight summary content theme scores were derived by summing the scores for each content theme across all the stories; the score for each summary content theme, therefore, had a potential range of 0 to 20.

The investigator generated a ninth score, coherence, following the description in Page's Coding Manual for the Tulane NSST Study (2007). According to Page (2007), "Coherence is characterized by a positive story resolution that is understandable, linear, compact and efficient, and makes sense in conveying meaning, versus one that is highly negative, odd, tangential, rambling, incomplete, highly conflicted, contradictory, or unintegrated" (p. 13). The investigator coded all the stories for each child for coherence on a 3-point scale with 1 representing *negative*, that is, usually characterized by high amounts of negative story events, 2 representing *mixed*

positive and negative, that is, characterized by both positive and negative story events, and 3 representing *positive*, that is, usually characterized by high amounts of positive story events. Finally, the investigator generated a composite score of narrative coherence for each child by summing the scores across stories; the composite coherence score, therefore, had a potential range of 10 to 30.

- Coding children’s representations of basic negative emotions. To identify the children’s representations of negative emotions, the investigator used a three-step process. First, the investigator constructed a list of three content themes based on previous research. The three themes – *anger*, *fear*, and *sadness*– were adapted from Wan and Green (2010), and Ekman (1992, 1999). See Table 9 for a summary description of the content themes.

Table 9

Summary Descriptions of the Content Themes of Children’s Representations of Negative Emotions

Negative Emotions	Descriptions
Anger	Child is described as being “angry” or “mad.”
Fear	Child is described as being “afraid” or “scared.”
Sadness	Child is described as being “sad” or “upset.”

- Second, the investigator read the transcripts of the children's story-stem completions and identified all instances of the children's descriptions of negative emotions. Finally, the investigator coded each identified representation with one of the three content themes. See Table 10 for examples of each of the three content themes extracted from the participating children's transcripts.

Table 10

Examples of Representations of Negative Emotions

Negative Emotions	Story Stem	Children's Verbal Responses
Anger	Three's a crowd	"Mom is coming and saying: 'What happened? What have you both done? Subject: 'Mom is very very <i>angry</i> .' Mom: 'Because it gets me <i>angry</i> when you do things and don't tell me.'"
Fear	Departure	"Little Mary, being <i>afraid</i> that she'll get bored and the parents will not come back, tried to convince the parents not to go ... grandma took the girls inside and told Little Mary not to be afraid of anything."
Sadness	Spilled juice	"Amy was very <i>sad</i> because it was her favorite pitcher and she was very sad because she didn't even start drinking a little bit of juice."

Note: Representations of negative emotions are italicized.

Each of the 10 story-stem narratives was scored for each of the 3 content themes per child. Each of the content themes was scored on a 3-point scale, with 0 representing *none* (i.e., there was no

indication of a representation of negative emotion), 1 representing *minimal* (i.e., there was one indication of a representation of negative emotion), and 2 representing *elaborate* (i.e., there was more than one indication of a representation of negative emotion) (see Table 11 for examples of representations of sadness from the Departure story for a better clarification of the 3-point scale coding system).

Table 11

Examples of the Use of the 3-Point Scale in Coding Sadness in the Departure Narratives

Codes	Children's Verbal Responses
None (0)	"The parents are taking their luggage, they are leaving, and grandma is staying with the two little girls. She asks them if they don't want to go to play or to do other interesting things for them ... and the girls are answering: 'Yes!' They're going with their grandma, they're playing, reading, and doing some other funny things."
Minimal (1)	"Little Marry: 'Mom, I don't want you to leave. I'll miss you. Don't leave!' ... And they took a picture together and they left ... Mom kissed Little Marry and Amy ... <i>Little Marry was very upset: 'Good bye, mom!'</i> "
Elaborate (2)	"Then, Little Marry is starting crying because she wants to go as well. Amy is trying to conciliate her: 'Don't worry! We'll stay with grandma and it'll be much more fun than going with the parents' ... <i>Little Marry was very upset and started crying in her room.</i> "

Note: Sadness responses are italicized.

Three summary content theme scores were derived by summing the scores for each content theme across all the stories; the score for each summary content theme, therefore, had a potential range of 0 to 20.

- Coding children's representations of negative self-conscious emotions. To identify the children's representations of self-conscious emotions, the investigator used a three-step process. First, the investigator constructed a list of five content themes based on previous research. The five themes - *shame-self*, *shame-others*, *guilt-repairing*, *guilt-apologizing*, and *guilt-feelings* were adapted from Luby et al. (2009). See Table 12 for a summary description of the content themes.

Table 12

Summary Descriptions of the Content Themes of Children's Representations of Specific Self-Conscious Emotions

Self-Conscious Emotions	Descriptions
Shame-self	Child is described as experiencing negative self-evaluation and global self-worth, e.g., "being ashamed."
Shame-others	Child is described as experiencing global negative remarks about another character in the narrative, e.g., "shame on you!"
Guilt-repairing	Child is described as having guilt feelings following some wrongdoing and trying to repair it physically or verbally, e.g., "'I'll fix it!"
Guilt-apologizing	Child is described as having guilt feelings following some wrongdoing and therefore, trying to apologize, e.g., "I'm sorry!"
Guilt-feelings	Child is described as having guilt feelings following some wrongdoing, but does not try to repair or apologize, e.g., "I felt bad."

Note: The information in Table 12 is drawn primarily from Luby et al. (2009).

- Second, the investigator read the transcripts of the children's story-stem completions and identified all instances of the children's descriptions of self-conscious emotions. Finally, the investigator coded each identified representation with one of the five content themes. See Table 13 for examples of each of the five content themes extracted from the participating children's transcripts.

Table 13

Examples of Representations of Specific Self-Conscious Emotions

Self-Conscious Emotions	Story Stem	Children's Verbal Responses
Shame-self	Spilled juice	" <i>Little Mary got ashamed</i> and apologized to her mom. Mom brought a mop and cleaned everything ... Then, her mom put another glass with juice."
Shame-others	Departure	"The parents went into the car and left. Grandma came and told the children not to run in the house because she's going to the kitchen to cook. <i>The boys were not obedient and they were loud</i> and were destroying everything."
Guilt-repairing	Spilled juice	"Mom is cleaning the floor so that it couldn't get sticky. <i>And they try to glue on the pitcher, to repair it.</i> But it's not working. They throw it away."
Guilt-apologizing	Bathroom shelf	"Little John is telling his mother that he cut his finger ... he took the bandaid, and he began to cry. After that ... mom scolded Little John and told Paul not to

(table cont.)

(table cont.)

		play with Little John anymore for two days ... and next day, <i>Paul came to apologize his mom. He said: 'Please forgive me!'</i> ”
Guilt-feelings	Spilled juice	“When mom saw what happened, she told Little Mary not to do that some other time and she didn’t scold her badly ... she just told her not to do that some other time. Little Mary felt <i>guilty</i> but she didn’t do that thing anymore ...”

Note: Representations of self-conscious emotions are italicized.

Each of the 10 story-stem narratives was scored for each of the five content themes per child. Each of the content themes was scored on a 3-point scale, with 0 representing *none* (i.e., there was no indication of a representation of SCE), 1 representing *minimal* (i.e., there was one indication of a representation of self-conscious emotion), and 2 representing *elaborate* (i.e., there was more than one indication of a representation of self-conscious emotion) (see Table 14 for examples of representations of guilt-repairing from the Spilled juice story for a better clarification of the 3-point scale coding system).

Table 14

Examples of the Use of the 3-Point Scale in Coding Guilt-Repairing in the Spilled Juice Narratives

Codes	Children’s Verbal Response
None (0)	“And then, mom scolded him and then, she went to the stores and bought a glass

(table cont.)

(table cont.)

with juice again and then ... Paul jumped on the table, and he also spilled the glass on the table. They were very upset, and then, mom bought more little juice bottles ... and mom was giving them to drink juice ...”

Minimal (1) “Mama bear explained Little John that it was not good what he had done ... Then, father is telling Little John to apologize to his mom ... *and Little John picked up the pitcher from the floor.* Then, all of them went to bed.”

Elaborate (2) “Mom: ‘Little Marry, if you wanted to drink juice, why didn’t you just ask me?’ ... And Little Marry got upset and went to her room ... And mom she [mom] saw that Little Marry was watching tv and then, she took her tv ... *Little Marry got more upset and thought to do something good for her mom and she made a card for her ... she said: ‘Mom, I love you.’ She also made a drawing, she also drew a heart over there ...*”

Note: Guilt-repairing responses are italicized.

Five summary content theme scores were derived by summing the scores for each content theme across all the stories; the score for each summary content theme, therefore, had a potential range of 0 to 20.

Reliability analyses of children’s representations of parenting behavior codes, coherence, negative emotion codes, and self-conscious emotion codes were conducted on 20% of the sample (i.e., 10 English transcripts). Coding reliabilities of 0.90, 0.90, 0.79, and 0.77, respectively, were attained using the Kappa statistic. The second coder was a Ph.D. Candidate in Family and Child Studies at Louisiana State University unaware of the children’s demographic data and the study hypotheses. All interrater disagreements were resolved by discussion.

3.5 Predictions

The investigator reasoned that the attachment theory characteristics were applicable to children's representations of parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions. First, it was predicted that the frequency of representations of parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions that were reflected in the Romanian children's narratives would be identified. More specifically, in line with the 3-point coding system that the investigator used to code representations of parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions, it was predicted that some of the children would not represent parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions, some would minimally represent parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions, and that some would elaborately represent parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions in their narratives.

Second, it was predicted that specific stories that elicited the greatest number of representations of parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions would be identified. More specifically, the investigator predicted that the stories that involved family relationship oriented scenarios would elicit the most parenting behaviors. Examples included Spilled juice, Hurt knee, Monster in the bedroom, Headache, Bathroom shelf, and Uncle Peter. On the other hand, the stories that involved peer relationship oriented scenarios, would elicit the fewest parenting behaviors. Examples included Three's a crowd and Ball play. In addition, the stories that involved attachment oriented scenarios would also elicit the fewest parenting behaviors. Examples included Departure and Reunion. In terms of representations of negative

emotions, the investigator predicted that the Spilled juice story would display the greatest number of representations of anger because it involved the scenario of a young child who reached across the table for some juice and accidentally spilled the pitcher of juice, which might make his/her parents angry. The Monster story would be more powerful in eliciting fear than the other nine stories because it involved a scary scenario of a possible monster in the bedroom. The Uncle Peter story would be the most influential story in eliciting sadness because it involved the death of a family member. Regarding representations of self-conscious emotions, the investigator expected to be able to find the most occurrences of shame in the Bathroom shelf story because it involved the scenario of a young child who cut his/her finger on the toy box and asked the older for a band aid after the mother had gone briefly to the neighbor's and told both children not to touch anything on the bathroom shelf while she was away. Consequently, the young child might feel shameful upon the situation when the mother returned home and asked what happened. The investigator also expected to be able to find the most occurrences of guilt in the Spilled juice story because it involved the scenario of a young child who reached across the table for some juice and accidentally spilled the pitcher of juice. Thus, the young child might feel guilty about the situation.

Third, it was predicted that possible relationships among the children's representations of parenting behaviors, negative emotions, self-conscious emotions, narrative coherence, children's age, and amount of time spent with parents would be identified. Particularly, based on past research (e.g., Bretherton et al., 1990), the investigator predicted that the more coherent children's narratives were, the more positive representations of parenting behaviors the children

would display in their narratives. More specifically, the older the children were, the more representations of negative emotions the children would display in their narratives. Conversely, it was expected that the younger the children were, the fewer representations of negative emotions would be displayed in their narratives. Finally, it was predicted that the older children would be more likely to represent shame in their narratives (Luby et al., 2009). In the same line, the investigator predicted that the older children would be more likely to represent guilt.

Next, it was predicted that possible gender differences in children's representations of parenting behaviors, coherence, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions would be identified. Built on previous research (Laible & Thompson, 2002; Oppenheim et al., 1997; Page & Brotherton, 2001), the investigator predicted that girls would produce more coherent narratives than boys, and thus, ultimately should reflect more positive representations of parenting behaviors. The rationale for the association between gender and narrative coherence, and ultimately with representations of parenting behaviors, may be that girls are socialized more than boys to share narratives particularly with dolls. Also, the verbal complexity of girls' speech may explain their capability to tell more coherent story-stem completions than boys (Laible et al., 2004). Consistent with the past research (e.g., O'Kearney, 2004), it was also predicted that boys would be more likely to represent more anger than girls, whereas girls would be more likely to represent more fear and sadness than boys. Regarding gender differences in children's representations of self-conscious emotions, the investigator predicted that girls would be more likely to represent shame and guilt than boys (e.g., Alessandri & Lewis, 1993; Luby et al., 2009; Zahn-Waxler & Robinson, 1995).

Finally, it was predicted that the usefulness of the NSST to assess the expression of children's negative emotions and self-conscious emotions would be evaluated. More specifically, the investigator predicted that the NSST would identify anger, fear, sadness, shame, and guilt.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The purpose of the study was to examine children's representations of parenting behaviors, basic negative emotions, and negative self-conscious emotions using the NSST (Bretherton et al., 1990). Data were collected from 52 children and were analyzed using statistical analyses. The results are presented sequentially according to the type of representation in the following order: parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions. In the results section for parenting behaviors, information regarding the frequency of the representations that were reflected in children's narratives is reported first. The specific stories that elicited the greatest number of representations of parenting behaviors are reported second. The relationships among children's representations of parenting behaviors and narrative coherence, their age, and amount of time that parents spend with their children, are reported next. Gender differences in representations of parenting behaviors and narrative coherence are reported last.

In the section for negative emotions, the usefulness of the NSST to assess children's expression of negative emotions is reported first. The frequency of the representations of negative emotions that were reflected in children's narratives is reported second. The specific stories that elicited the greatest number of negative emotions are discussed third. The relationships among children's representations of negative emotions and their age, and amount of time that parents spend with their children are reported next. Gender differences in

representations of negative emotions are reported last. The results for the children's expression of self-conscious emotions follow the same sequence as that for negative emotions.

4.1 Parenting Behaviors

4.1.1 The frequency of parenting behavior representations

The frequency scores of each parenting behavior per story are presented in Table 15 in descending order of frequency.

Table 15

Frequency of Each Parenting Behavior per Story (N = 52)

Story	Pfi ¹	C ²	R ³	Dp ⁴	A ⁵	H ⁶	Pp ⁷	Np ⁸	Total
Hurt knee	28	49	28	15	9	7	1	0	137
Spilled juice	33	35	27	19	6	2	0	0	122
Monster	24	37	21	27	7	1	0	0	117
Bathroom shelf	21	25	27	36	3	1	1	0	114
Three's a crowd	20	18	25	27	5	0	0	0	95
Uncle Peter	31	13	20	16	11	0	0	1	92
Headache	24	14	29	18	3	0	1	0	89
Reunion	21	13	13	22	8	0	0	0	77

(table cont.)

(table cont.)

Departure	8	5	2	5	6	0	0	0	26
Ball play	6	6	6	1	0	0	0	0	19
<hr/>									
Total	216	215	198	186	58	11	3	1	888
<hr/>									

¹ Pleasant family interaction

² Caregiving

³ Reasoning

⁴ Democratic participation

⁵ Affection

⁶ Helpfulness

⁷ Physical punishment

⁸ Nonreasoning punishment

The most frequent representations were pleasant family interaction (216 occurrences) and caregiving (215 occurrences), followed closely by reasoning (198 occurrences) and democratic participation (186 occurrences). There were relatively few representations of affection (58 occurrences) or helpfulness (11 occurrences). Representations of physical punishment (three occurrences) or nonreasoning punishment (one occurrence) were even more rare. See table 16 for narrative responses that were rated high in representations of parenting behaviors.

Table 16

Narrative Responses Rated High in Representations of Parenting Behaviors

Caregiving - Hurt knee

Child: “Mom is coming to help him ... The father is asking him: ‘Let me heal you!’ Mom is bandaging him and putting some ice above his knee ... Paul went to climb, too. And Paul’s father is telling him: ‘Don’t climb! You saw what happened to Little John. Do you want to pass through the same thing?’ And Paul is answering: ‘No, but I want to climb.’ And Paul’s father is saying: ‘Take care!’ He climbed and got stumbled by a rock. And the rock put him down.’ The father came to him quickly and told him: ‘I told you to take care! Why didn’t you take care?’ Paul: ‘Because I slipped.’ Father: ‘OK! Let’s go home!’”

Pleasant family interaction – Spilled juice

Child: “Mother bear scolds him because he spilled the juice and little John is going to this bedroom upset. And then, father bear is talking with mom because she was a little bit severe with him and he went to make him happy. And they bought another juice, they made fruit juice, and shared that equally.”

Reasoning - Headache

Child: “ ... Then, little Mary is going to the door and opened it. ... Then, little Mary was not allowed to open the door, but she did, and called her friend inside. And little Mary forgot to put the latch on. Then, they went to the sofa and turned the tv on. It was very loud and they didn’t find the remote control anymore. ... Then little Mary is going to her mom immediately and telling her: ‘Mom, I cannot find the remote control.’ Then, mom is coming and getting scared. Then, little Mary is telling her: ‘It’s not true! Don’t get scared! It’s my kindergarten friend.’ Then, mom is holding little Mary, taking her to her room, and scolding her because she was not allowed to open the door only with her permission.”

(table cont.)

Democratic participation – Bathroom shelf

Mom: “Mom: ‘Where is the towel? ... Did you touch the cupboard?’ Paul: ‘Yes, mom! He cut his finger, I took a bath, I pulled the toy box down.’ Mom: ‘OK!’ ... Mom is going to take the children to bed ...”

Physical punishment - Hurt knee

Child: “ ... Mom is asking Paul: ‘Paul, my dear, why did you climb the rock like Little John?’ And Paul is answering her: ‘Because I also wanted to see how the rock was. I didn’t know I’d hit myself ...’ Then, father is hitting Paul and telling him: ‘Don’t ever do like that anymore! You saw what happened to Paul. It happened really worse to you.’ When father hit Paul, he began to cry and went to his mom. And mom hugged him and told him not to cry anymore, and mom talked to father and asked him why he hit him. He could tell him easily, but not to hit him.”

Nonreasoning punishment - Uncle Peter

Child: “ ... They were climbing the sofa. Mother bear was still crying. And all of a sudden, Little John felt that he wanted to jump on the sofa (*he’s jumping very high on the sofa*). Mom: ‘Little John, don’t jump anymore!’ Little John: ‘Why, mom?’ Mom: ‘Because I told you that! Behave yourself!’ Little John: ‘OK! If mom is saying so ... ’”

4.1.2 The specific stories that elicited the greatest number of parenting behaviors

As can be seen in Table 15, eight stories, Hurt knee (137 occurrences), Spilled juice (122

occurrences), Monster in the bedroom (117 occurrences), Bathroom shelf (114 occurrences), Three's a crowd (95 occurrences), Uncle Peter (92 occurrences), Headache (89 occurrences), and Reunion (77 occurrences) elicited the most parenting behaviors, in descending order.

In terms of the specific stories that elicited the greatest number of specific parenting behaviors, Spilled juice (33 occurrences), Uncle Peter (31 occurrences), Hurt knee (28 occurrences), Monster in the bedroom (24 occurrences), Headache (24 occurrences), and Reunion (21 occurrences) were more powerful in eliciting pleasant family interaction than the other four stories. Hurt knee (49 occurrences), Monster in the bedroom (37 occurrences), and Spilled juice (35 occurrences) elicited the most representations of caregiving. Headache (29 occurrences), Hurt knee (28 occurrences), Spilled juice (27 occurrences), Bathroom shelf (27 occurrences), Three's a crowd (25 occurrences), Monster (21 occurrences), and Uncle Peter (20 occurrences) elicited the most occurrences of reasoning. Bathroom shelf (36 occurrences), Monster in the bedroom (27 occurrences), Three's a crowd (27 occurrences), and Reunion (22 occurrences), elicited the most representations of democratic participation. Uncle Peter (11 occurrences), Hurt knee (nine occurrences), Reunion (eight occurrences), Monster in the bedroom (seven occurrences), Departure (six occurrences), and Spilled juice (six occurrences) elicited the largest numbers of affection representations. Hurt knee (seven occurrences) elicited the most occurrences of help representations. Hurt knee (one occurrence), Bathroom shelf (one occurrence), and Headache (one occurrence) were the only stories that elicited physical punishment representations. Uncle Peter (one occurrence) was the only story that elicited nonreasoning punishment representations.

4.1.3 The relationships among children's representations of parenting behaviors, narrative coherence, their age, and amount of time spent with parents

The descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, and ranges) of each parenting behavior representation are presented in Table 17.

Table 17

Descriptive Statistics of the Eight Parenting Behaviors and Correlations among the Parenting Behaviors, Narrative Coherence, Child's Age, and Time Spent with Parents (N=52)

Parenting Behaviors	M	SD	Actual Range	Correlations						
				Pfi	C	Dp	A	Coherence	Age	Time
Reasoning (R)	6.62	3.56	0-14	.44***	.26	.46***	.01	-.30*	.10	.10
Pleasant family interaction (Pfi)	5.72	3.32	0-13		.11	.46***	.17	.00	-.03	-.16
Caregiving (C)	5.62	2.05	3-10			.06	-.10	-.12	.10	-.16
Democratic participation (Dp)	5.34	4.06	0-16				.28*	-.31*	-.08	.09
Affection (A)	1.24	1.96	0-7					-.01	.21	.29
Help (H)	0.12	0.86	0-4							

(table cont.)

(table cont.)

Physical punishment (Pp)	0.06	0.44	0-3
Nonreasoning punishment (Np)	0.02	0.14	0-1

* $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$.

The descriptive statistics of the amount of time children spent with their parents were the following: $M = 5.05$, $SD = 2.87$, and the obtained range was 2-20. To examine the relationships among the frequency of each representation, narrative coherence, child's age, and amount of time spent with parents, a correlational analysis was conducted. In the correlational analysis, the investigator included the data for representations with a mean frequency score above 1.00 only. Therefore, help, physical punishment, and nonreasoning punishment were excluded from the analysis. The results of the correlational analysis are also presented in Table 17. Reasoning was positively associated with pleasant family interactions ($r = .44$, $p < .001$) and with democratic participation ($r = .46$, $p < .001$). Reasoning was negatively associated with narrative coherence ($r = -.30$, $p = .02$). Reasoning was marginally associated with caregiving ($r = .26$, $p = .06$). Pleasant family interaction was positively associated with democratic participation ($r = .46$, $p < .001$). Democratic participation was positively associated with affection ($r = .28$, $p = .04$) and negatively associated with narrative coherence ($r = -.31$, $p = .02$). Affection was marginally associated with amount of time spent with parents ($r = .29$, $p = .06$). Of interest is that two representations, reasoning and democratic participation, were associated with narrative

coherence but, contrary to expectations, in the negative direction ($r = -.30, p = .02, r = -.31, p = .02$, respectively).

4.1.4 Gender differences in representations of parenting behaviors and narrative coherence

To examine possible gender differences in the representations of parenting behaviors and in narrative coherence, the group means for the boys versus girls were submitted to t -tests (see Table 18).

Table 18

Comparison of the Means of Five Parenting Behaviors and Coherence for Males and Females (N=52)

	<i>Gender</i>		<i>t</i> -statistic
	Females	Males	
Reasoning	7.40 (3.80)	6.16 (3.33)	1.24
Pleasant family interaction	6.45 (3.56)	5.09 (3.10)	1.45
Caregiving	5.70 (2.25)	5.47 (1.92)	0.39
Democratic participation	6.00 (4.76)	4.91 (3.51)	0.95
Affection	2.10 (2.56)	0.84 (1.37)	2.25*

(table cont.)

(table cont.)

Coherence	29.70 (0.57)	29.75 (0.67)	-0.28
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Note: Standard deviations appear in parentheses below means.

* $p < .05$.

Gender differences were found for affection, $t(50) = 2.25$, $p = .03$, with girls representing more affection ($M = 2.10$, $SD = 2.65$) than boys ($M = 0.84$, $SD = 1.37$).

4.2 Basic Negative Emotions

4.2.1 The usefulness of the NSST to assess children's expression of basic negative emotions

Representations of the three negative emotions identified *a priori*, anger, fear, and sadness, were found in the children's narratives (see Table 10). Therefore, the NSST was shown to be a useful technique to identify and assess children's representations of negative emotions. As a result, the research techniques that are frequently used to study children's expressions of negative emotions could be extended by using the NSST.

4.2.2 The frequency of negative emotion representations

The frequency scores of each negative emotion per story are presented in Table 19 in descending order of frequency.

Table 19

Frequency of Each Negative Emotion per Story (N = 52)

Story	Sadness	Fear	Anger	Total
Uncle Peter	77	2	0	79
Spilled juice	40	6	22	68
Monster	17	31	1	49
Three's a crowd	34	3	8	45
Bathroom shelf	16	8	11	35
Departure	23	9	3	35
Ball play	23	6	4	33
Hurt knee	17	9	3	29
Headache	23	5	3	31
Reunion	6	4	0	10
Total	276	83	55	414

As can be seen, the most frequently represented negative emotion was sadness (276 occurrences). The second most frequently represented negative emotion, fear, occurred

approximately one third (83 occurrences) as often as sadness, followed by representations of anger (55 occurrences).

4.2.3 The specific stories that elicited the greatest number of negative emotions

As can be seen in Table 19, four stories, Uncle Peter (79 occurrences), Spilled juice (68 occurrences), Monster in the bedroom (49 occurrences), and Three's a crowd (45 occurrences), elicited the most negative emotions followed by Bathroom shelf (35 occurrences), Departure (35 occurrences), Ball play (33 occurrences), Headache (31 occurrences) and Hurt knee (29 occurrences).

In terms of the specific stories that elicited the greatest number of specific negative emotions, the Uncle Peter story (77 occurrences) elicited the most representations of sadness followed by Spilled juice (40 occurrences), Departure (35 occurrences), Three's a crowd (34 occurrences), Ball play (33 occurrences), Headache (31 occurrences), and Hurt knee (29 occurrences). The Monster story (31 occurrences) was the most powerful in eliciting fear. Spilled juice story (22 occurrences) was the most powerful in eliciting anger followed by Bathroom shelf (11 occurrences) and Three's a crowd (eight occurrences) (see Table 20 for examples of sadness, fear, and anger in the most representative stories).

Table 20

Examples of Representations of Sadness, Fear, and Anger in the Most Representative Stories

Sadness - Uncle Peter

Child: “ ... Little John went to the sofa next to his mom and watched tv and while they were watching tv, they saw how Uncle Peter died in an accident, and mom is telling Little John: ‘Little John, why did you lie to me regarding that Uncle Peter died?’ ... Little John is answering her: ‘Because he wanted to cheer her up, not to be sad anymore.’”

Sadness and anger - Spilled juice

Child: “Mom is telling Little John: ‘Little John, why did you touch the juice? ... you could ask for my permission because I was giving that to you. You don’t have to climb the table and turn the juice over.’ ... And Little John got very upset and went to his room angrily.

Fear - Monster in the bedroom

Child: “... The father is telling him: ‘Little John, don’t get scared in vain! It was a thing that had a more scary shadow ... ’ ... Little John is answering her: ‘Mom, I came to apologize because I lied to you with the scary shadow.’ And mom is telling him: ‘Little John, we’re forgiving you, but don’t ever do that anymore because we can get very scared and pass out and we must go to the hospital ...’”

4.2.4 The relationships among children’s representations of negative emotions, their age, and amount of time spent with parents

The descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, and ranges) of each negative emotion representation are presented in Table 21.

Table 21

Descriptive Statistics of the Three Negative Emotions and Correlations among the Negative Emotions, Child's Age, and Time Spent with Parents (N=52)

Negative Emotions	M	SD	Actual Range	Correlation			
				F	S	Age	Time
Anger (A)	1.10	1.56	0-5	.09	.17	-.04	-.30*
Fear (F)	2.08	2.19	0-8		.36**	.26*	-.13
Sadness (S)	5.42	3.50	1-16			.25*	-.23

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

To examine the relationships among the frequencies of each representation, child's age, and amount of time spent with parents, a correlational analysis was conducted. The results of the correlational analysis are presented in Table 21. The frequency of anger representations was associated with time spent with parents in the negative direction ($r = -.30$, $p = .05$). Fear was intercorrelated with sadness ($r = .36$, $p = .01$). Of particular interest is that two representations of negative emotions, fear and sadness, were correlated with age ($r = .25$, $p = .02$, $r = .26$, $p = .02$, respectively).

4.2.5 Gender differences in representations of negative emotions

To examine gender differences in the representations of negative emotions, t -tests were conducted on the means (see Table 22).

Table 22

Comparison of the Means of Three Negative Emotions for Males and Females (N=52)

	Gender		<i>t</i> -statistic
	Females	Males	
Anger	0.30 (0.73)	0.50 (0.95)	-0.80
Fear	1.30 (1.49)	0.78 (1.36)	1.28
Sadness	2.55 (2.30)	1.94 (2.65)	0.85

Note: Standard deviations appear in parentheses below means.

No significant gender differences were identified.

4.3 Negative Self-Conscious Emotions

4.3.1 The usefulness of the NSST to assess children's expression of self-conscious emotions

Representations of the negative self-conscious emotions identified *a priori*, shame-self, shame-others, guilt-repairing, guilt-apologizing, and guilt-feelings, were found in the children's narratives (see Table 13). Therefore, the NSST was shown to be a useful technique to identify and assess children's representations of self-conscious emotions. As a result, the research techniques that are frequently used to study children's expressions of self-conscious emotions could be extended by using the NSST.

4.3.2 The frequency of self-conscious emotion representations

The frequency scores of each self-conscious emotion per story are presented in Table 23 in descending order of total frequency.

Table 23

Frequency of Each Self-Conscious Emotion per Story (N = 52)

Story	Ss ¹	So ²	Gr ³	Ga ⁴	Gf ⁵	Total
Spilled juice	6	2	37	30	4	79
Headache	10	11	10	23	4	58
Bathroom shelf	15	6	13	20	3	57
Three's a crowd	4	11	3	22	1	41
Ball play	5	5	2	19	2	33
Hurt knee	7	7	2	5	0	21
Departure	4	11	3	1	0	19
Uncle Peter	4	11	3	1	0	19
Reunion	3	8	0	1	0	12
Monster	2	4	0	3	0	9

(table cont.)

(table cont.)

Total	60	76	73	125	14	348
¹ Shame-self						
² Shame-others						
³ Guilt-repairing						
⁴ Guilt-apologizing						
⁵ Guilt-feelings						

As can be seen, the most frequently represented self-conscious emotion was guilt-apologizing (125 occurrences). The second most frequently represented self-conscious emotions, shame-others (76 occurrences) and guilt-repairing (73 occurrences), occurred approximately half as often as guilt-apologizing, followed closely by shame-self (60 occurrences). There were few representations of guilt-feelings (14 occurrences).

4.3.3 The specific stories that elicited the greatest number of self-conscious emotions

As can be seen in Table 23, five stories, Spilled juice (79 occurrences), Headache (58 occurrences), Bathroom shelf (57 occurrences), Three's a crowd (41 occurrences), and Ball play (33 occurrences) elicited the most self-conscious emotions, in descending order. They were closely followed by Hurt knee (21 occurrences), Departure (19 occurrences), Uncle Peter (19 occurrences), Reunion (12 occurrences), and Monster in the bedroom (nine occurrences).

In terms of the specific stories that elicited the greatest number of specific self-conscious emotions, the Bathroom shelf story (15 occurrences) elicited the most occurrences of shame-self followed by Headache (10 occurrences). Headache (11 occurrences), Three's a crowd (11 occurrences), Departure (11 occurrences), and Uncle Peter (11 occurrences) elicited the same

number of representations of shame-others. They were more powerful in eliciting shame-others than the other six stories. The Spilled juice story (37 occurrences) elicited the most representations of guilt-repairing. The Spilled juice story (30 occurrences) also elicited the most representations of guilt-apologizing followed by Headache (23 occurrences), Three's a crowd (22 occurrences), and Bathroom shelf (20 occurrences). Finally, Spilled juice (four occurrences), Headache (four occurrences), Bathroom shelf (three occurrences), and Ball play (two occurrences) elicited the most guilt-feelings (see Table 24 for examples of shame-self, shame-others, guilt-apologizing, guilt-repairing, and guilt-feelings in the most representative stories).

Table 24

Examples of Representations of Specific Self-Conscious Emotions in the Most Representative Stories

Shame-self - Bathroom-shelf

Child: “ ... Mom: ‘What have you done? I told you not to touch anything ...’ Paul: ‘Mom, I needed to ... mom, you said it’s good to help people.’ Mom: ‘You’re right!’ Paul: ‘But it was the closest and I was lazy ...’”

Shame-others - Three's a crowd

Child: “ ... Friend: ‘I’m not your friend anymore if you let him play with us. I’m leaving home.’ Little John: ‘Paul’s friend is bad ...’ Friend: ‘I’m not going to do what you like. I need to leave. Bye!’”

(table cont.)

(table cont.)

Guilt-repairing -Spilled juice

Child: “Mom: ‘... I’m not allowing you to watch tv anymore ...’ And Little Mary got upset ... and thought to do something good for her mom, and she made a card for her. She said: ‘Mom, I love you!’ She also made a drawing. She also drew a heart over there ...”

Guilt-apologizing - Spilled juice

Child: “... Little John went back to the table and apologizes to his mom and telling her: ‘Mom, please, forgive me because I spilled the juice you worked for.’ And mom is answering: ‘Little John, I’m forgiving you but don’t ever do this thing anymore!’”

Guilt-feelings - Bathroom shelf

Child: “... Mom: ‘Little Mary, where did you take those bandaids from?’ Little Mary: ‘Well, mom, I cut my finger and I told Amy to give me a bandaid from the shelf.’ ... Mom: ‘You both are guilty. You, because you were not obedient, and you, because you agreed with that.’”

4.3.4 The relationships among children’s representations of self-conscious emotions, their age, and amount of time spent with parents

The descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, and ranges) of each self-conscious emotion representation are presented in Table 25.

Table 25

Descriptive Statistics of the Five Specific Self-Conscious Emotions and Correlations among the Self-Conscious Emotions, Child's Age, and Time Spent with Parents (N=52)

				Correlations				
Self-Conscious Emotions	M	SD	Actual Range	Shame o	Guilt r	Guilt a	Age	Time
Shame								
self (s)	1.17	1.77	0-8	.33*	.11	.02	-.13	-.15
other (o)	1.58	2.35	0-10		.18	-.02	-.15	-.10
Guilt								
repairing (r)	1.35	1.44	0-5			.16	.27*	-.01
apologizing (a)	2.42	2.22	0-8				.04	-.13
feelings (f)	0.27	0.80	0-4					

* $p < .05$

To examine the relationships among the frequency of each representation, child's age, and amount of time spent with parents, a correlational analysis was conducted. The results of the correlational analysis are also presented in Table 25. Shame-self was intercorrelated with shame-others ($r = .33, p = .02$). Guilt-repairing was positively associated with age ($r = .27, p = .05$).

4.3.5 Gender differences in representations of self-conscious emotions

To examine gender differences in the representations of self-conscious emotions, *t*-tests were conducted (see Table 26).

Table 26

Comparison of the Means of Four Specific Self-Conscious Emotions for Males and Females (N=52)

	Gender		<i>t</i> -statistic
	Female	Male	
Shame-self	1.05 (1.54)	1.25 (1.92)	-0.39
Shame-others	1.20 (2.09)	1.81 (2.51)	-0.91
Guilt-repairing	1.30 (1.26)	1.38 (1.56)	-0.18
Guilt-apologizing	3.15 (2.68)	1.97 (1.77)	1.92

Note: Standard deviations appear in parentheses below means.

Marginally significant gender differences were found for guilt-apologizing, $t(50) = 1.92$, $p = .06$, with girls representing more guilt-apologizing ($M = 3.15$, $SD = 2.68$) than boys ($M = 1.97$, $SD = 1.77$).

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Summary and Explanation of Findings

Based on attachment theory and previous lines of work, the present study was designed to investigate whether Romanian children represent parenting behaviors, basic negative emotions, and negative self-conscious emotions in the NSST (Bretherton et al., 1990). Overall, the answer was in accord with attachment theory and the outcomes in previous research. Attachment theory (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Bowlby, 1982) posits that it is through the quality of early experiences with primary caregivers that children are thought to develop internal working models of self and others (Bowlby, 1988; Bretherton, 1991, 1992; Cassidy, 1990; Main et al., 1985; Sroufe & Fleeson, 1986). More specifically, children with sensitive caregivers develop positive internal working models of self and others, and consequently, tend to have positive representations of parenting behaviors, and fewer representations of negative emotions and self-conscious emotions in narratives. On the other hand, children with insensitive caregivers develop negative internal working models of self and others, and consequently, tend to have negative representations of parenting behaviors, and more representations of negative emotions and self-conscious emotions. Consequently, guided by attachment theory (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Bowlby, 1982), the present study was the first to address the gap in the literature of how children represent parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions using observationally based records from the NSST by examining the possibility of representations in Eastern European populations, more specifically in a Romanian sample.

5.2 Parenting Behaviors

5.2.1 The frequency of parenting behavior representations

The study evidenced the frequency of the representations of parenting behaviors in the Romanian children's story-stems. The content themes that emerged resemble the themes reviewed by Laible et al. (2004), Oppenheim et al. (1997), and Robinson et al. (1995). Some themes such as pleasant family interaction, caregiving, reasoning, democratic participation, affection, and helpfulness had more frequent representations in the present study than others such as physical punishment and nonreasoning punishment. The findings that these Romanian children displayed more representations of pleasant family interaction, caregiving, reasoning, democratic participation, affection, and helpfulness, as opposed to physical punishment and nonreasoning punishment support the idea that the parents of these children were warm and sensitive to children's needs during their first years of life and consequently, children typically displayed positive parenting behaviors. On the other hand, the reason why Romanian children portrayed comparatively few representations of affection and helpfulness is not clear and deserves attention in future research. One possible explanation for the lack of frequency in the representations of affection and helpfulness is the likelihood that these children's representations of parenting behaviors are strongly influenced by factors other than parenting including individual factors such as gender or temperament. In relation to physical punishment and nonreasoning punishment, the study showed that physical punishment and nonreasoning punishment were the least frequent representations. It is not clear if this reflects a weakness of the NSST or a characteristic of the sample.

In sum, the findings regarding the frequency of the representations of parenting behaviors are consistent with previous scientific parenting research using story stem completions that established strong relationships between high levels of early caregiver sensitivity and positive representations of parenting behaviors. Overall, the evidence of the frequency of the representations of parenting behaviors that were displayed by Romanian children extends the findings on children's perceptions of parenting behaviors to indicate cross-cultural applicability of the NSST.

5.2.2 The specific stories that elicited the greatest number of parenting behaviors

Study findings also showed the specific stories that elicited the greatest number of the representations of parenting behaviors. One possible explanation could be the specific scenario that each story involved. Hurt knee, Spilled juice, Monster in the bedroom, Bathroom shelf stories, followed by Uncle Peter and Headache, involved family relationship-oriented scenarios and consequently, displayed the most occurrences of representations of parenting behaviors. Although Three's a crowd and Reunion stories involved peer relationship-oriented scenarios and attachment-oriented scenarios, respectively, they elicited many representations of parenting behaviors as well. On the other hand, Ball play story involved a peer relationship-oriented scenario and therefore, elicited the fewest occurrences of representations of parenting behaviors. In the same vein, the Departure story involved an attachment-related scenario and consequently, also displayed few representations of parenting behaviors. Accordingly, the evidence of the differences in the narratives in their power to elicit representations of parenting behaviors also

expands the literature to suggest that the nature of the narrative scenario might impact children's construction of these representations.

5.2.3 The relationships among children's representations of parenting behaviors, narrative coherence, their age, and amount of time spent with parents

The present study is an effort to move beyond identifying differences among the narratives in their power to elicit representations of parenting behaviors in order to determine the relationships among the frequency of each representation, narrative coherence, child's age, and amount of time spent with parents. Study findings demonstrated significant statistical relationships in the predicted directions among some representations of parenting behaviors. More specifically, reasoning was significantly associated with pleasant family interaction. It seems probable that the parents' explanations for reasons for why things happen to be correlated with children's desires to be involved in pleasant family interaction activities. Reasoning was also significantly associated with democratic participation. It also seems probable that the representations of explanations for reasons for why things happen to be correlated with the representations of information seeking about children's behaviors or feelings. Reasoning was marginally associated with caregiving. The representations of explanations for reasons are correlated with the representations of taking care of child, protecting, soothing, feeding, comforting, or housekeeping. Pleasant family interaction was significantly associated with democratic participation. Likewise, the more the parents interact warmly with their children, the more they consider children's opinions when making family decisions. Democratic participation was positively significantly associated with affection. Similarly, the more the parents consider

children's opinions when making family decisions, the more the parents are described as kissing or hugging their children. These findings support the idea that children are constructing representations of parenting behaviors consistent with their experiences in the family out of the interactions with caregivers (e.g., Bretherton et al., 1990; Laible et al., 2004; Laible & Thompson, 2002; Oppenheim et al., 1997; Warren, Oppenheim, & Emde, 1996).

Affection was marginally associated with the amount of time parents spend with children. The more time the parents spent with their children, the more affectionate representations children displayed in their narratives. Study findings are in line with other studies which support the idea that aspects of sensitive parenting/caregiver sensitivity (i.e., the amount of time parents spend with their children) positively relate to children's representations of parenting behaviors (Laible & Thompson, 2002).

Contrary to expectations, the study found no significant statistical relationships in the predicted directions between children's representations of parenting behaviors and their ability to talk coherently about family relationships. A closer look at a contributing factor helps clarify a probable reason for the present results. According to Bretherton et al. (1990), the associations between parenting behaviors and narrative cohesion are likely more a reflection of attachment-related constructs, such as sensitivity. In the current study, the investigator measured children's warm and harsh representations of parenting behaviors, rather than the sensitivity and insensitivity of parenting behaviors.

The study found that reasoning and democratic participation were negatively related to narrative cohesion. More specifically, children who represented more reasoning and democratic

participation were less coherent in telling stories. The reason for the negative relation among these variables is not clear. One possible explanation could be that the investigator retained all the grammar errors, speech dysfluencies, and incoherence when she transcribed the Romanian discourses, and then, when she translated the discourses from Romanian into English. Moreover, the story length was likely to have an impact on coding of coherence. Specifically, it is possible that the longer the stories were, the more rambling they were and thus, the more grammar errors, dysfluencies, and incoherence children displayed in their narrative responses. Consequently, the study on possible relationships among the frequency of each representation, narrative coherence, child's age, and amount of time children spend with their parents indicated some significant associations among these constructs.

5.2.4 Gender differences in representations of parenting behaviors and narrative coherence

As noted previously, the study examined gender differences in the representations of parenting behaviors and in narrative coherence. Study findings showed that gender was significantly associated with affection. More specifically, boys, in comparison with girls, represented their parents as less affectionate. Consistent with other studies (Laible & Thompson, 2002), boys tend to display more harsh representations of their parenting behaviors than girls.

Overall, the findings in the current study further support the idea that the NSST may tap Romanian children's representations of parenting behaviors in a meaningful way. Moreover, the investigator thinks that the area of study is important because of the cross-cultural applicability of the NSST.

5.3 Basic Negative Emotions

5.3.1 The usefulness of the NSST to assess children's expression of basic negative emotions

A review of the literature found that the instruments that have been used to assess children's expression of negative emotions tended to focus on child's observation techniques (e.g., Kochanska, 2001), mother-child conversation techniques (e.g., Melzi & Fernandez, 2004), or parental reports (e.g., Lagace-Seguin & d'Entremont, 2006). A notable exception, Wan and Green (2010), used The Manchester Child Attachment Story Task (MCAST; Green et al., 2000) to assess children's negative and atypical story content themes including children's expression of negative emotions. Nevertheless, almost no research was found that has examined children's expression of negative emotions using the NSST in the Romanian population.

The NSST is a symbolic play narrative procedure that has been formulated for investigating children's internal working models of self and others (Page, 2001). In the present study, the investigator asked the children to complete story stems about bear figurines in order to approach children's perceptions of negative emotions. A rationale for this method is that children may be hesitant to share their experiences when asked about them straightforwardly. Therefore, the NSST provided the children with the opportunity to share their past emotional experiences in an indirect way, even though these experiences were negative. In spite of the extent to which children revealed real lived experiences, the investigator considered children's narrative responses as representations of children's internal working models of negative emotions. In this respect, the study brings back to current research on the instruments that have

been used to assess children's expression of negative emotions a significant perspective, that of the usefulness of the NSST in assessing children's representations of the negative emotionality in the Romanian population.

5.3.2 The frequency of negative emotion representations

In addition to evaluating the usefulness of the NSST in assessing children's negative emotionality, the study evidenced the frequency of the representations of basic negative emotions. Romanian children elicited the most representations of sadness, followed by fear, and then anger. The findings on the representations of sadness, fear, and anger support the idea that the basic negative emotions are expressed universally in all humans regardless of national origin (Ekman, 1992, 1999).

5.3.3 The specific stories that elicited the greatest number of negative emotions

The study also showed that the stories might have been more or less sensitive as indicators of particular representations of negative emotions. The Uncle Peter story was the most powerful story in eliciting and representing sadness, perhaps because it involved the scenario of the death of a family member. The Monster story was more powerful in eliciting fear than the other nine stories, perhaps because it involved a scenario of a possible monster in the bedroom. The Spilled juice story was more powerful in displaying anger than the other stories, perhaps because it involved the scenario of a younger sibling who accidentally spilled the pitcher of juice, which might have made his/her parents angry. However, the Reunion story was the least powerful in eliciting negative emotions. The Reunion story, which involves a scenario of the parents who came back home from the trip, is the representational proxy for the reunion

segment of the Strange Situation (Ainsworth et al., 1978). Consequently, the Reunion story is used as the primary scenario for the assessment of attachment quality. Displays of negative emotions in the reunion sequence would in most cases be associated with insecure attachment. In conclusion, the stories that elicited the greatest number of negative emotions involved specific scenarios.

5.3.4 The relationships among children's representations of negative emotions, their age, and amount of time spent with parents

The study is an effort to move beyond identifying the specific stories that elicited the greatest number of representations of negative emotions in order to determine the relationships among children's representations of negative emotions, their age, and amount of time spent with parents. Time was negatively associated with anger. More specifically, the more time the parents spent with their children, the fewer anger representations children demonstrated in their narratives. The amount of time parents spend with their children appears to be important for children's emotional development. However, it might not be the case if it is not a good quality time. Sadness was significantly associated with fear. The result supports the idea that the negative emotionality variables are inter-related and it is expectable that the representations of sadness to be correlated with the representations of fear. The study found significant statistical relationships between children's age and their representations of fear and sadness. The older the children are, the more advanced social capabilities for conveying requests for help, comfort, or support from significant social partners they have. Consequently, the study suggests that fear

and sadness serve as important social goals. These emotions are beneficial for children because they make them elicit helping behaviors in others.

5.3.5 Gender differences in representations of negative emotions

A final point in connection with negative emotions is that the study failed to find significant relationships between children's representations of negative emotions and gender. This seems to be a characteristic of the sample. In previous studies with U.S. samples, girls have a greater tendency than boys to include more sadness and fear themes, and fewer anger themes in their narratives. This tendency is theorized to stem from the higher levels of internalizing emotions they experience throughout development. It is possible that this hypothesis may not apply to the Romanian female population.

5.4 Negative Self-Conscious Emotions

5.4.1 The usefulness of the NSST to assess children's expression of self-conscious emotions

A review of the literature found that the approaches that had been used to assess children's expression of self-conscious emotions tended to focus on shame- versus guilt-inducing situations, global adjective checklists, scenario-based measures, statement-based measures, and nonverbal behavior measures (Tracy et al., 2007). In addition, Luby et al. (2009) used the MacArthur Story Stem Battery (MSSB; Bretherton et al., 1990) to assess children's representations of self-conscious emotions in a sample of clinically depressed European-American preschoolers. However, almost no research has examined children's expression of shame and guilt using the NSST in the Romanian population. Study findings revealed that the

NSST enabled the Romanian children with the opportunity to display their internal working models of shame and guilt disregarding children's expression of real lived experiences.

5.4.2 The frequency of self-conscious emotion representations

In reference to children's expression of specific self-conscious emotions, on the one hand, Luby et al. (2009) documented that shame was a measure of children's negative self-evaluations and global self-worth (i.e., shame-self), and global negative remarks about another character in the story (i.e., self-others). On the other hand, they documented that guilt was a measure of children's repairing, apologizing, or displaying guilt feelings following some wrongdoing. In line with Luby et al.'s research (2009), the investigator identified the frequency of Romanian children's various expressions of shame and guilt, and found that the Romanian children elicited the most representations of guilt-apologizing and the fewest representations of guilt-feelings. They also displayed shame-others, guilt-repairing, and shame-self representations. Consequently, these findings are similar to data reported by the only published study examining levels of shame and maladaptive guilt in preschool depressed children when using observational measures of children's internal representations of their self-conscious emotions (Luby et al., 2009).

5.4.3 The specific stories that elicited the greatest number of self-conscious emotions

The present study findings also showed the specific stories that elicited the greatest number of self-conscious emotions. The Bathroom shelf story elicited the most occurrences of shame-self. The four stories, Headache, Three's a crowd, Departure, and Uncle Peter were more powerful in portraying shame-others than the other seven stories. The Spilled juice story

displayed the greatest number of representations of guilt-repairing and guilt-apologizing. Finally, Spilled juice, Bathroom shelf, and Ball play elicited the fewest guilt-feelings. Therefore, the evidence of the differences in the narratives in their power to elicit representations of shame and guilt also expands the literature on negative self-conscious emotions to suggest that the nature of the narrative scenario tends to have an influence on children's representations of these constructs.

5.4.4 The relationships among children's representations of self-conscious emotions, their age, and amount of time spent with parents

Apart from identifying the specific stories that elicited the greatest number of self-conscious emotions, the present study also found some significant statistical relationships in the predicted directions among children's expression of self-conscious emotions, their age, and amount of time spent with parents. Shame-self was significantly associated with shame-others. Findings also indicate that the use of guilt-repairing increased with age. Particularly, the older the children are, the more advanced social capabilities for addressing social wrongdoings they have. Consequently, the study suggests that guilt-repairing serves an important function in children's lives. This emotion is particularly beneficial for children because it makes them recognize their actions as hurting others and motivate them to offer sympathy and aid. Also, the study suggests that a story-stem coding system for guilt-repairing might be valuable for assessing social competence in different conditions.

Significant relationships between children's representations of self-conscious emotions and amount of time they spend with their parents were not detected. Consequently, the

investigator could not determine whether the amount of time children spent with their parents was related to the number of representations of shame and guilt children displayed in their narratives with respect to the theoretical framework the study was guided. However, the investigator could determine some associations between children's representations of self-conscious emotions and the variables of interest.

5.4.5 Gender differences in representations of self-conscious emotions

As noted previously, apart from the marginally significant gender differences that were found for guilt-apologizing, with girls representing more guilt apologizing than boys, the study did not show significant associations between children's representations of self-conscious emotions and gender. This may be a characteristic of the population. Specifically, the notion that girls have a greater tendency than boys to include shame and guilt themes in their narratives because of the higher levels of internalizing emotions they experience throughout development may not be applied to the Romanian girls.

In sum, the results of the current study break new ground in understanding children's representations of parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions in the NSST. According to Bowlby (1969/1982, 1979) and Ainsworth's theory (1973), the quality of early caregiver/parent-child interactions is the major factor in the construction of the children's internal working models. In addition, the growing research shows that children's responses to the story stem completions are based on their real-life experiences within families (e.g., Bretherton et al., 1990b; Oppenheim et al., 1997). Thus, the findings of the present study add further support to the idea that the NSST may tap children's representations of parenting

behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions in a meaningful way by examining middle childhood aged Romanian children.

5.5 Implications of Findings

5.5.1 Theoretical Implications

Along with the research that had documented children's narrative representations of parenting behaviors in Western populations, the current study established children's narrative representations of parenting behaviors in Eastern European populations, using a Romanian sample and context. The study's findings have implications for how Romanian children perceive family relationships, regardless of the extent to which children's internalized images reflect children's actual experiences from the past. This may be encouraging as it suggests that the manner in which children internalize family relationships guides them in further interactions. For example, when children perceive negative representations of parenting behaviors such as physical punishment, they tend to have externalizing problems because they are prone to modeling hostile parenting techniques.

5.5.2 Measurement Implications

Along with the research instruments that had been more or less frequently used to assess specific negative emotions and negative self-conscious emotions in children, the present study established the transferrable effectiveness of the NSST to assess Romanian children's negative emotionality and negative self-affects. Thus, the study seems to indicate that the NSST is an instrument worthy of further consideration for tapping into children's internal working models about anger, fear, sadness, shame, and guilt.

A focus on the evaluation of the NSST in assessing negative emotions and self-conscious emotions was selected because the way in which children internally express their emotions helps us understand how they function in their social environment. The experience of negative emotions can be useful for children as motivation for moving away from what they do not know and do not want to deal with.

Guilt and shame are negative emotions that are often embedded in social situations. Children's feelings of shame and guilt tend to come mostly from family environments. Thus, it is important for parents to make sure that their children have a sense of self-worth even after having committed a transgression by showing them empathy and caring. It is also important for parents to discuss with their children about the discrepancy between the action and the actor so that they could prevent shame and its negative consequences.

On the other hand, shame and guilt may have adaptive effects (Tangney & Dearing, 2002). As a result, parents in Romania may help their children when shamed or guilty by encouraging a healthy sense of needed adjustments. For example, they may encourage their children to improve their performance so that they could achieve better results in school and later in life. Consequently, in this situation, children are not harmed when shamed or guilty.

5.6 Limitations

Although the investigation allowed for assessing children's representations of parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions in the Romanian cultural context using the NSST, the sample size was relatively small and homogenous. The investigator used 52 participants who attended a private Christian school in a university city in Romania. Because of

the small sample size and the characteristics of the school (i.e., school type, religious affiliation, geographical location, and social class), findings are not generalizable to other populations. As a next step, it will be important to examine children's representations of parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions in larger and more diverse samples.

Second, regarding method and coding-related limitations, the investigator translated qualitative data into quantitative scores and used a 3-point scale coding system. Although Pearson's correlation coefficient was calculated to investigate possible relationships between children's representations of parenting behaviors, negative emotions, self-conscious emotions and the variables of interest, some of the results were either not statistically significant or statistically significant but not in the predicted directions. The study could be improved if a larger continuous scale were used for a more complex statistical approach. However, the study was effective in identifying representations of parenting behaviors. The investigator used a system developed by Oppenheim et al. (1997) that has been shown to be useful in eliciting representations of parenting behaviors. Regarding identifying representations of negative emotions, the investigator developed her own system. It demonstrated to be useful in eliciting children's representations of basic negative emotions. In relation to identifying representations of self-conscious emotions, the investigator used a system developed by Luby et al. (2009), and also demonstrated to be effective in determining children's expression of self-conscious emotions.

Third, the selection of the story-stems that the candidate asked the children to complete could have been more deliberate. It is difficult to know whether some stories pertained to

attachment or to the parent-child relationship in general. According to the present findings, Hurt knee, Spilled juice, Monster in the bedroom, and Bathroom shelf stories displayed the most occurrences of representations of parenting behaviors because they involved family relationship-oriented scenarios. Consequently, researchers could use these stories in future investigations on Romanian children's representations of parenting behaviors. Also, according to the results, Uncle Peter, Spilled juice, Monster in the bedroom, and Three's a crowd elicited the most negative emotions. Thus, it would seem important to use these stories in future investigations on Romanian children's representations of negative emotions. Finally, the findings showed that Spilled juice, Headache, and Bathroom shelf elicited the most representations of self-conscious emotions. Consequently, future research on children's representations of shame and guilt could focus on these stories.

Next, the study is cross-sectional in design, thereby precluding claims about long term implication findings from this investigation alone. The investigator considers that longitudinal research on Romanian children's representations is needed. Finally, because cultural differences exist in the values regarding parenting behavior expression, negative emotion expression, and self-conscious emotion expression, it is important to examine whether the findings on the Romanian population transfer to other Eastern European school-age populations.

Despite the limitations of the current study, the results add an important dimension to the research field of children's narratives, that of Romanian children's representations of parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions. In sum, the area of study is

important and may yield additional findings if future researchers consider the improvements the investigator has suggested.

5.7 Future Research Directions

First, the findings of the study suggest that Romanian children's representations of parenting behaviors using the NSST could be investigated. Regardless, the use of the story stems to assess Romanian children's expression of parenting deserves further attention by researchers. Most of the research up to this point has linked children's views of parenting behaviors with concurrent assessments of parenting (e.g., Laible & Thompson, 2002; Laible et al., 2004; Oppenheim et al., 1997). Thus, an assessment of parents' actual parenting practices is needed in order to make a plausible argument about the connection between the Romanian children's real-life experiences within families and their perceptions of family relationships. Longitudinal research could identify the direction of effects. For example, children who represent positive parenting behaviors could suggest warm parenting techniques. On the other hand, children who represent negative parenting behaviors could suggest harsh parenting techniques. However, it is difficult to claim that parenting practices could determine children's perceptions of parenting because the effects are bidirectional (Bell, 1968). Besides, it is important to notice that children "function as contributors to their own motivation, behavior, and development within a network of reciprocally interacting influences" (Bandura, 1989, p. 6). Specifically, children are active agents in their own development by continually shaping their internal representations through the transactions with significant others. These transactions may be also rooted in cultural values and expectations that may indirectly affect children's

representations of parenting beyond real-life experiences within families. It may be the case that the familial values of the Romanian society produce a greater emphasis on the positive qualities of family relationships and consequently yield a higher rate of expression of warm representations of parenting behaviors and a lower rate of expression of harsh representations of parenting behaviors.

Second, the study results provide evidence that the NSST could assess Romanian children's representations of negative emotions and self-conscious emotions. Although the present findings are in the predicted directions, the viability of the NSST as a valid and reliable measurement of the Romanian children's representations of negative emotions and self-conscious emotions is worthy of future investigation. A next step for use of the NSST would be, first, to replicate the current study with a larger sample size, a larger continuous coding scale, and a careful selection of the story stems in order to reach more definitive conclusions about its application as a measure of negative emotions and self-conscious emotions. Second, the investigator believes that assessing these constructs in the home improves the validity of the measure. Therefore, future research needs to consider collecting complex videotaped data by measuring representations of negative emotionality and negative self-affects into home-based situations to determine the quality of the NSST also from an ecological perspective. Third, future researchers will need longitudinal studies in order to assess the construct validity of the NSST in the Romanian population as well as changes in these children's perceptions of emotions over time. Finally, the efficacy of the NSST should be publicized in order to make it available for use by researchers to further investigations in child development.

Third, future work can focus on story-stem codes for basic negative emotions and negative self-conscious emotions. Story-stem codes for these emotions might be valuable for tracing social competence in different circumstances.

Next, future work can also focus on differentiating between children who represent basic negative emotions and those who do not represent these emotions based on the quality of representations they construct. In the same line, an emphasis can be on differentiating between children who represent negative self-conscious emotions and those who do not represent these emotions.

Finally, the present study breaks new ground in understanding children's representations of parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions in the NSST. The study adds further support to the idea that the NSST may tap children's representations of parenting behaviors, negative emotions, and self-conscious emotions by examining middle childhood aged Romanian children.

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APPENDIX A IRB APPROVAL DOCUMENT

*** RETURN THIS SHEET TO THE DIRECTOR OF YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL ***

Dr. Sarah Pierce
School of Human Ecology
LSU- Baton Rouge, LA 70803
Work: 1-225-578- 1725
pierce@lsu.edu

M.S. Loredana Apavaloaie
School of Human Ecology
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Young Children's Stories Project

1. **Purpose of the study:** To examine any gender differences in young children's expression of emotions, using the narrative story stem technique, in two cultures: Romanian and American.
2. **Participants:** Children in first through fourth grades who attend Richard Wurmbrand College.
3. **Performance sites:** Children will be interviewed at one site: Richard Wurmbrand College. They will be interviewed in rooms designated by the school.
4. **Procedures:** The children will be presented with animal figurines and will be asked to complete stories that are begun by Loredana Apavaloaie, who is an LSU graduate student in child development. Loredana will begin a story using the figurines and end by asking, "What happens next?" The children will complete the story using the figurines and a description of what he/she has created. Additionally, parents will complete a short questionnaire about parenting attitudes and a short demographic questionnaire.
5. **Benefits:** By participating in the study, you will have the satisfaction of knowing that your child helped researchers better understand the development of children's emotions.
6. **Risks:** There are no physical or psychological risks to the children. The interviewer is an LSU graduate student who is majoring in Family, Child, and Consumer Sciences and is sensitive to young children's needs.
7. **Participants' rights:** Participation is voluntary; parents are free to withdraw their child from the study at anytime.
8. **Privacy:** Data will be kept confidential unless release is legally compelled. Research records will include an identification number after all the tests and procedures are complete. No names will be included on any final research records. All results will be reported as group averages. All information will be destroyed when it is no longer needed for the reporting of the research.
9. **Release of Information:** The general findings of the study will be available to the participants when it is published. Information about the individual families or children will not be available to parents, future teachers, or school systems.

*** TURN OVER FOR SIGNATURE ***

(appendix continues)

APPENDIX B PARENT CONSENT FORM

*** RETURN THIS SHEET TO THE DIRECTOR OF YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL ***

The study has been discussed with me to my satisfaction and all my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I may direct additional questions regarding study specifics to the primary investigator, Dr. Pierce. If I have questions about subjects' rights or other concerns, I can contact Dr. Robert Mathews, 1-225-578-8692, irb@lsu.edu. I agree to participate in the study described above and acknowledge the researchers' obligation to provide me with a copy of this consent form signed by me.

Parent's signature Date

Please print your name Relationship to child

Child's name

Child's birthday

Please circle the family type that best describes your family: two biological parent family, step-parent family, single parent family, foster family, other

Child's teacher Grade

Study Approved By:
Dr. Robert C. Mathews, Chairman
Institutional Review Board
Louisiana State University
203 B-1 David Boyd Hall
225-578-8692 | www.lsu.edu/irb
Approval Expires: 11-30-2010

APPENDIX C TWELVE STORY STEMS

Description of Figurines and Processes

In this study, an animal family, instead of a human family, is used for the enactment of story-telling. The family consists of a mother, a father, a grandmother, an older sibling, a younger sibling, and a friend. The child figures that are used in the stories are always of the same gender as the subject in order to encourage the child participant's identification with the child figures.

For each of the stories used in this protocol, there is a central problem or issue that the participant is expected to address (e.g., in Hurt knee, the child is expected to address the problem of the child's hurt knee).

The text below represents the verbatim commentary of the interviewer (I). Text that appears in quotes is attributed to one of the bear figures. Directions appear in parentheses in normal intensity.

Introduction of Animal Family

I: Let me show you what I have in this box. I have a bear family. This is the mom. (Begin bringing out the family one member at a time, as they are named.) This is the dad. And here's the older brother/sister, and his/her name is Paul/Anna. And here's the younger brother/sister and his/her name is little John/little Mary. Here's the grandma.

Now, let's see if you remember who all these people are. Who's this? (point to each figure in turn: mother, father, older sibling, younger sibling, and grandmother) Good!

And what I like to do with the family is to tell stories. This is the way it works: I'll start a story about them and you can finish it any way you want, ok? Let me show you what we have for the first one!

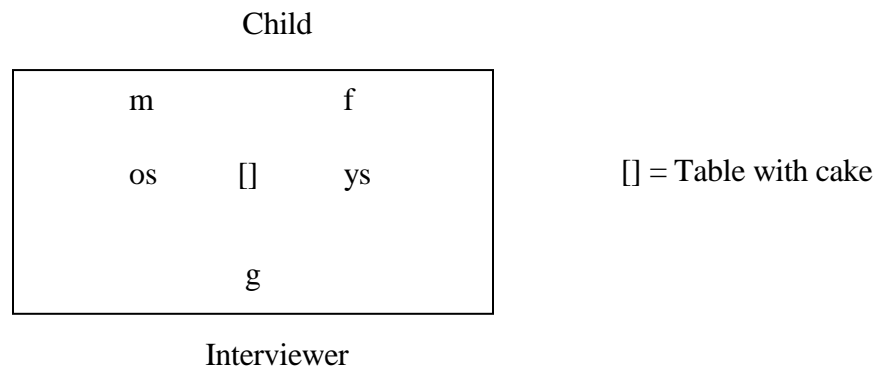
Warm-up: Birthday Party

This story serves as an introduction and warm-up. It is not for coding.

Props: table, birthday cake

Characters: all the family characters: mother (m), father (f), older sibling (os), younger sibling (ys), and grandma (g).

I: For this story we'll need the table. And we'll need this. What do you think this is? (bring out birthday cake and show it to subject). Right! And here's how this story goes: The mom has been baking a beautiful birthday cake in the kitchen all day. And she calls out, "Come on, everybody, let's have a birthday party!" Show me and tell me what happens next!



(Encourage the child to play with the figures and invent a story. It may be necessary for the interviewer to provide some directions (i.e., “scaffolding”) for a story if the child is reluctant to get started. Demonstrate how the figures can play, talk, and move about. Be sure to demonstrate

talking by moving a character as you have it talk. The interviewer uses this motion in all the stories.)

Prompts: What do you think they do at the party?

Can you show me how they do that?

Show me how they eat the cake!

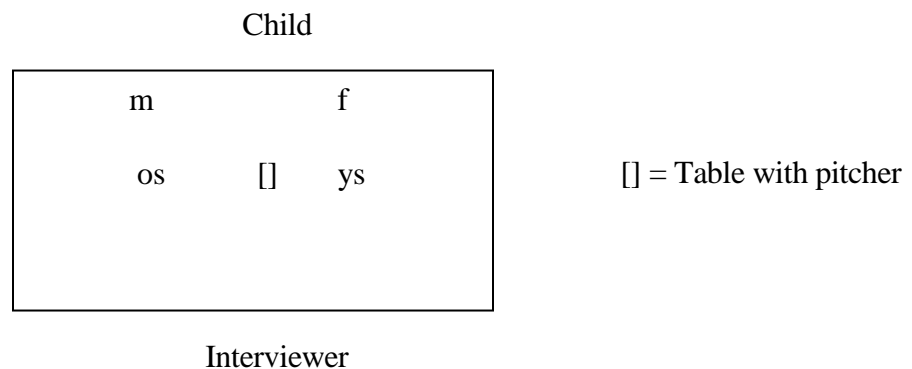
What do you think they say about the birthday cake?

Transition: Well, let's get ready for the next story! Can you set everyone up to get them ready for the next one? (This is asked at the end of each story). Here, the interviewer briefly allows the child some freedom to arrange the family members in any way that (s)he pleases. When finished, the interview will then place the figurines in the positions required of each individual story. This approach combines some freedom of expression for the child with standardization and consistency in the presentation of the stories. For this one, I pretend that the grandma goes back to her house.

Spilled Juice

Props: table, pitcher

Characters: mother (m), father (f), older sibling (os), younger sibling (ys)



I: For this story, we'll need the table again. And in this one, the family is going to have supper together. Can you put the family around the table to get them ready for supper? Thanks! And here's how this story goes: Here's our family sitting around the table, having supper. And little John/little Mary reaches for some juice and, Uh, Oh, (s)he spilled the juice! (make the younger sibling knock the juice off the table) Show me and tell me what happens next!

Prompts: (If nothing is done about the spilled juice) What do they do about the spilled juice?

(If the subject responds to the question without acting the response out with the figures)

Show me how they do that!

(If the subject is vague about who is performing an action) Who did that?

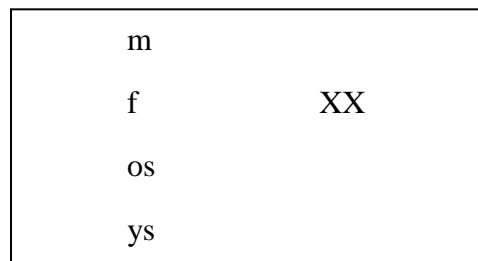
Transition: That was a good story, [child's name] (this reinforcement is provided for all stories). Let me show you what we have for the next one! For this one, we won't need the table or the cake. We will need this (bring out the felt "grass"). I pretend this is the grass. And this (bring out the sponge "rock"). I pretend this is a high, high rock, and this is the park. Do you sometimes go to the park?

Hurt Knee

Props: grass (green felt), rock (sponge)

Characters: mother (m), father (f), older sibling (os), younger sibling (ys)

Child



XX = rock on grass

Interviewer

I: For this story, the family is going for a walk in the park. And little John/little Mary says, "Hey everybody! Watch me climb this high, high rock! Uh! Uh!" (interviewer makes noises of exertion as the younger sibling climbs the rock). Just before reaching the top of the rock, the younger sibling falls to the ground, equidistant from the positions of the father and the mother figures. "Ah hah!" (crying sound) "I've hurt my knee!" Show me and tell me what happens now!

Prompt: (If the injury to the child is not addressed) What do they do about his/her hurt knee?

Continue to clarify if actions or characters in the subject's representations are ambiguous.

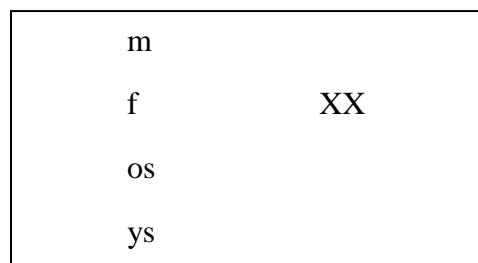
Transition: That was a good story! And for this next one, we won't need the grass or the rock but we will need this (bring out the bed). What do you think this is? And we'll need this (bring out the blanket, place on the bed). What do you think this is? Right!

Monster in the Bedroom

Props: bed, blanket

Characters: mother (m), father (f), older sibling (os), younger sibling (ys)

Child



XX = bed

Interviewer

I: And here's how this story goes: The mom says to little John/little Mary, "Little John/Little Mary, it's time for you to go up to bed. Go to bed, now!" And little John/little Mary says, "O.K., mom, I'm going." So, little John/little Mary goes up to his/her room, and opens the door, and says, (with alarm) "Oh, no! There's a monster in my room! There's a monster in my room!" Show me what happens now!

Prompt: (If nothing is done to respond to the younger sibling's fear) What do they do about what little John/little Mary said about the monster?

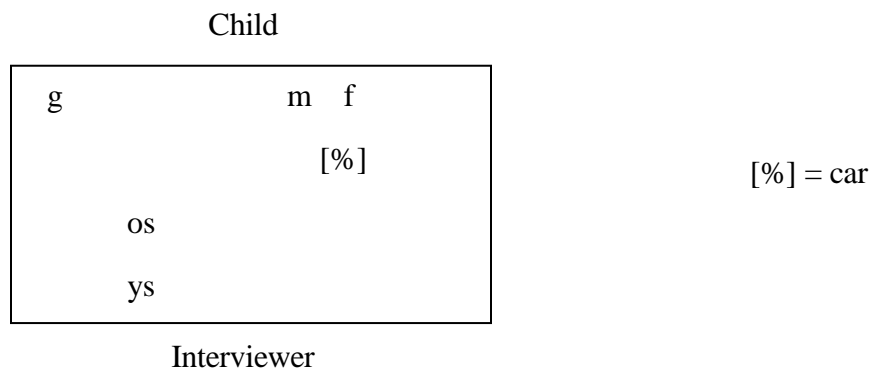
(This language is chosen to avoid labeling the emotion for the subject.)

Transition: That was a good story! And for this next one, we will need the grass again and we'll need this (bring out the family car); what do you think this is? Right, it's the family car. And we'll also need the grandma for this one. And you know what it looks like to me, [child's name]? It looks like the mom is going to go on a trip.

Departure

Props: family car

Characters: mother (m), father (f), older sibling (os), younger sibling (ys), grandmother (g)



I: Here's how this story goes: The mom says to Paul/Anna and little John/little Mary (turn mother to face the children), "Boys/Girls, we're leaving on a trip, now. See you tomorrow! Grandma will stay with you." Show me and tell me what happens!

Important: Interviewer should make sure the child puts the parents in the car and makes them drive off. Intervene only if the child does not make the car drive off. If the child puts the children in the car say: "No, they can't go on this trip!" It is allowable for the child to put the grandmother into the car, with parents. The requirements of this story are: 1) that parents go away and 2) that the children do not accompany them. After the child (or if necessary, the interviewer) makes the car drive off, then, the interviewer puts the car under the table, out of sight. If the child wants to retrieve the car, the interviewer replies: "No, they're not coming back yet."

I: And away they go! (as the car is moved under the table.) What do the girls/boys do now that mom and dad are gone?

Prompt: May need to repeat the above question if the child does not elaborate a story.

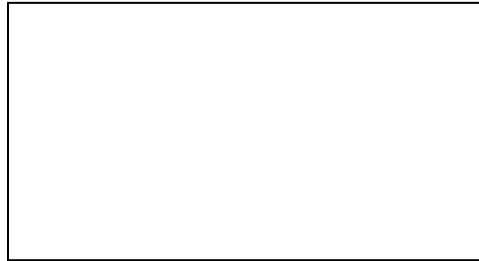
Reunion

Props: car

Characters: mother (m), father (f), older sibling (os), younger sibling (ys), grandmother (g)

If the child has put the children and grandmother figures in the middle of the table during the previous story, put them back on the side, create distance between the returning car and the child figures, as diagrammed below.

Child



Figures will begin
from where they were in
the last story.

Interviewer

I: You know what? It's the next day and Grandma looks out the window and she says,
"Girls/Boys, your mom is home from her trip."

(If, in unusual circumstances, the child has left the two children alone, then say, It's the next day and
the mom and dad are home from their trip.)

Bring the car with passenger(s) back out from under the table and set it on the table at a
distance from the family (i.e., keep it near Interviewer so the child has to reach for it and make it
drive "home"). Show me and tell me what happens next!

Prompt: (If child does not spontaneously take the figures out of the car) What do they do now that
the mom and dad are home?

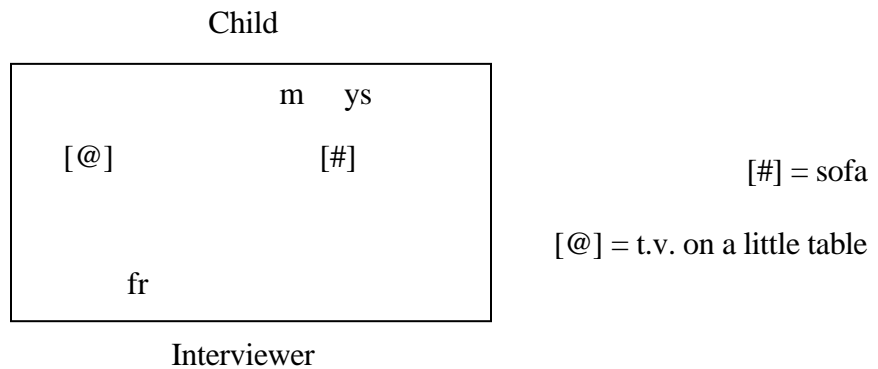
Transition: That was a fantastic story. You are doing a wonderful job helping me tell these stories.

There is only one story left and then, we will be finished.

Headache

Props: sofa, t.v. on a little table

Characters: mother (m), younger sibling (ys), friend (fr)



I: The mother and little John/little Mary are sitting on the couch watching t.v. Mom says she has a headache and she turns the t.v. off, and asks little John/little Mary for some quiet. The doorbell rings and it's little John's/little Mary's friend who asks to come in and watch t.v. because there is "a really neat show on." Show me and tell me what happens now!

Prompt: (If the headache of the mom is not addressed) What do they do about mom's headache?

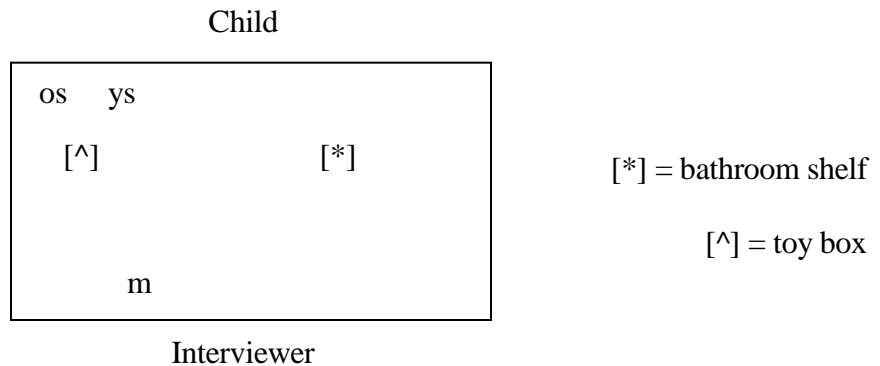
Continue to clarify if actions or characters in the subject's representations are ambiguous.

Transition: That was a good story! And for this next one, we won't need the sofa but we will need this (bring out the bathroom shelf). What do you think this is? What do you think this is? Right!

Bathroom Shelf

Props: bathroom shelf, toy box

Characters: mother (m), older sibling (os), younger sibling (ys)



I: Part I: The two children are playing in their toy box, and the mother comes in and says she has to go to the neighbor's, and the children are not to touch anything on the bathroom shelf while she is away. The children resume playing in the toy box. Little John/little Mary cries, "Ouch! I cut my finger, quick, get me a bandaid!" The older sibling replies, "But mom told us not to touch anything on the bathroom shelf." Little John/Little Mary replies, "But my finger is bleeding!" Show me and tell me what happens now!

Prompt: (If the children go and touch the bathroom shelf) But mom said not to touch anything!

Continue to clarify if actions or characters in the subject's representations are ambiguous.

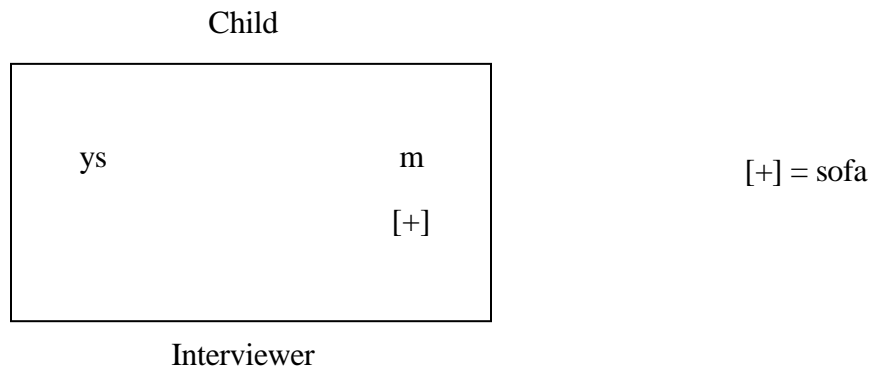
Part II: The mother returns. Show me and tell me what happens now!

Transition: That was a good story! And for this next one, we won't need the bathroom shelf but we will need this (bring out the sofa). What do you think this is? Right!

Uncle Peter

Props: sofa

Characters: mother (m), younger sibling (ys)



I: The mother sits on the couch, crying because Uncle Peter has died. The younger child stands facing her, some distance away. Show me and tell me what happens now!

Prompt: (If the death of Uncle Peter is not addressed) What about mom? She's said that Uncle Peter died!

Continue to clarify if actions or characters in the subject's representations are ambiguous.

Transition: That was a good story! And for this next one, we won't need the sofa but we will need this (bring out the wagon). What do you think this is? Right!

Three's A Crowd

Props: wagon

Characters: mother (m), younger sibling (ys), older sibling (os), friend (fr)

Child



[?] = wagon

I: The older child and friend are playing in the wagon. The younger child asks to join them. The friend replies, “If you let your brother/sister play, I won’t be your friend anymore.” Show me and tell me what happens now!

Prompt: (If friend still does not let his/her friend’s brother/sister play with them) But (s)he is his/her brother/sister!

Continue to clarify if actions or characters in the subject's representations are ambiguous.

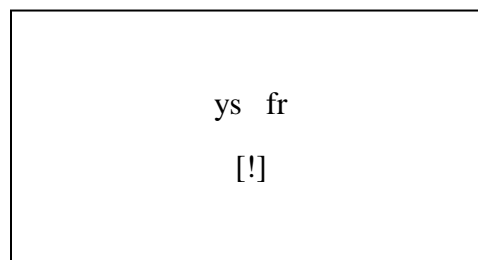
Transition: That was a good story! And for this next one, we won't need the wagon but we will need this (bring out the ball). What do you think this is? Right!

Ball Play

Props: ball

Characters: younger sibling (ys), friend (fr)

Child



[!] = ball

Interviewer

I: Little John/Little Mary is playing with his/her ball with his/her friend. Suddenly, little John/little Mary cries, “Ouch! That hurt my hand!” Interviewer asks: Why do you think little John/little Mary did that? Show me and tell me what happens now!

Prompt: (If the child’s hurt hand is not addressed) What about his/her hurt hand?

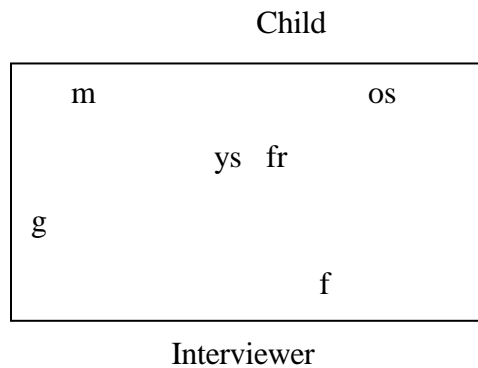
Continue to clarify if actions or characters in the subject's representations are ambiguous.

Transition: That was a good story! Thank you so much for your stories! You are such a good story teller!

Family Activity

Props: all the props that the subject requests

Characters: mother (m), father (f), older sibling (os), younger sibling (ys), grandma (g), and/or friend (fr)



I: Here's our family and they're all going to do something fun together today. Show me what they all do!

Prompt: (If no response) What do you think would be a fun thing for the whole family?

VITA

Loredana Apavaloaie was born to Timotei and Lenuta Apavaloaie in Iasi, Romania. In June of 1995, she graduated from “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” High school in Iasi, Romania. In June of 2000, she earned her Bachelor of Arts in Spanish and English at Alexandru Ioan Cuza University in Iasi, Romania. In December of 2008, she earned her Master of Science in human ecology with a concentration in family, child, and consumer sciences, 2008. Loredana received her PhD in human ecology with a concentration in family, child, and consumer sciences, 2012.

Loredana’s work experiences include teaching as a special education teacher for visually impaired students six years in Moldova School for Visually Impaired Students in Tg. Frumos, Iasi, Romania, 2000-2006. As a graduate student, she worked in the family, child, and consumer sciences division as a research and teaching assistant, 2006-2011. As a graduate administrative assistant, she worked in the college of education, office of the dean's sponsored programs and accounting, 2011-2012.