

MULTICULTURAL MESSAGES IN A PICTURE STORYBOOK: CONCEPTIONS OF
THREE- AND FOUR-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN

by

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(Under the Direction of Lynda Henley Walters)

ABSTRACT

By age 3, even though children do not have an adult's understanding of race, they are aware of their race and some differences in the race of other people. Many questions still remain concerning the content of young children's awareness and knowledge of race. As of yet, the young child's voice is not prominent in the research. This qualitative study is a step towards addressing the gap in the literature. Using a "culturally generic or neutral" multicultural children's picture storybook, in an open-ended interview format, three- and four-year-old children were interviewed to gauge their awareness of the race of the characters in the story. By listening to young children's knowledge and concepts of race, a more developmentally appropriate understanding of their awareness of race during the preschool years can be captured.

INDEX WORDS: Race awareness in preschool children, Multicultural children's literature, Picture storybooks, Child development, Knowledge of differences in racial groups

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my beloved father, Genecoit Vertus (1948-2001). You are and will be “Always in our hearts.”

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

As early as the age of three, young children's awareness of race starts to develop (Clark & Clark, 1939; Ocampo, Bernal, & Knight, 1993). Racial awareness, racial preference, racial attitudes, racial identity, and self-esteem are some aspects of racial identity formation of young children on which scholars have focused research; socialization for racial awareness, preference, attitudes, and identity formation has also been a focus of research (Alejandro-Wright, 1985; Holmes, 1995; Morgan, 1991; Morland & Hwang, 1981; Ocampo et al., 1993; Paley, 1981, 1989, 1995, 2001; Powell-Hopson & Hopson, 1988; Wright, 1998). This particular interest in the development of young children stemmed partly from the alarming findings reported by Kenneth and Mamie Clark (1939) regarding awareness of racial differences among three- to seven-year-old African American children. The Clarks reported that the majority of the children in their study showed a preference for the white doll presented to them and rejected the brown doll. These results were interpreted as being indicative of the negative effects of racial prejudice on young children. The rejection of the black doll was viewed as a rejection of self and their racial group.

Despite the continued interest in the understanding of race and ethnicity among young children, children's own voices are not prominent in the literature. The most popular trend in this research continues to be the replication of the Clark Doll Tests (Gopaul-Mc.Nicol, 1988). More than 70 years after the original Clark Doll Tests,

findings from studies using this same experimental procedure continued to indicate that black children, compared to white children, tend to be out-group oriented. That researchers have found it hard to explain this lack of change in the data over decades of social and political change, suggests there is a need to move away from doll studies as the standard in this research (McMillan, 1988). In fact, McMillan asserted that not only is the Clark Doll Test not a valid indicator of African American children's self-esteem, but that this research methodology needs to be laid to rest. According to McMillan, the Clark Doll Test "...is at best a questionable indicator of racial awareness, preference, or identity" (McMillan, 1988, p. 71). In order to get a broader view of children's knowledge of race from their unique point-of-view, it might help to introduce qualitative methods. With that challenge, I chose an open-ended interview format for this study of preschoolers' racial awareness.

Two examples of exceptions to the use of the forced-choice, experimental doll tests in learning about young children's knowledge of race (Holmes, 1995; Wright, 1998) were instructive. Through the use of participant observation and interviews, Holmes and Wright tried to capture in their own words how young children perceived race. Through participant observation, interviews, and drawings, Holmes learned from kindergarten children about how they grouped people into different groups. Children in this study grouped people into groups that were polar opposites of each other (boy/girl, black/white, adults/kids). Wright used interviews to learn about how preschoolers described themselves and how they described those whom they perceived as being different from them. She found that even though children could name their skin color, skin color was not the main factor they used in describing themselves or others. Despite these examples

highlighting more qualitative and naturalistic research methods with young children, there is still a need for more studies that use similar methods that are able to capture the perspective of young children on race. Some examples of qualitative methods that are more conducive to learning from children “in their own words” are: naturalistic observations, participant observation, open-ended interviews, multiple-choice picture interviews where children are allowed multiple possible answer choices as opposed to being forced to identify with either their own or the “other” group in the study, puppet interviews, and research that incorporates toys, props or other objects from children’s daily lives (Morland & Hwang, 1981; Spencer, Brookins, & Allen, 1985; Teaching Tolerance Project, 1997). This study incorporated the use of story as a means for creating a common context for participants; responses about the characters in the story provided the data for the study. The fact that adults communicate about their attitudes and beliefs by reading to children makes the use of story books a useful format for data collection.

The influence of significant others in children’s thinking is important during the preschool years (Beaty, 1991; Weitzman et al., 1972; Wright, 1998). Young children identify with their parents and close caregivers. Because of this close, personal relationship, preschoolers try to emulate these adults in their thoughts, feelings, and activities. Stories are one way in which adults share their thoughts, feelings, and activities with children; these are not just messages about a specific person, they are messages about the culture. Stories and picture storybooks are a part of the daily lives of many young children (Wolf & Heath, 1992). In a sense, books and the stories in them are socializing tools in that they are often used by parents, caregivers, and educators to teach

children about different aspects of their social world (Beaty, 1991; Corsaro, 1997; Mathis, 2001; Owens & Nowell, 2001; Paley, 2001; Weitzman, Eifler, Hokada, & Ross, 1972; Wolf & Heath; Wright, 1998). Hence, books may be one way that “children learn ‘race’ as a basis of social differentiation in their daily lives” (Holmes, 1995, p. ix). By extension, books could then be one way in which children communicate their understanding of the social environment in their response to the stories in these books (Beaty, 1991; Mathis, 2001; Paley, 1986; Wolf & Heath, 1992).

This study was an exploratory step in capturing a broader perspective of young children’s developing conceptions of race by inviting children to take part in an open-ended interview in which a picture storybook was used to elicit children’s responses to the characters featured in the book. Findings from this study offer researchers, teachers, parents, policy makers, child care providers, caregivers, and others who work with the very young another view of children’s knowledge of race.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was two-fold: (a) to capture a more developmentally accurate understanding of children’s knowledge of race in the preschool years; and (b) the development of a child-appropriate open-ended measure and procedure to assess racial awareness in young children. Both of these objectives were addressed in this study by allowing children to talk freely and openly about their perceptions of race in open-ended interviews.

Questions

In terms of content, questions for this study address the extent of children’s knowledge and its cultural implications. Methodologically, I wondered if the measure I

developed would elicit relevant comments for this study. Thus, the specific questions were:

1. What aspects of race of the characters in a picture storybook are young children aware of?
2. What cultural meanings or messages about race are young children getting from stories that are read to them?
3. Does the measure elicit children's comments?

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

A conception of the self is a continuous, developmental process. Scholars cite that self-awareness begins roughly at the age of five. This is the age when children begin to view themselves as unique individuals (DeHart, Sroufe, & Cooper, 2000). A child's concept of race is part of this complex process. The content and extent of knowledge of race are influenced by cognitive abilities. Children are egocentric and concrete thinkers in early childhood. This means that they are unable to think about themselves as others might think of them. Also, they attend to external, concrete evidence of similarities and differences. Hence, children's knowledge of race in the preschool years is characterized by physical descriptions (DeHart et al., 2000).

A child's perspective is useful in the conceptualization of a developmentally appropriate understanding of race awareness in the preschool years. This can happen only by listening to young children's own words about the perceived salience of this social aspect of the developing self. However, eliciting children's perception can be difficult and lead to inaccuracies if no concrete prompts are used. Because children are used to being read to, they may be more responsive in sharing their perceptions of race in the context of a familiar book-reading interaction as opposed to a highly controlled and structured forced-choice research procedure (Holmes, 1995; Paley, 1981, 1989, 1995, 2001; Wright, 1998). Children are not necessarily highly aware of their perceptions of race; thus, eliciting those perceptions is a delicate process.

Racial Awareness in Preschool Children

Children's conceptions of self develop as they grow and mature. Some hallmarks of young children's sense of self during Piaget's pre-operational period are knowledge that everyone thinks, including themselves, and that their thoughts are unique to them (DeHart, Sroufe, & Cooper, 2000). Young children's self-conceptions and their understanding of the world around them are expanding during this stage of development and their social cognition or understanding of the social world is improving. This increased awareness is, in part, a result of developments in cognitive ability, which includes a beginning theory of mind (alluded to above), improvements in the ability to communicate with others, and a decrease in level of egocentrism (DeHart et al., 2000). Even though children's grasp of the social world is still very much limited by their cognitive abilities, their understanding of the social world is increasing and they are able to communicate their perceptions of it.

During the preschool years, different facets of a child's identity began to form and take shape. Identity is "an understanding of who we are and who we are not" (Teaching Tolerance, 1997, p. 16). According to Neisser (1998), by the age of two-and-a-half children began to see themselves as separate and autonomous people, unique from others. Young children's self-constancy, or a "sense that the self endures despite temporary disruptions in relationships or superficial manipulations done to the self" (DeHart et al.) is taking shape in these "pre-rules" early childhood years. By the age of three, children have an explicit awareness of their gender (Ocampo et al., 1993; Paley, 1984, 1986,

1988). By age four, children become aware of their race (Holmes, 1995; Ocampo et al., 1993; Paley, 1981, 1989, 1995, 2001; Wright, 1998). By five, children become aware of their ethnicity (Holmes, 1995; Ocampo et al., 1993).

It is a developmental milestone in children's understanding of race when they realize that skin color is permanent (Wright, 1998). Children acquire concepts about race and skin color in a similar developmental sequence as they acquire concepts about gender (Beaty, 1991; Katz, 1976, 1983; Ramsey, 1991). Despite individual differences, by the time children make the transition to kindergarten, most have acquired the basics of these core concepts. At this stage of development, children have rudimentary classification skills. They have the ability to correctly group things according to one simple, concrete characteristic. They may not be naturally inclined to group people into categories exclusively based on differences in skin color (or race) as might an older child or an adult (Wright, 1998). Even though children's conceptions of race are by no means as integrated as an adult's, their ability to classify people and objects is becoming more sophisticated along with their understanding of race. Hence, their "racial" language is increasing. This study allowed young children to use their increased "racial" language in order to share their understanding of race.

According to early childhood specialist Patricia Ramsey (1998), children's conceptions of race develop as early as three and four years of age. By this time, "most children have a rudimentary concept of race and are quite accurate in the application of the socially conventional racial labels of black and white to pictures, dolls, and people" (p. 17). They may repeat what they hear others say about it (Ramsey, 1991, p. 55). Other

researchers have reported similar findings pertaining to the development of a rudimentary conception of race during the preschool years (Clark & Clark, 1939, 1947; Holmes, 1995; Ramsey, 1986).

Using interviews and children's own drawings, Holmes (1995) found that children had a high level of awareness regarding phenotypic characteristics of themselves and they could compare and differentiate themselves from other children. The children in her study were African American, European American, and Latino. Children in this study described differences in skin color, eye shape, and language spoken when categorizing people into different "people" groups. They used color terms such as "black" and "white" or "light" and "dark" to refer to different categories of people. In categorizing people into different racial and ethnic groups, children ascribed distinct physical characteristics and attributes to each group. For example, children described "White" as having "white skin" or being "English like me," "Black" as having "brown or black skin" or having "real real dark skin," and "Spanish" as "[they] speak Spanish" or "have white skin" (Holmes, 1995, p. 42).

In Ramsey's (1986) study, children between the ages of three and five were also aware of phenotypic characteristics of themselves as they compared and contrasted themselves to other children. These children described differences in skin color and eye shape in categorizing people into different ethnic groups such as "Chinese" or "Japanese." Both of these studies inform us that children are aware of physical racial characteristics that are the same or different from their own. Also, children have their own ways of categorizing people.

Age

Developmental psychologist Marguerite Wright (1998) reported a clear distinction between a three- and four-year-old in terms of race awareness. According to Wright, at age three, skin color and race are irrelevant factors in children's self-concepts. Even though three-year-olds are able to correctly match a color card to their own skin color, they are more likely to identify themselves by sex than by color or race. Holmes (1995) and Ocampo, Bernal, & Knight (1993) reported similar findings, suggesting that identification by sex comes earlier and is more natural for young children. At age four, Wright asserted that children know their skin color, but not necessarily their race. Four-year-olds are able to identify themselves using such color labels as pink, brown, black or white. These color words are usually associated with children's favorite foods or the crayon colors they are learning about at school. In understanding a child's racial awareness, Wright stressed that a child's "color identification" is not an adult's "racial identification" (p. 16). Thus, a child's awareness of physical skin color or pigmentation does not carry the social significance that a teenager or adult may have as a result of interpersonal interactions that frame their lived experiences as racial encounters.

Alejandro-Wright (1985) reported an age-related developmental progression in children's classification by race. In her study, children between three and 10 years of age were interviewed to assess their conceptions of racial categories. It was predicted that the youngest children would be less likely than older children to consistently classify people into racial categories as the level of a classification task became less concrete and more abstract. When children were asked to "put the people together (in a group) who belong together or who are the same" (p. 189), younger children consistently used factors other

than color or race to group people into categories. Gender and age were more prominent factors. Children in the older group (8-10 years) were more likely than the younger children (3-6 years) to group people into categories based on color. These older children were more likely to use such color labels as “brown,” “light white” to describe the people in their categories than to use the common racial labels such as black, white, or Chinese.

Culture

Culture is another factor to take into account when considering young children’s knowledge of race. Morland and Hwang’s (1981) study highlights the importance of culture in young children’s awareness of race. In their study of the racial awareness of children between the ages of 4 and 6 representing four racial/ethnic backgrounds from Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the United States, Morland and Hwang (1981) reported a socio-cultural difference regarding the salience of race for children. Using a picture interview, race awareness in 3-, 4- and 5-year-olds was assessed. After being shown pictures of preschool boys and girls and adult males and females who were racially similar to or different from them, children were asked “Which one do you look more like?” (p. 417). In a sample from a socially stratified society where race/ethnicity is related to social status, children from the upper-status, racial/ethnic category (European Americans) were most likely to say they looked like models of their own racial/ethnic category than were children from the lower-status racial/ethnic category (African Americans). In a multiracial society where race/ethnicity (or the appearance of such) was not related to social status (Hong Kong), children were found to pay less attention to racial/ethnic differences than were children in an upper-status racial/ethnic category in a stratified society (European Americans in the United States). Findings from this study indicate that

the salience of race awareness in the preschool years may also be influenced by culture as well as the developmental stage of children.

Summary of Race Awareness in Preschool Children

As is suggested in the literature, many factors influence children's awareness of race. Regardless of the factors influencing a young child's awareness of race, very early in their life, this knowledge begins to develop. Children's race awareness becomes even more deeply rooted as they make the transition from preschool to elementary school (Beaty, 1991; DeHart et al., 2000; Holmes, 1995; Morland & Hwang, 1981; Ocampo et al., 1993; Wright, 1998). To most accurately capture a young child's unique point of view, researchers must consider the role that cognitive abilities and culture play in understandings of race during the preschool years. The best strategy is to listen to young children. That was the method of Piaget who recognized that even when it comes to race, "the child's thinking differs from that of the adult not only in degree, but most fundamentally in kind" (Alejandro-Wright, 1985, p. 187).

Listening to Young Children

There are few studies where the voices of children are prominently heard (Beaty, 1991; Paley, 1986; Wolf & Heath, 1992). There is a need for more studies using qualitative methods or a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies in order to capture children's knowledge of race from their point of view. One researcher who has highlighted the importance of listening to children is Paley (1986). According to her, "the first order of reality in the classroom is the student's point of view" (p. 127). This insight into the importance of the inner thoughts of children provides a clue for how to examine a young child's ideas of how the world works. In

knowing what is important to children or what their views and notions about race are, adults can respond more appropriately and responsibly to a child's unique social, emotional, and/or academic needs. According to Alejandro-Wright (1985), the child's own conceptualization of race is "how the child groups people without the provision of the investigator's term or label" (p. 188). Hence, the child's own spontaneous labels for classifications are their conceptualizations of race "in their own words."

Paley has documented and explained many instances where children in her preschool or kindergarten classrooms have openly shared or wanted to talk about their ideas and notions of race (1981, 1989, 1995, 2001). In her 2001 book, Paley followed her young female student's, Reeny, explorations of the color brown. "Reeny," an African American girl in her kindergarten represented the "right" shade of brown in her drawings of herself by "barely pressing down the first time she colors in the outline, then gradually darkening the tones until she is satisfied" (p. 1). Only then did the drawing with the brown crayon certify that, "This girl is brown like me" (Paley, 2001, p. 2). In her research, Holmes has also documented many instances where the children in her research freely shared their understanding of race.

Holmes' (1995) ethnographic study of kindergarten children's racial beliefs was inspired by "children's candid conversations on such topics as interracial friendships and the influence of race on their selection of a "romantic" partner" (p. xi). Holmes studied children in their own natural environment (their classroom) and relied on their drawings and words to capture their conceptualizations of race. Holmes found that children were keenly aware of physical, phenotypic characteristics such as skin color which served as a standard of comparison to differentiate themselves from others. These comparisons were

readily clear in children's drawings. Children were selective in the crayon colors they chose and how light or dark they made their pictures. These examples demonstrate that in conditions more conducive to listening to children and capturing the child's point of view on the topic of race (Paley, 1986, 1994), children reveal information about identity relative to race.

Young Children and Picture Storybooks

Stories and picture storybooks are an integral part of the daily life and activities of many young children (Wolf & Heath, 1992). Parents, teachers, and other significant adults in children's lives commit a lot of time and effort to reading or sharing stories with young children. To varying degrees, these adults encourage reading activities and/or create opportunities for children to interact with books. Children can touch, play, and interact with books as they would with any other toy (Wolf & Heath, 1992). All of these literary activities are aimed at fostering a love of stories and reading. Indeed, reading to a child helps young children reach a very important early childhood milestone: learning to read. Adults in children's lives may have different reasons why they read certain stories to children, but "...through story, we share our opinions, values, and experiences" with children." (Mathis, 2001, p. 155) In fact, according to Mathis, "Story is the essence of communication." (p. 155). Through story, adults impart to children aspects of how they view the world, themselves in that world, and what aspect of that world is important to them (Beatty, 1991; Mathis, 2001; Weitzman, Eifler, Hokada & Ross, 1972; Wolf & Heath, 1992). Stories with their pictures are cultural products with certain implicit cultural meanings and messages (Corsaro, 1997). According to Harris (1993), "children's literature serves the important role of mediator between children, cultural

knowledge, and socialization by adults” (p. 168). As such, children’s books have the potential to influence children’s self-concepts and their conceptualization of their social world. Weitzman, Eifler, Hokada, and Ross (1972) considered picture books as socializing agents that “...are a vehicle for the presentation of societal values to the young child. Through books, children learn about the world outside their immediate environment...In addition, books provide children with role models—images of what they can and should be like when they grow up” (p. 1126). Hence, not only are picture books educational in the socialization of preschool children, they are prescriptive, in that we try to impart important moral as well as life lessons to children through the stories we share with them.

Even though very young children cannot fully understand the social, racial, or cultural implications of certain objects or images found in a society, they learn, on a daily basis, about the social world around them through their interactions with stories and pictures (Beaty, 1991; Corsaro, 1997; Owens & Nowell, 2001; Paley, 2001; Weitzman, Eifler, Hokada & Ross, 1972; Wolf & Heath, 1992; Wright, 1998). The problem is that we do not know much about children’s responses to stories. For example, do they use the stories and images from picture books to communicate their conceptions or understanding of the social world around them? Or do they just absorb the social messages without talking about them? These questions must be asked and answered if we are to understand how stories influence children’s thoughts, feelings, and actions.

Paley has shown that young children can use concepts, ideas, or events from stories that were read to them (1992, 1995, 2001). In her book, The Girl with the Brown Crayon: How Children Use Stories to Shape Their Lives, Paley (2001) described a year

in her kindergarten class where the books of Leo Lionni became their classroom's curriculum. After each Leo Lionni book was read and discussed, each child had the option of dictating a story that was written down verbatim and would later be performed with the students as the cast of characters. Through their storytelling and dramatic play, children continually explored aspects of themselves and their world by questioning and exploring the events and characters in the Leo Lionni books. On a daily basis, Paley used a tape recorder to record the conversations taking place in her classroom.

In You Can't Say You Can't Play (1992) and Kwanzaa and Me: A Teacher's Story (1995), again, through their storytelling and dramatic play, the characters, Magpie the black and white bird, Prince Kareem, Princess Annabella, Princess Alexandra, and Beatrix the witch, helped her students talk about the rules that govern their classroom and each person's role and contribution to the classroom. Paley learned that the rules that governed her classroom had to do with friendship, fairness, and fantasy. Through the events in the stories, children tackled such issues as who were their friends and who were not; what was fair in the block center or in the doll corner; and character choices in dramatic role playing (who could pretend to be what character, why, and how often).

Summary

As indicated in the literature, through interaction with stories and storybooks, children come to learn about the social and cultural aspects of their world. Children, in turn, use the messages and ideas from stories to communicate their understanding of that world. It is important to listen to young children's conceptions of multicultural messages in picture storybooks in order to better understand what children know about race and ethnicity during their preschool years. In order to listen to young children, adults must

“stop talking and begin listening...no matter what the age of the student; someone must be there to listen, respond, and add a dab of glue to the important words that burst forth” (Paley, 1986, 127). This is the case because, for the preschool teacher, “the fears, dreams, and logic of the culture of childhood [is] embedded in her students’ fantasy play and invented stories” (Paley, 1994, p.22).

The questions that will be addressed are: What aspects of race of the characters in a picture storybook are young children aware of? What cultural meanings or messages about race are young children getting from stories that are read to them? Does the measure elicit children’s comments?

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

Participants

The sample for this research was a convenience sample of African American and Caucasian boys and girls. Children at a northeast Georgia university-based child development center in the pre-kindergarten and Head Start programs were the targeted group for this study. All participants were approximately three to four years of age. Some children were five years old if their interview was conducted towards the end of the pre-kindergarten/Head Start school year. All children attending these programs had the opportunity to participate. Consent forms for this study were sent home with children to inform parents about the study and get parent/guardian consent. Only children with a signed consent form from their parent(s) or guardian(s) were able to take part in this research study.

Parents were introduced to the study via the Parental Permission Form (see Appendix A). Parents were given a brief overview of the study and told how they and their child could be participants in the study. Parents had the option of refusing consent for their children to take part in the study. Ninety-five percent of families gave permission. Parental/guardian permission was given by a parent checking on the form that they agreed to have their child participate in the study and signing and dating their consent at the bottom of the form. Child participation in the research study consisted of a videotaped one-on-one interview conducted by the researcher with each child participant

(see Appendix B). Interviews did not take place in the child's classroom. Each child was signed out of their classroom and taken to another room within the child development center reserved for the interviews. Child assent was procured at the beginning of each interview (see Appendix C). Each child was returned to the classroom at the conclusion of each interview and signed back in.

In the parental permission form (see Appendix A), parents were informed about how the data would be gathered, secured, and used after collection. More specifically, videotapes were kept in locked storage for later data analysis. All videotapes, questionnaire data, and participant information were confidential. No data analysis revealed from whom data were obtained. The use of videotapes in a classroom setting or conference was strictly for educational purposes or as teaching tools only. Parents were also informed of who they could contact if they had any questions, comments, or concerns about this research. Research at The University of Georgia is conducted under the approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Information about how to contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) was provided as well.

The IRB recommended the procurement of child assent in addition to parental consent when minors are research participants. The Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Child Assent Form was developed in order to get child assent for child participation in the study (see Appendix C). In the child assent form, children were introduced to the research project and told what they would be doing during the interview. Children were told that participation in the study was voluntary and that they had the option to stop at any time or not answer any questions that they did not want to answer (e.g., "I will keep your answers just between you and me. You can decide to stop at any time or not answer

any questions that you don't want to answer.”) During a question and answer session, children were given the opportunity to ask the researcher any questions they had about the study and get clarification about what they were expected to do. Children were encouraged to be participants in the study by “signing” their name at the bottom of the form. A similar procedure of procuring child assent from three- and four-year-old children was used in a prior research project in which I served as a child interviewer.

Measures

Child and Parent Demographic Information Form. The Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Child and Parent Demographic Information Forms were developed to compile a general profile of the child and parent/guardian participants in the study (see Appendix D). Child information consisted of date-of-birth, sex, and race and ethnicity. Parental information consisted of date-of-birth, relationship to child (mother or father), race/ethnicity, employment status (whether within or outside of the home), current occupation, job description, income level, and educational level. In terms of race and ethnicity, respondents were given the option of selecting their preferred racial/ethnic label for themselves and their child. If their preferred racial/ethnic label was not listed on the form, they had the option of writing it in. The above demographic descriptors were selected because they are indicators of participants' socio-cultural status (see Table 1).

Child Questionnaire. The questions for the Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Child Questionnaire were developed after a review of the literature on the formation and socialization of racial awareness in young children and a perusal of studies where the race awareness of young children were evaluated (Alejandro-Wright, 1985; Clark & Clark, 1939; Holmes, 1995; Morgan, 1991; Morland & Hwang, 1981; Ocampo

et al., 1993; Paley, 1989, 1995, 2001; Powell-Hopson & Hopson, 1988; Wright, 1998).

The questions were reviewed by graduate students in child development and family studies, the director and teachers at the child development center where the research was conducted, and the researcher's major professor. The graduate students, director, and teachers were asked to read the child questionnaire and script and give feedback on (a) whether they thought children would understand the questions or not and (b) whether the questions were appropriate for the ages of children taking part in the study. These questions were then piloted with a couple of participants to see whether children responded to them or not.

The Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Child Questionnaire is a 30-item questionnaire that was developed to encourage children to talk about the characters in a picture storybook in order to gauge their awareness of race (see Appendix B).

Transitions from one part of the interview to the next were scripted. The first set of questions was prompts intended to get the child to describe and talk about themselves. The rest of the questions (numbers 2 through 30) were grouped into three categories: (a) open-ended (questions 2-17), (b) race awareness (questions 18-25), and (c) Little Bill questions (questions 26-30). Little Bill is the main character in the book used in this research.

Questions 2-17 were intended to get the child talking about the story that was read to them and to talk about and refer to specific characters in the story. Children were encouraged to compare and contrast the characters featured in the book with themselves. These questions made no reference to the race of the characters in the story, which allowed children to make unsolicited responses. Children were asked to point out "what

is different” or “what is the same” about themselves and the characters in the story.

These questions allowed the child to talk about any aspects of the characters without any direct prompting or directions from the researcher. Therefore, comments that involved discussions of race reflected natural responses.

In contrast, questions 18-25 were developed to get children to talk specifically about the race of the characters in the story and about themselves. Children were encouraged to talk specifically about skin color in relation to themselves and the characters. For example, children were asked to name the skin color of characters in the storybook, to compare their skin color to the skin color of characters in the storybook, and to reveal what they thought about the characters’ skin color. Children were also asked to report how they came to know about race. All children were asked these questions regardless of whether they discussed aspects of race and in response to questions 2-17. If children discussed aspects of race in response to questions 2-17, questions 18-25 provided support for children’s unsolicited discussions about race. If children did not discuss aspects of race in response to questions 2-17, questions 18-25 provided some insight into children’s knowledge of race even though these questions specifically prompted children to talk about themselves and the skin color of the characters in the story.

Questions 26-30 were the Little Bill questions. These questions were to ascertain whether or not children were familiar with the Little Bill character. If children were familiar with Little Bill, they were asked if they knew about him through watching

him on television and/or reading his books. If children were not familiar with the Little Bill character, they were not asked questions 27-30. In those cases, interviews were concluded after question 26.

Procedures

Parents were first introduced to the Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Study at the child development center by the director and/or the teachers in the pre-kindergarten and Head Start programs. The introductions took place while parents dropped off or picked up their children. In addition to these informal conversations, forms about the Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Study were sent home with children in order to inform parents about the study and get parent/guardian consent. These forms included the Parental Permission Form for the Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Study (see Appendix A) and the Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Child and Parent Demographic Information Form (see Appendix D). The forms for the Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Study were placed in the parents' mailboxes at the center for parents to take home or sent home with each child.

Teachers informed parents that the forms were either in the mailboxes or had been sent home and that they were to be completed and returned to the classroom. There was a reminder flyer posted at the sign-in/sign-out area of the classroom reminding parents to complete the forms and return them as soon as possible. A folder labeled "Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Study" was placed in the sign-in/sign-out area of the classroom so parents had a place to return their completed forms. The principal investigator collected these forms at the end of each day or as the completed forms were

returned by parents. The principal investigator worked closely with the teachers to ensure that all parent questions were answered and that parents who wanted their children to participate in the study turned in all the necessary forms.

Prior to the start of the data collection phase of the research study, the researcher made classroom visits in order to spend time interacting with the children. These classroom visits were arranged with the director of the child development center and classroom teachers. Data were not collected during these visits. These classroom visits were an opportunity for both the researcher/interviewer and the children to get to know one another, have some positive interactions with each other, and establish a relationship of familiarity. The intent of these classroom visits was for students to become comfortable around the researcher/interviewer prior to being taken out of the classroom to be interviewed. These classroom visits took place over several days prior to the start of the interviews and continued until all interviews were concluded.

Additionally, on days when interviews were conducted, teachers reminded children about the study and how they would participate in it. The researcher/interviewer was present when teachers talked to their students about the study so that any questions that children had were answered prior to leaving the classroom to go to the interview room. The researcher and teachers worked collaboratively throughout the data collection phase of the study in order to insure that children were comfortable with taking part in the study and being signed out of the classroom to do the interview. An effort was made to sign children out to be interviewed during their free play time. Each taped reading and interview session lasted about 20 to 25 minutes. The data collection process minimally interfered with or affected the teachers' normal classroom instruction and interaction with

the children. Discussions about the study took place during “circle time.” Circle time in these classroom settings is the part of the day when the class comes together on the rug and talks about the news, announcements, and events of the day. During circle time, the teacher may instruct her students, hold discussions about certain topics, or share relevant information with the whole class.

Prior to leaving the classroom, children were asked individually by the researcher/interviewer if they would like to participate in the study. Children were told that participation entailed leaving the classroom and going to a pre-selected research room located within the child development center in order to complete the reading and interview session. Children were told that their participation was completely voluntary. (At anytime before or during the session, a child could refuse to participate in any part of the study.) If a child refused to do the interview on the day they were selected, another child was asked to participate. Children who were reluctant to participate were asked to participate at a later time.

Children participating in the Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Study were individually signed out of their classroom by the researcher during their free play times in order to complete a reading and interview session with the researcher/interviewer. The researcher and the child left the classroom and walked down a hallway to the research room selected for the interview sessions. The room contained two child-size chairs and a table, a video camera, the Little Bill book, the child assent form, the child questionnaire, crayons, and a pen and/or markers.

Any questions that the child had about the research project prior to the interview session were answered on the way to the research room. Depending on the center site

and the room available at the time interviews were conducted, the camera was located either behind a large one-way mirror in an adjacent room (see Appendix E) or positioned in plain view in front of the child and interviewer within the research room. In either case, the child was informed prior to the start of the reading and interview session that the session was being taped. The researcher pointed out the camera to the child, indicating where the camera was mounted or located. (Children at the child development center were accustomed to being observed by and/or interacting with college students, staff, and personnel at the center on an individual basis or small group setting; therefore, it was not unusual for children at the center to be signed out of their classroom and taken to another room for individual assessment or participation in a study. Because of this, the consensus amongst the director, the teachers, and the principal investigator of this study was that being taken to another room at the center and the presence of a camera would not negatively affect the interview session with the child. Children were at first curious about the camera, but the presence of the camera did not cause discomfort nor was it an undue distraction for the children.)

Child consent was obtained prior to the start of the reading and interview session. Child assent was obtained using the Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Child Assent Form (see Appendix C). Where age appropriate, children were asked to sign the assent form. When signing was not age appropriate, the interviewer obtained verbal assent from the child, noted this on the child's assent form, and allowed the child to draw or doodle on the form as desired. Before the start of the reading and interview session, an introduction session between the researcher and child took place. The Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Child Questionnaire was used (see Appendix B).

During the interaction, the researcher informed the child that they would go through the Little Bill book two separate times and be asked some questions about the story. The first time through the book was a “picture walk.” The researcher and the child went through the book together looking only at the pictures. The researcher responded to the child’s comments, if any, about the pictures in the book. No questions from the child questionnaire were asked at this time. The “picture walk” was just to familiarize participants with the book. During the second time, the researcher read the story to the child, asking specific questions about the featured characters and pictures in the story. The questions from the Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Child Questionnaire were used (see Appendix B). Children’s responses to the questions about the characters and pictures in the Little Bill book were gathered and analyzed to gauge their awareness and understanding of race.

After the completion of the interview, children were given a box of crayons as a reward for taking part in the research project. Children also had the opportunity to pick out a sticker from either the inside front or back flap of the Little Bill book. The pick of a sticker of the child’s choosing was an added reward for participation in the research. After the videotaping ended, the researcher walked the child back to the classroom and signed him or her back in. Teachers were informed of the return of the child to the classroom. The next child was asked to do the interview and signed out of the classroom. The necessary steps were repeated until all children participating in the study were interviewed.

Stimulus Materials

A “culturally generic or neutral,” multicultural, children’s picture storybook was the stimulus for the open-ended interview. A “culturally generic or neutral” multicultural children’s picture storybook is a book in which (a) the main character in the story has experiences that other children of a similar age or culture could experience or relate to; (b) the other characters in the story featured are of different racial backgrounds; and (c) no direct or indirect reference is made to the race of any of characters in the book. The title of the book used in this study was The Honeywood Street Fair (Lucas, 2001). It is a 14-page picture book with 49 stickers on the inside front and back flap of the book. The story is about Little Bill, who lives with his family in Philadelphia, and the residents of Honeywood Street. They have a neighborhood street fair to raise money to buy new uniforms for Little Bill’s older sister’s basketball team. The character was created by comedian and educator Bill Cosby. Little Bill is part of a book and television series shown on the cable channel Nick Jr. ®. Little Bill was researched and developed in conjunction with educational consultants (http://www.nickjr.com/little-bill/about-little-bill/little-bill-tv-show_ap.html). Little Bill’s signature saying is “Hello Friend!” As stated in the description of the show on the Nick Jr. ® website,

The show is designed to help kids celebrate their everyday experiences and the people who share them. Little Bill shows kids that what they do makes a difference in the world. By dealing with conflicts encountered in everyday life, the program encourages children to value the love of their family, to increase self-esteem, and to develop social skills (http://www.nickjr.com/little-bill/about-little-bill/little-bill-tv-show_ap.html).

After the story was read to children, children were asked to talk about the characters in order to gauge their awareness of race. Children were encouraged to compare and contrast the characters featured in the story to themselves and to other characters. They were asked to point out what they thought was “different” or “the same” about themselves and the characters in the story. These open-ended questions allowed children to talk about any aspects of the characters that they wanted to talk about without any direct prompting or directions from the researcher/interviewer. Therefore, children’s unsolicited comments involving race, if any, were a reflection of their natural knowledge of race. This is a move away from the contrived, restrictive, and experimental doll tests used by previous researchers in this area.

The three main criteria used in the selection of the Little Bill book for this study were that (a) the main character in the story was an “everyday” child; (b) his friends were multicultural; and (c) no direct or indirect reference was made to the race of the characters in the book. This book met all of these criteria. First, Little Bill is the “everyday child,” in that he experiences the everyday challenges of a five-year-old child. His experiences could be considered those of a typical kindergartener anywhere in America. Second, Little Bill’s friends are “multicultural.” Multicultural literature is defined as literature that is ethnically diverse, which means the literature is by, about, and/or relative to people of color (Yokota, 2001). Thus, the Little Bill book is considered “multicultural” because the main character in the story is a child of color and his friends and classmates are of different racial backgrounds. For example, Little Bill’s best friend, Andrew, is Caucasian American, his friend, Kiku, is Asian American, his cousin, Fuchsia, is African American, and his classmate, Diego, is Hispanic American

(<http://www.nickjr.com/little-bill/about-little-bill/little-bill-characters.html>). The third reason this book was chosen was that even though Little Bill and his friends are from different racial backgrounds, the race of Little Bill and his friends are not the focus of the story or plot. Surprisingly, race is not mentioned in the story. The book fit Sims Bishop's definition of "culturally generic or neutral" literature (Sims Bishop, 1992). In culturally generic or neutral books, the illustrations may depict characters from different ethnic backgrounds, but the experiences of the character(s) are universal or "generically American." In order to best gauge young children's awareness of the race of the characters in the story, it was imperative that a race-neutral text be used. This approach reduced the likelihood of prompting participant reactions to race or of the researcher guiding responses prompted by story content.

Finally, this book was chosen because even though children participating in this study may or may not have been familiar with Little Bill, this is a book series and television show aimed at children of this age. Children who may not have been familiar with Little Bill may instead have related to his character or one of his classmates because they were around the same age and may have shared similar experiences. Children who see characters that they think are like them tend to take more interest in the book and feel that they can contribute to discussions following a reading of the book (Temple, Martinez, Yokota, Naylor, 2002). According to Beaty (1991), young children identify with the characters in picture storybooks. Children's close identification with the main characters in storybooks is referred to as "book-character bonding" or "book-bonding" (Pratt, 1991).

Research Design

This was a quasi-qualitative study in which a “culturally neutral” multicultural children’s book was used to elicit natural responses from the children who participated in this study. It is considered qualitative because there was no elicitation of specific responses. On the other hand, one book was used as stimulus for all children and children were all asked the same questions. Children’s answers were recorded and the next question was asked. Children did not influence the direction of the study, but neither did the researcher place any limitations on children’s responses to questions.

The book was read separately to each child taking part in the study, which included 18 children from the pre-kindergarten and 17 children from the Head Start classrooms at the child development center where the research was conducted. With each child, after the story was read, an open-ended interview was conducted. Children were asked to talk about the characters in the picture storybook in order to gauge their awareness of race. Children were encouraged to compare and contrast the characters featured in the story to themselves and to other characters. They were asked to point out what they thought was “different” or “the same” about themselves and the characters in the story. These questions allowed children to talk about any aspects of the characters without any direct prompting or directions from the researcher/interviewer. Therefore, children’s unsolicited comments involving race, were a reflection of their natural knowledge of race.

In order to best capture the preschoolers’ natural knowledge of race, the researcher needed access to the inner world of the child. The inner world of the child includes the child’s thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and opinions (Greig & Taylor, 1999).

The inner world is where the real voice of the child is found. An open-ended interview method was selected for this study; thus, providing the researcher a window into the inner world of the child by allowing the child to talk about what mattered most to her or him.

The interactive and qualitative nature of this method also allowed the researcher to take into account the unique needs of each child taking part in the study. Within the interview setting, some allowances were made for child motivation and/or cognitive and linguistic competences (Greig & Taylor, 1999). For example, a child who did not feel like taking part in the interview on a certain day was invited back on a different day. Also, the researcher decided to end an interview with a child at any point during the session (a) if the child was having difficulties with the questions, (b) if the researcher deemed that the child did not understand the questions, or (c) if a certain line of questioning made the child extremely uncomfortable. In addition to these situational considerations, physical adaptations were made in order to facilitate a smooth and rewarding interview for both the child and the researcher. At the completion of each interview, children got to pick a sticker. The minimally restrictive nature of an open-ended interview in this study allowed the researcher and children both some flexibility in negotiating the quality of the interview experience.

Analysis of Data

Children's answers to questions were recorded in full. These data were analyzed using content analysis in order to identify similarities and differences in children's answers. The definition of race awareness used in this study was "knowledge of both the visible difference between racial categories and the perceptual cues by which one classifies people into divisions" (Porter, 1971, p. 22). The focus will be on children's

awareness of visual physical characteristics. Visible physical racial cues of race and ethnic awareness include skin color, hair color, hair texture, eye color and facial features such as the shape of the eyes, lips and nose. Using this definition of race awareness as a guide, data regarding young children's knowledge of multicultural messages in the Little Bill book were gathered and analyzed. Thus, the question that guided this inquiry was whether these physical racial characteristics were part of the young child's knowledge of difference in classifying people into different categories. More specifically, the questions addressed were: What aspects of race of the characters in a picture storybook are young children aware of? What cultural meanings or messages about race are young children getting from stories that are read to them? Does the measure elicit children's comments?

There was some prior interaction between the researcher and some of the children who participated in the Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Study. The researcher served as a graduate research assistant on another research project in which some of the children were participants. Also, the researcher had some interaction with the children serving as a substitute teacher in the pre-kindergarten and Head Start classrooms at the center. Thus, the children were more likely to participate given their familiarity and positive interactions with the researcher.

Because of the nature of the research methods used in the study, self-reflection was a part of the data analysis and interpretation process for the researcher/interviewer. Because of the prior interaction between the interviewer, child participants, and parents, the researcher was mindful that knowledge of such information as socio-cultural status, child personality, classroom behavior, and attitudes could influence the interpretation of the data. Researcher bias was minimized by having another person who had not had any

interaction with the children or parents at the child development center view and code some of the tapes. Also, in this study, even though child participants were around the same age, children were recruited from two distinct socio-cultural groups: one group of children was from a pre-kindergarten program at a university-based child development center and the second group of children was from a Head Start program housed within the same child development center. Careful attention was paid to children's responses to interview questions as opposed to the interviewer's personal impressions about child intelligence or ability. To more accurately capture the young child's point of view, in reviewing and analyzing the child data, the interviewer continually referred back to the recorded interviews in order to examine and reduce interviewer bias.

Even though children were familiar with the researcher/interviewer prior to the start of the data collection, the researcher was mindful of the influence that the interviewer's physical characteristics and personality traits can have on children's responses to the questions in the study. However, there is literature reporting that the race/ethnicity of the interviewer does not affect children's ethnic attitudes (Clark, Hocevar, and Dembo, 1980, Corenblum & Wilson, 1982, Gurkin, 1968, Jones, 1968, Moore, 1976).

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Thirty-five children were interviewed in this study. Interviews were reviewed and coded using the Racial and Perceptual Cues Coding Sheet (see Appendix F). In analyzing interviews, race awareness was defined as “knowledge of both the visible difference between racial categories and the perceptual cues by which one classifies people into divisions” (Porter, as cited in Alejandro-Wright, 1985, p. 186). What aspects of race of the characters in a picture storybook are young children aware of? What cultural meanings or messages about race are young children getting from stories that are read to them? Does the measure elicit children’s comments?

Credibility of Child Responses

Before considering issues of race, I provide evidence that children did know what they were doing. Before asking any questions about themselves and the book characters, I asked them to tell me what the story was about. Children were able to share key events from the story. Even though they did not always list events sequentially, some children referred to specific events from the story. Some children referred to specific pictures in the book in talking about what the story was about. Some children focused on a specific character and what the character was doing in the story. Descriptions of the story were consistent with what I read to them. Although they were not the same, all the children seem to get the gist of the story.

Racial and Ethnic Descriptions of Storybook Characters

In this study, in describing the characters in the book, children referred to some but not all of the racial cues used in gauging an individual's awareness of race. The racial cues that children used most were skin color, hair color, and eye color. Children did not use the racial facial features such as the shape of the eyes, lips, or nose in describing the characters in the story or in categorizing people into different groups.

Looks Just Like Me

In describing and comparing the appearance of themselves and the characters in the story, children tended to use skin color, hair color, and/or eye color in their descriptions. Using these racial cues, children categorized the characters in the story into two main groups: (a) a group that "looked like them" and (b) a group that "did not look like them". Children who placed the characters in the group that looked like them referred to the similarities in skin color, hair color, and/or eye color between themselves and the characters in the story. They pointed to characters in the story that had some of the same racial and phenotypic characteristics as they did. Both African American and Caucasian American girls and boys used racial cues in categorizing characters into these two groups.

For example, in choosing characters in the story that looked most like her, a Caucasian American girl picked the characters that looked racially similar to her. She pointed out the similarities in skin color, hair color, and eye color between her and the characters.

Interviewer: Which person in this story do you think looks the most like you?

Child: (Points to Andrew, a red-haired Caucasian American boy in the story and his mother.) I think both of them.

Interviewer: Why?

Child: Cause they kinda have the same colored hair as me and they also have the same colored skin and they also have (inaudible) blue eyes.

On the other hand, a Caucasian American boy was not able to identify any character in the book that looked racially similar to him. Instead, he referred to someone he knew in real life of similar skin color, hair color, and eye color as the person who looked the most like him.

Interviewer: Which person in this story do you think looks the most like you?

Child: I'm would guess...nobody.

Interviewer: Oh, there has to be somebody. Can you choose somebody who looks the most like you?

Child: Somebody that most looks like me in the real world?

Interviewer: Yeah. You can point to them in the story. Somebody in the book who looks like you, most like you in the real world. You can point to somebody in the book.

Child: Umm, umm. He's actually real though. He's in the real world.

Interviewer: Who?

Child: Um, his name is ----- like mine. And he really looks like me. Blonde hair and he has the same skin as me and he's about the same height as me.

An African American girl used facial cues in making a distinction in terms of those who looked like her and those who did not look like her. She picked Fuchsia, an African American girl in the story, as the character that she felt was like her.

Interviewer: Do you think that this girl or boy is like you?

Child: (Pointing to Fuchsia.) She's got black hands just like me. She's got the same color as me.

Later on in the interview, when asked: 'Which person in this story do you think looks the most like you?' she again pointed to Fuchsia, along with, April and Little Bill (African American characters in the story). She picked the African American characters as the people in the story that she thought looked the most like her. Alternatively, when asked: 'Which person in this story do you think does not look like you at all?' she pointed to Kiku, Andrew, and Andrew's mother. Kiku is an Asian girl and both Andrew and his mother are Caucasian American.

Sometimes, when the skin color of the child and the character matched, but the hair color did not, some children would acknowledge this fact, but would point to the similarity between their skin color and that of the character in the story. This point is highlighted in this conversation between the investigator and a blonde-haired Caucasian American boy.

Interviewer: Which person in this story do you think looks the most like you?

Child: Let me look. Who do you think is? Him. (Points to Andrew, a red-haired Caucasian American boy in the story.)

Interviewer: Why?

Child: Because he has kinda the same hair as me, the same hair color.

Interviewer: What else?

Child: Um, um, well, that's pretty much it.

Does Not Look Like Me

Alternatively, children who placed the characters in the group that did not look like them also stated that the characters in the story had “different colored” skin and/or “different colored hair.” Some children simply stated that the “face” or the “hair” of a character was different from their own and that was why they “did not look like them.” When asked: Do you think that this girl or boy is different from you? one Caucasian American girl referred to the difference in skin color and hair color between her and her chosen favorite character when asked if she thought her favorite character was different from her.

Interviewer: Do you think that this girl or boy is different from you?

Child: Yeah. (Referring to Fuchsia, a dark-skinned African American girl in the story)

Interviewer: Why?

Child: She's a little different. She has different colored skin, different colored hair. That's all the differences. And she may be littler than me. No, she's bigger than me. She's bigger than me. No, she's the same age. Except, just a little, little bigger than me. She sits on desks. She's in kindergarten.

Sometimes, these differences seemed so apparent to children that they would direct the interviewer to simply look at them and the characters in the story to see that difference. Children's acknowledgement of the visual, physical difference in skin color and hair color is illustrated in this conversation between the interviewer and a Caucasian American girl.

Interviewer: Which person in this story do you think does not look like you at all?

Child: (Points to April, a dark-skinned African American girl in the story.)

Interviewer: Why?

Child: Let me find her. I think this girl doesn't.

Interviewer: Why?

Child: Cause, look at her. Between me.

Interviewer: Can you tell me?

Child: Look at her face and (inaudible) my face. Our faces are different.

Interviewer: How is it different? How are your faces different?

Child: Look at her hair and look at my face. Look at my hair. Mom never puts it in a pony tail. And I don't wear the same clothes as her. That's all that's different about us.

When asked how she and three characters from the story were different from her, one African American girl pointed to the difference in their skin color.

Interviewer: How are they different from you? (Fuchsia, a dark-skinned African American girl; April, a dark-skinned African American girl; and Kiku, a light-skinned Asian girl)

Child: She's not my color (pointing to Kiku). She's my color (pointing to Fuchsia). She's my color (pointing to April).

Black and White

Children used color word terms to describe 'What makes the people in the story the same?' and/or 'What makes the people in the story different?' The color-word terms that were used most in describing skin color by children were "black" or "brown" and "white." Both African and Caucasian American children used these terms in categorizing the characters in the story into the different groups. Children used the color words "brown" or "black" interchangeably in labeling characters that had brown skin into the "black people" category. Children did not make a real distinction between different shades of brown skin color. The only exception was that some children described characters with very dark brown skin as "kinda black," "real dark black," or "dark brown." Children used the color word "white" to label characters into the "white people" category. Both African and Caucasian American children used the color word "white," to label the characters that had light skin.

The way that African American and Caucasian American children used these terms was very similar to how they categorized the characters in the story into the two groups. For example, one Caucasian American boy concluded that what made the characters in the story the same or different from each other is that some of them were one skin color and some of them were not.

Interviewer: What makes the people in the story the same?

Child: Yeah, a lot of them are like black...kinda dark brown skin. And, that's all.

Interviewer: What makes the people in the story different?

Child: Cause some are black and some aren't.

An African American girl shared similar sentiments when asked the same question.

Interviewer: What makes the people in the story the same?

Child: They make the same cause they're black. (Pointing to the coach, an Asian character in the story, Kiku, Andrew, and then Andrew's mother) They...She's white. She's white. He's white. She's white.

People "Like Them" Versus People "Not Like Them"

Children also asked to consider the more abstract question of how the characters were "like them" and "not like them." Taking into account more than appearance (see questions # 5, 6, 11, 12, 16, 17), children considered similarities and differences in age, gender, size (height), favorite color(s), dress, or a shared interest in certain leisure activities. Children considered characters in the story as being "like them" if they had any of these characteristics in common. For example, a Caucasian American girl stated

that Fuchsia, an African American girl in the story was like her because: "...I think her favorite color is pink, too, and blue." Similarly, another Caucasian American girl stated that how she and Kiku, an Asian character in the book, dressed, was what made them like each other.

Interviewer: Which person in this story do you think looks the most like you?

Child: Kiku.

Interviewer: Why?

Child: That one. (Inaudible.) She looks the most like me cause we both like to wear dresses. I really like to wear dresses.

Interviewer: That's why you think she looks the most like you?

Child: Yeah. We both look kind of cute. (Inaudible.) Very cute.

One African American girl simply stated that Fuchsia, April, and Kiku were like her: "Because they're girls." After choosing Little Bill as his favorite boy in the story "Cause he my friend," one African American boy stated that "He like me (inaudible) got the numbers on." For this little boy, because Little Bill had numbers on his shirt just like he did was enough for him to feel that they were like each other. One Caucasian American boy felt that Little Bill was like him because of a perceived shared interest in basketball.

Interviewer: Do you think that this girl or boy is like you?

Child: Maybe in some ways.

Interviewer: What ways? How is the girl or boy like you?

Child: Well, he likes to play basketball.

Interviewer: What else?

Child: Um, I can't think of anything else.

Alternatively, children considered characters in the story as being “not like them” if there were differences in any of these same characteristics: age, gender, size (height), favorite color(s), dress, or an interest in certain leisure activities. For example, one Caucasian American girl stated that the differences in clothes between her and a character in the story was what made the people in the story different.

Interviewer: What makes the people in the story different?

Child: They have different clothes on and different shoes on and Little Bill, he has a B on his shirt and I only have one B, right here.

For one Caucasian American boy, the difference in type of clothing and the color of clothes were determining factors in deciding who looked like him and who didn't.

Interviewer: Which person in this story do you think does not look like you at all?

Child: (Points to Bobby, an African American boy in the story.) This one.

Interviewer: Why?

Child: Because he has black hair, well you have black hair.

Interviewer: What else?

Child: Um, cause he has a green shirt on and I'm not wearing a green shirt. And he has blue pants on (inaudible). And also his shoes...not like my shoes. That's pretty much (inaudible).

An African American boy cited differences in clothes, hair, and shoes as the things that made him different from the people in the story.

Interviewer: Do you think the people in the story are different?

Child: (Nods his head to say yes.)

Interviewer: How are they different?

Child: Cause they got different clothes and different hair. And different shoes. And different clothes. And different hair. And different whistles. And different heads. And different eyeballs. And different (inaudible).

Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Child Questionnaire

Overall, the Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Child Questionnaire did elicit some comments from children in terms of their knowledge of race and ethnicity.

Children's responses to some of the questions in the questionnaire revealed the racial cues that preschoolers are aware of and use in categorizing people into different racial groups. Children's responses also revealed some of the other factors that preschoolers use in determining which characters are like them and which characters are not like them. This measure suggests that race is not the only factor that preschoolers use in grouping people into different categories.

Children needed a lot of repetition of questions and redirections in order to complete the interview. The reason for this was that children were easily distracted and needed encouragement to focus throughout the interview. Even though some preschoolers were very forthcoming with their answers and gave very thoughtful answers to the questions, most of the children involved in the study gave one-worded or very short-phrased answers. In response to many questions, some children shrugged their

shoulders or simply stated “I don’t know” as their answers. Children did the most talking when they were sharing about events in their lives that were unrelated to interview questions. At times, they would interrupt the interviewer in order to share personal stories or share a connection that they’d made to an event or a character in the story. However, most of the time, the stories or connections that children shared were unrelated to the issues that were the focus of this study.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

What these findings suggest is that young children are aware of some racial factors that make them “look” different from each other, but they are also aware of other things that they feel make them and the characters in the story alike. Young children have some knowledge of the racial cues that adults use in classifying people into different groups. Children’s awareness of race is very limited in the scope of its content. Young children’s awareness of race is visual and focused on physical characteristics and descriptions of themselves and those around them. At this age, children are very concrete. Their knowledge of race and ethnicity is limited to their awareness of differences in what they can see.

Additionally, even though children used these racial cues in describing the characters in the story into a group of people that “looked like them” and a group of people that “did not look like them,” children also had another way of grouping the characters in the story. Children grouped characters into a group of people that “were like them” and a group of people that “were not like them.” Inclusion in either of these groups did not prevent them from putting some of these same characters into the group of people that were “like them” and those who were “not like them.” Children acknowledged differences in racial characteristics between themselves and the characters

in the story, but there were other factors in the characters that children were aware of and identified with. This is indicative of race being a factor used by children to classify or categorize people, but not necessarily to exclude other people.

Dualistic Thinking

Young children have their own way of seeing the world. They are actively constructing their world as they learn about new things and gain new experiences. As they construct their world, they use categorization of people and things. Some researchers have said that children tend to organize their universe along dualistic constructs: boy/girl, black/white, are friends/aren't friends, big/little, grown-ups/kids, good/bad (Holmes, 1995). These constructs represent opposites, and inclusion in one category precludes membership in the other. Describing children's thinking as dualistic implies a person can only be in or out on the basis of each dualistic construct.

In this study, in categorizing people into "same" or "different" groups, children used some racial cues to organize themselves and the characters in the storybook into different groups. Children were asked to create two main groups: (a) a group that "looked like them" and (b) a group that "did not look like them." Children in this study also grouped the characters in the story into a group of people that was "like them" and a group that was "not like them." What was surprising about the second groups of people that children created was that although some children used some racial characteristics, most referred to other social and physical characteristics that made the characters "like them." These children appeared to have more flexibility in their thinking than expected.

That is, they qualified skin color and they categorized children differently based on race-based cues and other cues. Race clearly was not “at the center” of their thinking about themselves or the characters in the book.

This does not mean that children are not dualistic in their thinking. It means that their criteria are not always the same that adults would use. Nevertheless, children were dualistic in thinking of their similarity to characters in the book. It is important to recognize that the criteria themselves do not make thinkers either dualistic or not.

Importance of Listening

According to these data, adults need to do a better job of listening to children. By listening, we can better understand how children view the world around them; we can be less likely to impose our adult understanding and impressions on their unique experiences. This is especially true when it comes to conducting research where very young children are the participants.

In this study, by listening to children, I was able to discover what children considered to be the most salient descriptors that make them similar to or different from other children. Of course, we know that children attend to concrete descriptors, but in this book wherein the issues of race and ethnic differences are so available for focus, children chose other issues. They addressed racial indicators only in terms of appearance, but not in terms of personal characteristics. We can conclude that at this age, race is not as salient as it is likely to become as children age.

If children are truly to be participants, we need to move away from forced-choice instruments and move toward methods that allow children to answer research questions more freely and fully. When this happens, we can capture a more complete

picture of what children know rather than limiting our data to issues that are more relevant to us – and perhaps only understandable to adults -- than to them.

Use of Multicultural Resources

The use of “culturally generic or neutral,” multicultural children’s books may be key to helping children accept others on their own merit rather than according to societal norms regarding race. The book used in this study had characters of several racial backgrounds. The children in the story were engaged in everyday activities where they had to come up with a solution to an everyday problem. “Culturally generic or neutral” multicultural children’s books feature children of different cultural and ethnic backgrounds whose experiences often transcend their race, culture, or background. The experiences of the characters in these books are experiences that any child of a similar age could have. In reading these types of books, children can see themselves in these stories because they can relate to the experience(s) of the characters in the story. Indeed, in this study, children made assumptions about characters that seemed “like them” even if they “did not look like them.” Such was the case of the Caucasian American girl who stated that, Fuchsia, an African American girl in the story was like her because: “...I think her favorite color is pink, too, and blue.”

Recommendations for Research

Researchers in this area should strive to create or use research methods and procedures that are child-appropriate in order to capture a more developmentally accurate understanding of children’s thinking about race and ethnicity in the preschool years. Research efforts should be focused on the development of open-ended interviews or measures that allow children to talk freely and openly about their perceptions of race and

ethnicity. The point is that we must ask children what they think rather than assume we know based on their limited behaviors (such as choosing a doll). Results from this study suggest that the use of one type of multicultural children's books help children think about race; an open-ended interview can give them an opportunity to talk freely and openly about race as well as other topics of importance to them.

Towards creating an open-ended child-appropriate measure to capture a more developmentally accurate understanding of children's understanding of race, a "culturally generic or neutral" multicultural book might be used in future research studies using similar procedures. Also, researchers may consider the use of a "cultural-specific" book in gauging young children's awareness of the race. This change in the type of multicultural book used may shed additional light on young children's knowledge of race as well as ethnicity. Researchers should also consider using a shorter book. In using a shorter book, preschoolers would not have to be on task for such a long time. In the current study, the amount of time that children had to stay on task in order to get through the interview was problematic. The combined reading and interview session appeared to be too long for some children. With a shorter book, more time and emphasis can be placed on the quality of the interview portion instead of the reading portion of the procedure.

The Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Child Questionnaire should be shortened as well. Some questions did not elicit any responses; retaining them should be based on theoretical or methodological reasons. For example, if a question could reveal something important about how children think in another study, it should be kept. Questions should be eliminated only after they've resulted in no responses from

participants in a few more studies. Future researchers can choose which questions to use based on the purpose of their respective studies. The questions from the questionnaire that elicited the most responses from children were: Do you think that this girl or boy is like you? Why? How is the girl or boy like you? Do you think that this girl or boy is different from you? Why? How is the girl or boy different from you? Which person in this story do you think looks the most like you? Why? Which person in this story do you think does not look like you at all? Why? What makes the people in the story the same? What makes the people in the story different? Researchers should consider the inclusion of these questions in any future studies researching a similar topic.

Recommendations for Parents and Educators

Teachers and childcare providers can influence how children learn and think about race through the books they read-aloud in their classrooms and the books that they have in their classroom library that all children have access to. Parents and caregivers can influence children in a similar way with the books that they buy and read to their children at home. One way for children to think of themselves without explicit or implicit regard for race is to have access to multicultural books with a variety of types of characters. A parent is a child's first and most important teacher. Especially within the preschool years, parents control what their children are exposed to and the experiences they have. At this stage in their development, children are becoming aware of the differences and similarities between them and other people around them. This is the time when parents can introduce people with different backgrounds and cultures to through the

use of picture storybooks. This exposure to people of different backgrounds in books, who may share similar experiences, can help the child relate to other people even though they may not look like them.

Within the classroom, children who see themselves and people who look like them in the books in the classroom feel that they are important and that there is a place for them in the classroom (Temple, Martinez, Yokota, & Naylor, 2002). More importantly, as the teacher reads different books featuring people of different racial, ethnic, cultural and economical backgrounds who are dealing with real-world issues, the opportunity to talk about some of the problems addressed in these stories is invaluable.

There are certain social problems like racism, poverty and crime that are difficult to talk about, especially with children. Yet, these topics could be sensitively introduced and discussed through the use of a high-quality picture storybook. When approached appropriately, teachers can tackle difficult topics with their students and create an environment where students can feel free to talk. Multicultural books should be in all classrooms and in all children's hands. Rather than decorative assets, these books should be an integral part of the curriculum and classroom conversations.

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TABLE 1

Table 1
Demographic Descriptors of Children

	Number	Percentage
Male children	14	40
Female children	21	60
Race/Ethnicity		
African American/Black	18	51.43
Caucasian American/White	17	48.57
Parent education		
No high school	0	0.00
High school not completed	2	5.71
High school completed	1	2.86
Some college completed	0	0.00
Have Technical degree	1	2.86
Have Bachelor degree	6	17.14
Have Master degree	5	14.29
Have Doctoral degree	5	15.29
No educational information provided	15	42.86

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Parental Permission Form for the Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Study

Multicultural Messages in a Picture Storybook: Conceptions of Three- and Four-Year-Old Children

Parental Permission Form for the Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Study

Dear Parent or Guardian:

The “Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Study: Multicultural Messages in a Picture Storybook: Conceptions of Three- and Four-Year-Old Children” is an ongoing research study being conducted at the McPhaul Center. The purpose of this study is to assess young children’s conceptions of multicultural messages in a picture storybook. The voices of children themselves are not prominently heard in this area of research. But in this study, I will listen to children’s perceptions using a book that is intended to be culturally neutral in order to attain a more developmentally appropriate understanding of young children’s conceptions of race and ethnicity.

Children participating in the study will be signed out of the classroom during their free play times in order to complete a reading interaction and interview with the researcher. This session will last approximately 20 to 25 minutes. The reading and interview sessions will be videotaped. The interview questions are designed to help understand children’s knowledge and understanding of such multicultural issues as race and ethnicity. A copy of the child interview questions is available upon request for review. At any time, a parent may request that the child be removed from the research project. Children’s participation will be completely voluntary. At anytime before or during the session, a child may refuse to answer a question or to complete the interview. We are also asking parents to provide information about their own and their child’s interaction with books. Children’s multicultural knowledge will be assessed through analysis of parents’ answers to the questions from the parent questionnaire and children’s answers to the questions from the interview sessions.

All videotapes, questionnaire data, and participant information are CONFIDENTIAL. No analysis will reveal from whom data were obtained. Participant identification information will be kept secure in locked storage as will the videotapes. If parents choose to withdraw their child from this study, they have the option of retrieving their child’s data (including video records) from the database. Videotapes from consenting children and parents will be kept indefinitely for later data analysis. The videotapes may at some point be viewed in either a classroom setting or conference strictly for educational purposes or as teaching tools. The identity of the participants will not be revealed.

The Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Study at the McPhaul Center is conducted under the supervision of Dr. Lynda Henley Walters. Any inquiries about this study may be directed to Genise Vertus, a graduate student in the Department of Child and Family Development, at (706) 389-6393 or (beginning June 20, 2005) (305) 770-1219 (home)/ (706) 542-4905 (work) or at gvertus@yahoo.com. Research at The University of Georgia is conducted under the approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Questions or problems regarding this research project may also be addressed to Chris A. Joseph, Ph.D., Human Subjects Office, The University of Georgia, 612 Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone: (706) 542-3199; E-mail: IRB@uga.edu.

Multicultural Messages in a Picture Storybook: Conceptions of Three- and Four-Year-Old Children

Parental/Guardian Permission

I have read the above information concerning research at the University of Georgia's McPhaul Child and Family Development Center.

_____ I agree to participate and give consent for my child to participate in the Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Study: Multicultural Messages in a Picture Storybook: Conceptions of Three- and Four-Year-Old Children currently being conducted at the McPhaul Center.

_____ I do NOT agree to have my child participate in the Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Study: Multicultural Messages in a Picture Storybook: Conceptions of Three- and Four-Year-Old Children currently being conducted at the McPhaul Center.

PRINT NAME

Parent/Guardian Signature and Date

PRINT NAME

Parent/Guardian Signature and Date

APPENDIX B

Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Child Questionnaire

Multicultural Messages in a Picture Storybook: Conceptions of Three- and Four-Year-Old Children

Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Child Questionnaire

(Use the child's given name as often as is needed throughout the session in order to engage the child in the activity and allow them to become participants in the reading and interview session.)

Before we read this book...

1. Let's see if you can tell me all kinds of things about yourself? (*Some children may need more prompting than others. The questions below are probe questions to be used if the child says very little or doesn't say anything at all about herself or himself.*)

- How old are you?
- What color are your eyes?
- What color is your hair?
- Do you have any brothers or sisters?
- Do you have a pet at home?
- *If yes:* What kind of pet is it?
- What is your pet's name?
- What is your favorite color?
- What is your favorite food to eat?
- What is your favorite television show to watch?
- Who is your favorite television or cartoon character?
- What is your favorite book to read?
- Why is it your favorite book?
- Who reads this book to you? When?

- What kinds of things do you like to do for fun?

Thank you for answering my questions. Would you like to know a little about me?

(If child answers yes, INTERVIEWER script):

My name is Genise. I have dark-brown eyes, black hair, and very dark-brown skin.

I am five feet-three inches tall. I have two sisters and two brothers. I don't have a pet right now, but I am thinking of getting a kitty cat. My favorite show to watch is "Little Bill" on Nick Jr. My favorite character is Elmo from Sesame Street. My favorite book to read is "Harold and the Purple Crayon." It's my favorite book because purple is my favorite color and the little boy in the story uses a purple crayon and his imagination to create all sorts of great adventures for himself. For fun, I like to write stories.

Now, let's go through the book together and look at the pictures. After we finish looking at the pictures, I will read the story to you and ask you some questions.

Do you understand what we are going to do? Let's begin.

START OF READING INTERACTION

(THE HONEYWOOD STREET FAIR by Catherine Lukas, Illustrated by Barry Goldberg)

2. Can you tell me what happened in the story?
3. Who is your favorite girl or boy in this story?

Why?

(For subsequent questions, use the gender of the child's chosen favorite character when or where appropriate. Also, where appropriate, make it a point to use the character name of the child's chosen favorite character instead of "this girl" or "this boy": LITTLE BILL, ANDREW, FUCHSHIA, KIKU, APRIL, BOBBY, MONTY, etc.)

4. Can you tell me some things about the girl or boy in the story?
5. Do you think that this girl or boy is like you?
How is the girl or boy like you? (*Similar to Question 11,16*)
6. Do you think that this girl or boy is different from you?
How is the girl or boy different from you? (*Similar to Question 12, 17*)
7. If this girl or boy were a real person in your class, would you want her or him to be your friend?
Why or why not?
8. Would you want this girl or boy to be your best friend?
Why or why not?
9. Could this girl or boy be your sister or brother?
Would you want this girl or boy to be your sister or brother?
Why or why not?
10. Would you want this girl or boy to be your GIRLFRIEND or BOYFRIEND? (*Use this question only if the child's chosen favorite character is of the opposite sex.*)
Why or why not?
11. Which person in this story do you think looks the most like you? (*Similar to Question 5, 16*)
Why?
12. Which person in this story do you think does not look like you at all? (*Similar to Question 6, 17*)
Why?

13. Just for fun, if you could be any one of the children in this story, who would you be?
- Why?
14. How does reading this story make you feel?
- Why?
15. Did you think that this was a fun book to read?
- Why?
16. What makes the people in the story the same? *(Similar to Question 5)*
17. What makes the people in the story different? *(Similar to Question 6)*
18. Do you think this person has a color? *(Point to main character in the story or child's chosen favorite character. Point to LITTLE BILL and then ANDREW on the front cover.)*
19. What color is this girl's or boy's skin? *(Point to main character in the story or child's chosen favorite character. Point to LITTLE BILL and then ANDREW on the front cover.)*
20. What do you think about this girl's or boy's skin color? *(Point to LITTLE BILL and then ANDREW on the front cover.)*
- Why?
- How did you learn about the color of a person's skin?
- Who told you about the color of a person's skin?
21. Why do you think people have different skin colors?

22. How is this girl's or boy's skin color different from this girl's or boy's? (*Point to specific characters in the story. Point to and compare LITTLE BILL and ANDREW on the front cover.*)
23. How is this girl's or boy's skin color different from yours? (*Point to specific characters in the story. Point to and compare LITTLE BILL and ANDREW on the front cover.*)
24. Which girl or boy in the story has the same skin color as you?
25. IN REAL LIFE, do you know anyone who has the same skin color as this girl or boy in the story? (*Point to specific characters in the story. Point to LITTLE BILL and then ANDREW on the front cover. The emphasis is placed on "in real life" for question 25 because some children misunderstand question 25 as relating only to the characters in the book as opposed to people they know in real life.*)
- Who?
- Can you tell me about them?
- Are they a friend, family, relative, etc.?
26. Do you know who (the character) Little Bill is?
27. Do you read Little Bill books?
28. Do you watch Little Bill on television?
29. Do you like Little Bill when you watch him on television?
30. What do you like about Little Bill?

Question 1-child prompting questions

Questions 2-17-open-ended questions

Questions 18-25-race awareness questions

Questions 26-30-Little Bill questions

That's it. We are finished. Thank you for answering all of my questions. I really appreciate your help. Here is a box of crayons for all of your help. You can also pick out a sticker from the front or back flap of this book, if you want to.

We are now ready to go back to the classroom.

APPENDIX C

Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Child Assent Form

Multicultural Messages in a Picture Storybook: Conceptions of Three- and Four-Year-Old Children

Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Child Assent Form

Please help me with a project about things that children like you think about. We will read a book together and ask each other questions. There are no right or wrong answers to my questions. I just want to know what you think about what is in the book.

I will keep your answers just between you and me. You can decide to stop at any time or not answer any questions that you don't want to answer.

Do you understand what we are going to do? Do you have any questions you want to ask me? Would you be willing to do the project with me? Thank you for taking part in this very important project. Could you please write your name on the line below for me? Thank you.

Now we are ready to begin the project.

Child's Name/Signature (where age appropriate)
or Initials

Session Date/Interviewer
Initials

APPENDIX D

Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Child and Parent Demographic Information Form

Multicultural Messages in a Picture Storybook: Conceptions of Three- and Four-Year-Old Children

Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Child and Parent Demographic Information Form

CHILD INFORMATION

1. Date of birth: _____
 2. Sex:
 - _____ Female
 - _____ Male
 3. Race/ethnicity: *(Please check one. Where applicable, circle the race or ethnicity category which you most identify with or you most consider yourself to be a part of.)*
 - _____ African American / Black
 - _____ American Indian / Alaska Native
 - _____ Asian / Asian American
 - _____ East Indian / East Indian American
 - _____ European American / White
 - _____ Hispanic / Latino / Latin American
 - _____ Middle Eastern / Middle Eastern American
 - _____ Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander
 - _____ West Indian / West Indian American
 - _____ Bi-Racial *(Please specify.)* _____
 - _____ Multi-Racial *(Please specify.)* _____
 - _____ Other *(Please specify.)* _____
-

PARENT INFORMATION

1. Date of birth: _____

2. Relationship to child:
 - _____ Mother
 - _____ Father
 - _____ Other (*Please specify.*) _____

3. Race/ethnicity: (*Please check one. Where applicable, circle the race or ethnicity category which you most identify with or you most consider yourself to be a part of.*)
 - _____ African American / Black
 - _____ American Indian / Alaska Native
 - _____ Asian / Asian American
 - _____ East Indian / East Indian American
 - _____ European American / White
 - _____ Hispanic / Latino / Latin American
 - _____ Middle Eastern / Middle Eastern American
 - _____ Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander
 - _____ West Indian / West Indian American
 - _____ Bi-Racial (*Please specify.*) _____
 - _____ Multi-Racial (*Please specify.*) _____
 - _____ Other (*Please specify.*) _____

4. Have you worked outside of the home in the last six months?
 - _____ Yes _____ No

5. If you work outside of the home, is it full-time or part-time?
 - _____ Full-time _____ Part-time _____ Don't work

6. What is your current occupation?

7. What types of things do you do at your job?

8. Approximately how much is your family's after-tax income per year?

Less than \$15,000

\$15,000-\$25,000

\$25,000-\$35,000

\$35,000-\$45,000

\$45,000-\$55,000

\$55,000-\$65,000

\$65,000-\$75,000

\$75,000-\$85,000

\$85,000-\$95,000

\$95,000-\$100,000

More than \$100,000

Other (*Please specify.*) _____

9. What is the highest grade or level of education completed? (*Please check one.*)

No high school

Have Technical degree

High school not completed

Have Bachelor degree

High school completed

Have Master degree

Some college completed

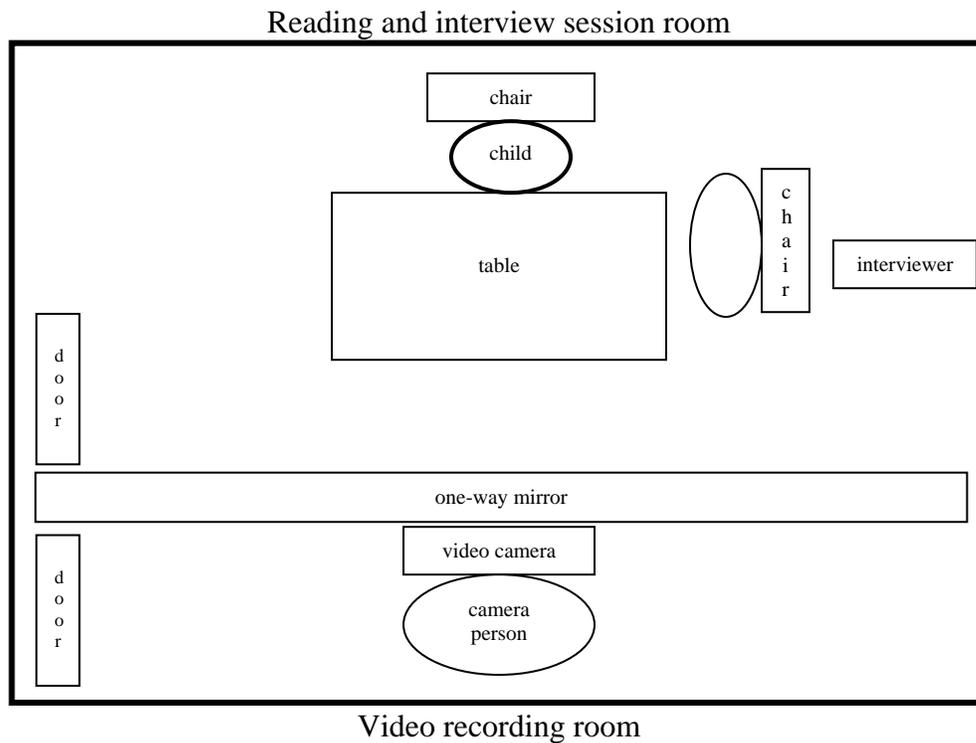
Have Doctoral degree

APPENDIX E

Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Study Research Room Set Up

Multicultural Messages in a Picture Storybook: Conceptions of Three- and Four-Year-Old Children

Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Study Research Room Set Up



APPENDIX F

Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Study Racial and Perceptual Cues Coding Sheet

Multicultural Messages in a Picture Storybook: Conceptions of Three- and Four-Year-Old Children

Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Study Racial and Perceptual Cues Coding Sheet

Participant Identification Number:							
Child's First Name:				Child's Age:			
Interview Date:				Child's Date-of-Birth:			
Child's Sex:				Child's Race/Ethnicity:			
Program:				Child's Favorite Character:			
Start of Tape:				End of Tape:			
Child's Physical Description of Self							
Skin Color:				Hair Color:			
Hair Texture:				Eye Color:			
Favorite Color(s):							
Child's Physical Description of Favorite Character(s)							
Skin Color:				Hair Color:			
Hair Texture:				Eye Color:			
Miscellaneous:							
Racial Cues							
	skin color	hair color	hair texture	eye color	facial features (shape of)		
					eyes	lips	nose
Child							
Book Character							
Other							
Perceptual Cues							
ethnic values		Customs		language styles		behavioral codes	
Miscellaneous Cues							

APPENDIX G

Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Study Interview Transcription Form

Multicultural Messages in a Picture Storybook: Conceptions of Three- and Four-Year-Old Children

Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Study Interview Transcription Form

Participant Identification Number:	
Child's First Name:	Child's Age:
Interview Date:	Child's Date-of-Birth:
Child's Sex:	Child's Race/Ethnicity:
Child's Physical Description of Self:	
eye color:	
hair color:	
favorite color:	
Program:	Child's Favorite Character:
Start of Tape:	End of Tape:
2.	Can you tell me what happened in the story?
3.	Who is your favorite girl or boy in this story?
	Why?
4.	Can you tell me some things about the girl or boy in the story?
5.	Do you think that this girl or boy is like you?
	Why?
	How is the girl or boy like you? (Similar to Question 11, 16)
6.	Do you think that this girl or boy is different from you?
	Why?
	How is the girl or boy different from you? (Similar to Question 12, 17)
7.	If this girl or boy were a real person in your class, would you want her or him to be your friend?
	Why or why not?

8.	<p>Would you want this girl or boy to be your best friend?</p> <p>Why or why not?</p>
9.	<p>Could this girl or boy be your sister or brother?</p> <p>Why or why not?</p> <p>Would you want this girl or boy to be your sister or brother?</p> <p>Why or why not?</p>
10.	<p>Would you want this girl or boy to be your girlfriend or boyfriend?</p> <p>Why or why not?</p>
11.	<p>Which person in this story do you think looks the most like you? <i>(Similar to Question 5, 16)</i></p> <p>Why?</p>
12.	<p>Which person in this story do you think does not look like you at all? <i>(Similar to Question 6, 17)</i></p> <p>Why?</p>
13.	<p>Just for fun, if you could be any one of the children in this story, who would you be?</p> <p>Why?</p>
14.	<p>How does reading this story make you feel?</p> <p>Why?</p>
15.	<p>Did you think that this was a fun book to read?</p> <p>Why?</p>
16.	<p>What makes the people in the story the same? <i>(Similar to Question 5, 11)</i></p>
17.	<p>What makes the people in the story different? <i>(Similar to Question 6, 12)</i></p>
Comments:	

APPENDIX H

Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Study Sample Interview

Multicultural Messages in a Picture Storybook: Conceptions of Three- and Four-Year-Old Children

Preschool Multicultural Knowledge Study Sample Interview

Participant Identification Number:	
Child's First Name:	Child's Age:
Interview Date:	Child's Date-of-Birth:
Child's Sex:	Child's Race/Ethnicity:
Child's Physical Description of Self:	
eye color: hazel	
hair color: brown	
favorite colors: pink, blue, red	
father's hair color: dark brown	
Program:	Child's Favorite Character: Fuchsia
Start of Tape:	End of Tape:
2.	Can you tell me what happened in the story?
3.	Who is your favorite girl or boy in this story? Fuchsia. Why? I think she is cause she has pink on and pink's my favorite color.
4.	Can you tell me some things about the girl or boy in the story? I'll have to look, to see. She she was jumping on (inaudible) the table. She was hanging on. She was eating banana muffin. She was cheering for April and her best friend. And she was dancing. And she was sitting down.
5.	Do you think that this girl or boy is like you? Yes. Why? How is the girl or boy like you? (Similar to Question 11, 16) Cause I think her favorite color is pink too and blue.
6.	Do you think that this girl or boy is different from you? Yeah. Why? Yeah, she's a little different. She has different colored skin, different colored hair. That's all the differences. And she maybe littler than me. No, she's bigger than me. She's bigger than me. No, she's the same age. Except, just a little, little bigger than me. She sits on desks. She's in kindergarten. How is the girl or boy different from you? (Similar to Question 12, 17)

7.	<p>If this girl or boy were a real person in your class, would you want her or him to be your friend? Mm-uh. Why or why not? Well, because she seems very nice.</p>
8.	<p>Would you want this girl or boy to be your best friend? No. Why or why not? No, cause I already have a best friend, XXXXXX.</p>
9.	<p>Could this girl or boy be your sister or brother? No. Why or Why Not? No! She couldn't cause of her skin and her hair. Except for my daddy. My daddy...He's almost like her except he yelled at me a lot. We always get in a fight when Mom's sleeping. (Inaudible.) We wake up Boy-Boy. That's my bother. That's what we call him, Boy-Boy. But now we get along just fine. Cause, now that we play the opposite game. It's it's kinda funny. You use different words (inaudible). Like, let's play the opposite game right now. No, that means, yes! Would you want this girl or boy to be your sister or brother? No. Why or why not? No, cause I have a brother already and I'm jealous of him! Yeah, Mom always pays attention to him and I never get to spend time with her. But she still loves me. I'm jealous because he gets to go with Mom. (Inaudible.) I don't get to go with her. But when I'm mad, I never ever get to go with her. Cause I'm in my room and doing fun stuff and Mom's not there. And she goes to the grocery store and she leaves without saying goodbye and I'm mad and jealous because XXX gets to go with her. I didn't get to go with her. So I'm jealous.</p>
10.	<p>Would you want this girl or boy to be your girlfriend or boyfriend? Why or why not?</p>
11.	<p>Which person in this story do you think looks the most like you? (<i>Similar to Question 5, 16</i>) Kiku. Why? That one. (Inaudible.) She looks the most like me cause we both like to wear dresses. I really like to wear dresses. (That's why you think she looks the most like you?) Yeah. We both look kind of cute. (Inaudible.) Very cute.</p>
12.	<p>Which person in this story do you think does not look like you at all? (<i>Similar to Question 6, 17</i>) (points to April) Why? Let me find her. I think this girl doesn't. (Why?) Cause, look at her. Between me. (Can you tell me?) Look at her face and (inaudible) my face. Our faces are</p>

different. (**How is it different? How are your faces different?**) Look at her hair and look at my face. Look at my hair. Mom never puts it in a pony tail. And I don't wear the same clothes as her. That's all that's different about us.

13. Just for fun, if you could be any one of the children in this story, who would you be?

Kiku.

Why?

Cause she looks a lot like me. I want to be Kiku.

14. How does reading this story make you feel?

Happy.

Why?

Yeah, it makes me feel really happy inside. Well, cause I like reading books a lot. With friends and family.

15. Did you think that this was a fun book to read?

Yeah.

Why?

Well, because of all the exciting stuff that happened with Little Bill.

16. What makes the people in the story the same? (Similar to Question 5)

I don't know.

17. What makes the people in the story different? (Similar to Question 6)

I don't know.

Comments:

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