LOVE ME TENDER: THE ROLE OF VERBALLY CODED EMOTIONS ON NONVERBALLY CODED EMOTIONS IN MOTHER-CHILD REMINISCING AND PLAY CONTEXTS

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ABSTRACT

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The current study aimed to investigate the role of mothers' verbal use of emotions on children's and mothers' affectionate physical touching behavior in two distinct yet similar socialization tasks: play, and reminiscing. Mothers' attachment styles were also integrated into the design to capture individual differences. The study is conducted under the scope of a scientific research project supported by the Middle East Technical University Scientific Research Projects (SRP; coded BAP – 08 – 11 – 2013 – 074), with the participation of ninety-five mothers and their children between 45 and 73 in months of age. Dyads were invited to the Child and Adolescent Development Laboratory (Çegel) located at the METU campus, and were asked to reminisce about a shared past event (reminiscing: 10 minutes) and then asked to play together with toys of building blocks (play: 10 minutes). Tasks were audio-recorded and videotaped simultaneously. Mothers reported their romantic attachment style via Experiences in Close Relationships Revised (ECR-R) developed by Fraley et al. (2000). The data was analyzed using descriptive analyses and hierarchical regressions depending on the hypotheses. Results showed that maternal positive

emotion words were predictive of mothers' affectionate touching behavior in both tasks, and of children's affectionate touching behavior only in the reminiscing task. Maternal romantic attachment did not significantly explain any variance over and above the predictive role of emotion words, nor the control variables of mothers' age, children's age, or gender. Overall, the findings of the current thesis supported the emotion socialization and physical affection in parent-child interactions literature. The findings were discussed in light of previous literature, underlining the implications, contributions, limitations, and suggestions for future studies.

Keywords: mother-child reminiscing, play, emotion words, affective touching behavior, maternal romantic attachment.

ÖZ

BENİ ŞEFKATLE SEV: ANNE – ÇOCUK GEÇMİŞ YAŞANTI KONUŞMALARI VE OYUN BAĞLAMLARINDA SÖZEL OLARAK KODLANAN DUYGULARIN SÖZEL OLMAYAN DUYGULAR ÜZERİNDEKİ ROLÜ

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Bu çalışma, annelerin duyguları sözel olarak ifade etme biçimlerinin, iki farklı ancak benzer sosyalleşme bağlamı olan oyun ve geçmiş olayların hatırlanması sırasında, çocukların ve annelerin sevgi dolu fiziksel dokunma davranışları üzerindeki rolünü araştırmayı amaçlamıştır. Çalışma tasarımına bireysel farklılıkları yakalamak amacıyla annelerin romantik bağlanma stilleri de dahil edilmiştir. Araştırma, Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Bilimsel Araştırma Projeleri (BAP; kod: BAP – 08 – 11 – 2013 – 074) tarafından desteklenen bir bilimsel araştırma projesi kapsamında gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırmaya, yaşları 45 ila 73 ay arasında değişen çocuklar ve annelerinden oluşan doksan beş ikili katılmıştır. İkililer, ODTÜ yerleşkesinde bulunan Çocuk ve Ergen Gelişimi Laboratuvarı'na (ÇEGEL) davet edilmiş ve birlikte yaşadıkları bir geçmiş olay hakkında hatırlama (10 dakika) ve ardından yapı bloklarıyla birlikte oyun oynama (10 dakika) görevlerini yerine getirmişlerdir. Görevler eş zamanlı olarak ses kaydı ve video kaydı ile belgelenmiştir. Anneler, Fraley ve arkadaşları (2000) tarafından geliştirilen Yakın İlişkilerde Yaşantılar Envanteri-II (YİYE-II) aracılığıyla romantik bağlanma stillerini rapor etmişlerdir.

Veriler, hipotezlere bağlı olarak tanımlayıcı analizler ve hiyerarşik regresyon analizleriyle incelenmiştir. Bulgular, annelerin olumlu duyguları ifade eden sözcüklerinin, her iki görevde de annelerin sevgi dolu dokunma davranışlarını ve sadece hatırlama görevi sırasında çocukların sevgi dolu dokunma davranışlarını yordadığını göstermiştir. Annelerin romantik bağlanma stilleri, ya da kontrol değişkenleri olan annelerin yaşı, çocukların yaşı ve cinsiyeti duygusal ifadelerin yordayıcı rolü üzerinde anlamlı bir farklılık yaratmamıştır. Genel olarak, bu çalışmanın bulguları, ebeveyn-çocuk etkileşimlerinde duygu sosyalleştirme ve fiziksel sevgi literatürünü desteklemektedir. Bulgular, önceki çalışmalar ışığında tartışılmış; sonuçların uygulamaya yönelik çıkarımları, katkıları, sınırlılıkları ve gelecekteki çalışmalar için öneriler vurgulanmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: anne-çocuk geçmiş yaşantı konuşmaları, oyun, duygu kelimeleri, duygusal dokunma davranışı, annenin romantik bağlanması

to my beloved family and my heart: Larin..

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BAP   Bilimsel Araştırma Projesi

ÇEGEL   Çocuk ve Ergen Gelişimi Laboratuvarı

ECR-R   Experiences in Close Relationships – Revised

METU   Middle East Tehnical University

SRP   Scientific Research Project

YİYE-2   Yakın İlişkilerde Yaşantılar Envanteri II

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Overview

Autobiographical memory is what makes us who we are; it constitutes a continuum of self in the past, in present, and in the future. The distinctive function of autobiographical memory is its personal significance. Memory researchers defined autobiographical memory as a path from "what happened" to "what happened to self" (Fivush, 2011). Autobiographical memory is a memory system, that is composed of both episodic (person specific events and experiences) and semantic memories (general knowledge about the world and self). It is a system that involves storing and retrieving personal experiences linked to a person's individual life story. Conway and Pleydell-Pearce (2000) describe autobiographical memory as a multifaceted and dynamic system that facilitates the development and recall of self-related knowledge. This system emerges from the interplay between episodic memory and conceptual knowledge according to them. Autobiographical memory necessitates the unification of contextual aspects like time, place, and emotions, with person-specific features of the self and life discourse.

The development of autobiographical memory system in infants is a gradual process that takes place along preschool years (Nelson & Fivush, 2004). The factors contributing to the system's development are basic memory abilities, language skills, adult memory talk, temporal understanding, and understanding of self and others (Nelson & Fivush, 2004). By equipping oneself with language skills and a sense of self, a toddler becomes ready to form their personal life history.

Among the above factors, adult memory talk serves a pivotal function. Especially primary caregivers' conversations with the growing infant are co-constructive in

their nature. When they talk about past events in particular detail and encourage their children to widen their perspective on past events by promoting such talks, autobiographical memories become richer. In other words, social interactions with the primary caregiver contribute to autobiographical memory formation significantly (Reese, 2002). Furthermore, these memory conversations are dialectical in nature, in which both parents and children are active participants in creating the content of reminiscing, even if parents are more active especially in very early years, and from four years of age, children also become active participants in these memory conversations. Thus, parent-child pairs co-construct their shared past through reminiscing, they also co-construct the unshared past as well through recounting. Literature mainly focuses on mothers as primary caregivers (Leaper, 2002; Parke, 2002) and reminiscing of mother-child pairs about shared past events. Since mothers are considered as main caregivers for the most part in developmental psychology literature, reminiscing literature is also heavily based on mother-child memory conversations.

Two major concentrations that shed light to social interactions of mothers and their children within the scope of autobiographical memory system composition are reminiscing and play, which are both very prevalent in daily life context and happen to take place frequently between mothers and children. Reminiscing as a socialization context, happen to occur less or more frequently between main caregivers, usually mothers, and their children. In a way, mothers use reminiscing as a nourishing socialization context for their children to organize children's personal past within and outside of their families, and thus providing a framework for this type of memory consolidation (Fivush, Haden, & Reese, 2006). Of course, memory conversations constitute only one form of daily context to socialize, and through this form of socialization to organize autobiographical memory system. Another context is through play.

Play, as a form of adult-guided activity, constitutes a ground where caregivers scaffold by introducing materials, directing questions, or modeling behaviors, but also give free space to the child to express itself, direct content, and outcomes (Weisberg et al., 2016). Play, as well as reminiscing, constitutes an essential

framework not only to socialize, but also to consolidate past experiences directly, or indirectly. Usually, main caregivers and mostly mothers play with their children less or more, but usually use this activity as a basis for teaching something, or guiding their children's emotion regulation, and for bonding, like they use reminiscing.

Previous literature mostly examined verbal content of reminiscing through coding for emotional content and other characteristics of memory conversations. Yet, there are also other studies through which researchers investigated the nonverbal messages that researchers coded by using video recordings or observations of parent-child dyads. The current study, aimed to investigate these two frequently used socialization tasks, reminiscing and play tasks, to explore how verbal and nonverbal content of these socialization tasks are related. In other words, this study converged the two frameworks and revealed a comparative yet comprehensive picture of reminiscing and play's contribution to the development of the autobiographical memory system. While mother-child dyads reminisce and play together in two distinct tasks, the role of the mother's talk on emotional content was investigated on how it predicted both mothers' and children's physical touch, which constitutes an indicator of affection. Since responsive interactions are an integral part of mother-child affection, the study aimed to reveal the impact of words on an outcome observable on the physical level *(touch)*. Finally, the current study aimed to add another layer and pay regard to individual differences between mothers by integrating attachment anxiety and avoidance, as emotional factors like attachment security are known to play a critical role in the socialization of life stories and personal memories (Reese, 2002).

1.2. Mother-Child Reminiscing

Mother-child reminiscing is the process of sharing past experiences in a social basis that constitutes a framework for organizing memories and that fosters the child's developing sense of self (Fivush, Haden, & Reese, 2006). It is critical for a child's socio-emotional and cognitive development (Reese & Fivush, 2008). This social interaction between the mother and the child builds an essential fabric that creates a way to make meaning out of personal experiences, organizing them, and helps the child create its own autobiographical memory system.

Reminiscing finds itself a place in socio-cultural theories of learning, which highlight the fundamental role of social interaction and cultural context in development of cognitive skills (Vygotsky, 1978). Particularly, reminiscing functions as a scaffold mechanism through mothers guide their children in constructing coherent and meaningful narratives (Nelson and Fivush, 2004). Nelson & Fivush's multicomponent dynamic developmental theory of human autobiographical memory (AM) states that the AM system emerges gradually across preschool years (Nelson & Fivush, 2004). Adult memory talk, temporal understanding, language and narrative abilities, and understanding of self and others are all important benchmarks through autobiographical memory development.

For children's autobiographical memory development, mother's way of reminiscing is vital. Research shows that when mothers reminisce in an elaborative manner with their children, children tend to have more detailed, coherent, and evaluative autobiographical memories (Fivush, 2011). It is apparent that the composition of autobiographical memories is affected by reminiscing through childhood and reminiscing style, like an inner voice built inside, could be maintained across the life span (Sahin-Acar & Leichtman, 2020). Mothers, while scaffolding the event in a more or less elaborative manner, offer their infants a chance to talk about their emotions and how to perceive that event in an emotional tone when retrieved through reminiscing (Bürümlü-Kısa, & Sahin-Acar, 2020). Intervention studies targeting to create a change in maternal reminiscing style are applied throughout the world. One example is the reminiscing and emotion training intervention (RET; Valentino et al., 2019) that is developed to support maltreated 3- to 6- year old children's healthy development (Edler et al., 2024). RET is composed of six weekly home based sessions during which research staff train mothers with maltreatment histories about reminiscing strategies. Mothers learn to ask open ended questions, talk about the consequences and causes of their child's emotions, and discuss resolutions of their children's prior negative emotional experiences. Through RET, maternal sensitive guidance and elaboration during mother-child interactions regarding past emotional experiences are improved; in turn reductions in child welfare reinvolvement is achieved (Edler et al., 2024). In the concept of reminiscing, parents vary in terms of their sensitive guidance and their contributions to conversations in terms of adding

new details (Koren-Karie et al., 2003; Fivush et al., 2006). Sensitive guidance significantly correlates with enhanced child language outcomes and decreased child internalizing and externalizing symptoms (McDonell et al., 2022).

Differences in mothers' conversational styles were tied to variations in self-construal orientations as compositions of individuation and relatedness in previous research (Sahin-Acar & Leichtman, 2015; Wang, 2001, 2007; Wang, Leichtman, & White, 1998). This subject matter also draws our attention to Vygotsky's theory highlighting the importance of cultural context on cognitive-developmental outcomes (1978). In their study comparing three samples, two of which are from differing regions of the same country (Türkiye) and one from USA, Sahin-Acar and Leichtman found out that, mothers who score high on both individuation and relatedness (balanced self-construal subtype) were more prone to take part in richer memory talk (2015). Former research revealed similar results: elaborativeness was linked to independent orientation, and repetitiveness to interdepentent orientation (Leichtman et al., 2003; Wang & Fivush, 2005). Culture, as its form in an individualistic or a collectivistic sense, serves as the primary context for the abovementioned line of researches. Therewithal, patterns of self-construal are not identical for all members of a culture (Kagitcibasi & Berry, 1989) and it is inevitable to state that individual self-construal differences is critical in understanding differing maternal conversational styles.

Cultural variations in reminiscing patterns has an impact on children's viewpoints of social norms and relationships (Wang, 2001). Western culture's underscoring of independence on one hand, and eastern culture's underscoring of interdependence could be given as an example to that. Whereas mothers from western cultures focus on individual based expressions in their narratives, mothers from eastern cultures focus on group related ones (Wang, 2001). Child's knowledge about past experiences is dynamically being co-constructed with his/her mother's reminiscing style. These re- and co-constructional differences make reminiscing a globally critical and culturally particular field, that has a tremendous effect on a child's cognitive and socio-emotional development.

Mothers and their children talk about emotions in their daily life. From a socio-emotional perspective, mother-child reminiscing is exquisitely crucial for supporting

children finding their ways through their emotional spaces. Mothers and their children evaluate ongoing encounters, talk about past events in an emotional perspective, examine certain themes related to those events, give place to feelings within play and daily activities (Landau et al., 2006). According to Fivush et al. (2000), speaking about past emotions is crucial for emotion socialization. Reflection and interpretation of emotional experience can be assured by reminiscing in an emotionally charged manner. Children learn to express and regulate emotions through their interactions with adults. When discussing past emotions, consequences of the emotion experience is realized, self-defining emotions are formed, and emotions are reflected and interpreted once more by the child (Fivush et al., 2000). Through this practice, the infant figures out what is worthwhile, and grasps a picture of the world and feelings attached. High quality parent-child reminiscing, has been associated with better child developmental outcomes such as language skills, autobiographical memory, theory of mind, socio-emotional abilities (i.e. self-concept coherence, self-esteem) and wellbeing (Fivush & Nelson, 2006; Fivush & Vasudeva, 2002; Reese, Bird, & Tripp, 2007). As previous research reveals, sharing conversations about shared past events is essential for emotional socialization of children.

Reminiscing is one of many contexts through which emotions could be shared and discussed between parents and their children. Usually, the daily conversations between mothers and their children are based on two pillars: daily talks (i.e. "What have you done today?") and talks during play (i.e. guidance, collaboration, emotion regulation etc.). Like reminiscing, play as a guided activity performed in collaboration with mothers, lies at the heart of autobiographical memory system development. Next section reviews the literature of play.

1.3. Play

Play is the cornerstone of early childhood. It is through play that a child learns, tries, makes mistakes, goes wrong, goes right, and finds its way way (Bodrova, E. & Leong, D. J., 2007; Piaget, 1945; Vygotsky, 1978). In other words, play is the experimental laboratory of a growing child (Piaget, 1945). Play provides

opportunities for a child to learn with, try out with, and bond with his/her caregivers (Ginsburg, 2007; Pellegrini, 2009; Rogoff; 2003). Discussed within the scope of numerous psychological theories, defining play solely as a leisure time activity would be an understatement if not a fallacy (Ginsburg, 2007; Pellegrini & Smith, 1998; Smith, 2010).

Play is an activity through which children explore their surrounding environment, develop relationships with their peers and elders, and improve their cognitive, social, physical, and emotional skills (Frost, Wortham, & Reifel, 2008; Ginsburg, 2007). As rooted in Lev Vygotsky's socio-cultural perspective on cognitive development, social interactions play a big part in advancing and fostering cognitive skills (1978). Vygotsky, approaching development as an apprentice-master relationship, stated children develop by collaborating with more skilled ones. According to this theory, play enables a ground for the "zone of proximal development" in which, the child can accomplish much more with the guided participation of a more skilled accompany. That accompany is, in most cases, the child's mother. During mother-child play, the pair becomes physically close, and emotionally harmonious so that attachment bonds are being established in between (Ainsworth, 1978; Feldman, 2007; Isabella & Belsky, 1991).

The process of the play is more important than the end goal. Some important properties of play are flexibility (putting objects in differing combinations, acting roles in novel ways), positive affect (infants laugh and smile during play, it is enjoyable for them), and pretense (utilizing objects and behavior in figurative ways) (P.K. Smith, 2005). As Smith also emphasized, the physical aspect of play supports neural maturation and motor skills development in infants (2005). Beyond that, play contributes to social development by supporting social skills such as turn taking, cooperation, following rules, empathy, self-regulation, self-confidence, impulse control, and motivation (Elias & Berk, 2002; Singer et al., 2006). By participating in social pretend play, children build their theories of mind, grasp others' points of view, and develop their social skills (Lillard, 2001). Last but not least, play promotes healthy emotional development by ensuring the necessary ground to release disturbing feelings, overcome emotional discords, and work on challenges (Erikson,

1963; Landreth, 2012; Landreth & Homeyer, 1998). Parents can support their children's development through play by becoming a part of the social joint effort that play sessions necessitate (Lindsey & Mize, 2000; Rogoff, 2003). One way of that involvement is through conversations embedded in episodes of play.

When mother-child play is considered, conversations passing through offer a great setting for language development, problem-solving, and emotional declaration. It was found that during imaginative play, mothers portray elaborative language utilization, and promote problem solving skills; in turn, playing creates a socialization framework that enhances child's language and narrative skills (Tamis-LeMonda et al., 2004). Parents use conversations during play as a medium to highlight what is worthwhile to talk about. They perceive their children as active participants in stating their point of views and thoughts, try to scaffold them concerning their needs in a daily and emotional bases, and expect them to be as contributing as possible (Brown & Vaughan, 2009; Sahin-Acar, 2024). When mothers engage in pretend play scenarios, they are found to be guiding their children through symbolic-representations, modeling problem-solving actions, and by those, they foster cognitive flexibility and creativity (Fiese, 1990). Additionally, cultural differences find their parts in the arena of play also. In a study conducted in 1992, Bornstein et al. found out that US mothers were more responsive to infant object play, whereas Japanese ones were more responsive to social play.

Recent studies in play, regard the family as a whole interactive model. For example, Family Alliance Model of Favez, Frascarolo, and Tissot, operationalize participation, organization, focalization, and affect sharing functions through characteristics as distance between partners, their bodily orientations, congruence within body segments, signals of readiness to interact, joint attention, and facial expressions (2017). Favez et al. utilize triadic play (i.e. The Lausanne Trilogue Play) for families with one child and multi-partner play (i.e. PicNic Game) for families with several children in their abovementioned study (2017). From that, family level observations arise. Those observations give more detail about the family dynamics as a whole, details that cannot be caught neither with individual nor dyadic assessments. We focused on the presence of mothers within the scope of this study, but since the

literature is expanding towards a more integrative pattern, fathers should also be involved in future studies, as discussed further in the discussion section.

Through both reminiscing and play contexts, parental individual differences have a remarkable role regarding the course of the conversations. In their 2019 study, Sahin-Acar et al. analyzed the conversations of mother-child dyads through their travel from children's daycare to their homes and found out that attachment styles and self-construals of mothers have an impact on how they discussed daily conversations with their children. Embracing the subject matter from maternal attachment perspective, the current study also addressed the individual differences among mothers.

1.4. Attachment

According to Bowlby (1969) attachment "is a strong affectional tie that binds a person to an intimate companion" (as cited in Sigelman & Rider, 2009). People regulate their emotional distress and achieve security by being close to an intimate other through their attachment system. The first attachment relationship, the one between the child and its primary caregiver (most commonly the mother), designates the quality and manner of future relationships. Attachment theory is based on the physical and emotional presence of the mother and how this presence affects her to respond her infant's needs. Mother's responsiveness in these manners designates the attachment style according to the theory. If a mother consistently and sensitively responds to the needs of her infant(s) secure attachment is present in between the mother-child pair. If she is inconsistent in her responding anxious attachment is formed. When the mother is distant, cold, and rejective towards her infant(s), avoidant attachment is exhibited. Maternal sensitivity is high in secure attachment, and low in insecure types (both anxious and avoidant) (Ainsworth et al., 1978). When research developed in the field, there occurred a need to form another categorical attachment style, because it is seen that there is difficulty to place some children to the three traditional categories (secure, avoidant, anxious) through Ainsworth's strange situation. Main and Solomon, filling this gap, identified a fourth type, namely disorganized/ disoriented attachment style, pointing the children who experience an alarm towards its mother (1990). In this form, there is safe haven

ambiguity in child's perspective, and the child experience difficulty in organizing itself. The mother, who should have been the one resolving an alarmed state, is perceived as a source of alarm herself (Reisz, Duschinsky, & Siegel, 2017).

Internal working models of self and others are created to be used in further relationships through these attachment styles (Bowlby, 1973). These models shape future close relationships with significant others (Cassidy & Shaver, 2008). Importantly, these internal working models manifest themselves in romantic relationships also (Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Bartholomew & Horrowitz, 1991). In romantic partnerships, people tend to seek comfort from their loved ones. In their naturalistic study, Fraley and Shaver analyzed the separation behaviors of couples in a public airport and revealed that women with anxious working models were more likely to experience distress before a separation (1998). In other words, just like infants seeking for their mothers in times of stress, adults need their partners' support when life becomes harsh on them.

Mother's attachment patterns with her romantic partner influence the way she engages with her child. There are direct and indirect effects of it. First, securely attached mothers are better in regulating their own emotions, and therefore portray a much more sensitive and respondent caregiving. Anxious or avoidant mothers on the other hand may have difficulty in consistently responding to their child's needs because of their preoccupation with their own emotional world. Second, mothers with prior secure attachment representations are more nurturing and consistent in their caregiving actions, fostering secure attachment profiles in their children. These two are direct roles of maternal attachment on the child outcomes. In a previous study, researchers found out that mothers' romantic attachment style predicted their attachment with their children (Selçuk et al., 2010).

Moreover, a secure romantic attachment provides a supportive co-parenting practice, therefore positively influences a child's environment. Fourth, marital conflict usually accompanies insecure (avoidant and anxious) romantic attachment types, and through a troubled relationship with the spouse, affects the child negatively by decreased maternal sensitivity and responsiveness. These two are the indirect roles of

maternal attachment on child outcomes, through the mediation of spouse relationship quality (Finger et al., 2009). In their 2010 study, Selçuk et al. analyzed whether self-reported adult romantic attachment predicts maternal caregiving behaviors at home. Eighty-five Turkish mothers and their 0 to 4 year old children were included in the study. During their three hour long home visits, researchers observed mothers' caregiving behaviors. After 1-3 weeks following the home visit, mothers completed measures about their romantic attachment style through Experiences in Close Relationships Inventory-Revised (ECR-R; Fraley et al., 2000). Attachment related avoidance and anxiety were both found to be negatively associated with global maternal sensitivity. Beyond that, mother's attachment related avoidance was found to be negatively associated with maternal sensitivity. Interestingly, mother's attachment related anxiety was not a significant predictor of maternal sensitivity. The caregiving themes occurred after principal component analyses revealed that, among many other components, attachment avoidance was correlated to non-synchronicity in interactions and attachment anxiety was correlated to conflict in interactions (Selçuk et al., 2010). We may highlight from this line of research that romantic attachment of mothers affect mother-child interactions.

Attachment style of the mother was found to be directly associated with the emotional socialization of the child. A sample of 157 teenagers and their mothers were examined in a study seeking for the association between maternal adult attachment types and coping suggestions made by mothers to their children. It was found out that maternal insecure attachment predicted fewer engagement coping suggestions (orienting toward stress) and increased disengagement coping suggestions (avoiding or denying stress). The study revealed insecure attachment significantly decreases a parent's proficiency in supporting its child to build adaptive coping strategies (Abaied & Rudolph, 2010). Results of previous research show that more avoidant mothers portray less intense positive affect with regards to positive events of their own and their children. On the other hand, mothers scoring high on attachment wise anxiety are found to be inclined to reducing the emotional importance of the experience (i.e. dampening) (Gentzler, Ramsey, & Black, 2015). In this sense, how a mother addresses a shared event is expected to be highly related to her attachment pattern. The relation between maternal attachment and maternal

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tendency to verbally refer to her infant's mental world (referred to as mind-mindedness in the literature) was analyzed within the framework of autonomous, dismissing, preoccupied, and unresolved representations (Milligan et al., 2015). Both Gentzler et al.'s and Milligan et al.'s studies used AAI (Adult Attachment Interview; George et al., 1985) as their measurement scale.

The socio-developmental approach to autobiographical memory is based on childhood interactions and their effects on a child's autobiographical memory development (Nelson & Fivush, 2004). The vast majority of literature is based on mother-child interactions. As attachment is one of the first systems that is built in between a mother and her child, its impact is incontrovertible. Analyzing attachment style as an individually differentiating factor for mothers will provide clearance in our prevailing knowledge of autobiographical memory development. Because not only the reminiscing content (in terms of emotionally charged words), but also attachment styles of mothers could be a differentiating factor in terms of predicting touching behavior in between mother-child dyads.

The prevailing literature is ambivalent regarding mothers' romantic attachment based individual differences. Whereas Lawson et al. (2018) associated high levels of attachment anxiety with low elaborativeness in memory talks, Fivush & Sales (2006) linked the same with high elaborations. On one hand we have Lawson et al.'s work which was unable to find significant relations in between avoidance and conversational styles (2018), and Sahin-Acar et al.'s research linking higher avoidance with greater elaboration on the other (2019). This study aims to put another brick on the wall and intends to pull the wires in favor of one stand point regarding mothers' romantic attachment styles. The independent and control variables of this research had been scrutinized so far. Next section focuses on the dependent variable of the study, physical affectionate touch.

1.5. Physical Affectionate Touch

Physical touch is a fundamental form of nonverbal communication that plays a significant role in the development and persistence of relationships, particularly in

the bond between mother and child. From birth, physical contact serves as a primary medium through which mothers express love, care, intimacy, bonding, and affection, creating a secure foundation for the child's emotional and social development (Hertenstein et al., 2006). This unique dynamic underscores the importance of physical touch in fostering attachment, trust, and emotional well-being in children. For the mother-child dyad, affectionate touch not only communicates warmth but also establishes a sense of safety and belonging.

Previous studies underlined that early and consistent affectionate touch provided by caregivers offers comprehensive benefits, supporting the psychosocial and neurophysiological development of infants (Carozza & Leong, 2021). In face-to-face interactions, parental use of gentle, affectionate stroking has been shown to reduce arousal levels in infants while enhancing their positive emotional responses (Pelaez-Nogueras et al., 1997; Fairhust et al., 2014).

Affectionate touch has been found to have long-lasting effects, as touch-based interventions are linked to better physiological and psychological outcomes, such as improved stress regulation and strengthened mother-infant bonding. On the contrary, the absence of touch is associated with various developmental impairments (Feldman et al., 2002; Field, 2010; Moore et al., 2016).

Expanding the subject from a psychobiological perspective, the role of physical touch in mother-child interactions is particularly critical during infancy and early childhood (Cunha et al., 2024; Field, 2010). During this stage, touch is often the child's first experience of communication, occurring through skin-to-skin contact, holding, cuddling, and other nurturing behaviors. These interactions stimulate the release of oxytocin, a hormone linked to bonding and stress reduction, in both the mother and child (Feldman, 2012). Additionally, acknowledging that the sense of touch serves as an infant's initial means of contact with the external world, touch-based interactions are found to contribute to the regulation of physiological processes, such as heart rate and cortisol levels, highlighting their importance in supporting the child's physical and emotional health (Della Longa, Dragovic, & Farroni, 2021).

A study of Stepakoff and Beebe (2024) approached maternal touch as a form of communication. The study sought to explore the nuances of early tactile communication by examining a community sample of 126 mothers during interactions with their 4-month-old infants. Mothers and their infants were videotaped in the laboratory while engaging in face-to-face play. The findings of the study underlined that touching behavior may function as a prelinguistic medium through which mothers convey affective messages to their children (Stepakoff & Beebe, 2024).

Previous studies focused on the altering role of maternal touch on children's emotions. When objects were presented to mother-child dyads, mothers delivered tactile stimulation to their 12-month-old children through three different methods. Findings revealed that mothers touching manner changed the way their child interacted with the presented object (Hertenstein & Campos, 2001).

Regarding these findings, maternal emotional communication may influence the frequency and nature of physical touch in mother-child interactions, highlighting the interconnectedness of verbal and non-verbal expressions of affection.

1.6. The Current Study

Mothers and their children talk about emotions in their daily lives. They evaluate ongoing encounters, talk about past events in an emotional perspective, examine certain themes related to those events, and give place to emotions within play and daily activities (Landau et al., 2006). According to Fivush et al. (2000), speaking about past emotions is crucial for emotion socialization. Reflection and interpretation of emotional experience can be assured by reminiscing in an emotionally charged manner.

Children learn to express and regulate emotions through their interactions with adults. When discussing past emotions, the consequences of the emotion experience are realized, self-defining emotions are formed, and emotions are reflected and interpreted once more by the child (Fivush et al., 2000). Through this practice, the

infant figures out what is worthwhile, and grasps a picture of the world and emotions attached. High quality parent-child reminiscing, has been associated with better child developmental outcomes such as language skills, autobiographical memory, theory of mind, socio-emotional abilities (i.e. self-concept coherence, self-esteem), and wellbeing (Fivush & Nelson, 2006; Fivush & Vasudeva, 2002; Reese, Bird, & Tripp, 2007). As previous research reveals, sharing conversations about shared past events is essential for the emotional socialization of children.

Reminiscing is one of many contexts through which emotions can be discussed. Usually, the daily conversations between mothers and their infants are based on two pillars: daily talks (i.e. "What have you done today?") and talks during play (i.e. guidance, collaboration, emotion regulation etc.). The current study combines the two (namely reminiscing and play) and aims to portray a full figure about how emotionally charged words relate to physical affection in two contexts.

Play is also vital for emotional socialization. It is through play that a child learns and interacts with the world. Especially, conversations during play episodes are central to emotional socialization. Fivush underscores the importance of maternal elaboration during mother-child conversations, including the ones happening through play, in supporting children to develop self-understanding and emotional awareness (2007). Interactive play promotes the development of emotion regulation strategies that are crucial for social competence (Thompson & Meyer, 2007). Children recognize emotions, have a chance to enhance emotion wise communication, and learn to regulate their emotions through the emotional socialization ground that play episodes provide.

Generally, previous studies had focused on transcription of conversations falling into an inevitable shortcoming: loss of information under what has not been said. "A picture is worth a thousand words" notes a famous adage, and in the current study we seek an answer to whether verbal ground posits itself in the world of actions. Emotion is embedded in verbal and nonverbal cues. So, touch, as its most obvious form of manifestation, is scrutinized in this study as a form of nonverbal emotional cue.

Some previous line of work concentrated on non-verbal qualities such as emotional attunement between conversational partners, enthusiasm for sharing memories with each other, and the timing of maternal responsiveness to the child's needs during the conversation (Larkina & Bauer, 2010). But they are limited in number, and touch was remained in a rather shadowy ground.

The current study brings through a major unification by combining two tasks: play and reminiscing. We aimed to seek an answer to the question of whether the emotional verbal cues (positively and negatively charged words) portrayed during a conversation predict physical touching behavior displayed by the parties involved. For that, we used mother-child dyads, as they form a tailor-fit sample to scrutinize emotional socialization.

Altogether, this research aims to reveal a comparative picture about reminiscing and play's contribution to autobiographical memory system. When doing so, it scrutinizes whether the content of mother's talk has role on physical touch, which is an indicator of affection. Since responsive interactions are an integral part of mother-child affection, this study aims to reveal the impact of words on an outcome observable at physical level *(touch)*. In other words, our main research question is whether verbal cues (positively and negatively charged emotion words) predict nonverbal ones (physical affectionate touch) in mother-child reminiscing and play sessions. On top, current study adds another layer and pays regard to individual differences in between mothers by integrating attachment profiles into the whole figure, as emotional factors like attachment security is known to play a critical role in socialization of life histories (Reese, 2002).

The hypotheses of the current study are as follows:

1. We hypothesize that verbal use of emotions would predict nonverbal use of emotions in both reminiscing and play tasks.
    a. For both reminiscing and play tasks, it was hypothesized that positive emotion words of mothers should predict higher physical affectionate touching behavior of mothers.

b. For both reminiscing and play tasks, it was hypothesized that positive emotion words of mothers should predict higher physical affectionate touching behavior of children.

2. The romantic attachment style of the mother is hypothesized to predict the physical affectionate touch of mothers and their children for both tasks.

a. Attachment anxiety and avoidance of mothers are expected to be negatively related to physical affectionate touching behavior of both mothers and their children.

b. Higher levels of maternal attachment anxiety and avoidance are expected to predict lower levels of physical affectionate touch between mothers and their children.

CHAPTER 2

METHOD

The study is conducted under the scope of a scientific research project supported by the Middle East Technical University Scientific Research Projects (SRP; coded BAP – 08 – 11 – 2013 – 074).

2.1. Sampling

In the current study, convenience sampling technique was employed. The participants were found and recruited by the referral of undergraduate students attending a *"Workshop in Developmental Psychology"* class, within the scope of METU Psychology undergraduate curriculum.

2.2. Participants

Ninety-five children between 45 and 73 in months of age (M_{age} = 56.89 months, SD_{age} = 6.66, 41 girls and 54 boys) and their mothers participated in the study. The data from ninety-four mothers were available, with one missing value.

The age range of mothers was 25 to 45 (M_{age} = 35.67, SD_{age} = 3.83). Mothers were mostly married; 96.8% of them were married, 3.2% of them were widowed. Mothers were predominantly well-educated; 53.2% had a college degree, 31.9% of them had a Master's degree or higher, and 13.8% of them had a high school diploma. Mother-child pairs were predominantly from upper-middle class living in the capital city of Turkey, Ankara. Sociodemographic information about 95 mother-child pairs is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

	M	SD
Age of mother	35.67	3.83
Age of child (in months)	56.89	6.66
	min	*max*
Age range: mothers	25	45
Age range: children (in months)	45	73
	N (95 dyads)	*%*
Mother's Education Level	**Total: 94**	
Other	1	1.10
High-school	13	13.80
Undergraduate	50	53.20
Graduate	30	31.9
Mother's Marital Status	**Total: 94**	
Widowed	3	3.20
Married	91	96.8
Child's Gender	**Total: 95**	
Female	41	43.2
Male	54	56.8

2.3. Measurements

2.3.1. Demographic Information Form

The demographic information form consists of questions regarding the mother's age, marital status, education level, child's gender, and child's age (See Appendix A).

2.3.2. Experiences in Close Relationships Inventory Revised (ECR-R)

The Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised (ECR-R) was utilized to measure mothers' adult romantic attachment style. The scale was developed by Fraley et al.

(2000), and, its Turkish adaptation was made by Selcuk, Gunaydin, Sumer, and Uysal (2005) (see Appendix B). Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses showed that ECR-R has a two-factor result representing attachment-related anxiety and attachment-related avoidance. It was found that the dimensions measured via ECR-R portrayed high internal consistency and test-retest reliability in Turkish sample (Selcuk et al., 2005). ECR-R was composed of 36 items, 18 of which measuring anxiety (i.e., "I'm afraid that I will lose this person's/others' love") and 18 measuring avoidance (i.e., "I prefer not to show this person/ others how I feel deep down") dimensions. Cronbach's alpha coefficients were declared as .86 for anxiety and .90 for avoidance subscales in Turkish adaptation. For the original inventory, they were reported as .85 and .89 respectively. Participants were asked to answer the inventory's questions with regard to their general feelings toward their close relationships. Items were evaluated on a 5-point likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Higher scores on the anxiety and avoidance sub scales reflect stronger attachment related anxiety or avoidance.

2.4. Procedure

As a first step, ethical approval was taken from Human Subjects Ethics Committee (HSEC) of Middle East Technical University (see Appendix C).

Mothers were reached by phone to set an appointment for their participation in the current study. All mother-child dyads participated in the study by coming to the METU Child and Adolescent Development Laboratory (CEGEL). They were welcomed by the main researchers in the lab. Mothers were briefly told about the nature of the current study and signed the informed consent, also children's verbal assent was taken by asking the child, as well. Once the participation consents were assured, mothers were asked to think about two past events that they necessarily shared with their participating child, and to write a keyword or two that would remind them of each memory. Then, the researcher asked them to briefly tell the nature of the past event, while the other researcher kept the child busy by chitchatting with the child. After the first researcher reviews the nature of the past events that the mother nominated, mother was told to reminisce about this shared

event with her child approximately for ten minutes. Mother-child pair was seated onto two cushions on the carpet in the home-like looking lab, and asked to face each other during both tasks. Meanwhile, two digital voice recordings were placed near the cushions on the carpet, and also five different cameras video-recording their tasks from five different angles. The dyad's conversation was audio recorded and videotaped simultaneously. When ten minutes was over, one researcher approached the dyad, and notified the pair that the task was finished. Once the mother-child pair completed the reminiscing tasks, they were given toys of building blocks by the interrupting researcher, and asked to play together for another ten minutes. The play task was not structured, and dyads were given freedom to create their own flow. Once again, after ten minutes play time was completed, a researcher approached the dyad to inform the pair that the time is over.

After both of the tasks were completed, mothers were asked to go to the cubicles at the other end of the lab to fill out the questionnaires, the questions of which were described in the measurements section. Namely, mothers were asked to fill in *Demographic Information Form* and *ECR-R*. Meanwhile, the second researcher continued to engage in a joint-play with the child via using the building blocks. As mothers completed filling out the questionnaires, they were debriefed about the study by giving out a debriefing form. Researchers' e-mail addresses and contact information were handed to the mothers in case of emerging inquiries. Mother-child pairs were thanked for their participation, and were escorted from the lab by stating they were welcome to ask for the results of the study through the contact information provided.

2.5. Coding Content

Emotional words and affectionate physical touching behaviors were counted and coded through content analysis (see Table 2).

2.5.1. Emotionally Charged Word Count

In the aim of understanding the emotional aspect of memory contents, there are numerous coding schemes used for mother-child dyads in memory literature (Bohanek, Fivush, & Walker, 2005; Fivush & Sales, 2008; 2012).

Within the scope of this study, three separate variables were numerically counted for conversations during tasks between mothers and their children: positive emotion words, negative emotion words, and total words used (see Appendix D). The counts were made separately for mothers and children (see Table 2). Positive emotion words are counted as the words citing positively charged emotions (i.e., happy, joy, fun, giving a kiss) whereas negative emotion words are counted as the words citing negatively charged emotions (i.e., sad, furious, frustrated, cry, scream). In the end, six different word counts were reached: positively charged words of mother, negatively charged words of mother, total words of mother, positively charged words of child, negatively charged words of child, total words of child. The word count of children was not utilized within the scope of this study, since the current study put the mother in the center and focused on the predictive nature of mothers' emotionally charged words on touch; their own, and their child's.

The conversations regarding the tasks (*reminiscing and play*) were transcribed verbatim and then coded. Two trained hypothesis blind independent coders worked on the transcripts and each coded 20% of the data. Interrater reliability was assessed using Pearson's correlation, yielding a value of 0.80 (95% CI [0.69 – 0.91]) for reminiscing and 0.73 (95% CI [0.59 – 0.87]) for play, indicating strong agreement between the two coders on reminiscing and play tasks.

2.5.2. Physical Affectionate Touch

The video recordings were visually coded from each and every angle (namely 5 distinct angles) as to keep mothers' and children's actions in sight. Affectionate physical touch moments were counted by two independent coders. An affectionate physical touch was labeled as such under two conditions: first, if the actor intends to demonstrate love, care, fondness, or appreciation (Floyd, 2006), and secondly if the touch signifies closeness (i.e., hugging, caressing, stroking face, hair, arm, hand, holding hands) (Pisano et al., 1986).

The counts were performed by two hypotheses-blind coders and the second coder processed 20% of the entire data. Interrater reliability was assessed using Pearson's

correlation, yielding a value of 0.80 (95% CI [0.69 – 0.91]) for reminiscing and 0.73 (95% CI [0.59 – 0.87]) for play, indicating strong agreement between the two coders on reminiscing and play tasks.

Table 2

Coding Scheme by Task

Task	Member	Variable: Emotionally Charged Words	Variable: Touch
Reminiscing	Mother	# of positively charged emotion words # of negatively charged emotion words # of total words used	# of physical affectionate touching behavior occurred during task
	Child	# of positively charged emotion words # of negatively charged emotion words # of total words used	# of physical affectionate touching behavior occurred during task
Play	Mother	# of positively charged emotion words # of negatively charged emotion words # of total words used	# of physical affectionate touching behavior occurred during task
	Child	# of positively charged emotion words # of negatively charged emotion words # of total words used	# of physical affectionate touching behavior occurred during task

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

3.1. Preliminary Analyses

Prior to the data analysis, in the aim of checking for missing values, outliers, and normality, data screening was conducted based on the procedure suggested by Tabachnick and Fidell (2013). A value was deemed missing either in the case of non-completion of one or both of the tasks, or leaving one or more items unanswered through the questionnaires. Missing cases were integrated into overall data since their quantity were extremely low when compared to the accumulated data. Missing values were calculated through SPSS 23 allowing for 5% per case. Results showed that the missing values were less than 5%, and no outliers were present, so that all cases were included to the computational analysis.

As the second step, demographic properties of the sample was analyzed.

3.1.1. Correlations Between Variables

Pearson's bivariate correlations were computed via SPSS Statistics 23 in the aim of investigating the relationship between variables (see Tables 3 and 4).

3.1.1.1 . Correlations of Reminiscing Task

A preliminary Pearson correlation analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between mothers' positively charged emotion words and mothers' affectionate physical touch during reminiscing task (r (93) = .515, p < .01). Regarding the reminiscing task, a significant positive relationship between mothers'

positively charged emotion words and child's affectionate physical touch was also showed (r (93) = .444, $p <$ .01). In addition, a significant association between mothers' affectionate physical touch and child's affectionate physical touch was detected (r (93) = .787, $p <$ .01).

3.1.1.2 . Correlations of Play Task

When play task is considered, a significant positive relationship between mothers' positively charged emotion words and mothers' affectionate physical touch was detected (r (93) = .394, $p <$ .01). The association between mothers' positively charged emotion words and child's affectionate physical touch was not significant in the preliminary analysis of play task. In addition, a significant association between mothers' affectionate physical touch and child's affectionate physical touch during play task was detected (r (93) = .295, $p <$ .01).

3.2. Main Analyses

After descriptive analyses were conducted, four hierarchical regression analyses were executed for mothers' positively charged and negatively charged emotion words (i.e., total number of positive and negative emotion words) in the mother-child dyad's conversations during two tasks (i.e., play and reminiscing) as outcome variables separately for mothers' and children's affectionate physical touches (i.e., touching on the cheek, caressing, and alike) coded from the video recordings during the tasks. For all analyses, mothers' positively charged and negatively charged emotion words in dyadic conversations were entered into regression analyses in the first step. In the second step, maternal attachment anxiety and avoidance, which were measured via ECR-R Scale, were added to reveal improvements over and above the first model, if any. Lastly, mother's age, gender of the child, and child's age in months were added as control variables to compose the third model. The same analyses were conducted for both tasks, namely play and reminiscing. The results can be seen in Tables 5, 6, 7, and 8.

The results of the first hierarchical regression analysis, regarding the play task, were significant (R^2_{adj} = .164, $F(2,88)$ = 9.837, $p < .001$). Specifically, mothers' positively charged emotion words during the play task significantly predicted mothers' affectionate physical touch during the video recording of the same task (β = .428, t = 4.42, $p < .001$). Mothers' negatively charged emotion words did not significantly predict mothers' affectionate physical touch in the video recording of the play task. Additional effects of the extended models (Models 2 & 3) were not significant. For the same task, neither mothers' positively nor negatively charged emotion words were found to be significant in predicting children's affectionate physical touch during the video recording of the play task.

Examining the reminiscing task, the results of the first model under the three-step hierarchical regression analysis were significant (R^2_{adj} = .266, $F(2,88)$ = 17.29, $p < .001$). Specifically, mothers' positively charged emotion words during the reminiscing task predicted their affectionate physical touch during the video recording of the same task (β = .523, t = 5.78, $p < .001$). Mothers 'negatively charged emotion words did not significantly predict their affectionate physical touch in the video recording of the reminiscing task as was the case in its play task counterpart. Additional effects of the extended models (Models 2 & 3) were not significant.

Table 3

Correlations between study variables: Reminiscing task

Variable Names	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1 Anxiety	1								
2 Avoidance	-.580	1							
3 Mom's age	.009	.053	1						
4 child age (in months)	-.055	.078	.216*	1					
5 gender of the child	.108	.185	-.025	.126	1				
6 reminiscing positive emotion m	-.044	.104	.122	.088	.105	1			
7 reminiscing negative emotion m	-.041	-.096	-.141	.035	-.075	-.039	1		
8 reminiscing touch c	-.128	.017	.225*	-.019	.145	.444**	.064	1	
9 reminiscing touch m	-.137	-.016	.080	-.093	.088	.515**	.097	.787**	1

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Zooming in the reminiscing task from the prediction of children's affectionate physical touching behavior perspective, the results of the first model were significant (R^2_{adj} = .211, $F(2,88)$ = 13.002, $p < .001$). Specifically, mothers' positively charged emotion words during the reminiscing task significantly predicted children's affectionate physical touch during the video recording of the same task (β = .473, $t.$ = 5.040, $p < .001$).

Mothers 'negatively charged emotion words did not significantly predict their children's physical affectionate touch within the video recording of reminiscing task. Additional effects of the extended models (Models 2 & 3) were not significant.

Table 4

Correlations between study variables: Play task

Variable Names	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1 Anxiety	1								
2 Avoidance	.592	1							
3 Mom's age	.005	.074	1						
4 child age (in months)	-.099	.084	.197	1					
5 gender of the child	.108	.185	-.025	.126	1				
6 play positive emotion m	-.069	.020	.058	-.188	-.127	1			
7 play negative emotion m	.019	-.076	-.101	.151	-.044	-.082	1		
8 play touch c	-.119	-.106	.118	-.065	-.206	.086	-.076	1	
9 play touch m	.099	.067	.102	-.172	-.064	.394**	-.005	.295**	1

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Models 1, 2, and 3, including predictor variables (mothers' positive emotion words, mothers' negative emotion words, anxiety, avoidance, mother's age, child's age, gender of the child) and outcome variables (mothers' affectionate touch, children's affectionate touch) for play and reminiscing tasks can be seen in Tables 5, 6, 7, and 8 with statistical results.

Table 5

Hierarchical regression analysis predicting mothers' affectionate touch: Play task

Model	Predictor(s)	B	SE B	β	R²	ΔR²	Sig. ΔF
1	mothers' positive emotion words	.102	.023	.428**	.183	.183**	< .001
	mothers' negative emotion words	.097	.150	.063			
2	mothers' positive emotion words	.105	.023	.438**	.202	.020	.350
	mothers' negative emotion words	.093	.150	.060			
	anxiety	.508	.421	.145			
	avoidance	-.022	.350	-.088			
3	mothers' positive emotion words	.098	.024	.412**	.219	.016	.629
	mothers' negative emotion words	.133	.155	.086			
	anxiety	.430	.435	.123			
	avoidance	.028	.364	.10			
	mom's age	.062	.057	.109			
	child's age	-.033	-.035	-.100			
	gender of the child	-.035	.436	-.088			

Note. *p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Table 6

Hierarchical regression analysis predicting chilren's affectionate touch: Play task

Model	Predictor(s)	B	SE B	β	R²	ΔR²	Sig. ΔF
1	mothers' positive emotion words	.015	.019	.081	.012	.012	.582
	mothers' negative emotion words	-.082	.126	-.070			
2	mothers' positive emotion words	.014	.20	.077	.028	.016	.497
	mothers' negative emotion words	-.087	.127	.074			
	anxiety	-.187	.355	-.070			
	avoidance	-.159	.295	-.072			
3	mothers' positive emotion words	.007	.020	.036	.076	.047	.243
	mothers' negative emotion words	-.073	.129	-.062			
	anxiety	-.219	.361	-.082			
	avoidance	-.074	.303	-.034			
	mom's age	.051	.048	.118			
	child's age	-.014	.029	-.055			
	gender of the child	-.596	.362	-.179			

Note. *p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Table 7

Hierarchical regression analysis predicting mothers' affectionate touch: Reminiscing task

Model	Predictor(s)	B	SE B	β	R^2	ΔR^2	Sig. ΔF
1	mothers' positive emotion words	.688	.119	.523**	.282	.282**	< .001
	mothers' negative emotion words	.849	.639	.120			
2	mothers' positive emotion words	.679	.121	.516**	.294	.012	.481
	mothers' negative emotion words	.817	.644	.116			
	anxiety	-2573	2523	-.116			
	avoidance	.175	2110	.009			
3	mothers' positive emotion words	.654	.123	.498**	.316	.022	.454
	mothers' negative emotion words	.949	.654	.134			
	anxiety	-3.265	2.576	-.147			
	avoidance	.444	2.165	.024			
	mom's age	.245	.343	.068			
	child's age	-.290	.199	-.139			
	gender of the child	2.112	2.596	.076			

Note. *p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Table 8

Hierarchical regression analysis predicting children's affectionate touch: Reminiscing task

Model	Predictor(s)	B	SE B	β	R²	ΔR²	Sig. ΔF
1	mothers' positive emotion words	.581	.115	.473**	.228	.228**	<.001
	mothers' negative emotion words	.626	.619	.095			
2	mothers' positive emotion words	.564	.117	.459	.240	.012	.509
	mothers' negative emotion words	.631	.624	.096			
	anxiety	-2.845	2.446	.-137			
	avoidance	1.284	2.045	.074			
3	mothers' positive emotion words	.518	.116	.422	.295	.055	.100
	mothers' negative emotion words	.885	.620	.134			
	anxiety	-3.137	2.444	-.151			
	avoidance	.985	2.054	.057			
	mom's age	.718	.325	.212			
	child's age	-.170	.189	-.087			
	gender of the child	3.446	2.463	.133			

Note. *p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

The current thesis aimed to investigate the role of mothers' verbal use of emotions on children's and mothers' affectionate physical touching behavior in two distinct yet similar socialization tasks: play, and reminiscing. In previous literature, research usually focuses on the predictive role of verbal conversational characteristics on the verbal ones, or likewise, visual conversational characteristics on visual ones. Yet, the study made a unique contribution by focusing on the predictive role of verbally coded conversations on visually coded conversations, specifically about the particular codings of affective socialization namely as use of emotion words and affective touching behavior; and while focalizing on the emotional socialization within these aspects, using two distinct yet common socialization tasks of reminiscing and play.

Mothers' emotionally positively charged words had the power to predict the number of sentimental contacts between mother-child dyads. This study also sought for whether attachment wise individual differences between mothers had a role on affectionate touching behavior in between mother-child dyads. For this purpose, maternal attachment was brought into the picture from romantic attachment perspective. Anxious and avoidant attachment dimensions of mothers were measured via ECR-R in order to see if they have any additive effects over and above the emotion words exclusively. On top of that, maternal age, child age, and gender of the child were examined as control variables.

The main aim was to understand the outcome of emotion words in a physically visible dimension. In other words, to comprehend how verbal communication (emotion words) posits itself on the non-verbal ground (physical touch). With this

aim, mother-child dyads' conversations were transcribed and coded based on the coding schemes utilized in previous literature (Bohanek, Fivush, & Walker, 2005; Fivush & Sales, 2008; 2012). Also, video recordings of play and reminiscing sessions were visually coded from five distinct angles and physical affectionate touch moments were counted.

Our main hypothesis, claiming verbal cues would predict nonverbal cues in both tasks was supported by our findings for the most part. Regarding the reminiscing task, results demonstrated that mothers' positively charged emotion words predicted both their and their children's physical affectionate touching behavior. In challenging experiences, emotions enhance attention and energize our actions (Cyders & Smith,2008). Emotions are human beings' adaptive responses (as cited in Myers & DeWall, 2014). The presence of emotionally positive words might have positively appraised the ongoing interaction between mother-child dyads, and consequently yielded touching behavior even without awareness. The brain processes a vast amount of information without our conscious awareness (Lazarus; 1991, 1998) and although the study's tasks are not challenging, touching action could still be energized as a response to those positive emotion words.

The abovementioned results of the reminiscing task are also in line with prior research underlining the connection between emotion socialization and physical affection in parent-child interactions. Previous works have demonstrated that parents' positive emotional expressions have the power to enhance warmth and security in children, which promotes affectionate actions in turn (Denham et al., 2015; Eisenberg et al., 2018). The use of positive emotional language might have increased this by forming a conversational context that is supportive, and children felt comfortable demonstrating affection through touching (Laible, 2011). The use of positive emotional language is known to increase emotional attunement between mother-child pairs, and this might have yielded to a dialectical understanding, creating a synchrony in affectionate behaviors (Feldman, 2007). In these terms, the findings of the current thesis study tapped into the synchrony in verbal and nonverbal expressions of emotions, and made an essential contribution to the existing literature of both reminiscing and play.

When the play task is considered, our findings showed that mothers' positively charged emotion words also predicted mothers' affectionate physical touch during the video recording of the same task. Expressive language in an emotional tone is a key mechanism through which mothers portray closeness, warmth, and sensitivity to their children. As a result, it constitutes a way to support and foster secure attachment relationships (Eisenberg et al., 2001). Previous research demonstrated that positive emotional expressions are associated with higher levels bonding through the incremental roles of trust and empathy, that are critical for intimate behaviors (Fredrickson, 2001). Fredrickson posits in the broaden–and–build theory that experiencing positive emotions enhances people's thought-action repertoires (2001). Therefore, emotional words might have found themselves a visible base by way of affectionate touching actions. Regarding the play task, considering that previous research showed that play has a critical role in supporting synchrony and emotional bonding between parents and their children (Feldman, 2007), it is no surprise to observe that synchrony positing itself in the forms of touching behaviors of mothers.

Reiterating, the main hypothesis of this study was mostly supported. The only nonsignificant finding was the one showing the lack thereof the association between mothers' positively charged emotion words, and children's affectionate physical touch during the play task. The reason behind this might have been due to the difference in points of focus in two tasks. During verbal interactions, the point of focus is the other person participating the conversation. Especially during reminiscing, active listening is very much in practice, and there is a dialectical nature in memory conversations of parent-child dyads, in which both members are quite active in co-constructing the shared past event that they are conversing about (Cuncic, 2024). Along this active listening, participants tend to go beyond solely hearing the words pronounced; indeed they are focused and mindfully a part of the interaction. On the other hand during play, especially the child's focus is on the play task itself, thus emotional words could have stayed below the attention radar of the child. Although a relatively neutral toy (i.e building blocks) was selected as a tool in our experiment, children at that age are easily distracted from what is said to what is done. If the play session was designed to be lengthier (i.e 20 mins instead of 10 mins), mothers' positive emotion words might have had a higher predictive nature on

children's touching behavior as well, from our point of view. This aspect is further expanded in the limitations and future research section.

While mothers' positively charged emotion words worked famously as a predictive variable in three of the four main regression analyses, mothers' negatively charged emotion words did not significantly predict any of the dependent varaible; neither were they included as a predictive factor in the study's hypotheses, in the first place. In other words, findings revealed that mothers' negative emotion words were not significant in predicting either children's or mothers' physical affectionate touch counts within the scope of both reminiscing and play tasks. Previous research showed young children, in particular, struggle with understanding and regulating negative emotions (Laible & Thompson, 1998). This might be the mechanism behind the absence of significance in the role of mothers' negative emotion words. Previous research revealed that parents differ in their approaches to emotion socialization, with distinctive beliefs about the management and regulation of emotions. For instance, some parents perceive negative emotions as undesirable and to-be kept under control, whereas others view emotional awareness and expression of emotions as substantial and praise emotional openness (Eisenberg et al., 1998). The former parent type encourage their children to dismiss, minimize, ignore, or avoid both the experience and expression of negative emotions (Eisenberg et al., 1998), whereas the latter motivate their children towards emotional awareness and socially appropriate expression of emotions (Gottman,Katz, & Hooven, 1997). Within the scope of this study, mothers might have suppressed negative emotion words intentionally or might have increased touching behavior to compensate for the possible unfavorable effect on their children.

Regarding our second hypothesis, it was striking to see that maternal romantic attachment dimensions of avoidance and anxiety did not add any explanation over and above the effects of emotion words. We hypothesized that higher levels of maternal attachment anxiety and avoidance would predict lower levels of physical affectionate touch between mothers and their children. One possible explanation to that is the utilization of a romantic attachment scale (ECR-R) in measuring maternal attachment. Although attachment patterns tend to remain relatively stable across the

lifespan (Fraley, 2002; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016), further studies should revisit this association through varying attachment inventories (AAI: George, Kaplan, & Main, 1985; ASQ: Feeney, Noller, & Hanrahan, 1994). Considering that ECR-R worked for other genres of work scrutinizing the role of attachment dimensions on mother-child dyadic interactions (Sahin-Acar et al., 2019). On one hand, this may seem as a shortcoming of this study, but on the other, we deem it as a strength. Because, even after using maternal romantic attachment anxiety and avoidance as predictors, along with some control variables such as maternal age and child's gender, mothers' verbal coding of affect, as positively charged emotion words, still significantly predicted mothers' nonverbal coding of affect, as affective physical touch in both reminiscing and play task; and also predicted children's nonverbal coding of affect, as affective physical touch in reminiscing task; which could be underlining the robustness of the current research.

Furthermore, even when mothers' and children's age, and gender (girl vs boy) were added as control variables, as aforementioned, the findings did not change at all. In other words, the regression models worked even in the presence of those control variables. In previous literature, older mothers were found to be more elaborative in unshared and overall past experiences, and less repetitive in overall past experiences (Sahin-Acar, Bahtiyar-Saygan, Alsancak-Akbulut, & Sagel-Cetiner, 2019). Mothers' attachment style was also measured romantically within the scope of that line of research. In other words, maternal age revealed itself as an influential variable when autobiographic memory system's working mechanisms were explored in previous studies. Although previous studies about universal patterns of attachment anxiety and avoidance found that maternal attachment avoidance predicted elaboration inversely and maternal attachment anxiety predicted repetitiveness in interactions regarding unshared past events, our design's focus on shared past experiences should be highlighted as a potential causal factor of the findings revealed. Due to the sample characteristics and the potential role of within-cultural or individual differences, the attachment anxiety and avoidance wise patterns observed in Western samples could be inapplicable to Turkish context as well (Sahin-Acar et al., 2019). Therewithal, the small sample size utilized in previous literature might have caused this so called winner's curse, that means exaggerated effect sizes for the designated significance of

variables due to low statistical power. Further studies should seek to replicate our results in large samples as to overcome this foregone statistical power phenomenon. Taken together, the model worked despite the presence of the abovementioned control variables (mother's and child's ages, child's gender) underscoring the robustness of this study.

4.1. Contributions of the Current Study

The socialization of emotion has significant implications for both social and emotional development, as emotional abilities are thought to play a key role in the development of social competence (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1992; Hubbard& Coie, 1994; Saarni, 1990) and have part in many psychological issues (Casey, 1996). We consider the current study by its findings demonstrating the association between verbal and nonverbal expressions of emotion, putting another brick in the wall, and underlining one of the major contexts through which emotional socialization manifests itself. In other words, the current study captured the line between what has and has not been said, and revealed the power of words in their altering role on non-verbal emotional cues.

To our knowledge, this is the first study that combines play and reminiscing tasks and scrutinize the task-wise affectionate behaviors of mother-child dyads. Furthermore, the utilization of the ECR-R and measuring maternal attachment through the romantic attachment pattern is relatively new in mother-child reminiscing literature. This study is the second in the autobiographical memory system literature that consolidated maternal romantic attachment dimensions to autobiographical memory system dynamics, according to the information available to us (the first; Sahin-Acar et al., 2019), and the first to apply these dimensions to reminiscing.

Although execution in a laboratory setting is to be given as a limitation in the following section, as the details would be provided, performing this research in a laboratory and exclusively focusing on mothers' affect would even have been a strength instead of a limitation. By that, possible embedded roles of numerous other

socializing factors beyond mothers (i.e siblings, peers, teachers) playing a role in emotion socialization (Brown &Dunn, 1996; Dunn &Brown, 1994) were extricated.

4.2. Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

As previous literature suggests, there is a gender-wise difference when emotionally charged memory talk is concerned: girls talk more about emotions, use a greater variety of emotions within their narrative, and utilize more words while expressing their emotionally charged life experiences, compared to boys (Buckner & Fivush, 1998; Fivush et al., 2000; Zaman & Fivush, 2011). Within the scope of this study child's gender did not have a role over and above mothers' emotion words on affectionate touches in between mother-child dyads. The current thesis study did not encompass children's emotionally charged words as an independent variable. Further studies should consider the back-feeding possibility of that mechanism, and seek for effects rooted from child's emotion word utilization. Current evidence offers support for the view that parental socialization practices have a salient role on children's emotional and social competence, and that the process of socialization is bidirectional and dialectical in nature, as the co-constructive nature of reminiscing literature argues (Eisenberg et al., 1998; Graneist & Habernas, 2019).

Participants of this research were mothers and their four to six year old (45 and 73 in months of age) children. Feldman et al. drew attention to a new kind of psychology, namely cultural cognitive developmental psychology (1993). Directing their compass towards that understanding, Graneist and Habernas explored the development of scaffolding of narrative emotion regulation during adolescence (2019). They presented co-narrations of sad events between mothers and their adolescent children in their study, and revealed that there are adolescence specific scaffolding strategies that mothers utilize (Graneist & Habernas, 2019). Regarding this age-sensitive impact, future studies should replicate our findings for older children, and for teenagers especially.

It was found in previous research that parents possess the tendency to use higher number of emotion words while communicating with their daughters compared to

their sons (Buckner & Fivush, 1998; Fivush, Berlin, Sales, Mennuti-Washburn, & Cassidy, 2003). Although we could not find any significant role of gender through conversation contents, previous findings cannot be disregarded, and the issue should also be scrutinized from this perspective in succeeding analyses. Previous research has shown that mothers tend to be more emotionally expressive to their daughters than they do to their sons, specifically when it comes to the expression of positive emotions (Brody, 1993; Garner et al., 1997). Malatesta-Magai et al. (1994) could not find a significant difference in mothers' showing of positive affect towards their daughters than sons, yet in that play session with 34-month-olds, they observed that mothers expressed more positive emotion words vocally towards their daughters. In this sense, findings of previous research cannot be disregarded, and further studies should scrutinize this gender difference delicately.

Furthermore, this research was carried out in a laboratory setting, and inevitably there had been a shortcoming in reflecting daily-life conversations in between the mother-child pairs. A laboratory setting is always preferred at the expense of ecological validity. Besides, the artificial setting of laboratory environment might cause participants to behave in unnatural manners, in times. Social desirability bias is the critical issue here; such that participants, and especially mothers, might have present themselves in an exaggerated manner since they were aware of being recorded. Then again, in the light of previous findings, the associations between most parental emotion related behaviors (such as reactions and expressivity) and child outcomes demonstrate a tendency to be either modest or inconsistent bidirectional (Eisenberg et al., 1998). Regarding the fact that there are numerous other socializing factors beyond mothers (i.e siblings, peers, teachers) certainly playing a role in emotion socialization (Brown &Dunn, 1996; Dunn &Brown, 1994), performing this research in a laboratory and exclusively focusing on mothers' role would even have been a strength instead of a limitation.

The design of the study was based on non-directing the mothers about the content of the reminisced memories. In other words, dyads were given the freedom to bring up and discuss any topic related to their shared memories. The valence of the memory is known to shape the nature of mother-child interactions. Whereas positive memories

commonly promote more cooperative and emotion-based exchanges, negative memories may elicit more causal and explanatory maternal approaches (Sales, Fivush, & Peterson, 2003). Maternal behaviors may change regarding the valence of the memories. Particularly, negative memories could introduce variability in maternal dynamics such as physical touch, responsiveness, and tone. Mothers may differ in their navigation of negative emotions, some inducing less sensitive interactions by struggling, and others portraying greater warmth and reassurance by taking up the challenge (Koren-Karie et al., 2003). Also, research suggests that discussing emotionally salient memories usually elicits stronger emotional responses and deeper engagement from the parties involved (Hamann, 2001; Talmi, 2013). This could lead to expressing more communication, both in verbal and non-verbal dimensions, and influence the observed effects. Future studies should regard this particularity, and seek answer to the question of whether the results would change when mothers were asked to bring emotionally charged (positive and negative) shared memories in their conversations with their children.

Recent studies in play, regard the family as a whole interactive model. As mentioned, Favez, Frascarolo, and Tissot utilized Family Alliance Model to operationalize participation, organization, focalization, and affect sharing functions of play in their study (2017). Favez et al. used triadic play (i.e. The Lausanne Trilogue Play) for families with one child and multi-partner play (i.e. PicNic Game) for families with several children in their abovementioned study (2017). Family level observations arise including the role of the fathers through that. The universal observations within the scope of Favez et al.'s work give more detail about the family dynamics as a whole, details that cannot be caught neither with individual nor dyadic assessments. Considering the literature is expanding toward a more integrative pattern, fathers should also be involved in future studies. This is also essential to enhance construct validity since the natural setting of the family climate involves the father, as well. Previous line of research includes home visits to capture the most naturalistic data possible (Sahin-Acar & Leichtman, 2018). Regarding the difficulty of bringing fathers to laboratory settings, future studies might consider executing the same design at home settings to ensure and capture father involvement, as well.

4.3. Conclusion

The current study aimed to investigate the predictive role of mothers' verbally coded emotions (positively and negatively charged emotion words) on mothers' and children's nonverbally coded emotions (the physical affectionate touching behavior), in mother-child dyads' reminiscing and play tasks. Mothers' attachment related avoidance and anxiety were brought into the picture to capture factors that may compose an individual based difference. The findings indicated the crucial presentment of non-verbal affection cues (in form of physical affectionate touch) induced by verbal triggers (positive emotion words) when it comes to mother-child interactions. Within the scope of two tasks, scientific evidence showed that maternal positive emotion words were predictive of mother-child reciprocal touch when reminiscing on the carpet, whereas maternal positive emotion words were predictive of mothers' touch only when play is on it. Furthermore, maternal romantic attachment style did not account for any additional variance beyond the explanation provided by maternal use of positive emotion words. The predictive strength of mothers' emotion words was revealed at that point, and the results turned out to be even more robust. Non-verbal and verbal grounds were found to be in an unequivocally close relation, which was mostly discarded in previous literature. These implications were discussed within the scope of emotion socialization aspect.

As for the play task, children's touch was not predicted by maternal emotion words, and this was discussed in terms of differences between the structural frameworks of two tasks. It was underlined that point of attention focus is on the conversation itself when reminiscing was concerned, and on the 'play' itself when the play task was in action. Another finding indicated that maternal romantic attachment had no significant role on physical touching instances in between the dyads. This result was discussed in terms of small sample sizes of previous studies, and utilization of other attachment inventories apart from ECR-R.

Future studies should shed light on paternal involvement to these processes. Either triadically or evaluating the father-child dyad exclusively, further lines of research should reveal the role of fathers' emotional words on touching behavior.

Furthermore, further studies should replicate this study's results in larger sample sizes to increase power and to enforce the probability of detecting a true effect. Lastly, future studies should also elucidate the back-feeding possibility of children's emotion words on mothers' affectionate touching behaviors as the relationship was found to be bidirectional in prevailing literature.

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APPENDICES

A. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FORM

Kişisel Bilgi Formu

*Çocuğunuzun doğum tarihi:_____   *Bugünün tarihi:_____

*Çocuğunuzun cinsiyeti: kız___   erkek___   *Sizin yaşınız:_____

*Medeni haliniz:_____   *Sizden başka kaç kardeşiniz var?_____

*En son aldığınız eğitim derecesi:_____*Kaç çocuğunuz var?_____

*Çocuğunuzun kronik bir hastalığı var mı?_____

*Çocuğunuzla ne sıklıkta konuşursunuz?
      1   2   3   4   5   6   7
Hemen hiç   Çok sıkça

*Kendi anneniz sizinle ne sıklıkta konuşurdu?
      1   2   3   4   5   6   7
Hemen hiç   Çok sıkça

*Anılar sizin için ne kadar önemli?
      1   2   3   4   5   6   7
Hemen hiç   Çok önemli

*Size önemli insanları ve olayları hatırlatan şeyleri ne sıklıkla biriktirirsiniz?
      1   2   3   4   5   6   7
Hemen hiç   Çok sıkça

*Çocuğunuzla ne sıklıla oyun oynarsınız?
      1   2   3   4   5   6   7
Hemen hiç   Çok sıkça

*Çocuğunuzun babasıyla birlikteliğinizde ne kadar mutluydunuz ya da mutlusunuz?
      1   2   3   4   5   6   7
Hemen hiç   Çok mutluyum

B. EXPERIENCES IN CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS REVISED
(TURKISH ADAPTATION)

	Hiç Katılmıyorum	Biraz Katılmıyorum	Kararsızım	Biraz Katılıyorum	Tamamen Katılıyorum
Aşağıda verilen cümlelere ne ölçüde katıldığınızı **eşinizle olan ilişkinizi göz önünde bulundurarak cevaplayınız**. Her maddenin evliliğinizdeki duygu ve düşüncelerinizi ne oranda yansıttığını karşılarındaki 5 aralıklı cetvel üzerinde ilgili rakamı yuvarlak içine alarak belirtiniz. Eğer eşinizi kaybettiyseniz veya eşinizden ayrı yaşıyorsanız, aşağıdaki maddeleri **bir ilişki içinde bulunduğunuzu varsayarak cevaplayınız.** 1-----------------2-----------------3-----------------4-----------------5 Hiç Biraz Kararsızım/ Biraz Tamamen katılmıyorum katılmıyorum fikrim yok katılıyorum katılıyorum **ÖNEMLİ NOT:** Aşağıdaki cümlelerin bazılarında "yakın olmak" veya "yakınlaşmak" ifadeleri geçmektedir. Bu ifadelerle kastedilen eşinizle duygusal yakınlık kurmak, düşüncelerinizi veya başınızdan geçenleri eşinize açmak, eşinize sarılmak ve benzeri davranışlardır. Lütfen ilgili soruları bu tanıma göre cevaplayınız.					
1. Eşimin sevgisini kaybetmekten korkarım.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Gerçekte ne hissettiğimi eşime göstermemeyi tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Sıklıkla, eşimin artık benimle olmak istemediği korkusuna kapılırım.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Özel duygu ve düşüncelerimi eşimle paylaşmak konusunda kendimi rahat hissederim.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Sıklıkla, eşimin beni gerçekten sevmediği kaygısına kapılırım.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Eşime güvenip dayanmak konusunda kendimi rahat bırakmakta zorlanırım.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Eşimin beni, benim onu önemsediğim kadar önemsemediğinden endişe duyarım.	1	2	3	4	5

	1	2	3	4	5
8. Eşime yakın olma konusunda çok rahatımdır.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Sıklıkla, eşimin bana duyduğu hislerin benim ona duyduğum hisler kadar güçlü olmasını isterim.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Eşime açılma konusunda kendimi rahat hissetmem.	1	2	3	4	5
11. İlişkilerimi kafama çok takarım.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Eşime fazla yakın olmamayı tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Benden uzakta olduğunda, eşimin başka birine ilgi duyabileceği korkusuna kapılırım.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Eşim benimle çok yakın olmak istediğinde rahatsızlık duyarım.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Eşime duygularımı gösterdiğimde, onun benim için aynı şeyleri hissetmeyeceğinden korkarım.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Eşimle kolayca yakınlaşabilirim.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Eşimin beni terkedeceğinden pek endişe duymam.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Eşimle yakınlaşmak bana zor gelmez.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Eşim kendimden şüphe etmeme neden olur.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Genellikle, eşimle sorunlarımı ve kaygılarımı tartışırım.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Terk edilmekten pek korkmam.	1	2	3	4	5
22. Zor zamanlarımda, eşimden yardım istemek bana iyi gelir.	1	2	3	4	5
23. Eşimin, bana benim istediğim kadar yakınlaşmak istemediğini düşünürüm.	1	2	3	4	5
24. Eşime hemen hemen her şeyi anlatırım.	1	2	3	4	5
25. Eşimin bazen bana olan duygularını sebepsiz yere değiştirdiğini hissederim.	1	2	3	4	5
26. Başımdan geçenleri eşimle konuşurum.	1	2	3	4	5
27. Çok yakın olma arzum bazen insanları korkutup uzaklaştırır.	1	2	3	4	5
28. Eşim benimle çok yakınlaştığında gergin hissederim.	1	2	3	4	5
29. Eşim beni yakından tanırsa, "gerçek ben"i sevmeyeceğinden korkarım.	1	2	3	4	5
30. Eşime güvenip dayanmak konusunda rahatımdır.	1	2	3	4	5
31. Eşimden ihtiyaç duyduğum şefkat ve desteği görememek beni öfkelendirir.	1	2	3	4	5

32.Eşime güvenip dayanmak benim için kolaydır.	1	2	3	4	5
33.Başka insanlara denk olamamaktan endişe duyarım	1	2	3	4	5
34.Eşime şefkat göstermek benim için kolaydır.	1	2	3	4	5
35.Eşim beni sadece kızgın olduğumda önemser.	1	2	3	4	5
36.Eşim beni ve ihtiyaçlarımı gerçekten anlar.	1	2	3	4	5

C. APPROVAL OF THE METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER

ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ
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Sayı: 28620816/ ȝol ~1477   14 Kasım 2013

Gönderilen: Dr. Başak Şahin
              Psikoloji Bölümü

Gönderen :   Prof. Dr. Canan Özgen
              IAK Başkanı

İlgi   :   Etik Onayı

"Anne-Çocuk Konuşmalarında Annenin Kullandığı Mimik ve Dokunma Davranışlarının Çocuğun Bellek Özellikleri Üzerindeki Etkisi" isimli araştırmanız "İnsan Araştırmaları Komitesi" tarafından uygun görülerek gerekli onay verilmiştir.

Bilgilerinize saygılarımla sunarım.

Etik Komite Onayı

Uygundur

14/11/2013

Prof.Dr. Canan ÖZGEN
Uygulamalı Etik Araştırma Merkezi
(UEAM) Başkanı
ODTÜ 06531 ANKARA

19 11.2013   09

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D. WORD COUNTS

Coding Scheme by Task

Task	Member	Variable: Emotionally Charged Words	Variable: Touch
Reminiscing	Mother	# of positively charged emotion words # of negatively charged emotion words # of total words used	# of physical affectionate touching behavior occured during task
	Child	# of positively charged emotion words # of negatively charged emotion words # of total words used	# of physical affectionate touching behavior occured during task
Play	Mother	# of positively charged emotion words # of negatively charged emotion words # of total words used	# of physical affectionate touching behavior occured during task
	Child	# of positively charged emotion words # of negatively charged emotion words # of total words used	# of physical affectionate touching behavior occured during task

E. CONSENT FORMS

Gönüllü Katılım Formu

Bu çalışma, ODTÜ Psikoloji Bölümü'nden Yardımcı Doçent Dr. Başak Şahin tarafından yürütülmektedir. Çalışmanın amacı, annelerin çocuklarıyla konuşmalarının ilişkisel özelliklerini incelemektir. Cevaplarınız tamamiyle gizli tutulacak ve sadece araştırmacılar tarafından değerlendirilecektir; elde edilecek bilgiler bilimsel yayımlarda kullanılacaktır.

Çalışma sırasında sorulan sorular, kişisel rahatsızlık verecek herhangi bir ayrıntı içermemektedir. Ancak, katılım sırasında sorulardan ya da herhangi başka bir nedenden ötürü kendinizi rahatsız hissederseniz çalışmayı yarıda bırakmakta serbestsiniz. Böyle bir durumda çalışmada sorumlu kişiye, çalışmadan ayrılmak istediğinizi söylemek yeterli olacaktır. Çalışmanın veri toplama aşamasının sonunda, bu çalışmayla ilgili sorularınız cevaplanacaktır. Bu çalışmaya katıldığınız için şimdiden teşekkür ederiz. Çalışma hakkında daha fazla bilgi almak için Psikoloji Bölümü öğretim görevlilerinden Dr. Başak Şahin (Tel: ; e-posta:_____) ile iletişim kurabilirsiniz.

Bu çalışmaya tamamen gönüllü olarak katılıyorum ve çocuğumun da bu çalışmada yer almasını onaylıyorum. İstediğim zaman çalışmayı yarıda kesip çıkabileceğimi biliyorum. Verdiğim bilgilerin bilimsel amaçlı yayımlarda kullanılmasını kabul ediyorum. (Formu doldurup imzaladıktan sonra uygulayıcıya geri veriniz).

İsim Soyad   Tarih   İmza

                                  ----/----/-----

Veli Onay Formu

Sevgili Ebeveyn,

Bu çalışma, ODTÜ Psikoloji Bölümü'nden Öğretim Görevlisi Dr. Başak Şahin tarafından yürütülmektedir. Çalışmanın amacı, çocukların ve aynı aileden bireylerin otobiyografik bellek özelliklerini incelemektir. Çocuğunuzun verdiği cevaplar tamamıyle gizli tutulacak ve sadece araştırmacılar tarafından değerlendirilecektir; elde edilecek bilgiler bilimsel yayımlarda kullanılacaktır.

Çalışma sırasında sorulan sorular, kişisel rahatsızlık verecek herhangi bir ayrıntı içermemektedir. Ancak, katılım sırasında sorulardan ya da herhangi başka bir nedenden ötürü çocuğunuz kendisini rahatsız hissederse, çalışmayı yarıda bırakmakta serbest olacaktır. Böyle bir durumda çalışmada sorumlu kişiye, çalışmadan ayrılmak istediğini söylemesi yeterli olacaktır. Çalışmanın veri toplama aşamasının sonunda, bu çalışmayla ilgili sorularınız varsa cevaplanacaktır. Bu çalışmaya katıldığınız için şimdiden teşekkür ederiz. Çalışma hakkında daha fazla bilgi almak için Psikoloji Bölümü öğretim görevlilerinden Dr. Başak Şahin (Tel: ____ ; e-posta:_____) ile iletişim kurabilirsiniz.

Çocuğumun bu çalışmada yer almasını onaylıyorum (Lütfen alttaki iki seçenekten birini işaretleyiniz.)

***Evet onaylıyorum*___   *Hayır, onaylamıyorum*___**

Annenin adı-soyadı: _____

Çocuğun adı soyadı ve doğum tarihi:_____

(Formu doldurup imzaladıktan sonra uygulayıcıya geri veriniz).

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Katılım Sonrası Bilgi Formu

Bu çalışma daha önce de belirtildiği gibi ODTÜ Psikoloji Bölümü Yardımcı Doçent Dr. Başak Şahin tarafından yürütülen anne-çocuk konuşmalarının doğasını ve bunun çocuğun bellek gelişimi üstündeki etkilerini anlamak üzerine yapılan bir çalışmadır. Temel olarak, annenin çocuğa ne tip sorular sorduğu, ne kadar fiziksel temasta bulunduğu ve ne tür yüz ifadeleri ve mimikler kullandığı araştırılmaktadır.

Çeşitli çalışmalar göstermiştir ki, annelerin çocuklarına yaşadıkları olaylar ve günlük aktivitelerle ilgili soru sormaları, çocukların anlattıklarını değerlendirir nitelikte olumlu ya da olumsuz tepki vermeleri, ve en çok da çocuklarıyla sıkça konuşmalarının, çocukların bellek gelişimi ve otobiyografik benlik gelişimleri üzerinde olumlu etkileri vardır.

Bu çalışmadan elde edilen bilgiler sadece bilimsel araştırma ve yazılarda kullanılacaktır. Çalışmanın sonuçlarını öğrenmek ya da bu araştırma hakkında daha fazla bilgi almak için aşağıdaki isimlere başvurabilirsiniz. Bu araştırmaya katıldığınız için tekrar çok teşekkür ederiz.

Dr. Başak Şahin (tel: ; e-posta:)

F. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Otobiyografik bellek, bizi biz yapar; geçmişte, şimdide ve gelecekte bir benlik sürekliliği oluşturur. Otobiyografik belleğin ayırt edici işlevi, kişisel önemidir. Bellek araştırmacıları, otobiyografik belleği "ne oldu"dan "bana ne oldu"ya bir yol olarak tanımlamışlardır (Fivush, 2011). Otobiyografik bellek, hem epizodik (kişiye özgü olaylar ve deneyimler) hem de semantik (dünya ve benlik hakkında genel bilgiler) anılardan oluşan bir bellek sistemidir. Bu sistemin işleyişi, zaman, mekan ve duygular gibi bağlamsal unsurları benliğe ve yaşam anlatısına özgü özelliklerle birleştirmeyi gerektirir.

Bebeklerde otobiyografik bellek sisteminin gelişimi, okul öncesi yıllar boyunca kademeli bir süreçte gerçekleşir (Nelson & Fivush, 2004). Bu sistemin gelişimine katkı sağlayan faktörler arasında temel bellek yetileri, dil becerileri, yetişkinlerin geçmiş yaşantı konuşmaları, zaman kavrayışı ve kendini ve başkalarını anlama yer alır (Nelson & Fivush, 2004). Bir çocuk dil becerisi ve benlik duygusu kazandığında, kendi kişisel yaşam tarihini oluşturmaya hazır hale gelir.

Yukarıda belirtilen faktörler arasında, yetişkinlerin geçmiş yaşantı konuşmaları kritik bir rol oynar. Özellikle birincil bakım verenlerin büyüyen çocukla yaptıkları konuşmalar ortak yapılandırıcı bir nitelik taşır. Birincil bakım verenle yapılan sosyal etkileşimler, otobiyografik bellek oluşumuna önemli ölçüde katkıda bulunur.

Otobiyografik bellek sistemi oluşumunda anne ve çocukların sosyal etkileşimlerine ışık tutan iki ana odak noktası geçmiş yaşantı konuşmaları ve oyundur. Bunlar, günlük yaşam bağlamında çok yaygın olan ve annelerle çocukları arasında sıklıkla gerçekleşen etkinliklerdir.

Anne-çocuk geçmiş yaşantı konuşması, geçmiş deneyimlerin sosyal bir temel üzerinde paylaşılması sürecidir ve bu süreç, anıların düzenlenmesi için bir çerçeve

oluşturarak çocuğun gelişen benlik algısını destekler (Fivush, Haden, & Reese, 2006). Geçmiş yaşantı konuşmaları, bir çocuğun sosyo-duygusal ve bilişsel gelişimi için kritiktir (Reese & Fivush, 2008). Anne ile çocuk arasındaki bu sosyal etkileşim, kişisel deneyimlerden anlam çıkarmanın, onları düzenlemenin ve çocuğun kendi otobiyografik bellek sistemini oluşturmasının temel dokusunu inşa eder.

Çocukların otobiyografik bellek gelişimi için annenin geçmiş yaşantı konuşma tarzı büyük önem taşır. Araştırmalar, anneler çocuklarıyla daha ayrıntılı bir şekilde konuştuklarında, çocukların da daha ayrıntılı ve tutarlı bir otobiyografik belleğe sahip olma eğiliminde olduğunu göstermektedir (Fivush, 2011). Çocukluk boyunca geçmiş yaşantı konuşma sıklığı ve tarzının, yaşam boyu sürdürülebilecek bir iç ses gibi otobiyografik bellek oluşumunu etkilediği açıktır (Sahin-Acar & Leichtman, 2020).

Anneler, yaşanan olayı daha ayrıntılı veya daha az ayrıntılı bir şekilde yapılandırırken, çocuklarına bu olayı duygusal bir tonla hatırladıklarında nasıl algılamaları ve duygularını nasıl ifade edecekleri konusunda konuşma fırsatı sunar (Bürümlü-Kısa & Şahin-Acar, 2020).

Kültürel farklılıklar, anı konuşma tarzlarında çeşitlilik yaratmakta ve bu durum çocukların sosyal normlar ve ilişkiler hakkındaki bakış açılarını etkilemektedir (Wang, 2001). Batı kültürünün bireyselliği vurgulaması ve Doğu kültürünün karşılıklı bağımlılığı ön plana çıkarması buna örnek olarak verilebilir. Batı kültüründen anneler anlatılarında birey odaklı ifadelere ağırlık verirken, Doğu kültüründen anneler daha çok grup ilişkili konulara odaklanmaktadır (Wang, 2001). Çocuğun geçmiş deneyimlere dair bilgisi, annesinin anı konuşma tarzı ile dinamik bir şekilde birlikte inşa edilmektedir. Bu yeniden ve birlikte inşa etme farklılıkları, geçmiş yaşantı konuşmalarını çocukların bilişsel ve sosyo-duygusal gelişiminde muazzam etkileri olan, hem küresel anlamda kritik hem de kültürel olarak özgün bir alan haline getirmektedir.

Anneler ve çocukları günlük yaşamlarında duygular hakkında konuşurlar. Sosyo-duygusal bir perspektiften bakıldığında, anne-çocuk geçmiş yaşantı konuşmaları,

çocukların duygusal dünyalarında yollarını bulmalarını desteklemek açısından son derece önemlidir. Anneler ve çocukları, yaşanan olayları değerlendirir, geçmiş olayları duygusal bir bakış açısıyla tartışır, bu olaylara ilişkin belirli temaları inceler ve bu tür duygulara oyunda ve günlük etkinliklerde yer verirler (Landau ve diğerleri, 2006). Fivush ve diğerlerine göre (2000), geçmiş duygular hakkında konuşmak, duygu sosyalleştirme için kritik bir öneme sahiptir. Duygusal deneyimlerin yansıması ve yorumlanması, duygusal olarak yüklü bir anı konuşma süreci ile sağlanabilir. Çocuklar, duygularını ifade etmeyi ve düzenlemeyi yetişkinlerle olan etkileşimleri aracılığıyla öğrenirler. Geçmiş duygular hakkında konuşulduğunda, duygusal deneyimlerin sonuçları fark edilir, kendini tanımlayan duygular oluşur ve çocuk bu duyguları bir kez daha yansıtır ve yorumlar (Fivush ve diğerleri, 2000). Bu uygulama sayesinde çocuk, neyin önemli olduğunu öğrenir ve duygularla ilişkilendirilmiş bir dünya resmini kavrar. Önceki araştırmalar, ortak geçmiş olaylar hakkında konuşmanın, çocukların duygu sosyalleştirmesinin temel yapı taşlarından olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır.

Genellikle anneler ile çocukları arasındaki konuşmalar iki öge üzerine kuruludur: günlük konuşmalar (ör. "Bugün neler yaptın?") ve oyun sırasında yapılan konuşmalar (ör. rehberlik, iş birliği, duygusal düzenleme vb.). Oyun, erken çocukluğun temel taşıdır. Çocuk oyun aracılığıyla öğrenir, dener, hata yapar, yanlış yapar, doğru yapar ve kendi yolunu bulur (Bodrova ve Leong, 2007; Piaget, 1945; Vygotsky, 1978). Başka bir deyişle, oyun, büyüyen bir çocuğun deneysel laboratuvarıdır (Piaget, 1945). Oyun, bir çocuğun bakım verenleriyle öğrenme, deneme ve bağ kurma fırsatları sunar (Ginsburg, 2007; Pellegrini, 2009; Rogoff, 2003). Smith'in de vurguladığı gibi, oyunun fiziksel boyutu, bebeklerde sinirsel olgunlaşmayı ve motor becerilerin gelişimini destekler (2005). Bunun ötesinde, oyun, sırayla hareket etme, iş birliği, kurallara uyma, empati, öz düzenleme, öz güven, dürtü kontrolü ve motivasyon gibi sosyal becerileri destekleyerek sosyal gelişime katkıda bulunur (Elias ve Berk, 2002; Singer ve diğerleri, 2006). Sosyal hayali oyunlara katılarak çocuklar, zihin teorilerini inşa eder, başkalarının bakış açılarını kavrar ve sosyal becerilerini geliştirir (Lillard, 2001).

Son olarak, oyun, rahatsız edici duyguları serbest bırakmak, duygusal uyumsuzlukları aşmak ve zorluklarla başa çıkmak için gerekli zemini sağlayarak

sağlıklı duygusal gelişimi teşvik eder (Erikson, 1963; Landreth, 2012; Landreth ve Homeyer, 1998). Ebeveynler, oyun oturumlarının gerektirdiği sosyal ortak çabanın bir parçası olarak çocuklarının gelişimini destekleyebilirler (Lindsey ve Mize, 2000; Rogoff, 2003). Bunun bir yolu, oyun oturumları sırasında oluşan sohbetler yoluyla gerçekleşir.

Anne-çocuk oyunu ele alındığında, bu bağlamda gerçekleşen konuşmalar dil gelişimi, problem çözme ve duygusal ifadeye yönelik önemli bir zemin sunmaktadır. Ebeveynler, oyun sırasında yapılan konuşmaları, üzerinde durulması gereken önemli konuları vurgulamak için bir araç olarak kullanır. Çocuklarını düşüncelerini ve bakış açılarını ifade edebilen aktif katılımcılar olarak görür, onların günlük ve duygusal ihtiyaçlarına göre rehberlik etmeye çalışır ve mümkün olduğunca katılımcı olmalarını beklerler (Brown & Vaughan, 2009; Sahin-Acar, 2024).

Hem anıları hatırlama hem de oyun bağlamları, ebeveynlerin bireysel farklılıklarından büyük ölçüde etkilenir ve bu farklılıklar, konuşmaların dinamiklerini ve kalitesini şekillendirir. Bu çalışma, anne-çocuk etkileşimlerini bağlanma perspektifinden ele alarak anneler arasındaki bireysel farklılıklara da odaklanmaktadır. Çocuğun ilk bağlanma ilişkisi, genellikle birincil bakıcı (çoğunlukla anne) ile olan ilişkisi, gelecekteki ilişkiler için bir şablon görevi görür. Anne, bebeğin ihtiyaçlarına tutarlı ve duyarlı bir şekilde yanıt verdiğinde güvenli bağlanma gelişir. Bunun aksine, tutarsız yanıtlar kaygılı bağlanmaya, soğuk, mesafeli ve reddedici davranışlar ise kaçıngan bağlanmaya yol açar. Bu bağlanma türlerinin belirleyicisi olan anne duyarlılığı, güvenli bağlanmada yüksek, güvensiz türlerde (hem kaygılı hem de kaçıngan) ise düşüktür. Bağlanma stilleri aracılığıyla gelecekteki ilişkilerde kullanılmak üzere kendilik ve diğerlerine yönelik içsel çalışma modelleri oluşturulur (Bowlby, 1973). Bu modeller, bireyin diğerleriyle olan gelecekteki yakın ilişkilerini şekillendirir (Cassidy & Shaver, 2008) ve romantik ilişkilerde de kendini gösterir (Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). Annenin romantik partneriyle olan bağlanma tarzı, çocuğuyla olan etkileşim biçimini de etkiler.

Konuyu psikobiyolojik bir perspektiften genişletecek olursak, anne-çocuk etkileşimlerinde fiziksel temasın rolü, özellikle bebeklik ve erken çocukluk

döneminde kritik bir öneme sahiptir (Cunha ve ark., 2024; Field, 2010). Bu dönemde dokunma, genellikle çocuğun ilk iletişim deneyimini oluşturur ve ten teması, kucaklama, sarılma gibi şefkat dolu davranışlarla gerçekleşir. Bu etkileşimler, hem annede hem de çocukta bağlanma ve stres azaltma ile ilişkili bir hormon olan oksitosin salınımını uyarır (Feldman, 2012). Ayrıca dokunma duyusunun bebeğin dış dünyayla ilk temas aracı olduğu göz önüne alındığında, dokunma temelli etkileşimlerin kalp atış hızı ve kortizol düzeyleri gibi fizyolojik süreçlerin düzenlenmesine katkıda bulunduğu ve çocuğun fiziksel ve duygusal sağlığını desteklemede önemli bir rol oynadığı bulunmuştur (Della Longa, Dragovic & Farroni, 2021).

Önceki araştırma bulguları, annelerin duygusal iletişiminin anne-çocuk etkileşimlerinde fiziksel temasın sıklığını ve doğasını etkileyebileceğini, böylece sözel ve sözel olmayan sevgi ifadelerinin birbiriyle bağlantılı olduğunu vurgulamaktadır. Genel olarak, önceki çalışmalar konuşmaların transkripsiyonuna odaklanmış ve bu yaklaşım, dile getirilmeyen unsurların kaçınılmaz bir şekilde göz ardı edilmesine yol açmıştır. "Bir resim bin kelimeye bedeldir" ve mevcut çalışmada, sözel temelin eylemler dünyasında kendine nasıl bir yer edindiği sorusuna yanıt aranmaktadır. Duygular hem sözel hem de sözel olmayan ipuçlarında yer almaktadır. Dokunma, bunun en belirgin tezahürlerinden biri olarak, bu çalışmada sözel olmayan bir duygusal gösterge biçimi olarak incelenmiştir.

Bu çalışma, oyun ve hatırlama görevlerini birleştirerek önemli bir yenilik sunmaktadır. Çalışmamızda, bir konuşma sırasında kullanılan duygusal sözel ipuçlarının (*pozitif ve negatif yüklü kelimeler*), tarafların sergilediği fiziksel dokunma davranışını yordayıcı niteliği araştırılmıştır. Bu amaçla, anne-çocuk ikilileri kullanılmıştır; çünkü bu grup, duygu sosyalleştirmeyi incelemek için ideal bir örneklem oluşturmaktadır.

Karşılıklı etkileşimler, anne-çocuk yakınlığının ayrılmaz bir parçası olduğundan, bu çalışma sözcüklerin fiziksel düzeyde gözlemlenebilir bir sonuç (*dokunma*) üzerindeki etkisini ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır. Diğer bir deyişle, temel araştırma sorumuz, sözel ipuçlarının (*pozitif ve negatif yüklü duygusal kelimeler*) anne-çocuk geçmiş

yaşantı konuşma ve oyun seanslarında sözsüz ipuçlarını (*fiziksel sevgi dolu dokunma*) yordayıcı niteliğidir. Mevcut çalışma buna bir başka katman ekleyerek anneler arasındaki bireysel farklılıklara yer vermekte ve bağlanma profillerini araştırmaya entegre etmektedir. Zira alanyazında, bağlanma güvenliği gibi duygusal faktörlerin yaşam öykülerinin sosyalleştirilmesinde kritik bir rol oynadığı bilinmektedir (Reese, 2002).

Mevcut çalışmanın hipotezleri şu şekildedir: İlk hipotez olarak duyguların sözel kullanımının, hem hatırlama hem de oyun görevlerinde duyguların sözsüz kullanımını öngörmesi beklenmektedir. Annelerin pozitif duygusal kelime kullanımının, anneler ve çocukların fiziksel sevgi dolu dokunma davranışını yordaması beklenmektedir.

İkinci hipotez olarak ise, annelerin romantik bağlanma stillerinin, hem annelerin hem de çocukların fiziksel sevgi dolu dokunma davranışlarını öngörmesi beklenmektedir. Annelerin romantik bağlanma kaygısı ve kaçınganlığının, hem annelerin hem de çocukların fiziksel sevgi dolu dokunma davranışlarıyla negatif bir ilişki göstermesi beklenmektedir. Anne romantik bağlanma kaygısı ve kaçınganlığı arttıkça, anneler ve çocukları arasındaki fiziksel sevgi dolu dokunma davranışının azalması beklenmektedir.

Bu çalışma, Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Bilimsel Araştırma Projeleri kapsamında desteklenen bir bilimsel araştırma projesi (BAP; kod: BAP – 08 – 11 – 2013 – 074) çerçevesinde gerçekleştirilmiştir. Çalışmaya yaşları 45 ile 73 ay arasında değişen (*M* = 56.89, *SD* = 6.66 ay) toplam doksan beş çocuk (41 kız, 54 erkek) ve anneleri katılmıştır. Çalışmada, 94 annenin verisi değerlendirilmiş, bir anneye ait veri eksik kalmıştır. Annelerin yaş aralığı 25 ile 45 arasında değişmekte olup, yaş ortalaması 35.67'dir (*SD* = 3.83). Annelerin büyük bir çoğunluğu (%96.8) evli, %3,2'si dul olduklarını belirtmişlerdir. Annelerin %53.2'si üniversite mezunu ve %31.9'u yüksek lisans veya daha üst bir dereceye sahipken, %13.8'i ise lise diplomasına sahiptir. Anne-çocuk ikilileri, çoğunlukla Türkiye'nin başkenti Ankara'da yaşayan üst-orta sınıf ailelerden oluşmaktadır.

Çalışmada veri toplamak amacıyla *Demografik Bilgi Formu* ve *Yakın İlişkilerde Yaşantılar Envanteri – II (YİYE-2)* kullanılmıştır. Anne ve çocukların demografik özelliklerini öğrenmek amacıyla demografik bilgi formu kullanılmıştır. Bu form kapsamında, annelerin eğitim durumu, yaşı ve medeni durumu ile çocukların yaş ve cinsiyet bilgileri yer sorulmuştur.

Annelerin yetişkin romantik bağlanma stillerini ölçmek için *Yakın İlişkilerde Yaşantılar Envanteri – II (YİYE-2)* kullanılmıştır. Ölçek, Fraley ve arkadaşları (2000) tarafından geliştirilmiş, Türkçe'ye uyarlaması ise Selçuk, Günaydın, Sümer ve Uysal (2005) tarafından yapılmıştır. Katılımcılardan, genel olarak yakın ilişkilerine dair duygularını değerlendirmeleri istenmiştir. Maddeler, 1 (kesinlikle katılmıyorum) ile 5 (kesinlikle katılıyorum) arasında değişen 5'li Likert tipi bir ölçekle değerlendirilmiştir. Anksiyete ve kaçınganlık alt ölçeklerinden alınan yüksek puanlar, daha güçlü bağlanma ile ilişkili anksiyete ya da kaçınganlık düzeyini yansıtmaktadır.

Çalışmanın ilk adımı olarak, Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu'ndan (İAEK) etik onay alınmıştır. Çalışmaya katılımlarını ayarlamak için annelere telefon yoluyla ulaşılmıştır. Tüm anne-çocuk ikilileri, Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Çocuk ve Ergen Gelişimi Laboratuvarı'na (ÇEGEL) gelerek çalışmaya katılmışlardır. Katılımcılar, laboratuvarda ana araştırmacılar tarafından karşılandıktan sonra anneler, çalışmanın hakkında kısaca bilgilendirilmiş ve onam formlarını imzalamışlardır. Çocuklara çalışmaya katılmak isteyip istemedikleri sorularak onayları sözel olarak alınmıştır.

Katılım onamları alındıktan sonra, annelerden çocuklarıyla birlikte yaşadıkları iki geçmiş olayı düşünmeleri ve bu anıları hatırlamalarına yardımcı olacak bir veya iki anahtar kelime yazmaları ve ardından, araştırmacıya bu geçmiş olayların doğasını kısaca anlatmaları istenmiştir. Bu esnada, diğer araştırmacı çocukla sohbet ederek onu meşgul tutmuştur. İlk araştırmacı, annenin belirttiği olayların içeriğini inceledikten sonra, anneden bu ortak yaşantıyı çocuğuyla yaklaşık on dakika boyunca hatırlayıp konuşmasını talep etmiştir. Anne-çocuk ikilisi, ev ortamı şeklinde düzenlenen laboratuvarda halının üzerine yerleştirilen iki minder üzerine oturtulmuş

ve her iki görev boyunca yüzlerinin birbirlerine dönük olması istenmiştir. Bu esnada, minderlerin yakınına iki dijital ses kaydedici yerleştirilmiş ve ayrıca görevleri beş farklı açıdan kaydetmek üzere kameralar kullanılmıştır. İkilinin konuşmaları eş zamanlı olarak ses ve video kaydına alınmış, birinci on dakika dolduğunda, bir araştırmacı ikiliye yaklaşarak görevin tamamlandığını bildirmiştir.

Hatırlama görevlerini tamamlayan anne-çocuk ikilisine, araştırmacı tarafından yapı bloklarından oluşan oyuncaklar verilip ikinci bir on dakika boyunca birlikte oynamaları istenmiştir. Oyun görevi yapılandırılmamış olup, ikililere kendi akışlarını yaratma özgürlüğü tanınmıştır. On dakikalık oyun süresi tamamlandıktan sonra bir araştırmacı ikiliye yaklaşarak sürenin dolduğunu belirtmiş, ve her iki görevin tamamlanmasının ardından, anneler laboratuvarın diğer ucundaki odacıklara yönlendirilerek, ölçüm anketlerini doldurmaları istenmiştir. Bu anketler, Demografik Bilgi Formu ve YİYE-2'yi içermektedir.

Görevler sırasında anneler ve çocuklar arasında geçen konuşmalardaki sözlü duygusal ifadeler ve fiziksel şefkat dokunuş davranışları içerik analizi yoluyla sayılıp kodlanmıştır. Bu çalışmanın kapsamında, anne ve çocuklar arasındaki konuşmalarda olumlu duygusal ifadeler, olumsuz duygusal ifadeler ve toplam kullanılan kelime sayısı olmak üzere üç ayrı değişken sayısal olarak ölçülmüştür. Sayım, anne ve çocuk için ayrı ayrı yapılmıştır. Olumlu duygusal ifadeler, olumlu duygulara atıfta bulunan kelimeler (ör., mutlu, neşe, eğlenceli, öpücük vermek) olarak sayılmış; olumsuz duygusal ifadeler ise olumsuz duygulara atıfta bulunan kelimeler (ör., üzgün, öfkeli, hayal kırıklığı, ağlamak, bağırmak) olarak değerlendirilmiştir. Çocukların kelime sayımları bu çalışmanın kapsamında kullanılmamıştır, çünkü bu çalışmada anneler merkez alınmış ve annelerin duygusal ifadelerinin hem kendi hem de çocuklarının dokunma davranışları üzerindeki yordayıcı rolüne odaklanılmıştır.

Video kayıtları, anne ve çocukların eylemlerini göz önünde bulundurmak amacıyla beş farklı açıdan görsel olarak kodlanmıştır. Şefkat içeren fiziksel dokunma anları, iki bağımsız kodlayıcı tarafından sayılmıştır. Bir fiziksel dokunma, iki koşul altında "şefkatli fiziksel dokunma" olarak etiketlenmiştir: İlk olarak, eylemin sevgi, bakım, yakınlık veya takdir gösterme niyeti taşıması durumunda (Floyd, 2006), ikinci olarak

ise dokunmanın yakınlığı ifade etmesi durumunda (ör., sarılma, okşama, yüzü, saçı, kolu, eli sıvazlama, el ele tutuşma) (Pisano ve ark., 1986).

Çalışma hipotezlerini test etmek için betimleyici analizler ve çoklu hiyerarşik regresyon analizleri kullanılmıştır. İlk olarak, değişkenler arasındaki ilişkileri araştırmak amacıyla ikili korelasyonlar hesaplanmıştır. Analiz sonuçları, hatırlama görevi sırasında annelerin olumlu duygusal ifadelerinin kullanımı ile annelerin şefkatli fiziksel dokunmaları arasında anlamlı ve pozitif bir ilişki olduğunu göstermiştir (r (93) = .515, p < .01). Hatırlama görevi bağlamında, annelerin olumlu duygusal ifadeleri ile çocuğun şefkatli fiziksel dokunmaları arasında da anlamlı ve pozitif bir ilişki bulunmuştur (r (93) = .444, p < .01). Ek olarak, annelerin şefkatli fiziksel dokunmaları ile çocuğun şefkatli fiziksel dokunmaları arasında anlamlı bir ilişki tespit edilmiştir (r (93) = .787, p < .01). Oyun görevi açısından değerlendirildiğinde, annelerin olumlu duygusal ifadelerinin kullanımı ile annelerin şefkatli fiziksel dokunmaları arasında anlamlı ve pozitif bir ilişki bulunmuştur (r (93) = .394, p < .01). Ancak, oyun görevinin ön analizlerinde annelerin olumlu duygusal ifadeleri ile çocuğun şefkatli fiziksel dokunmaları arasında anlamlı bir ilişki bulunamamıştır. Buna ek olarak, oyun görevi sırasında annelerin şefkatli fiziksel dokunmaları ile çocuğun şefkatli fiziksel dokunmaları arasında anlamlı bir ilişki tespit edilmiştir (r (93) = .295, p < .01).

Betimleyici analizlerin ardından, iki görev sırasında anne-çocuk ikili konuşmalarındaki annelere ait olumlu ve olumsuz duygu ifadeleri (ör., olumlu ve olumsuz duygu kelimelerinin toplam sayısı) ile video kayıtlarından kodlanan anne ve çocukların şefkatli fiziksel dokunmaları (ör., yanağa dokunma, okşama vb.) arasında ilişkiyi incelemek amacıyla dört hiyerarşik regresyon analizi yapılmıştır. Tüm analizlerde, anne-çocuk ikili konuşmalarındaki annelere ait olumlu ve olumsuz duygu kelimeleri birinci adımda regresyon analizine dahil edilmiştir. İkinci adımda, YİYE-2 Ölçeği ile ölçülen annelere ait bağlanma kaygısı ve bağlanma kaçınması eklenerek, ilk modele kıyasla ek bir iyileşme olup olmadığı araştırılmıştır. Son olarak, üçüncü modeli oluşturmak amacıyla annenin yaşı, çocuğun cinsiyeti ve çocuğun yaşı (ay olarak) kontrol değişkenleri olarak modele eklenmiştir. Aynı analizler hem oyun hem de hatırlama görevleri için ayrı ayrı yürütülmüştür.

Oyun göreviyle ilgili ilk hiyerarşik regresyon analizinin sonuçları anlamlı bulunmuştur (R^2_{adj} = .164, $F(2,88)$ = 9.837, p < .001). Özellikle, oyun görevi sırasında annelerin kullandığı olumlu duygu ifadeleri, aynı görevin video kaydı sırasında sergilenen annelerin şefkatli fiziksel dokunmalarını anlamlı bir şekilde yordamıştır (β = .428, t = 4.42, p < .001). Genişletilmiş modellerin (Model 2 ve Model 3) ek etkileri anlamlı bulunmamıştır. Aynı görev için, annelerin olumlu veya olumsuz duygu ifadelerinin, çocukların oyun görevi sırasındaki şefkatli fiziksel dokunmalarını anlamlı bir şekilde yordamadığı tespit edilmiştir.

Hatırlama görevi için üç aşamalı hiyerarşik regresyon analizinin ilk modeline ilişkin sonuçlar anlamlı bulunmuştur (R^2_{adj} = .266, $F(2,88)$ = 17.29, p < .001). Özellikle, hatırlama görevi sırasında annelerin kullandığı olumlu duygu ifadeleri, aynı görevin video kaydı sırasında sergilenen annelerin şefkatli fiziksel dokunmalarını anlamlı bir şekilde yordamıştır (β = .523, t = 5.78, p < .001). Genişletilmiş modellerin (Model 2 ve Model 3) ek etkileri bu görev için de anlamlı bulunmamıştır.

Çocukların şefkatli fiziksel dokunma davranışlarını yordama açısından hatırlama görevine daha yakından bakıldığında, birinci modelin sonuçları anlamlı bulunmuştur (R^2_{adj} = .211, $F(2,88)$ = 13.002, p < .001). Özellikle, hatırlama görevi sırasında annelerin kullandığı olumlu duygu ifadeleri, aynı görevin video kaydı sırasında çocukların şefkatli fiziksel dokunmalarını anlamlı bir şekilde yordamıştır (β = .473, t = 5.040, p < .001). Genişletilmiş modellerin (Model 2 ve Model 3) ek etkileri anlamlı bulunmamıştır.

Çalışmanın ilk hipotezi olan sözel ipuçlarının her iki görevde de sözsüz ipuçlarını yordayacağı yönündeki sav sonuçlar doğrultusunda büyük ölçüde desteklenmiştir. Hatırlama görevi bağlamında, sonuçlar annelerin olumlu duygu ifadelerinin hem kendi hem de çocuklarının fiziksel şefkatli dokunma davranışlarını yordadığını göstermiştir. Zorlu deneyimlerde duygular dikkat artırıcı bir rol oynar ve eylemlerimizi enerjiyle besler (Cyders & Smith, 2008). Duygular, insanın adaptif tepkileri olarak tanımlanmaktadır (Myers & DeWall, 2014'te alıntılandığı gibi). Duygusal açıdan olumlu kelimelerin varlığının, anne-çocuk diyadları arasındaki mevcut etkileşimi olumlu bir şekilde etkilemiş olduğu ve bu durumun farkındalık dışı dokunma davranışlarını ortaya çıkarmış olabileceği düşünülebilir.

Hatırlama görevinin sonuçları, duygu sosyalleştirme ile fiziksel şefkat arasındaki bağlantıyı vurgulayan önceki araştırmalarla uyumludur. Daha önceki çalışmalar, ebeveynlerin olumlu duygusal ifadelerinin çocuklarda sıcaklık ve güvenlik duygusunu artırma gücüne sahip olduğunu ve bunun sonucunda şefkatli davranışları teşvik ettiğini göstermiştir (Denham et al., 2015; Eisenberg et al., 2018). Olumlu duygusal dil kullanımı, destekleyici bir konuşma bağlamı oluşturarak çocukların kendilerini rahat hissetmesine ve dokunma yoluyla şefkat göstermesine olanak sağlamış olabilir (Laible, 2011). Olumlu duygusal dil kullanımı, anne-çocuk diyadları arasında duygusal uyumun artmasına katkıda bulunabilir ve bu durum, şefkatli davranışlarda bir senkronizasyon oluşturarak bir karşılıklılığa yol açmış olabilir (Feldman, 2007). Bu bağlamda, bu tezin bulguları, duyguların sözel ve sözsüz ifadelerindeki senkronizasyona ışık tutmuş ve hem hatırlama hem de oyun bağlamındaki mevcut literatüre önemli bir katkı sağlamıştır.

Oyun görevi bağlamında bulgularımız, annelerin olumlu duygu ifadelerinin, şefkatli fiziksel dokunmalarını yordadığını göstermiştir. Duygusal bir tonda ifade edilen dil, annelerin çocuklarına yakınlık, sıcaklık ve duyarlılık sergilemesinin önemli bir mekanizmasıdır. Güvenli bağlanma ilişkilerini desteklemenin ve teşvik etmenin bir yolunu oluşturur (Eisenberg et al., 2001). Daha önceki araştırmalar, olumlu duygusal ifadelerin, güven ve empati gibi yakınlık barındıran unsurları artırıcı rolü ile daha yüksek düzeyde bağlanmayla ilişkili olabileceklerini göstermiştir (Fredrickson, 2001). Bu nedenle, duygusal ifadeler, şefkatli dokunma davranışları yoluyla kendilerine görünür bir temel bulmuş olabilir.

Tekrar vurgulamak gerekirse, bu çalışmanın ana hipotezi büyük ölçüde desteklenmiştir. Tek anlamlı olmayan bulgu, oyun görevi sırasında annelerin olumlu duygu ifadeleri ile çocukların şefkatli fiziksel dokunma davranışları arasında anlamlı bir ilişkinin bulunamamasıdır. Bunun nedeni, iki görev arasındaki odak noktası farkı olabilir. Sözel etkileşimler sırasında odak noktası, konuşmaya katılan diğer kişidir. Ancak oyun sırasında, özellikle çocuğun odağı oyunun kendisindedir, bu nedenle duygusal ifadeler çocuğun dikkat radarının altında kalmış olabilir. Oyun görevinde nispeten nötr bir oyuncak (örneğin, yapı blokları) seçilmiş olmasına rağmen, bu yaştaki çocuklar, söylenenden ziyade yapılana doğru kolayca dağılabilen bir dikkat

eğilimi sergilemektedir. Oyun oturumu daha uzun (örneğin, 10 dakika yerine 20 dakika) tasarlanmış olsaydı, annelerin olumlu duygusal ifadelerinin çocukların dokunma davranışları üzerindeki yordayıcı etkisi de daha yüksek olabilirdi. Bu husus, zayıf yönler ve gelecekteki araştırmalar bölümünde daha ayrıntılı olarak ele alınmıştır.

Önceki araştırmalar, özellikle yaşça küçük çocukların olumsuz duyguları anlamakta ve düzenlemekte zorlandığını göstermiştir (Laible & Thompson, 1998). Bu durum, annelerin olumsuz duygu ifadelerinin etkisinin anlamlı olmamasının ardındaki mekanizma olabilir. Önceki çalışmalar, ebeveynlerin duygu sosyalleştirme yaklaşımlarında, özellikle duyguların yönetimi ve düzenlenmesine ilişkin farklı tutumlara sahip olduklarını ortaya koymuştur. Bu çalışmanın kapsamı dahilinde anneler, olumsuz duygu ifadelerini kasıtlı olarak bastırmış veya çocukları üzerindeki olası olumsuz etkiyi telafi etmek için dokunma davranışlarını artırmış olabilir.

İkinci hipoteze ilişkin olarak, annelerin romantik bağlanma boyutlarının (kaçınganlık ve kaygı) duygu ifadelerinin etkilerinin ötesinde bir açıklama sunmaması dikkat çekicidir. Bunun bir olası açıklaması, annelerin bağlanma stillerini ölçmede romantik bağlanma ölçeğinin (ECR-R) kullanılmış olmasıdır. Ancak bir başka yaklaşıma göre ise bu durumun çalışma açısından bir güçlü yan teşkil ettiği söylenebilir.

Bu çalışmayı, duyguların sözel ve sözsüz ifadeleri arasındaki ilişkiyi gösteren bulgularıyla değerlendirmek yerinde olacaktır. Çalışma, duygu sosyalleştirmenin kendini gösterdiği başlıca bağlamlardan birine dikkat çekerek literatüre önemli bir katkı sağlamıştır. Başka bir deyişle, bu çalışma, söylenen ile söylenmeyen arasındaki çizgiyi yakalamış ve sözcüklerin sözsüz duygusal ipuçları üzerindeki dönüştürücü rolünü ortaya koymuştur.

Bildiğimiz kadarıyla bu, oyun ve hatırlama görevlerini birleştirerek anne-çocuk ikililerinin görev bazlı şefkatli davranışlarını inceleyen ilk çalışmadır. Bu çalışmada, çocuğun cinsiyeti, anne-çocuk ikililerindeki şefkatli dokunmalar üzerinde annelerin sözlü duygu ifadelerinin ötesinde bir rol oynamamıştır. Mevcut tez çalışması, çocukların duygusal yüklü sözcüklerini bağımsız bir değişken olarak kapsamamıştır.

Gelecekteki çalışmalar, bu mekanizmanın geri besleme ihtimalini göz önünde bulundurmalı ve çocuğun duygusal sözcük kullanımının etkilerini araştırmalıdır. Bununla beraber, annelerin olası yaklaşımlarında görülebilen çocuğun yaşına duyarlı etki göz önüne alındığında (Graneist & Habernas, 2019), gelecekteki çalışmalar özellikle daha büyük çocuklar ve ergenler üzerinde bulgularımızı tekrarlamalıdır.

Ayrıca, bu araştırma bir laboratuvar ortamında gerçekleştirilmiş olup, anne-çocuk çiftleri arasındaki günlük konuşmaları yansıtma konusunda kaçınılmaz bir eksiklik içermektedir. Laboratuvar ortamı, ekolojik geçerlilik pahasına tercih edilen bir yöntemdir. Bunun yanı sıra, laboratuvar ortamının yapay doğası, katılımcıların zaman zaman doğal olmayan şekilde davranmalarına yol açmış olabilir. Sosyal arzu edilirlik önyargısı burada kritik bir sorundur; katılımcılar, özellikle de anneler, kayıt altında olduklarının farkında oldukları için kendilerini abartılı bir şekilde sunmuş olabilirler.

Çalışmanın tasarımı, annelere hatırlanan anıların içeriği hakkında herhangi bir yönlendirme yapılmaması üzerine kurulmuştur. Başka bir deyişle, ikililere, herhangi içerikte bir konuyu gündeme getirme ve tartışma özgürlüğü tanınmıştır. Ancak, bir anının duygusal yükünün, anne-çocuk etkileşimlerinin doğasını şekillendirdiği bilinmektedir. Gelecekteki çalışmalar bu durumu göz önünde bulundurmalı ve annelerden çocuklarıyla yaptıkları konuşmalarda duygusal (olumlu ve olumsuz) yüklü paylaşılan anıları gündeme getirmelerinin istendiği bir durumda sonuçların değişip değişmeyeceğini araştırmalıdır.

Son dönemlerde oyun üzerine yapılan çalışmalar, aileyi bir bütün olarak etkileşimsel bir model olarak ele almaktadır. Bu bağlamda, babaların rolünü de içeren aile düzeyindeki gözlemler ortaya çıkmaktadır. Literatürün daha bütünleşik bir model doğrultusunda genişlediği göz önüne alındığında, gelecekteki çalışmalara babalar da dahil edilmelidir. Bu, aynı zamanda kurultu geçerliğini artırmak açısından da önemlidir çünkü ailenin doğal ortamı babayı da içeren bir iklimi kapsar.

Araştırmanın güçlü ve zayıf yönleri ele alındığında, annenin bağlanma kaygısı ve kaçınganlığı, anne / çocuk yaşı, ve çocuğun cinsiyeti gibi çok yönlü değişkenler

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