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"Nice, Quiet Hand": The Creation and Navigation of Feeling Rules in a Second Grade Classroom

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**“Nice, Quiet Hand”: The Creation and Navigation of Feeling Rules
in a Second Grade Classroom**

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Honors Thesis in Education
Colby College
May 2021

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ABSTRACT

Emotions are largely viewed as individual and internal, but in reality, emotions are socially situated. This project aims to use a sociology of emotions framework in order to explore how emotional expectations are created, maintained, and navigated within a classroom environment. Through a series of observations over the course of a month, I set out to answer questions surrounding which emotions were encouraged, which emotions were discouraged, and how both teachers and students created and navigated these feeling rules. Overall, I found that emotions were largely discouraged, especially through the overarching feeling rules of “be quiet” and “control your body.” Specifically, individual emotions like excitement, anger, frustration, worry, and sadness were commonly discouraged. On the other hand, social emotions such as repentance and compassion were frequently praised. Teachers used a number of strategies to uphold these feeling rules. These strategies ranged from unsupportive of students’ emotional experiences, like threats, to neutral strategies like preventative feeling rule reminders, and finally to positive strategies such as showing empathy and teaching students skills to self-regulate. Students were not passive recipients of these feeling rules; instead, they participated in moments of compliance and resistance, and they used emotions in order to navigate the classroom’s social hierarchy. This project concludes with implications for educators, including recommending greater support for emotional expressions within the classroom and addressing emotions first before controlling behavior.

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INTRODUCTION

“People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” — Maya Angelou

I have only one memory from kindergarten. One day in class, we had been playing an “around the world” style game where we would battle another student to move up in the class rankings. In order to win each individual competition, one had to correctly count the cent value of the change on the projector quicker than their opponent. I was a very competitive child, but that day, I lost. I don’t remember any details surrounding the game; the only thing I do remember was sitting in the hallway with my knees pulled tight against my chest. I was crying. My teacher eventually came out in the hallway and told me, “we don’t cry when we lose.”

It is striking to me that this is my only memory of kindergarten. I was a child who cried a lot, so I’m sure this was not the only time that I broke down in tears during my kindergarten year. Yet, I think it was the clear command from my teacher not to cry that imprinted the situation in my memory. I wish I could excavate my childhood and better understand the ways that peers and adults dealt with a child like me who had a lot of big, unwieldy emotions that often leaked out. Although I don’t think I could have articulated at the beginning of this journey that this project would ultimately connect to excavating my lost childhood, I do think this kindergarten memory inspires this endeavor, even if on a subconscious level.

What stands out to me about this memory is the inherent social nature of the situation. Although the sadness I was feeling was on the individual level, the teacher established a clear emotional expectation through her comment about crying being inappropriate after losing. It is

easy to think about emotions as highly individual, and a significant amount of research has been conducted looking at the bio-physiological and psychological dimensions of children's emotions. Conversely, there has yet to be as much inquiry from the sociological arena. As the discipline that focuses on social processes and social relations, sociology provides an important perspective to examine the social dimension of emotions.

Through a sociological lens, we can understand how emotions are largely borne out of social interactions, how emotions are labeled and understood, how communities create emotional expectations for their members, and how individuals show or hide certain emotions in order to fit in within the community's norms. Although there will always be an internal experience to emotions, all emotions are inherently social as well. A sociological framework allows us to begin to critically examine how these emotions are labeled, interpreted, and responded to.

Within sociology, the lens that directs this project is the sociology of emotions. The sociology of emotions is a relatively new subset of sociology that attempts to understand how the expression and management of emotions reflects and reproduces the social structure. I will be utilizing ideas and language from the sociology of emotions throughout the thesis. As part of the title of this project, *feeling rules* is a critical term for this research. Feeling rules are guides to how people are expected to express (or not express) their emotions as well how people perceive the emotional displays of others. *Emotion management* is a term used to describe how people work to abide by feeling rules. Finally, *feeling rule reminders* are attempts to restore the feeling rules after an emotional breach has occurred. This project aims to define the feeling rules in the classroom, discuss students' emotion management, and explore how teachers use different strategies as feeling rule reminders.

The sociology of emotions perspective brings a new lens through which to examine classroom dynamics. Although my kindergarten memory was a clear example of a feeling rule being established since the teacher directly told me that crying was not okay after losing, I wanted to also focus this project on the more subtle examples of feeling rules. I wanted to see how these feeling rules were embedded within the classroom in ways that may not be as obvious but that a sociological lens could help uncover. Furthermore, I believe a sociology of emotions framework allows for the analysis of students as co-creators of these feeling rules. Rather than treating students as passive recipients, I wanted to frame students as actors within their own environment. Consequently, this project tries to look at emotions from the students' side and considers how they uphold the emotional expectations created by the teachers as well as how they find moments of resistance.

Understanding these classroom dynamics related to emotions has very real implications for teaching. Classrooms are inherently interactional spaces, making them breeding grounds for emotions. Teachers do not just instruct on academic knowledge; they must also navigate students' emotions. As the epigraph of this thesis from Maya Angelou says, "people will never forget how you made them feel." Keeping this quote in mind is especially important for teachers as they interact with students' feelings. This project aims to explore how teachers interact with students' emotions and speculate on the ways that teachers can best support their students and be remembered by how they made them feel. With the information gathered on how teachers create, uphold, and enforce feeling rules, this project aims to provide recommendations for teachers to best nurture students' emotional experiences.

Furthermore, this line of research raises important questions about how feeling rules impact students' well-being and provides recommendations to educators about how best to

support students' emotional experiences. On a more personal level, this project allows me to grapple with how to support my future students and consider how I will shape the emotional atmosphere of my classroom. In order to explore these personal and larger scale questions that explore the ways teachers and students create, monitor, and reinforce emotional norms at school, this project asks the following questions:

1. What emotions are encouraged and discouraged within the classroom environment?
2. How do teachers and students establish and navigate these emotional expectations?

The outline of this thesis is as follows: In Chapter 2, I present a literature review, focusing on key research and theory in the sociology of emotions in general and work that focuses specifically on educational applications and implications. In Chapter 3, I discuss the methodological background of the project, including information about the site, data collection, and data analysis. In Chapter 4, I present the results and discussion, highlighting the feeling rules of the classroom, the teachers' role in establishing and reinforcing these emotional expectations, and the students' actions in navigating these emotional norms. Finally, in Chapter 5, I conclude with reiterating the key takeaways of this project, presenting implications for teaching, and exploring areas for future research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter I will first establish the sociological framework of this project through discussing the discipline of sociology of emotions. Additionally, I will discuss existing research on teachers' and students' navigation of emotions within classrooms. I will also outline existing research on the significance of students' emotional well-being in order to demonstrate the importance of this project's inquiry.

Sociology of Emotions

This project will draw largely on literature from the field of sociology of emotions. This field of sociology is relatively new as it was developed in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Lively, 2015). The sociology of emotions looks at the ways in which emotions, which are often believed to be personal, are influenced by social forces (Hochschild, 1979). The sociology of emotions distinguishes between internal emotional experiences and emotional expressions, which present themselves through words, facial expressions, bodily actions, and other external signals (Bericat, 2016). Emotional expressions both arise out of social phenomena and are also influenced by social phenomena. This embodiment of emotions is relational; individuals do not feel emotions in isolation, but rather through interacting with others (Game, 1997). Additionally, emotions can only be understood as actions taking place in the context of social connections (Burkitt, 1997). Thus, the sociology of emotions attempts to understand how emotional norms are created, abided by, enforced, and deviated from.

Arlie Russell Hochschild was the first to use the term *sociology of emotions* in 1975, and in 1979, she published an article that went to define some of the key terms of the discipline: *feeling rules*, *feeling rule reminders*, and *emotion management*. *Feeling rules* are defined as

guides to how individuals are expected to display and manage their emotions as well as how they assess the appropriateness of the emotional displays of others (Hochschild, 1979). *Emotion management* is the conscious and intended attempt at altering the presentation of one's feelings (Hochschild, 1979). When people do not perform emotion management appropriately, people often respond to these emotional breaches with *feeling rule reminders* that work to reestablish the importance of abiding by these emotional norms (Hochschild, 1979). Through these feeling rule reminders, people can work to maintain the emotional order within a social structure.

Around the same time as Hochschild's work, other pioneers within the field of sociology of emotions were adding their theories and research to the burgeoning discipline. Thomas Scheff and Theodore Kemper are regarded as two of the other key players in the formation of the field of sociology of emotions, and they were taking slightly different angles than Hochschild as the field was coming together. Scheff (1977) first linked social rituals to emotions in 1977 and then proceeded to synthesize his theory of pride and shame (Scheff, 1988), whereby he argued that deference to exterior emotional norms resulted in pride and disobedience resulted in shame. While Scheff was focusing on pride and shame, Kemper turned his research towards power and status. Kemper (1978) argued that power and status are fundamental to the study of emotions because distressing emotions come out of an interactional felt excess or deficiency in power and/or status.

After Hochschild, Scheff, and Kemper fully established the domain of the sociology of emotions, other academics followed with important contributions to the field. Randall Collins (1993) argued that emotion is the fundamental force behind all group interactions and that individuals decide which sorts of interactional situations to participate in based on the emotional energy (EE) they expect to obtain. Working in a different realm of research and building on

Hochschild's work on feeling rules and feeling rule reminders, Peggy A. Thoits (1985) declared that when individuals fail to appropriately manage their emotions, this is known as emotional deviance. Emotional deviance is another key term in the field of sociology of emotions as it explains breaches of emotional norms. When emotional deviance occurs, those with higher statuses often turn to scolding or punishments, which relate to Hochschild's work on feeling rule reminders.

These feeling rules are often so entrenched, though, that emotional deviance can be a rare occurrence. Much of the existing research on the sociology of emotions focuses largely on occupations where emotion management and abiding by specific feeling rules are key aspects of individuals' jobs. One of the most influential works within the field of sociology of emotions is Arlie Russell Hochschild's 1983 book, *The Managed Heart*, which examines flight attendants and bill collectors with the goal of understanding how individuals must perform emotion management to serve companies' goals. With fundamentally social occupations, these workers must practice certain emotional displays in order to best support their companies' expectations (Hochschild, 1983). Researchers after Hochschild have explored similar themes of emotion management within hospitals, call centers, nail salons, law firms, and childcare centers, among others (Cottingham, 2015; Jenkins et. al, 2010; Kang, 2003; Lively, 2000; Vincent and Braun, 2012). This research shows that different environmental settings provide different emotional norms for how individuals are expected to act.

Furthermore, different individuals must manage their emotions differently and to different levels based on qualities such as gender, race, immigrant status, and social class. Women are encouraged to feel and express emotions such as fear and sadness, known as powerless emotions, whereas men are encouraged to feel and express emotions like anger and

pride, known as power emotions (Brody, 1999; Garside and Klimes-Dougan, 2002; Harden, 2012). Wingfield (2010) interviewed Black professionals and found that feeling rules were racialized in two ways: first, some feeling rules extended to all individuals but were especially hard for Black professionals to follow, and second, there were other feeling rules that their white counterparts did not have to follow. Additionally, Kang (2003) examined class, race, and immigrant status in her research on nail salons where Korean immigrant women performed their services with appropriate emotional pampering to their wealthier clients. While individuals holding marginalized identities may experience anger and frustration due to unfairness and injustice in their workplaces, in order to keep their jobs, they must hide these emotions and abide by the prescribed feeling rules (Kang, 2003; Pugliesi and Shook, 1997; Wingfield, 2010).

On the other hand, those with higher status positions are required to perform emotion management in different, usually easier ways and to lower extents. For example, attorneys have higher status positions than paralegals and secretaries, which results in them having more ability to express negative emotions and to demand emotional labor of their paralegals and secretaries (Lively, 2000; Pierce, 1995). It is a sign of privilege for individuals to be able to emotionally detach from their social environment. For higher status individuals, this detachment serves as a means to dominate others by requiring emotion work from those in lower positions (Froyum, 2010; Schwalbe et al., 2000). People with higher status positions often do not have to deal with the same emotional inconveniences that lower status individuals do, resulting in lower needs for the management of negative emotions.

Emotional Socialization & Teacher-Student Dynamics

Another important factor in the sociology of emotions is emotional socialization.

Emotional socialization occurs when individuals learn a vocabulary of emotions and how they are supposed to express these emotions in different social contexts (Clark, 1990; Gordon, 1981; Hochschild, 1979). This socialization process starts from the moment a child is born and begins with the child's parental figures. In addition to family, another extremely critical place for emotional socialization is schools, especially at younger grade levels as students are beginning to interact formally with peers for the first time.

In order to do well in school, students must learn a variety of different skills. These skills are not purely academic but also contain many social and emotional guidelines. For example, students are socialized to maintain a sustained effort without immediate reward, to be able to focus and shift attention when necessary, to regulate strong emotions, to be sensitive to the feelings of others, to place the feelings of the group above their own individual feelings, and other key skills needed to successfully navigate learning environments (Evans and Rosenbaum, 2008; Ahn, 2016). Pirskanen et al. (2019) found that in all five countries in their study (Australia, China, Finland, Japan, and Spain), teachers perceived students' emotional skills in the first grade of even higher importance than academic skills since these socioemotional skills can function as a prerequisite to academic learning. Thus, it is up to educators to not only teach their students academic content but also to socialize them into the emotional norms necessary for success in the classroom and beyond. This requires dedicated emotion work from teachers and is a demanding task, though this emotional labor can contribute to teacher satisfaction, commitment to their job, and be emotionally rewarding (Soldaat, 2019).

When students do not express emotions in the way they've been socialized to behave, teachers often respond in the form of punishments and discipline. Much of the existing research in the field of sociology of emotions within schools looks at teachers' negative responses to students' feeling rule violations and emotional deviance. These negative responses take a variety of different forms with one of the primary focuses of qualitative research being teachers' discourse as corrective feeling rule reminders. Cox (2016) found that teachers used two different types of feeling reminders: Room for Repair reminders were moments where teachers gave students the opportunity to de-escalate the situation and Boxed In reminders led to increasingly tense interactions between teachers and students. Teachers also use different negative emotions to craft these feeling rule reminders. Froyum (2010) discovered that teachers often used disappointment, guilt, and shame to respond to negative emotional displays. In addition to these one-on-one feeling rule reminders to students, research has also examined different forms of punishment that teachers use to respond to emotional deviance, such as lectures to the entire class, rescinding of special privileges like recess, office referrals, suspensions, expulsions, and many other unique forms of discipline.

As has been noted in the sociology of emotions literature on workplaces, individuals respond differently to feeling rule breaches based on the demographics of the person who displays the emotion. The same is true for schooling environments. The research on emotion management within classrooms has focused on gender, race, social class, and other demographic qualities as reasons behind differing teacher responses to emotional deviance (Cox, 2016; Morris, 2007; Skiba et al., 2002). Research has found that students of color, and especially Black students, are more likely to be disciplined than white students even though evidence shows that students of color do not participate in disruptive behavior at higher rates than white students

(Arcia, 2007; Peguero and Shekarkhar 2011; Rocque, 2010; Skiba et al., 2002; Verdugo, 2002).

When examining gender, researchers have found that male students both participate in more disruptive behaviors and receive higher rates of punishment for these behaviors (Kaufman et al., 2010; Skiba et al., 2002). In relation to social class, researchers have found that lower-income youth have lower self-regulating abilities when it comes to emotion management, resulting in increased disciplinary actions from teachers (Evans and Rosenbaum, 2010; Jensen and Vitus, 2020).

In addition to looking at race, gender, and social class separately, researchers have examined how intersecting identities impact teachers' rates and ways of disciplining students. For example, researchers concluded that teachers reprimand Black female students for the same assertive behaviors that they attribute as harmless and appropriate for white students (Froyum, 2010; Morris, 2005; Morris and Perry, 2017). The effects of these unjust punishments on students of color are particularly harmful for their schooling. For example, when Black female students are encouraged to perform emotion management of passivity and silence, this hampers the qualities of assertiveness and initiative that aid their abilities to rise above the inherent discrimination within the classroom (Froyum, 2010; Morris, 2007). Teachers have different perceptions of the actions and emotions of different students based on their race, class, gender, and other demographic characteristics.

While there is ample research of teachers' negative responses to certain emotional displays, fewer scholars have examined other ways that teachers encourage the practicing of emotional norms. This could look like positive reinforcement of certain appropriate behaviors. In Cox's (2016) study of an organization that prepares students of color for elite boarding schools, she observed that during an assembly, an administrator greeted everyone with "good evening," to

which the crowd responded with the same greeting, and the administrator said, “This cohort knows a lot about being polite.” There is limited research that examines positive reinforcements of feeling rules in schools, such as this example of responding with polite greetings in an assembly. Furthermore, research has rarely looked at how teachers use other more latent forms of communicating feeling rules. One example of this type of research comes from Harden’s (2012) study of 6–7-year-old students in a Scottish school where she noticed visual feeling rule reminders through posters hung up in the classroom that featured examples of “good sitting,” “good looking,” and “good listening.” In addition to the more widely studied negative reactions to remind students of feeling rules, this project will aim to extend the research on how teachers use other modes of communication to reinforce emotional norms within the classroom.

Emotional Socialization & Student-Student Dynamics

Although many researchers have focused on teachers’ roles in emotional socialization, the role of students has not been as widely studied. Often in research on schooling, children are portrayed as passive recipients of adult socialization instead of as active participants in this production of emotional realities (Ahn, 2016). As compared to this top-down conception, Ahn (2010) argues that most of children’s cultural and emotional learning comes from their active participation in their own social environments. These peer-to-peer emotional interactions often occur because students’ emotions are tightly policed by teachers, providing them with few outlets to express their emotions without repercussions. In attempting to examine emotion in a Scottish school with children aged 6 and 7 years old, Harden (2012) found few examples of emotional displays; instead, she found that the classroom was a tightly controlled space where children’s bodies and emotions were regulated, so she adjusted her research to focus on the

subtle ways that peers performed emotions with each other. Students constantly negotiate with their peers about their socioemotional realities—they decide who will be included and excluded during play, who gets to engage with what toys, and how others get treated in their interactional spaces. As much as educators try to monitor and police students' emotional geographies, most of students' complex emotional realities will be navigated and learned about on their own and with their peers rather than with the adults in their lives.

One of the ways students learned about their own emotional landscapes was through interactions with peers. Negotiating these social hierarchies is a critical way for students to explore emotional landscapes at school. In order to form a reputation as someone with physical toughness and power, some male students may resort to fighting (Ferguson, 2000; Jensen and Vitus, 2020; Morrison, 2008). Another way students navigate these socioemotional landscapes is through relationship building. Getting into and out of friendships with their peers is one of the largest emotional experiences for young students, and it is one of the primary ways that they learn about their own emotions (Kyratzis, 2004; Harden, 2012; Singer and Doornenbal, 2006). Furthermore, in these relationships with peers, students learn to put in emotion work as they navigate establishing and maintaining friendships (Harden, 2012). These negotiations for positions within the classroom hierarchy operate outside teachers' domains. Thus, students create their own feeling rules and feeling rule reminders.

Another key way that children navigate social hierarchies and perform emotional socialization is through discourse. Kyratzis (2004) argues that there are four main ways that children use discourse to establish and maintain peer hierarchies: first, through games and codes; second, through conflict talk; third, through discussing identities as peer group phenomena; and finally, through resistance to adult culture. Similarly, Ahn (2010) found that children do not only

genuinely portray emotions but also consciously use certain emotions as pragmatic actions to create peer alliances and hierarchies. Students use different emotions like niceness and bravery in order to position themselves higher in the classroom's social hierarchy (Ahn, 2016).

Furthermore, through these discourses, children teach one another linguistic and embodied practices such as standing up for themselves and holding others accountable for certain actions. Language practices and emotional displays signal appropriate behavior for being a part of the in-group (Evaldsson, 2002; Goodwin and Kyratzis, 2007). Through discourse, students create their own emotional socialization practices as well as learn to conduct emotion work to navigate their social landscapes.

Similar to Kyratzis's (2004) conclusion that students use discourse to resist adult culture, even when teachers attempt to remind students of emotional norms, students do not always listen and obey passively. Rather, students have the agency to resist and subvert adults' implementations of feeling rules. One example of this is male students' decisions to fight. Although not something that will gain them favor from adults in the school who view violence as antithetical to the school's feeling rules, these displays of masculine power help boys position themselves higher within the social hierarchy at school (Morris, 2008). Students also use discourse to resist the adult emotional culture at school. Ahn (2016) found that young children often use negative comments about other students in order to position themselves higher in the social hierarchy. Students use negative discourse to resist teachers' emotional socialization goals of niceness and inclusion and jockey for position within the classroom's social environment. Furthermore, Kyratzis (2004) discussed how female students resisted their emotional socialization as cooperative and deferential by mocking adults behind their backs. Students use a

variety of strategies to not only create their own emotional landscapes but also to resist the implementation of adults' emotional socializations.

Significance of Students' Emotional Experiences

Better understanding how teachers and peers respond to displays of emotion within the classroom is critical for a number of reasons. The National Scientific Council on the Developing Child (2004) wrote that “children clearly need the social and emotional capabilities that enable them to sit still in a classroom, pay attention, and get along with their classmates just as much as they need the cognitive skills required to master the reading and math concepts taught in kindergarten.” Being able to abide by emotional norms is a key factor in being labelled a “good” student. These categorizations of students as either good or bad can influence the relationships between teachers and students, and these relationships are often crucial for student success. Positive teacher-student relationships can help improve students' emotional, behavioral, and academic outcomes (Hamre and Pianta, 2001). For students with social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) difficulties, having positive relationships with teachers is especially important in order to promote academic achievement and emotional well-being (Dolton et al., 2020).

Developing emotional competence is crucial for students. Denham (2007) defines emotional competence for young students as mastering several areas: (a) awareness of emotional experience, including multiple emotions; (b) discernment of one's own, and others', emotional states; (c) emotion language use; (d) empathic involvement in others' emotions; (e) regulation of one's own negative emotions; (f) realization that inner experience and outer emotional presentation may differ; and (g) awareness that relationships are in part constructed through the communication of emotions. One way that developing these strong emotional skills pays off for

students is through the acquisition of emotional capital. Similar to Bourdieu's (1984) theory of cultural capital, emotional capital treats emotional expressions and emotion management as skills that translate into social advantages (Froyum, 2010). Further, more emotional capital allows students to better navigate the invisible school curriculum of knowledge and skills, which connects to cultural capital, as well as the relational norms of accessing and creating social networks, which connects to social capital (Jensen and Vitus, 2020). Thus, students who can master emotion management and perform emotion work to satisfy the emotional norms at school gain more emotional capital and in turn, also improve their cultural and social capital as well..

Emotional capital may also benefit students in their peer relationships. Students' reciprocal friendships and peer acceptance are important factors in students' success both academically and emotionally (Wentzel and Caldwell, 1997). Realizing that one of the main ways that students learn about their own emotional geographies and set emotional norms for each other is through friendships, exploring peer-to-peer interactions through emotional displays is crucial in gaining a better understanding of what types of emotional displays and responses to these emotional displays are rewarded within the social hierarchy. Students who can savvily employ emotion work with their peers are more likely to be accepted and find themselves higher on the social ladder, which will in turn provide positive benefits for these students at school.

On the opposite side, emotional deviance can have a negative impact on student outcomes. For example, when developmental milestones of emotional ability are not met, children are at risk for mental health issues, both at their current age and as they get older (Denham, 2007; Denham et al., 1991). Furthermore, research has found that children who are described as angry and aggressive are at risk for numerous problems again at their current state and as they age, including academic issues, truancy, delinquency, and drug abuse (Denham,

2007; Gagnon et al., 1995; Raver and Knitzer, 2002). Thus, it is paramount that educators better understand students' emotional displays and find strategies for appropriate intervention with students who show emotional deviance.

In addition to negative outcomes for the individual student, the censoring of certain emotions can have political ramifications. For instance, by disallowing anger, schools reinforce its shame and stigma and label it as disrupting and disobedient rather than recognizing it for its power to provoke change and challenge injustice (Gagen, 2019). The emotional norms of schooling reproduce inequalities as they teach students to be docile and obey authority, hindering the transformative possibilities of students' emotional displays.

Conclusion

While plenty of existing research has examined students' emotions through the frameworks of child psychology and human development, there has been far less research examining the sociological dynamics of students' emotions. Within the relatively young field of sociology of emotions, minimal amounts of research have focused on classrooms. Most of the existing research on emotional expectations within classroom environments focuses on the ways that teachers use punishment to uphold the expectations. One way that this project attempts to expand upon the existing research is to offer a more holistic picture as to how feeling rules are created and enforced within the classroom. This research lays out a list of nine strategies that teachers use, ranging from largely unsupportive of students' emotional experiences to very supportive of students' emotional well-being. Additionally, the primary focus of existing research on emotional expectations within classrooms has been on teachers. While some research has explored students' roles in creating and maintaining feeling rules, this line of research has

been far more limited in scope. My research expands on this by clarifying ways in which students comply, resist, and navigate the social hierarchy in relation to their emotional expressions. Finally, existing research continually extols the importance of students' proper navigation of emotions within the classroom. This project adds to the existing research on the significance of students' emotional experiences because it explores implications for teachers when supporting students.

METHODS

In this chapter, I provide an overview of the methodological aspects of this study, including information about the site, data collection, and data analysis. Although I had originally hoped to conduct this research with middle-grade students throughout the entire fall semester, it was incredibly challenging to find a field site willing to accept an in-person researcher, especially with all the uncertainties surrounding returning to in-person learning at the beginning of the school year. In so many ways, this project comes out of the trials and tribulations of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Field Site

My eventual field site and data collection turned out to be far different from what I expected. I had originally hoped to do the data collection for this project throughout the entire fall semester. With many schools feeling hesitant about allowing potential COVID-19 carriers into their buildings and limiting all strangers from coming inside, I struggled to find a willing field site all of fall semester. I had also originally hoped to do this work with middle school because I am especially interested in how puberty influences students' emotions and because that is the age I plan to teach after I graduate. Yet, at the end of fall semester, a local elementary school decided they would allow me in the building and a second grade teacher agreed to welcome me into her classroom. I was elated to have a field site to complete the data collection, even if it was not at all how or what I had expected.

This PreK-2 elementary school serves about 200 students and is located in a small town of around 6,000 in central Maine. The school's demographics are fairly representative of that of central Maine—largely white and working class. Less than five percent of the school's

population are students of color and about half of the students are on free or reduced lunch. The student-to-teacher ratio at the school is 13:1.

This student-to-teacher ratio was reflective in my data sample. The second grade classroom I observed had 14 students. I sent passive consent forms home to families to secure parental permission to conduct the research, and one family opted not to have their student participate. Consequently, there were 13 students who participated in the study. Eight of the students appeared to be female while five students appeared to be male. There were 12 white students and one student of color. Although there were only 13 students, I saw four “specials” during my observations, leading me to be able to observe five different teachers. I recorded data on the classroom teacher, music teacher, P.E. teacher, computer teacher, and guidance counselor.

The class was set up with seven tables with two students sitting at each table. The teacher’s desk was located in the far back corner of the classroom. There was a whiteboard in the front of the class where the teacher posted a handwritten “letter” each day to students that outlined the plans for the day. On the whiteboard, there was an alphabet with vocabulary words under each letter. Above the whiteboard and wrapping around the top of the classroom near the ceiling was a number line. In the other back corner of the classroom opposite the teacher’s desk was an iPad cart where students would charge their iPads and retrieve them when instructed. On the walls around the classroom were different student work, ranging from art to short pieces of writing. Between the student work and a myriad of different motivational and informational posters, the walls were nearly entirely covered with materials.

The school day started around 7:45 AM when students would begin trickling into the classroom. Students would arrive over the next fifteen or so minutes. When students arrived, they would unpack everything they needed into bins underneath their tables. Then, they would

place their backpacks on hooks in the hallway. After taking off all their winter gear, they would grab a colored folder bucket from the back corner of the classroom. This folder bucket contained their workbooks and writing materials. After grabbing their folder buckets, they would return to their seats and open their workbook that contained the bell work. The bell work had questions about the day, the weather, and some math questions. After finishing their bell work, students would work on their daily math worksheet. Eventually, the teacher would connect her laptop to the Apple TV in the classroom, project the flag on the TV, and have students stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance. After the Pledge of Allegiance, the classroom teacher would work on Language Arts with students, which often looked like a sentence editing activity. Then, students would have recess. I was able to observe both indoor and outdoor recesses, which depended on the temperature outside. If it was outdoor recess, the teacher would wrap up the Language Arts lesson about five minutes early in order to provide students with enough time to put on all their winter gear. After recess, the schedule differed based on the day of the week.

On Tuesdays after the Language Arts lesson by the classroom teacher, the computer special occurred. The computer teacher would come into the classroom and instruct students to get their iPads from the cart in the back corner of the class. Then, he would have students log onto ABCYa—a website with educational games for young students. He would model how to play different games by connecting to the Apple TV and showing the students how to play. Then, students would get the opportunity to try out these games individually. Usually, he would model and provide time for about three games during the around half-hour block of time.

On Fridays after the Language Arts lesson, the music special occurred. The music teacher would wheel in her music cart into the classroom. Students would go to the back corner of the classroom near the iPad cart and pick up their music Ziploc bags. Inside these bags were

different items they might be instructed to use during music special, like an egg shaker and a scarf. The music teacher would first take attendance by asking students if they would like to select presto, moderator, or largo. Based on the students' selection, the teacher and the students would repeat this student's name at the respective pace. After attendance, the music teacher would introduce the music mystery box on her cart. She would play the instrument in the mystery box and then students would ask questions and make guesses about the instrument. Eventually, she would reveal the instrument and explain it to the class. After the music mystery box, the music teacher would focus on the main part of the lesson, which ranged from writing rhythms to learning about tempo.

After computer special on Tuesdays, the classroom teacher would take back over and would practice handwriting with the students. On Fridays, the classroom teacher would use this time after music special for students' spelling tests. After either handwriting or spelling tests, students would get snack time. The classroom teacher would walk students to the library for snack time. In the library, there were Xs marked with tape on the ground spaced out six feet apart due to COVID-19 protocols so students could remove their face masks and eat. Sometimes, the teacher would read a book to the students while they ate their snacks, and other times, she would let the students socialize with each other. After snack time, the teacher would walk the students back to the classroom.

Following snack time, on Tuesdays, the guidance counselor would come to the classroom for the guidance special. There was no clear introductory routine for the guidance counselor; she would typically just jump straight into her lesson planned for the day. The lessons I observed focused mostly on teaching students to name and manage their emotions.

After the guidance counselor's lessons on Tuesdays were P.E. Burst. P.E. Burst was a ten-minute block during the day where the P.E. teacher would come into the classroom and they would have a physical activity led by the P.E. teacher. These activities ranged from a musical chairs-like game to a game called Silent Basketball where the P.E. teacher created a makeshift hoop in the classroom that students tried to shoot small balls into.

On Fridays, there would be no specials during the time between snack time and lunch. Instead, the classroom teacher would teach a science lesson. During this block before lunch was when the classroom teacher often tried to incorporate engaging activities such as measuring things with a printout of a foot, having students create their own catapults, and having students create vessels to protect eggs from an egg drop. After these fun science activities on Fridays or after the specials on Tuesdays, the students would get ready for lunch and recess. They would again don their winter gear and line up to walk down to the cafeteria. I would walk with the students down to the cafeteria and would then exit the school, ending my observation period within the classroom for the day around 12:45 PM.

Data Collection

I completed these observations throughout the month of January 2021. I visited the school two days per week over a span of three weeks. Due to a snow day, I ended up with five total trips, totaling about 25 hours of observations. I took unstructured handwritten jottings in a notebook while in the classroom. These unstructured jottings were based on asking myself two questions throughout the observations: 1) is someone demonstrating an emotion?; and 2) are feeling rules being established and/or enforced? If the answer was yes to either of these questions, I then began recording what was happening and continued to record until I was not

observing either of these things. I attempted to record both the vocal and body language data that were being expressed. One particular challenge of conducting observational data during the COVID-19 pandemic was that I was largely unable to code for facial expressions due to the fact that all students and teachers were required to wear face masks. Once I arrived back to my dorm room after each of my observations, I immediately sat down and typed up my jottings into more robust field notes.

While in the classroom, my role was very much one of the participant-observer. I sat in the front corner of the classroom at a table the classroom teacher had already set up. Although I wanted to lean more into the observer side of the participant-observer role, I was also more than happy to do whatever the classroom teacher asked of me. This led to me having more of a participant role than I expected as she'd ask me to work with individual students, support with some of the craft activities, and once even left me alone in the classroom with a distraught student while she took the rest of the students outside for a science experiment. Thus, although I am primarily looking outwards at the five teachers in this study, my own tactics and navigations of the feeling rules within the classroom likely play a role in the data collected. Another shortcoming of the data collection method was that I only used observational data. I did not interview the teachers or the students, so I had to use vocal, physical, and context cues in order to outwardly assign what emotion I assumed the student was feeling. I was unable to ask individuals in the study what they were feeling, so the data is filtered through my lens as the researcher.

Data Analysis

During the month of February 2021, I worked to transform these field notes into a coded data set. One of the first things I did with the data was attempt to prune it down. During the data collection phase, if I was unsure if an expression was emotional or not, I aired on the side of caution by still recording what was happening in my jottings. Yet, as I began coding, I wanted to make sure that all my data reflected emotions. Thus, I went through and purged any data that dealt with simply behavioral expressions rather than emotional expressions. If I could not trace the expression to an emotion or to a feeling rule, I deleted it from my field notes.

After attempting to prune the data based on my focus on emotions, I began an inductive coding method. I performed an initial read through of the final data looking for broad themes. The two themes that immediately stood out to me were “be quiet” and “control your body.” There were no other themes that occurred as frequently in the data, so I changed my focus in order to further organize the data. On my second read through the data, I created codes connecting to the different emotions that students were demonstrating. In order to continually keep this project focused on emotions, I made sure that all my codes connected to emotions. If I could not trace a student’s behavior or a teacher’s strategy to an emotion, then it was not included in my codes. I separated these codes into whether the feeling rules related to largely encouraging emotional expression or largely discouraging emotional displays. This left me with my final code list related to feeling rules:

Overarching Feeling Rules:

- Be Quiet
- Control Your Body

Feeling Rules Related to Encouraging Emotion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Feel Compassion ● Feel Repentance 	Feeling Rules Related to Discouraging Emotion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Don't Get Excited ● Don't Show Anger ● Don't Show Frustration ● Don't Show Worry ● Don't Show Sadness
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After coding for feeling rules, I separated the data based on teachers and students. From here, I created one set of codes for teachers and one set of codes for students. While looking at the teacher data, I coded based on strategies used to create and reinforce the feeling rules. I organized these strategies on a scale from most supportive of students' overall emotional well-being to least supportive of students' emotional landscapes. Thus, this spectrum does not necessarily connect to supporting the display of emotion since emotions were so largely controlled. Rather, this scale is oriented around classifying strategies based on how supportive they were of students' emotional well-being in the situation and beyond. The reasonings behind placing certain strategies as least supportive, neutral, or most supportive will be discussed in the following chapter. Below is my final list of codes for teacher strategies:

Least Supportive	Threats Direct Commands Ignoring
Neutral	Preventative Reminders Classroom Routines
Most Supportive	Positive Reinforcement Explaining the Why Showing Empathy Teaching to Self-Regulate

While examining the student data, I created two lists of codes. First, I separated the data into moments of compliance and moments of resistance to the feeling rules. Then, on a final read through of the student data, I recognized that much of the student data connected to jockeying for position within the social hierarchy. Thus, I created a set of three codes for the student data:

- Upholding the Feeling Rules
- Resisting the Feeling Rules
- Navigating the Social Hierarchy

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

In this chapter, I present and discuss the results of my data analysis, focusing on the feeling rules of the classroom, the teachers' role in establishing and reinforcing these emotional expectations, and the students' role in navigating these emotional norms. I argue that emotions are largely discouraged, though emotions connected to social behaviors are more acceptable. Additionally, I articulate nine strategies that teachers use to create and enforce feeling rules and place these nine strategies on a spectrum from least supportive to most supportive of students' general emotional well-being. Finally, I discuss students' roles as active participants in navigating emotional expectations and the social hierarchy within the classroom.

What Are the Feeling Rules in the Classroom?

As discussed in the literature review, feeling rules are guides to how individuals are expected to display and manage their emotions as well as how they assess the appropriateness of the emotional displays of others (Hochschild, 1979). Much of this discussion will focus on how teachers and students co-create appropriate displays of emotions within the classroom. In this section, I present an overview of the different emotions that arose in the classroom and how those emotions were encouraged and discouraged. Although all emotions are context-dependent on whether they are deemed appropriate or inappropriate, the emotions that were largely encouraged were compassion and repentance. The emotions that were largely discouraged were excitement, anger, frustration, worry, and sadness. Connected to the general discouragement of emotional expression were the two overarching feeling rules of be quiet and control your body. These two overarching feeling rules connected to the nearly all-encompassing discouragement of emotional displays within the classroom

Feel Compassion

Although not one of the primary emotions within the classroom, moments where students felt compassion for others were highlighted and praised. When encouraged, this compassion was always outwardly motivated and connected towards feeling compassion towards others rather than towards oneself. This emotional expectation was co-created by both teacher-student and student-student interactions.

Feel Repentance

Feeling repentance for hurting others was also encouraged within the classroom. Similar to compassion, this emotional expectation was encouraged when outwardly directed. In the one moment where a student expressed feeling sorry for an action that only impacted herself, this was the singular example in the data where feeling repentance was not encouraged. This promotion of feeling sorry for hurting others was primarily upheld by teachers.

Don't Get Excited

Excitement was perhaps the both the most interesting and most common emotion observed within the classroom. The surprising angle surrounding excitement was that although it would seemingly be a positive emotion and one that teachers would likely say they want their students to experience in connection with learning, I found it to be the emotion that was most closely managed and discouraged. Although excitement was deemed more appropriate in certain situations and was not always controlled, it was usually only deemed appropriate up to a point. Eventually, this excitement became too much and would be discouraged. Other times, it was

quickly or proactively undermined. This emotional expectation to contain one's excitement was largely enforced by teachers, though students also contributed to creating this emotional guideline.

Negative Emotions: Don't Show Anger, Frustration, Worry, or Sadness

The negative emotions of anger, frustration, worry, and sadness were unsurprisingly discouraged in the classroom. When students displayed anger or frustration through slamming body parts on the table, this was quickly reprimanded by teachers. Similarly, when students expressed feelings of worry or sadness through vocalizing their feelings or crying, these were also shut down by teachers. Instead of addressing the negative emotions themselves, the teachers always attempted to control the expressions of these negative emotions.

Overarching Feeling Rule: Be Quiet

Although the overarching feeling rule of "be quiet" connects most closely to containing excitement, this feeling rule encompasses most emotions in the classroom. Emotional expressions were largely discouraged all around, and when emotional displays occurred, the behaviors were targeted instead of exploring the emotion. Overall, "be quiet" is a symbol of how emotions are largely deemed inappropriate to express in the classroom and that students should self-regulate and not show how they feel; instead, they should just "be quiet."

Throughout the observations, there was only one interesting moment where being quiet was perceived with a negative connotation. One day during computer special, the computer teacher walks around the classroom, checking to make sure students are playing the correct game. He realizes Maya isn't even logged in yet. He says, "You need to log in? Were you ever

logged in? Wow, you sat over here so quietly.” She doesn’t respond and he picks up her iPad and logs in for her. Although interesting to see this student gently reprimanded through the computer teacher’s comment of surprise that insinuates that she should have said that she was not logged in, it is not too surprising considering the appropriate feeling rules of the classroom. In this instance, quietude does not connect to a management of excitement but rather not advocating for her confusion and thus not being on task. Thus, this negative response to being quiet does not go against the theme but instead reinforces the idea that the emphasis on being quiet connects to the inherent feeling rule of the classroom of containing and managing excitement among other emotions.

Overarching Feeling Rule: Control Your Body

“Control your body” is another overarching feeling rule that frequently came up in the classroom. When addressing different emotional displays, teachers often addressed these in two ways: either trying to silence the vocal display of the emotion or trying to silence the physical display of the emotion. Students were consistently encouraged to control their bodies and to keep from expressing their emotions through actions. Instead of inquiring about the inner emotional state, teachers largely discouraged emotional displays through commenting on the physical presentation of the emotion and discouraging these bodily displays.

Both of these overarching feeling rules are environmentally situated. I did not record data of feeling rules in other areas of school, like the gym or the playground, but I hypothesize that a completely different set of feeling rules would embed themselves in these locations, especially related to vocal and physical displays of emotion. While students are instructed to sit calmly in their chairs in the classroom, they can show excitement through running and other physical

gestures in the gym or outside during recess. Although I did not hear these exact terms used, the construction of an “outside voice” versus an “inside voice” demonstrates how these two overarching feeling rules are dependent on the specific environment of the classroom.

How Teachers Create and Uphold Feeling Rules

In the sociology of emotions discipline, feeling rule reminders is the term used to describe attempts to uphold the expected emotional structure. Following will be a discussion of a variety of different strategies that functioned as feeling rule reminders within the classroom. Teachers used these various strategies to establish and enforce the feeling rules within the classroom. These strategies are presented in order from least supportive of students' general emotional well-being to most supportive of students' overall emotional state. On this spectrum, threats are seen as the most detrimental to students' emotional well-being while teaching to self-regulate is seen as the most beneficial to students. In the direct middle of this hypothetical continuum are preventative reminders and classroom routines because they served neither to support emotional landscapes nor to make emotions worse for students.

Threats

I perceived threats to be the most negative way that teachers created and upheld feeling rules because threats do not address the emotion but rather create more to worry about. Although threats were not a common strategy employed by teachers, threats still did surface a couple of times throughout the observations.

Threats were often used as final resort to get students to stop expressing themselves emotionally. One threat came when the classroom teacher noticed that Austin had not done any work on the MLK worksheet:

The classroom teacher walks over and asks him, "You got something yet?" The student mumbles a response I can't hear. The teacher says, "It's how you treat people with equality. I can think of a couple ways—like on the playground, have you ever told someone 'no' that you wouldn't play? Or at Halloween or Christmas, when you gave everyone the same treats?" The student doesn't respond. The teacher then leaves, and the student puts his head back on the table. The teacher eventually comes back to Austin who

still has his head on his desk. The teacher says, “We’re not going to have recess until you get that done.”

Obviously, Austin was experiencing some sort of emotion. He had his head down on the table and was not engaged with the world around him at all. Yet, the teacher did not inquire about this emotional experience but instead threatened him with losing recess if he did not complete his homework.

On another occasion, the classroom teacher was interacting with Austin and threatened him this time with calling the principal:

During the spelling test, the teacher gives students the word ‘would.’ After writing ‘wo’ Austin stops working and puts his head in his hands on the table. After a few seconds, he picks his head up, but he doesn’t continue to attempt any of the spelling words. Instead, he pulls out his small rat toy and begins playing with that instead. The teacher eventually notices, walks over, takes the rat toy from him, and points at the spelling test sheet. The student says “uh uh” while shaking his head and once again puts his head in his hands on the table. The teacher continues giving the spelling test to the other students. She is about done giving the spelling test when she walks back over to the student and asks, “Austin, do you want to join us, or should I call [the principal]?”

Again, Austin was clearly experiencing some sort of negative emotion with him shaking his head and resting it on the table. Instead of trying to understand why Austin was emotionally expressing himself in this way, the teacher instead threatened to call the principal and did end up calling the principal after Austin did not respond to her threat.

Overall, threats seemed like the least supportive means to enforce feeling rules because they conveyed to students in the harshest possible way that their emotions were not valid. Instead of alleviating the stress of the emotions that Austin was feeling, I would assume that threatening to take away the positive emotional release time of recess would only cause further emotional distress. Similarly, the optics of having the principal come into the classroom and take a student

away would likely add an additional burden of stress upon Austin. Through threats, the emotions students feel are not being understood but rather stress is likely compounded for the students.

Minimizing Statements

Minimizing statements were another strategy that teachers employed to enforce feeling rules. Although not as direct or aggressive as direct commands, these statements served to minimize a student's feelings, therefore invalidating their emotional experience. Although minimizing statements seemed often to be given with the intention of comforting a student, they further served to show students that their emotional expressions were not appropriate or valid within the classroom environment.

These minimizing statements were primarily used to establish and enforce the feeling rule surrounding managing the negative emotions of sadness, worry, frustration, and anger. One day during P.E. Burst, the P.E. teacher introduced a game similar to musical chairs where students would walk around the classroom and stand on a dot on the floor when the music turned off. During this game, Austin lost and had to sit back down at his desk after being eliminated from the game. He is visibly angry and slams his fist on the table. The P.E. teacher says, "It is okay. This is a luck game. This isn't the Super Bowl." The P.E. teacher does not condone Austin's anger and rather attempts to stifle it by minimizing the stakes at play. The P.E. teacher implicitly comments that the magnitude of Austin's emotions is inappropriate for the context because it is just "a luck game" and it "isn't the Super Bowl."

In a similar situation, during computer special one day, the students are playing a problem-solving puzzle game on their iPads:

Austin seems to be becoming increasingly frustrated as he is stuck and can't seem to beat one level. Eventually, he shouts, "this game is impossible!", puts his iPad down, and

places his head on the table. He appears to be crying. The computer teacher walks over and says, “Austin, let’s go to another game. We have some free time now. It’s okay bud.” Austin sits up and begins trying to beat the level again. After failing once more, he slams down the iPad and puts his head back on the table. The computer teacher says, “It’s okay buddy, you didn’t have to stay there.” The student appears to be crying with his head in his arms on the table.

Again, Austin is frustrated and dismayed after losing another game. The computer teacher responds by telling him that “it’s okay” and that he should have gone to a different game.

Through these comments from the computer teacher, he tries to divert attention away from the emotion rather than addressing the anger and frustration Austin is feeling. Both the P.E. teacher and computer teacher signal that Austin’s negative emotional displays are too large and consequently inappropriate for the classroom. The scenario surrounding Austin’s frustration with the problem-solving puzzle game continues when the classroom teacher returns to the classroom as the computer teacher is wrapping up his lesson. The computer teacher says to her, “Sorry, I think I’ve frustrated them. We had a puzzle game, and Austin got really frustrated.” The classroom teacher responds, “trials of life.” Again, the classroom teacher does not validate or acknowledge Austin’s feelings of frustration and rather dismisses these feelings as simply “trials of life.” Through these examples, it is clear that the feeling rules of the classroom do not provide space for negative emotions like anger and frustration. Instead, students are encouraged to stifle these emotions.

Teachers also used minimizing statements to discourage the emotional display of worry.

This came up one day when a student forgot his water bottle on the playground:

After coming in from recess one day, Mateo remarks to the classroom teacher that he forgot his water bottle on the playground, and he asks if he can return outside to get it. The teacher tells him he can’t and that he will have to get it at lunch. He responds, “but that’s too long! What if someone takes it?” The teacher assures him that no one will take it. Mateo walks away from this conversation with the teacher but is visibly still upset and mumbling to himself about the water bottle. The teacher says to the student, “Mateo, it’s time to let it go.”

Mateo was discouraged from worrying about his water bottle and instead was instructed “to let it go.” This showcases another example of emotions being stifled in the classroom as the classroom teacher does not indulge or explore Mateo’s worried emotions surrounding the lost water bottle. Similar to Austin’s anger and frustration, Mateo’s worry is viewed as something that should be small and that can just be let go. In these situations, there was a lack of support from teachers. They implicitly told Austin and Mateo that these negative feelings were inappropriate, but they failed to provide them with any skills or strategies to make their emotions more manageable.

On the other hand, one interesting moment came up where a minimizing statement was used seemingly in the opposite direction of a feeling rule. Largely, the teachers modeled and promoted feeling sorry for one’s bad actions, but in one situation, the classroom teacher used a minimizing statement to discourage the feeling of repentance. One day while the students are working on their bell work, the classroom teacher walks over to Maya in the back of the class and starts up a conversation with her. I don’t catch the whole conversation, but it seems to be about the student not finishing her work yesterday. She mumbles a quiet “sorry” to which the teacher responds, “Sorry isn’t worth it.” Although the teacher had encouraged Maya to apologize on a different occasion when she had accidentally pushed someone, here the teacher responded that “sorry isn’t worth it.” This seems to be a moment of mixed messaging on the feeling rules within the classroom. Although there are certain moments where apologizing for harm is expected, there are other moments where sorry isn’t a valid response. Although it is hard to delineate this distinction since there was only one moment where repentance was discouraged, the main difference between the situation where Maya was encouraged to apologize and the other scenario where she was discouraged from feeling sorry was the presence of another person. In both situations where students were told to apologize, it was due to harming another student.

In this case where Maya did not finish her work, it did not harm anyone else. Thus, it appears that feeling repentance is a feeling rule when connected to harming others, but that repentance is not appropriate when it comes to lacking productivity. Through this minimizing statement that “sorry isn’t worth it,” the classroom teacher upheld the feeling rule that feeling repentance is appropriate when it relates to doing harm upon someone else.

Direct Commands

Direct commands were the most frequent way that teachers created and upheld feeling rules. Similar to threats and minimizing statements, direct commands did not serve to understand emotions but rather had the potential to make them worse. Although likely causing less negative emotional impacts than threats and minimizing statements, direct commands were often delivered as quick ways to get the students back into following the feeling rules without providing any space to explore the emotions students were feeling.

These direct commands often came in the form of quick, terse comments from teachers. While the classroom teacher was instructing the class that they will get to practice math games on their iPads, Mateo exclaims, “Yes! Yes!” The teacher responds, “Hush, Mateo.” Another example came when the classroom teacher was grading the spelling tests with the students. The teacher is reading the correct spellings of words after the spelling test. After spelling the word “brain” there is a chorus of “yes!” from the students with some of them throwing up their hands. Then, the teacher spells the word “snack,” which elicits a little louder chorus of cheers from the students. The teacher says, “Okay, shh,” and holds a finger up to her lips. In both instances, one might predict the classroom teacher would be glad that students were excited to play math games or that they were excited to have gotten their spelling words correct. Yet, on the contrary, their

expressions of excitement were discouraged in favor of quietude and control. One of the most surprising results of this study is how much excitement, a seemingly positive emotion, was so controlled and minimized by teachers. A primary strategy that teachers used to uphold this feeling rule discouraging excitement was through these quick and terse direct commands.

There were a number of moments in the classroom where teachers used direct commands to control excitement that seemingly should have been appreciated. One day during computer special, the computer teacher is explaining the next game they are going to play on ABCYa. It is a game about stacking falling items on a burger bun in order to make the type of burger the game instructs. He's explaining that this first burger needs "three pieces of cheese, three pieces of lettuce, and three pieces of burger patty." One student laughs at this and the computer teacher responds, "listen up!" It would have made sense that the computer teacher would feel happy that a student would laugh at the funny idea of stacking items on a burger for a game. Instead, this emotional display of showing excitement through laughter was discouraged through the quick, terse comment of "listen up!" Similarly, the classroom teacher planned a math lesson about measurement one day that would allow students to use a picture of a foot to measure things. A chorus of "ooh!" "ew!" and "gross!" pervades the room. The teacher allows this outburst for about ten seconds before saying, "Shh!" and putting a finger to her mouth. While the teacher condoned this emotional expression of excitement for about ten seconds, she eventually stopped students from vocalizing their excitement. Again, one might expect the teacher to feel happy that the students were actually excited to do math and measure things with a foot, but ultimately, this excitement was discouraged through the direct command of "Shh!" plus putting the finger to her mouth to signal this command.

Similar to the discouragement of excitement in the classroom through the feeling rule of being quiet, teachers also used direct commands connected to the physical body to discourage excitement. A series of direct commands arose one day in the transition between music special and snack time.

After the music special finishes, it is almost snack time. Mateo rockets out of his seat to get his snack. The classroom teacher says, "Mateo, sit down, relax." Mateo sits down. Another student has walked over near the door to be ready to leave to go eat snack. The teacher says to the whole class, "Everyone, [the music teacher] hasn't even left yet. Sit down. Sit down, no one has asked you to line up yet. With the exception of Emily, Noah, and Mateo, everyone else can politely get in line." After all the other students have gotten up from their seats and lined up, the teacher says, "Now, you three can get in the end of the line."

Mateo had been so excited to eat snack that he had rocketed out of his seat. Yet, this excitement went against the classroom expectation of sitting and waiting to be dismissed. The classroom teacher made the three students who had gotten out of their seats out of excitement sit back down. Furthermore, with the command of relax, the teacher communicates that excitement is not appropriate, but calmness is. These students are penalized for their excitement and must stand in the very back of the line. Through the direct command to sit down and relax, the classroom teacher demonstrates that the discouragement of excitement does not only occur on the sound level but also through the physical body.

As evidenced through this example of transitioning from music special to snack time, the classroom teacher often used direct commands that related to the physical body during transition periods. After coming in from recess, the classroom teacher says to the entire class, "Everyone, calm your bodies down." Students must transition from the feeling rules of recess and the outdoors where emotional displays happen between students and are not as closely controlled by teachers to the classroom environment where bodies and sounds are more closely monitored. The

classroom teacher frequently used these quick, terse comments during transition periods to reinforce the classroom expectations of calmness.

In addition to using direct commands to articulate the feeling rule of containing excitement, the classroom teacher also used direct commands to police negative emotions. One example of sadness being discouraged through a direct command came when students were working on their bell work one morning. While working, Austin has his head down on the table and appears to be crying. The teacher walks by and says, "I need to see a little more life in you than that, Austin." The classroom teacher does not inquire about Austin's sadness and instead encourages him to transform this sadness into "more life." This quick, terse comment encouraging "more life" articulates that sadness in this case where it is not connected to compassion is inappropriate to feel and show within the classroom.

While direct commands were most commonly used to control certain emotions, these statements were also employed to encourage the feeling rule of feeling repentance for doing harm upon others. One example of this encouragement of repentance came during music special when the students were packing up their Ziploc bags that hold the supplies for music special. The teacher has called on Emily to talk while Austin shouts out, "I'm done with this bag!" The teacher says, "But I can't hear Emily, and I called on her. Can you say sorry to Emily?" Austin says, "Sorry, Emily." The music teacher directly commands Austin to apologize to Emily. This upholds the feeling rule that Austin should feel sorry for interrupting Emily. He complies to this direct command, signaling his internalization of this feeling rule that he should show repentance at appropriate times.

One of the most troubling moments of controlling emotions came during music special one morning. This troubling moment connected to a direct command from the music teacher:

During the music special where students are guessing what is in the Music Mystery Box, Austin asks, “Is it a hexagon?” The teacher responds, “No, it’s not, but that’s a good guess. I love that you’re thinking that way.” The student starts hitting his head on the table. While hitting his head on the table, he says “empty” and then hits his head again and says “head” and repeats “empty” “head” while hitting his head twice more. The music teacher says, “Can you stop doing that? I can hear it all the way over here which means you’re hitting your head pretty hard.”

The music teacher directly asks Austin to stop hitting his head on the table. Rather than actually inquiring about how he is feeling or providing him with the skills to manage his emotions, she simply asks him to stop. Further, she asks him to stop only because it is loud. Although the being quiet feeling rule most often connected to excitement, this example showcases the overarching nature of the being quiet feeling rule because the music teacher employs this direct command in order to silence Austin’s negative emotions.

Ignoring

Ignoring did not serve to validate students’ emotional experiences, since ignoring comes out of inaction, it did not directly make the student feel worse. Yet, at the same time, for students with abandonment issues, ignoring could actually serve to exacerbate their negative feelings. By not addressing emotions, students could be reminded that their feelings are not worthy of being explored or understood. Due to this potentially harmful effect of ignoring for some students’ backgrounds, ignoring comes right below the neutral middle point on the continuum of teacher strategies.

Ignoring served to uphold that negative emotions were unwelcome because they went unaddressed. For example, during computer special one day, students began playing a game on their iPads where they must estimate how many marbles are in the jar. Austin is frustrated with the game they are playing and is repeatedly slamming his fist on the table. He says, “I hate this

game.” The computer teacher does not engage with this behavior at all. Here, Austin expresses his anger and frustration through slamming his fist on the table. This is a loud and clear emotional expression, but the computer teacher ignores this behavior. Through ignoring these emotions, teachers neither provided students with comfort nor the skills necessary to manage their emotions more effectively.

Austin underwent a similar experience of his negative emotions being ignored with the classroom teacher. One day the teacher introduced an activity where students would create their own catapult:

Students are working on building their catapults out of six popsicle sticks, three rubber bands, and one spoon. Austin has finished building his catapult. I don't see what triggers this, but eventually, he is sitting hunched over with his head in his hands on his desk. He looks distraught. The teacher tells the class that it's time to go test the catapults outside, so students should put on their coats. While all the other students are getting on their coats, Austin is still sitting with his head on the desk. The teacher walks by him a few times and initially ignores this behavior, but eventually, she asks him to put on his coat. He ignores her and does not move or say anything. The teacher does not say anything else to Austin and asks me if I'm okay with staying inside with him while the rest of the class goes outside to test their catapults.

In this situation, the teacher repeatedly ignored Austin's behavior of displaying negative emotions. Although she eventually asks him to put on his coat, this is the extent of her engagement. There is no discussion at all of the emotions Austin feels or even the behavior he presents. Instead, the teacher even further ignores him by leaving him in the classroom to be alone (with me) with his emotions. While ignoring students' negative emotions is troubling because it provides neither support nor skills to manage these emotions, it has the potential to cause harm even beyond the lack of support. By physically leaving Austin, this could catalyze feelings of abandonment and serve to worsen his experience with feeling supported by adults in his life.

Preventative Reminders

I conceptualize preventative reminders in the direct middle of the continuum of teacher strategies to uphold feeling rules because preventative reminders serve neither to support emotional expression nor do they make emotions worse for students. On the one hand, preventative reminders further articulate the inappropriateness of emotional displays. Yet, preventative reminders also allow students the opportunity to understand the emotional expectations before potentially getting themselves in a situation where their emotions are being controlled.

Before introducing something that might generate feelings of excitement, teachers often employed preventative reminders to try to combat potential feeling rule infractions. For example, one day the music teacher was preparing to show the class a music about tempo that included cartoon characters of a turtle and a hare. Before starting the video, she says, “I told you last week about how to be a good audience. Do you remember how to be a good audience?” Three different students answer with “no laughing,” “be quiet,” and “no talking.” The teacher comments on this last answer by saying, “Manage your impulsivity to shout things out of turn.” Before playing this video that might arise some excitement for students, the music teacher chose to review the feeling rules around “how to be a good audience.” By doing this, she further silenced emotions and students voiced their clear expectations of these guidelines because they answered understanding that even the positive expression of laughing would be inappropriate. Yet, this reminder also served to allow students to reflect on their own behavior and make choices before incurring the consequences of not abiding by the feeling rules.

Similar to the use of direct commands connected to transitional periods, the classroom teacher also used preventative reminders during transition times. One day when it became time

for lunch, the classroom teacher tells the class, “We need to put our iPads away carefully and quietly to get ready for lunch.” Here, the classroom teacher reinforces the feeling rule of containing excitement. Although the transition to lunch might excite students, she reminds them that they need to get ready for lunch quietly. There were a number of occasions before transition periods where the classroom teacher would utilize preventative reminders as a way to reinforce the feeling rules surrounding managing excitement.

Seemingly, this emphasis on quietude and containing excitement connects to the physical space of the classroom environment. Students are not policed to control their excitement in the same ways on the playground. One area where fun and classroom seemed to intersect was a brief time they had on Tuesdays called “P.E. Burst.” P.E. Burst is a ten-minute block during the day where the P.E. teacher would come, and they would have a physical activity led by the P.E. teacher within their own classroom. One day, the activity the P.E. teacher introduces was called “Silent Basketball.” While he is explaining the directions for the “Silent Basketball” game, he says, “You will not be allowed to speak or howl or scream.” Although I did not get to observe any actual P.E. classes in the gym, I would assume that noisemaking and excitement would not be so completely discouraged. Yet, when the P.E. teacher enters the space of the classroom, he bought into these preventative reminders about rules around quietude and excitement so much to even name the game “Silent Basketball.” Potentially, the P.E. teacher used preventative reminders during P.E. Burst to overcompensate for the fact that students do not have to follow these emotional expectations so strictly during P.E. times in the gym.

Classroom Routines

Similar to preventative reminders, classroom routines fall in the middle of the continuum. They serve to discourage emotions, yet they also provide a clear structure for how to abide by feeling rules. Raising hands was the primary classroom routine, which connected to the overarching feeling rule of being quiet. Through the classroom routine of raising hands, students understood that excitement was largely discouraged in the classroom, but they had a clear routine for this emotional expectation.

As second graders, the students seemed to understand this routine of raising hands, but still fairly often a student would speak without raising a hand. When this happened, a reminder often came from the teacher. For example, during the music special one day, Noah shouts, “where’s my note?” The music teacher responds, “you’re shouting out of turn. What do you do when you want to say something?” Noah replies, “raise your hand.” The music teacher affirms this with a vocal “yes.” Another example of reinforcing this routine came from the classroom teacher. While introducing a catapult experiment, one student becomes excited and raises his hand. The teacher says, “I like how Austin is raising his hand. It seems like we need some reminders because even specialists are having to remind you. We raise our hands. We don’t just shout things out.” Teachers clearly articulated this classroom expectation of raising hands to students. Although it may just seem like an innocuous classroom routine on the surface, the underlying message of raising hands connects to emotion management. Students are encouraged not to shout, not to be excited. Instead, students are asked to be composed, to wait, to keep their emotions and feelings inside until called on to share.

Positive Reinforcement

On the least positive of the positive end of the continuum is positive reinforcement. Positive reinforcement is conceptualized here not as positive reinforcement of feeling emotions but rather positive reinforcement related to following the feeling rules of controlling emotions. Although positive reinforcement would seemingly serve to validate students, this validation was, of course, unequally doled out. Students already adept at managing their emotions received this praise frequently while students less adept at holding back their emotional displays received less of this praise. Furthermore, this positive reinforcement often came as a way to address one student's lacking emotion management by commenting on another student's successful emotional restraint. Thus, although positive reinforcement helped instill the feeling rules within students in a largely non-harmful way, it still created a hierarchy in the classroom where some students received this praise at the expense of other students.

Teachers sometimes positively reinforced the classroom routine of raising hands. One example of this came from the classroom teacher who would sometimes call on students who were sitting with their hand raised by calling on their name and then saying, "nice quiet hand." The classroom teacher sometimes took this strategy in response to students who became overly excited and shouted answers out of turn. For example, while editing a sentence for grammatical errors together as a class, one student attempts to point out an error without being called on. The teacher does not acknowledge this student's comment and instead calls on another student by saying, "Sadie, nice quiet hand." Furthermore, another time when editing a sentence together as a class, the teacher calls on a student, but it's difficult to hear her answer because other students are shouting out answers. The teacher says, "I love the way Evelyn was nice and quiet and raised her hand. The only trouble was that I had a hard time hearing her because other people were talking." Students who were already adept with managing their emotions by sitting quietly and

waiting to be called on received this positive messaging from teachers. Furthermore, this positive reinforcement of “nice, quiet hand” was largely used to combat negative behavior by ignoring the undesirable shouting out of answers and instead recognizing the positive behavior of sitting and waiting quietly to be called upon. This may further the divide between those who received positive affirmation from teachers and those who did not.

The music teacher also upheld the feeling rule of showing a management of emotions through being quiet and controlling the body. When the music teacher finished taking attendance, she says, “I see some people sitting quietly and looking at me. That can be hard sometimes. That shows very good self-control, but I also hear others shouting.” Here, students are not just being quiet but rather they are praised for “sitting quietly.” This emphasis on controlling the physical body paired with controlling sound demonstrates the “very good self-control” that the music teacher and others encouraged within the classroom. The music teacher used this positive reinforcement to target the negative behavior of the “others shouting.”

Another example of reinforcing the conflation of the physical body with being quiet through positive comments came during P.E. Burst. After the first round of “Silent Basketball,” the P.E. teacher tells the class, “you did a very good job of being quiet that game. You are under control of your bodies.” Again, the compliment of being quiet is given right next to a compliment about being in control of their physical bodies. By placing these two in the same compliment, teachers send the implicit message to students that being quiet and being in control of the physical body are connected. Through this connection, emotions are not only stifled in expressing through sound but also stifled through expression in a physical form.

Similar to how the particular physical space of the classroom prescribes certain rules for sound, the classroom also dictates how students are able to use their physical bodies within the

space. As opposed to outside recess or the gym, these differences in appropriate behavior come through quite clearly in P.E. Burst.

During the PE Burst musical spots game, Mateo and Evelyn race over to claim a spot in the corner even though they had been instructed earlier not to run and that running would get someone disqualified. The gym teacher tells both students that they're out, not seeming to realize that Evelyn is standing on a spot. The teacher notices this and asks Evelyn, "Why are you sitting down?" She responds, "Because I ran over there." The P.E. teacher says, "Wow, what great honesty. Because of your honesty, you're back in." Evelyn stands up and goes back to participating in the musical spots game.

During this game, students were not allowed to show excitement through their physical bodies—they could not show their excitement by running to the spots. They were specifically instructed on this and then Evelyn policed herself by taking herself out of the game for violating this feeling rule connected to containing excitement. Had they been in a different physical environment, like the playground or the gymnasium, students likely would have been allowed to show their excitement through running. Yet, the physical space of the classroom comes with its own set of feeling rules related to the physical body. Surprisingly in this scenario, a different feeling rule seems to outweigh the initial infraction of inappropriately running. Evelyn was praised for recognizing her feeling rule infraction and rewarded for this recognition by being let back in the game. Teachers often must remind students about appropriate behavior, so Evelyn recognizing her error herself and then self-regulating demonstrates that students are internalizing these feeling rules. Furthermore, this scenario showcases that students who can self-regulate their emotions are rewarded for this control of their bodies.

In addition to this praise surrounding controlling emotions, other feeling rules were highlighted through the use of positive comments. One example of the prioritization of compassion and feeling bad for others came during music special one day when they watched a video on tempo where a bunny character in the video did not make it to the finish line of the

fictitious race. After watching the music video, the music teacher asks for student's reactions to it. Harper says, "I felt sad for the bunny." The music teacher responds, "it's good that you have compassion for the bunny who couldn't make it." Here, the music teacher transformed Harper's sadness into a positive by encouraging the compassion that she was feeling. The music teacher compliments her feeling, names it as compassion, and promotes it as positive to feel within the classroom. Through turning this into a positive, the music teacher demonstrates that feeling compassion and feeling bad for others' hurt is an important feeling rule.

Explaining the Why

Opposite of direct commands is explaining the why behind feeling rules. While direct commands served as quick ways to address deviations from the emotional expectations of the classroom, explaining why a feeling rule existed while still enforcing it allowed teachers the opportunity to educate students on the why behind the feeling rules. This educational opportunity could help students understand the importance of abiding by feeling rules. That being said, the reasons behind feeling rules were often lackluster and did not serve to validate emotions but rather treated students as productive, unfeeling beings.

Although teachers rarely explained the reasoning behind this feeling rule of being quiet, one explanation that was offered related to productivity. One day, the classroom teacher was working with Emily in the front of the classroom on a math worksheet. The teacher could hear Mateo in the back of the classroom talking. She turns around and says, "I wouldn't waste my time talking. I'd use my time working." Here, she encourages Mateo to be quiet because it will help him get more work done instead of talking and wasting his time. Here, being quiet and properly practicing emotion management connects to being able to complete the most work

possible. Similarly, while students are preparing to put on their winter gear to go outside after lunch, the classroom teacher says, “Get dressed without the talking. You do it faster that way.” Through this comment, the classroom teacher articulates that being quiet connects to doing things faster. Students are instructed that quietude connects to both more work getting done and things getting done quicker.

Another example of explaining the value of being quiet came when students were working on a worksheet about friction. While students were competing the worksheet, the classroom teacher says, “Nice job! What hard workers we have. We’re going to stop on that for this week, but great hard work. Did you notice how quiet it was and how everyone was getting stuff done?” In this statement, the classroom teacher has connected being quiet to working hard, sending the message that doing well academically is tied to managing emotions and working quietly. In these examples, the classroom teacher has implicitly instructed the students that being quiet helps students get more work done, get things done quicker, and connects to hard work. This prioritizes students as productive beings rather than feeling beings.

In addition to encouraging focus, there was one example of a teacher explaining why feeling compassion is important:

One morning, the classroom teacher walked up to Austin as he was taking off his winter gear. She continues to talk to him about yesterday and begins to speak specifically about the mess that he made on the floor from his winter gear. “That (the mess) made their job harder for the girls who clean our room and the janitor. Think of something kind to do today, so they know how kind you are. It’d be good to make their lives easier, especially on a Friday night.”

The teacher encourages Austin to feel compassion and then to act that out by being kind to the individuals who clean the classroom. She explains that making a mess makes their lives harder, so that being kind and not leaving them a mess would make their lives easier, especially on a Friday night where they would want to have an easier work shift before the weekend. Through

this explanation, it provides context to Austin on why he might want to feel compassion and change his behavior.

Another example of a teacher encouraging students to feel sorry when they've wronged someone came while students were lining up to walk to the library for snack time:

While lining up for snack time, Mateo tells the teacher that "Maya pushed me!" The teacher asks, "Maya, did you do that?" She says, "no." The teacher responds, "well, Mateo says you did. Could it have been an accident?" Maya says, "it wasn't on purpose." The teacher says, "Could you have told Mateo that it was an accident? Because we feel better when we know it was an accident rather than on purpose. Even if it was an accident, though, could you tell him you're sorry?" Maya says, "sorry."

Even though Maya claims that she did not push Mateo and even if she did, it was not on purpose, the teacher instructs Maya that she should feel sorry for her actions even if it was an accident. She explains that "we feel better when we know it was an accident," signaling to Maya that she should voice her repentance in order to make Mateo feel better about what happened. Through this request that Maya say sorry to Mateo, the teacher shows students that feeling bad is expected when they hurt someone. By stating the reasoning behind why Maya should feel badly for harming someone else, the teacher equips Maya with the opportunity to alter her emotional expression and come into accord with the feeling rules.

Showing Empathy

I would place showing empathy and teaching to self-regulate in similar places along the continuum of teacher strategies because showing empathy normalizes students' feeling and supports their emotions whereas teaching to self-regulate provides students with the skills necessary to be able to manage their emotions. Although it happened fairly rarely in the classroom, these displays of empathy allowed teachers to comment on how they also sometimes struggle with their emotions. This makes emotions a shared human experience and shows

solidarity with how the student is feeling. Furthermore, by stating that the teacher has also felt that way, it shows the student that it is okay to feel emotions.

One way that teachers showed empathy was by sharing examples of how they have experienced similar emotions. After first threatening Austin with no recess unless he finished the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day worksheet, the classroom teacher pivots and tries the strategy of using empathy. She says to him, “I was at the gym yesterday. Last night, I was the last one done at the gym and one guy had to say to wait until I was done because they had to wait for everyone to finish. We all have our little struggles and things that are hard for us.” Although she minimizes his feelings by calling it a “little struggle,” she still attempts to relate with Austin by articulating that she has felt similarly. She uses this personal anecdote about causing everyone at the gym to wait for her to show that some things are harder to finish. Through sharing this personal story, the classroom teacher signals to Austin that he is not alone in having some things be hard for him.

The classroom teacher attempted to show empathy to Austin another time connected to his negative emotional displays. Austin had become especially frustrated by the puzzle game that they had played during computer special. He still has his head down on the table and is not putting away his iPad like the rest of the students when the computer special ends. The classroom teacher says to him, “puzzles can be frustrating, like when I’m doing jigsaw puzzles and start to get frustrated, I get up and walk away and come back to it later, and then usually, the piece was right in front of me. Some of us can work and not get frustrated longer than others.” Again, the classroom teacher attempts to relate to Austin by sharing how she, too, gets frustrated when she works on jigsaw puzzles. In addition to showing that Austin is not alone in feeling this emotion, she also provides him with a specific strategy that she employs to manage her emotions

when she gets frustrated by telling him about how she walks away and takes a break from the puzzle that frustrates her. These displays of empathy validate students' emotions and may even make students feel less isolated in their emotional experiences knowing that their teacher has gone through similar struggles.

Teaching to Self-Regulate

Like showing empathy, teaching to self-regulate falls on the most positive end of the teacher strategy continuum because it provides students with the skills necessary to regulate their own emotions. Although people would never expect students to learn how to multiply on their own without direct instruction, it feels like emotional expectations are rarely explicitly taught in the classroom. Yet, students are constantly asked to manage their emotions, so providing direct instruction about emotion management would be helpful for them to explicitly understand how they are supposed to perform that skill.

One way that students were explicitly taught about emotion management was through the guidance counselor's visits on Tuesdays. During these visits that I observed, she taught lessons on noticing and controlling emotions. The guidance counselor had students participate in an activity called "Feelings Factory" where she gives them an emotion such as "frustrated," "excited," or "angry," and asks them to act out how this emotion looks and think (not share) about a time when they've felt those feelings. She also tells them about the amygdala and how the amygdala is where we have emotions. She illustrates this with the thumb and then the "thinking part" of the brain is the fingers that curl down over the thumb and controls the emotions. To further illustrate this point, the guidance counselor provides students with three dance moves to correlate with the chorus of a song she projects on the TV. The song's chorus

goes, “Stop. Name the feeling. Calm down.” During the next week when the guidance counselor returns, she reminds them of some of the things they went over last week, such as how the brain is like a hand with the fingers, like thoughts, covering the thumb, which signifies the feelings and how sometimes people “flip their lid” and stop managing their emotions. She says, “As you get older, your feelings get stronger, so even if this doesn’t fit you now, you will need to know how to calm yourselves.” She keeps talking and says, “Some of you can already manage your feelings by yourself. Others need some help and reminders. That’s okay because it’s learning just like anything else.” Although I have no idea if the guidance counselor’s lessons always focused on emotion management, it was at least something she was clearly working on with the students during the weeks while I was conducting my observations. Through these lessons, she taught students that controlling emotions is a valuable and important skill. The importance of managing emotions was one of the explicit feeling rules within the classroom. She used this direct instruction to teach students about how to name their emotions and then calm down in order to manage these emotions.

Although not an explicit lesson on emotion management, the classroom teacher once encouraged self-reflection around emotion management:

Students were returning to their classroom from eating snack in the library. After getting back to the classroom, the classroom teacher says to the class, “Take a minute and think... how did you do at walking quietly from the library to here? How did you do at keeping your place in line? And then think... how did you do at your manners for the person behind you and holding the door until the person behind had it? To me, that didn’t sound like a quiet line in voices or in feet. Think about that. Think about being in control of yourself.”

Here, the classroom teacher uses self-reflection in order to uphold the feeling rule of managing excitement through their physical bodies by staying in line and walking rather than running. The classroom teacher uses this feeling rule infraction as a teaching moment and asks students to

reflect on their self-control. Through these questions, students are instructed that they must be adept at transitioning between spaces with different feeling rules. At snack time, it is appropriate to have fun and be excited, but while walking in the hallways and back in the classroom, it is not appropriate to showcase this excitement through sound or through the physical body.

In addition to encouraging self-reflection, the classroom teacher sometimes provided other strategies to students for calming the physical body:

While working on vocabulary words, the teacher introduces the word “magnet.” She asks if any of them have any magnets in their kitchen (another vocabulary word). She tells them to put a thumb up if they do and a thumb down if they don’t. Dylan originally puts two thumbs down but then starts talking loudly and quickly and switches his thumbs to up. I don’t catch what he is saying. The teacher says to this student, “Shh your outburst! Take a deep breath. Calm yourself down for listening.”

Here, the classroom teacher discourages this excitement by instructing him to first quiet his outburst. Yet, after the comment towards the noise, the focus immediately turns to the physical body. The teacher tells the student to take a deep breath and calm down. This provides the students with a specific strategy that he can use to regulate his physical body and come back into accordance with the classroom feeling rules. Another example comes when students were working on a math worksheet about place values. While working, the teacher says to Mateo, “Are you okay? Obviously, you’re not since you’re making so much noise. Take a second and slow your body down.” Again, the classroom teacher first focuses on the noisemaking but then transitions to addressing this feeling rule violation through the physical body. She asks Mateo to take a second and slow his body down in order to counteract his excitement. Through these instructions about how to calm down by taking a deep breath and taking time, the teacher gives the students strategies to manage their emotions.

One failed way that students could have received explicit messaging about emotion management was from the calm down corner in the classroom. When I was selecting a research

site, one of the considerations was that I had heard that this classroom teacher had created a calm down corner for her students in her classroom. I figured this classroom setup might create some interesting data. Yet when I actually arrived in the classroom, I realized that had the classroom teacher not told me about this calm down corner, I probably would not have realized it existed except for maybe wondering about some posters on emotion management in one corner of the room. She did not reference this calm down corner once during my observations and not a single student ever interacted with this barely designated space. Although this could have been a way that students received explicit instruction on feeling rules, it appears that this calm down corner did not actually function to socialize students into the emotional expectations of the classroom.

How Students Navigate Feeling Rules

Although teachers were the primary forces that created and upheld these feeling rules, students were not passive recipients of these emotional expectations. Students actively participated in co-creating, navigating, and resisting these feeling rules. Students participated in this environment through mimicking teacher-established feeling rules, finding appropriate moments to resist emotional expectations, and ultimately navigating this environment through jockeying for position in the social hierarchy.

Upholding Feeling Rules

Although most feeling rule reminders about being quiet came from teachers, students participated in creating and maintaining these expectations. Students' peer policing of quietude was far less prevalent than the emphasis on social competition and hierarchy, but students did seem to internalize this messaging about being quiet from teachers. There was one example of a student mimicking a teacher through his command to the rest of the class during P.E. Burst. The P.E. teacher steps outside into the hall in order to grab the makeshift basketball hoop (which is really a large blue mat that he makes into a cylinder that is almost as tall as the ceiling). While the P.E. teacher is in the hallway, Noah says, "everyone be quiet or you sit down." This comment from Noah almost mirrors exactly how a teacher might phrase this reminder about being quiet. Although it is impossible to know if Noah meant it in a mocking way, the message did seem genuinely directed towards his peers. This demonstrates that students internalize their teachers' messaging about feeling rules and uphold these expectations with each other.

Similar to the upholding of being quiet, students also participated in upholding the feeling rule of feeling repentance for harming others. The scenario where Maya accidentally pushed Mateo continued after Maya was encouraged to apologize.

After Maya says sorry, the teacher then asks Mateo, “what could you say back to Maya?” He responds tersely, “Don’t do it again.” The teacher cocks her head and pauses for a moment and then turns to the class lined up in front of the door and asks, “Any other ideas?” Several students raise their hands, and the teacher points at Dylan, who says, “That’s okay.” The teacher nods.

The teacher does not accept Mateo’s hurt response of “don’t do it again.” By not accepting this as an appropriate response, the teacher sends the implicit message that vengeance and hurt are not appropriate feelings after being wronged. Rather, students should feel forgiveness, which is showcased when the teacher validates Dylan’s response of “that’s okay” with a nod. Through this comment, Dylan leans into how students are expected to feel and teaches his peers how they are also supposed to feel. In this scenario, student feedback works to uphold the feeling rule of feeling sorry for harming others.

Furthermore, students also occasionally tattled on each other as a way to uphold feeling rules. One day, when the classroom teacher returned to the classroom after computer special, Dylan looks at the teacher and says, “During computer, Mateo screamed that he hated the game.” The teacher then looks at Mateo and asks, “That’s controlling your emotions, huh, Mateo?” By reporting Mateo’s behavior, Noah helps reinforce the feeling rule that negative emotions should be controlled and monitored.

While students helped to uphold these feeling rules, they did not always respond as positively to this peer policing. One day when students are filing into class and taking off their winter clothes, many students who have finished putting their things away are mingling or finding other modes of distraction. One student, Maya, has already pulled out her bell work

booklet and started working. Austin says to her, “Great job, Maya, setting a great example.” I did not interpret sarcasm in this statement, but after hearing this, Maya puts away the bell work booklet and instead just sits quietly doing nothing at her desk. While the other students are struggling with transition and talking and allowing emotional expressions to occur, Maya quietly got straight to work. Austin recognized this emotion management and on-task behavior and praised it very similarly to how teachers used positive reinforcement to praise emotion management. Yet, unlike how students responded positively to teacher comments, Maya actually changed her behavior after hearing this. This shows that students were adept at understanding what feeling rules were important in what contexts. For example, this emotion management might curry favor with teachers, but it was not seen as important among peers. Maya stopping her on-task behavior demonstrates that following this feeling rule might even be negatively perceived by peers. This example connects to how students navigated deciding when to obey and when to resist feeling rules.

Navigating Resistance

Students almost always chose to outwardly obey feeling rules when they were enforced by teachers. I only once saw a student directly resist to a teacher about a feeling rule. It makes sense that students largely followed the feeling rules without resistance considering the outcome of the singular moment of defiance. This moment occurred while students had participated in a science experiment where they made containers to protect an egg from dropping to the ground from a set height. After the egg drop experiment, Austin seems disappointed that his egg broke. He has his head down on the table. The teacher comes over, points at his worksheet, and says to him, “come on.” Austin mumbles something that I can’t hear. The teacher says, “huh?” The

student repeats himself and says, “I’m a terrible estimator.” The teacher says, “you need to work.” In this scenario, the classroom teacher attempted to uphold the feeling rule of disallowing negative emotions through the direct command of “come on.” Austin tries to respond and then eventually articulates his negative emotion loud enough for the classroom teacher to hear. Yet this moment of emotional vulnerability of sharing his feeling of being a terrible estimator is only further silenced by the teacher who directly commands him to do his work. This situation showcases that directly resisting a feeling rule would not be received well by a teacher. Thus, students had to find other ways to navigate the emotional expectations of the classroom.

Although students rarely outwardly disobeyed feeling rules, it was more common for them to find subtle ways to resist. These resistances often seemed calculated, as if students understood they might be less negatively perceived for violating a feeling rule than for showing another weakness. After the catapult experiment, students had to fill out a worksheet surrounding the data gathered from the experiment:

Austin is not writing a reflection like the teacher has instructed. The teacher comes around and asks him to write one, but he just sits there. The teacher then prompts him by encouraging him to write about why some of his tests had negative numbers and others positive distance, but the student still doesn’t write anything. Next, the teacher tries to encourage him to use the vocabulary words “force,” “push,” or “pull,” but the student still just sits there and does not write anything. He eventually puts his head on his hands on the table and shuts down. I try to talk to him about it and he mumbles something about being “terrible at schoolwork.”

In this scenario, Austin appears to be showing his negative emotions in order to hide his perceived deficiencies about being “terrible at schoolwork.” Instead of trying to complete the worksheet, he instead decides to violate the feeling rule of managing negative emotions by not engaging and putting his head on his table.

Another example of Austin’s fears outweighing his obeying of feeling rules came when the music teacher was teaching a lesson about writing notes and rhythms:

The music teacher gives directions for students about writing a rhythm on their whiteboards. Instead of saying out loud like she has in the past, she says she is going to give them a challenge by clapping the rhythm instead. Austin shouts out, "I'm not doing it!" The music teacher says, "you have to try." Austin shakes his head and says, "uh uh." Then, after the music teacher claps the rhythm, he appears to realize it is easier than he expected. He participates and writes the rhythm on his whiteboard.

As referenced by Austin's previous comment about being "terrible at schoolwork," he seems to have some negative conceptions about his intellectual abilities. Here, he decides to defy the emotional expectation of not expressing negative emotions by shouting about not participating. It seems he decides not to participate because he is lacking confidence in his abilities to write down the rhythms correctly since once he realizes he can do it, he participates and no longer shouts. In both of these scenarios, Austin seems to be so concerned about how he will be perceived in regard to his academic abilities that he ends up making an emotional scene. These fears appeared to get in the way of his ability to manage his negative emotions. Unfortunately, this fear of negative perception might lead to further negative perception because by resisting the feeling rule of not showing negative emotions, this becomes a spectacle to the class that both the classroom teacher and music teacher attempted to address. Thus, although Austin found a way to resist the feeling rules, it may have actually served to further harm him.

Resistance, Compliance, and the Social Hierarchy

In addition to the example of Maya rejecting a feeling rule when policed by a peer, another way that students resisted the emotional expectations was through being more expressive about their emotions with other students. This expressiveness almost always came in the form of competitiveness. When they were not so closely controlled about being quiet and managing emotions, students argued and put each other down regularly. Although students found many different ways around the emotional repressiveness of the classroom, these resistances came

most often during computer special. This is likely due to the computer teacher taking a more passive role in teaching and allowing most of class to be free time for students to play certain prescribed games on their iPads. For example, while playing the burger stack game, Mateo, who is sitting in the back of the class, shouts, "I'm gonna win." Julia, who is in the front of the class, responds, "No, I'm gonna win." Mateo responds to this while pointing at her and saying, "No, you're gonna be last. You're gonna lose." Hearing students talk so loudly and openly about the material they were interacting with in class was uncommon. Mateo was able to voice his excitement by shouting his belief in himself. Julia engages in this discourse and Mateo responds by putting her down.

When students expressed their emotions, it often came in the form of putting others down. Another example of this came during computer special on a different day where students were playing a game where they had to estimate how many marbles were inside a jar.

Students seem to be frustrated with the marble guessing game because they must guess close enough before it will allow them to move onto the next jar of marbles. Mateo exclaims, "This stupid game is broken!" Another student, Noah, who sitting in front of him turns around and says, "No it's not." Then, Mateo begins waving his iPad around almost like he is pretending to slam it on the table, and says, "It doesn't make sense." Noah responds, "*You* don't make sense."

Here, Mateo expresses his negative emotions surrounding "this stupid game." Instead of policing this emotion, Noah uses it as an opportunity to engage and then put Mateo down. Through this expressive back and forth, Noah and Mateo jockeyed for a position within the social hierarchy. When students found opportunities to voice their emotions, they often engaged with each other in a discourse connected to putting each other down.

Although students' primary goal in interacting with each other was seemingly the social hierarchy, there were rare moments of compassion and care for one another. These moments showcase the ways in which students reclaimed the feeling rules of feeling compassion for others

in ways that supported each other, unlike many of the feeling rules prescribed by teachers, which served to make them into productive rather than feeling beings. For example, while the students are getting their snow gear on for lunch and recess, Stella is saving a spot in line for her friend by standing with her feet spread wide apart. She says, “My legs are already hurting. This spot is for Emily.” Eventually, Emily gets all her winter gear on and joins her friend in the middle of the line at the spot she saved. Stella showed her care for Emily by hurting her legs for her in order to save her a spot in line. This scenario demonstrates that students were not always just putting each other down but also actively looking out for each other. Although these actions align with the teacher-supported feeling rule to feel compassion for others, in this student-to-student context, it allows them to perform this feeling rule for each other rather than for a teacher.

Another example of students looking out for each other came when a student voiced empathy for another student. While students are filing into the classroom and unpacking, Mateo goes to grab his folder bucket from the bookshelf in the far back corner of the classroom. When he gets it back to his table, he tips it over, and it makes a loud “clap” as it falls on the table. He looks at the other student at his table and remarks, “look, Evelyn.” Evelyn responds, “oh no.” Dylan, who is sitting near the front of the class, turns around after hearing the folder bucket fall and says, “Don’t worry, that happens to me all the time.” This is another example of students upholding the classroom feeling rule of feeling compassion for others yet in order to support one another. The student voices empathy for Mateo, who knocked over the folder bucket. Although students seemed to be largely focused on putting each other down and navigating the social hierarchy of the classroom, there were also moments like these where students saved spots in line for their friends or voiced empathy for a fallen folder bucket.

Conclusion

Overall, emotions were primarily discouraged within the classroom. Feeling rules were established by both teachers and students to monitor emotions like excitement, frustration, worry, anger, and sadness. Feeling rules were also created to support emotional displays of compassion and repentance towards others. Teachers and students used different strategies to create, uphold, and navigate these emotional expectations. Teachers' methods ranged from threats, which were deemed unsupportive of students' overall emotional well-being, to showing empathy and teaching to self-regulate, which were argued to be supportive of students' general emotional states. When navigating feeling rules in the classroom, students were able to find moments of compliance and resistance, and they often performed emotion work as a way to jockey for position within the social hierarchy.

CONCLUSION

For this project, I set out to use a sociology of emotions framework to explore emotions within a classroom environment. Within this framework, I focused on feeling rules in order to understand how emotional expectations are socially constructed. I also focused on feeling rule reminders to examine how emotions are interactionally enforced. Finally, I set out to discuss emotion management as a strategy to navigate these socially constructed and interactionally enforced expectations. This sociological lens provided me with a valuable base to explore my research questions. These research questions surrounded what emotions were encouraged and discouraged within the classroom environment and how teachers and students established and navigate emotional expectations within the classroom. I explored these topics through a participant-observation method in a second grade class where I was able to observe a group of 13 students and five teachers.

In this conclusion chapter, I will outline answers to the research questions and key takeaways of the project. Furthermore, I will consider the implications of these findings for teaching. These implications are significant on both a personal and wider professional scale as I prepare to enter the teaching workforce next fall. Following these implications, I will review the main limitations of the project as well as note a number of continued questions that arose from the project. From these questions, I will highlight some potential areas for future research. I finish this section with a final personal reflection.

Key Takeaways

In answering my research questions about what emotions were encouraged and discouraged in the classroom, I found that for the most part, emotions were largely discouraged.

The prevalence of the two overarching feeling rules of “be quiet” and “control your body” connect to the general discouragement of emotions within the classroom environment. Through these two overarching feeling rules, students were expected not to show their emotions through vocalizations or body language. More specifically, these two overarching feeling rules were wielded to control emotions such as excitement, sadness, worry, frustration, and anger. Students were encouraged not to get excited and not to show negative emotions like sadness, worry, frustration, and anger. Although it was far more common for emotions to be discouraged, there were two emotions—compassion and repentance—that were encouraged in the classroom. The general discouragement of emotions came through with the overarching feeling rules of “be quiet” and “control your body.” Yet, at the same time, social emotions like compassion and repentance were praised.

The difference between the encouraged and discouraged emotions was significant. The two emotions that were encouraged—to feel repentance and to feel compassion—were based on a social context. Students were encouraged to show these emotions because they connected to others. These emotional expectations were upheld through teachers requesting that students feel sorry for causing harm upon peers and feel care for other individuals. These emotions were encouraged to be expressed outwardly. On the other hand, the discouraged emotions of excitement, sadness, worry, and frustration were inward and individualized. Feeling these emotions had nothing to do with other people but rather centered on the student’s personal feelings. This is significant because the social context was prioritized over individual students’ well-being. It shows that teachers deemed it more important for students to care about others over students caring for themselves.

In addition to exploring what emotions were encouraged and discouraged within the classroom, I set out to examine how teachers established and reinforced these emotional expectations. I found that teachers employed a variety of strategies as feeling rule reminders to work to establish and reinforce emotional expectations. I argued that threats, direct commands, and ignoring were least supportive of students' overall emotional well-being. I placed preventative reminders and classroom routines as neutral as they neither positively nor negatively impacted students' emotional state. On the more supportive of students' general emotional well-being end of the spectrum were positive reinforcement, explaining the why, showing empathy, and teaching to self-regulate.

I also explored students' navigations of emotional expectations through compliance and resistance. Students were not passive recipients of feeling rules; rather, students seemed to understand how to employ their emotions to serve their own goals. These motivations largely connected to jockeying for position within the social hierarchy. When students complied with feeling rules, they often wielded their compliance with the result of putting down other students. Other times, they used feeling rules to support their friends' social positions through compassion. Students also navigated resistance in order to achieve their own goals. Although students rarely protested the feeling rules directly to teachers, they found other ways to resist these emotional expectations. They capitalized on the opportunity to be more emotionally expressive during computer special since the computer teacher was not as consistent with upholding the feeling rules. They often used this time to voice their emotions and put other students down. Furthermore, students sometimes chose to resist feeling rules in order to mask their own self-perceived academic deficiencies. This allowed them to be seen for emotional deviance rather than their academic deviance.

Implications For Teaching

From these key takeaways, I have found three main implications for teaching. First, I recommend that teachers rethink the amount of control that is placed around excitement. The feeling rule of “don’t get excited” was one of the most surprising findings of this project. Even when teachers created intentionally engaging learning experiences, this emotional expectation still ruled the classroom. Seemingly, the reasoning behind the discouragement of excitement was an emphasis on productivity in the classroom. When explaining the why behind the feeling rules, teachers often explained that things would get done faster if it was quieter. Although it is understandable that teachers feel pressures surrounding getting things done, I believe that it would be a more positive experience for both teachers and students if there was more grace surrounding excitement. When creating activities that work to excite students about their learning, teachers should allow students to feel and show that excitement. I recommend that teachers find moments to slow down and allow positive emotional expression.

In addition to rethinking the role of excitement, I recommend that teachers critically examine the implications of supporting emotions that are social and discouraging emotions that are individual. These feeling rules teach students that it is important to care about others yet less important to take care of oneself. Teachers should work to cultivate both students’ individual and social well-being within the classroom. In order to truly support students on both a personal and social level, I believe that teachers must be more understanding of the individual emotions that arise, such as excitement, frustration, worry, anger, and sadness. Through becoming more accepting of the presentation of these emotions, students will be implicitly encouraged to care for themselves in addition to caring for others. Being more supportive of students’ individualized

emotions in addition to their more social emotions will allow them to grow their self-care and community care skills.

While I believe that teachers should work to expand their acceptance of students' emotional display, I also recognize that teachers need to provide students with the concrete skills to be able to manage their emotions when they arise. In the classroom I observed, emotions were highly stifled. I assume that this general discouragement of emotions would not be ultimately beneficial to students' well-being; I believe that students should feel safe to express their emotions at school. Yet, at the same time, one major goal of teachers is to prepare their students for what comes next after school. In the workforce, it is critically important that individuals be able to manage their emotions in order to maintain their employment. Thus, I do not advocate for an environment where there is full emotional expression without the encouragement to manage emotions. Instead, I think teachers should aim to develop both skills—ability to encourage emotional expression and also teach students how to manage their emotions when they arise. This will support students both in the present as they feel their emotions and, in the future, when they encounter situations that require their ability to manage their feelings.

One way that I believe teachers can work towards supporting both emotional expression and emotion management is through reframing how emotions and emotional expressions are addressed. One of the most surprising things I noticed was how much emotions came up but how little these were actually named as emotions. Besides the guidance counselor, I rarely heard teachers name emotions in the classroom. Instead, they almost always attempted to correct the behavior. Thus, instead of saying, “please contain your excitement,” the response was “nice, quiet hand.” Instead of “why are you worried?,” it was “let it go.” This was a pervasive theme throughout the observations that behavior was addressed rather than the emotions causing the

behavior. Instead of this tactic which penalizes the behavior without truly understanding what students are feeling, I recommend that teachers work to address the emotion first in order to address the behavior second. By first addressing the emotion, teachers can not only support students' feelings by naming, validating, and inquiring about them, they can also more explicitly teach about emotion management. By addressing the emotion and then addressing the behavior, students can learn what they need to do to manage themselves when certain emotions arise.

Limitations & Areas For Future Research

While this project has important takeaways and implications, it was ultimately limited in scope. While conducting this research, I realized that I was leaving with far more questions than answers. One major limitation of the project was the participant-observation method. This method allowed me to place my own judgments upon the feeling rules in the classroom, but it did not allow me to ask the individuals what emotions they were feeling. Furthermore, it made emotion management much harder to observe because successful emotion management most often appears as a lack of emotional display. Successful emotion management was rarely explicitly present except for lessons from the guidance counselor, so much of what is omitted from this study is understanding how students were performing emotion management. How hard are students working to control their emotions? Are some students working harder than others to manage their emotions?

Additionally, one of the largest questions that I wish this project could have answered connected to how the creation and enforcement of emotional expectations impact students. Ultimately, one large limitation of the project was that I had to assume the effect on students' emotional well-being in order to make recommendations for teaching. This is another reason for

future research to use a method that includes interviews. This would allow researchers to ask students about their feelings towards the feeling rule reminder strategies used by teachers. It is critical to hear student voices on this subject in order to fully understand the ramifications of feeling rules and how they are upheld.

Additionally, incorporating interviews could also be beneficial for understanding the motivations behind the creation and reinforcement of feeling rules by teachers. I would be curious to know if teachers even perceive themselves as creators and enforcers of feeling rules within the classroom. Furthermore, it is important to understand why teachers act the way they do surrounding emotions in the classroom. Although in my study, they often explained to students that the reasoning was productivity, it would be important to find out if teachers themselves believed the emphasis on productivity was the main motivator behind their general discouragement of emotions. It would also be instructive to hear teachers' thoughts on what they believe are the best ways to navigate emotional expressions within the classroom. Where do they believe the line is between supporting students' emotional expression and asking students to control their emotions? Through interviews, researchers would be able to answer many of the questions that this project was unable to explore.

Another methodological opportunity in this line of research would be content analysis. The introduction and expansion of social-emotional learning (SEL) within the past few decades into educational policy and teacher training provides ample room for academic inquiry. Many schools have teachers teach SEL to students as a part of their academic curriculum, and many districts use SEL materials in professional development for teachers. Researchers could examine the SEL materials that teachers are trained with as well as the SEL materials they teach to

students in order to understand how teachers are taught to talk about and address emotions in their classrooms.

Future research should also work to understand teachers' own emotion management and their own emotional expression. As I completed my own student teaching experience while writing this thesis, I began noticing my own feelings in the classroom. Although I largely worked to control my emotions and not allow them to surface, emotions were ever present in my work with the students. Whether it was feelings of frustration due to technological difficulties or students' challenging behaviors or feelings of compassion for students' situations or kind actions, the fact that I continually worked to not show these feelings is something I believe is worth studying. My personal anecdotal experience seems to briefly align with what I observed as teachers largely seemed like un-feeling beings, though I know that this perception comes from emotion management rather than a lack of feeling emotions. Although teachers are seemingly more adept at managing their emotions than students, it is still important to understand what emotions teachers are feeling and how they are working to control their emotions. This line of inquiry about teachers raises important questions such as, by not showing their emotions, are teachers not modeling to students how to manage their emotions? And does the lack of showing emotions from teachers make students who frequently express their emotions feel more isolated in their emotional experiences?

One area that I did not focus this project on was the ways that various identities influence emotional expectations. From such a small data set, it is challenging to make any confident claims in this area, but from my limited perspective, it seemed that female students were far less expressive of their emotions than male students. Although I did not necessarily see encouragement of this disparity from teachers, it aligns with prior research that suggests that men

are socialized to show power emotions like anger more than women (Brody, 1999; Garside and Klimes-Dougan, 2002; Harden, 2012). Future research with a larger sample could further explore this small trend I observed within my data. Additionally, my sample included only one student of color, so there is opportunity for future research to continue to examine how emotional expectations differ based on race. The first iteration of this project planned to explore how social class influenced feeling rules within the classroom. Unlike gender or race, there is far less research exploring students' social class backgrounds in relation to these emotional topics. Future research should examine the impact that social class has on the ways feeling rules are created and navigated. Furthermore, future research could also explore how teachers' identities impact how they create, navigate, and enforce feeling rules with their students.

A final area that future research could explore would be how school type and school culture impacts the creation and navigation of feeling rules. After presenting my preliminary findings at the Colby Liberal Arts Symposium (CLAS), one of my professors reached out to me and said she was thinking about how my research would have looked different at her daughter's Montessori school. She said that there is a heavy focus on emotional learning and how teachers talk to students as a part of the school's philosophy. It makes sense that my research at a public school would look different than a private Montessori school. School type and school culture are other areas with strong connections to social class. Future research should examine the myriad ways that emotional expectations are created and navigated through social class—from the explicit social class backgrounds of students to the more nuanced ways that social class shows up in school type and the school culture surrounding emotions.

Final Reflection

I set out on this project to explore how emotions arise in the classroom. Although I expected emotions to play a role within schooling, I was surprised how emotions were simultaneously everywhere and nowhere. Emotions often came up in the classroom, but teachers worked extremely hard to make the classroom an un-feeling space. Most surprisingly, teachers worked to control emotions even when they were positive and likely intended, such as when introducing an engaging learning activity, students would express their excitement, and the teachers would discourage this display. It is rather remarkable to me that this classroom functioned as a space where emotions were somehow everywhere and nowhere at the same time.

As I step out of the role of researcher and into the role of teacher as I leave college and enter my own middle school English Language Arts classroom, this project will inform how I work to establish emotional expectations in my own classroom. I want to make sure not to treat emotions as purely individual and internal. Rather, I hope to uncover their social nature and understand myself (as the teacher) as a large contributor to the emotional atmosphere of my classroom. I hope to use more positive feeling rule reminder strategies, such as showing empathy and concretely teaching my students skills to self-regulate. I want to slow down and allow students to feel things, especially excitement for learning.

I truly believe in the epigraph of this project— that people remember how you made them feel. My singular memory from kindergarten was the isolation of crying and being told it was not appropriate. This is my only recollection of my kindergarten teacher. Although the prospect of being remembered for such a simple comment as a teacher is terrifying, I also believe this holds a lot of promise and possibility. Teachers can help co-create an environment with their students where emotions are supported and validated. They can be remembered for how they

made their students feel, for validating their emotional expressions ranging from their nice, quiet hands all the way to their tears.

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