PURPOSEFUL TALK: CONCEPTUALIZING NARRATIVE WRITING CONFERENCE GENRES AND HOW THEY SHAPE TEACHER-STUDENT INTERACTIONS IN PRIMARY-GRADE CLASSROOMS

By

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation is composed of an introduction and two journal-length manuscripts. Both manuscripts focus on the same descriptive case study of teacher-student narrative writing conference enactment in two primary-grade settings, which addressed the following research questions: (1) When conducting narrative writing conferences with primary-aged students, what conference genres do the experienced writing teachers in case study classrooms draw upon across the writing process in order to guide conversational interaction so as to perform specific work for specific instructional purposes? and (2) How, in general, does talk in case study classrooms operate within each identified conference genre in order to support conference purpose? The first manuscript is written for researchers. It introduces the concept of a *conference genre*, and builds a rationale for its use. Furthermore, it defines and characterizes four potential conference genres utilized by study participants when composing narrative text. The second manuscript is written for teachers, literacy specialists, and teacher educators. It emphases the practical implications of conference genre usage and illustrates their ability to support *purposeful talk* in primary-grade writing classrooms. Abstracts for each manuscript are given below:

Manuscript 1: A common practice in today's primary-grade classrooms, teacher-student writing conferences are considered by accomplished writing teachers and process writing advocates to be a vital component of instruction. Moreover, it is suggested that how teachers and students interact while conferring is of critical importance to their utility as an educational tool. Building an understanding of the discourse that ensues during a writing conference, those

purposes that such talk serves overall, and the significance of their pedagogical appropriateness, then, is essential. Typical examinations of the discourse structures used by conference participants, on their own, however, are not enough. In doing so researchers risk isolating the function of such talk to how it operates within a particular moment in a writing conference, while ignoring the greater function such talk might play. Instead, this article offers an alternative framework—the *conference genre*—that more fully accounts for purpose when examining writing conference talk. Four potential conference genres used to structure conference talk toward particular instructional goals during the production of narrative text in two primary-grade case study settings are defined and characterized; each named according to the type of work it immersed students and teachers in (conferencing as *verbal rehearsal*, conferencing as *criterion specific* collaboration, conferencing as *transcription* activity, and conferencing as *find-and-fix* correction). Implications for research and practice are also discussed.

Manuscript 2: When making determinations about how to teach students educators often give thought to the content of their talk. However, the ways in which they deliver that content—or the talk itself—receives considerably less attention. Yet how talk functions is of critical importance to the success of the teacher-student writing conference as a pedagogical tool in primary-grade settings. In this article, two illustrative narrative writing conference interactions are shared from one high-functioning first-grade writing classroom that showcase how teacher talk, and especially teacher talk in relation to overall conference purpose, greatly shaped the nature of work young children were able to accomplish within a particular conference. Recommendations for implementing *purposeful talk* when conducting writing conferences in primary-grade classrooms are also offered.

This dissertation is dedicated to my children, Madeline and Joshua, who have provided fresh perspective on what being a teacher of young children truly entails. To my husband, Gregory, without whose support this journey would not have been possible. And to my advisor and friend, Janine Certo, who provided endless hours of encouragement and guidance throughout this process.

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INTRODUCTION

> *At its best, writing has helped transform the world. Revolutions have been started by it. Oppression has been toppled by it. And it has enlightened the human condition (National Commission on Writing for America's Families, Schools, and Colleges, 2003, p. 10).*

Writing is an essential skill for success. A number of studies and reports suggest that students who do not learn to write well are at great disadvantage both in school and in life (e.g., National Commission on Writing for America's Families, Schools, and Colleges, 2003, 2004, 2008). Given its significance, results from the 2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) are alarming, as they suggest that by the time American youth reach late adolescence, over 70% are operating on a basic or below basic writing level and do not display adequate writing skill to meet classroom or future career demands (National Center for Education Statistics, 2012). Variability in teacher ability and teaching practice are two prominent factors contributing to discrepancies in student achievement (e.g., Rockoff, 2004; Wright, Horn, & Sanders, 1997); implying that teachers' pedagogical writing practices and the ways in which they are enacted across classroom settings, play a significant role in students' writing development. While examining teacher practice in upper grade classrooms can afford some insight, providing effective writing instruction to students in the early grades can help alleviate many later writing problems (Graham & Harris, 2002). In order, then, to address such problems at their onset, a focus on primary-grade writing instruction is essential.

In the hope, then, of not only building understanding of primary-grade writing practice, but to improve upon it in the future, I have spent the last few years studying and promoting one key writing practice in particular, the teacher-student writing conference. Teacher-student

writing conferences—herein referred to simply as writing conferences or conferences—are often described in teacher practitioner literature as involving brief one-to-one conversations in which students and teachers come together to confer on what the student is "doing today as a writer" (e.g., Anderson, 2000; Calkins, 1994; Calkins, Hartman, & White, 2005; Graves, 1983; Murray, 1968, 1979). More specifically, in such conferences students and teachers are encouraged to sit beside one another to share, discuss, revise, or evaluate a piece of student writing or an idea for writing. Given the diverse needs of primary-aged children, the possibility afforded by writing conferences to spend time in one-on-one conversations tailored to students' unique writing needs, seems an instructional opportunity full of promise. Moreover, like Anderson, I agree that in regard to primary-grade writing instruction, "[w]riting conferences aren't the icing on the cake; they are the cake" (2000, p. 3). Yet, meeting individually with students takes time, and in today's test-driven culture time is a commodity teachers cannot afford to squander. Therefore, conferencing practice must be purposeful and consciously enacted. I refer to such conference talk as *purposeful talk*, a notion examined and advocated for in this dissertation research.

Before introducing the research project this dissertation is based on, though, I first turn to a review of the larger literature on writing conference enactment in classroom settings in order to better contextualize the study and its results. Here, after a brief examination of the historical foundation for writing conference use in educational settings, I discuss research relating to conference enactment in elementary, secondary, and post-secondary contexts conducted over the past four decades. Given their origin and longer history of use in colleges and universities, it comes as little surprise that much of the empirical knowledge surrounding such conferences stems from research conducted in undergraduate composition classrooms with post-secondary populations. While research conducted with older students and young adults may not directly

reflect conference enactment in primary-grade classrooms, I include it here due to the dearth of research on writing conferences in elementary settings and the possible insights such work with older students affords. This literature has been organized around two prevalent themes: (1) studies that have examined writing conference enactment and concluded that these interactions mirror traditional teacher-dominated classroom discourse patterns; and (2) studies that have attempted to complicate this finding somewhat by exploring contextual factors that may possibly be of relevance to conference enactment at various grade levels.

Writing Conference Enactment: A Review of Research

Historical Background

Despite their current popularity in primary-grade classrooms (Cutler & Graham, 2008), writing conferences are rooted in approaches involving adult writers both within and outside educational contexts. The practice of instructors conferring one-to-one with students to discuss revision possibilities for a written draft prior to final submission, has been utilized in college composition classrooms since the late 1800s as a means for combating overcrowded lecture halls and a more diverse student population with varying needs (Lerner, 2005). As the student body continued to grow and diversify in the 1960's, writing conferences were reintroduced into academia with a reimagined and reduced role for the composition instructor. A role in which the instructor was expected to act less as a "teacher" and more a "mirror for students to see *their* intent, *their* needs, *their* problems" (Murray, 1979 as cited in Lerner, 2005, p. 201). Donald Murray is often credited as one of the most influential voices to champion such student-led conferences during this time; his *response theory of teaching* (Murray, 1968), which encouraged teachers to first elicit student writers' responses to their own writing before offering feedback or evaluation, remains as one of the earliest and most elaborated theories on the subject (Newkirk,

1995). Furthermore, during the 1970s and 80s, when researchers were interested in studying the practices of expert writers and investigating the processes they used to compose text, it was noted that professional writers often conversed with other writers and their publishers throughout the process of composing their work as a means to springboard ideas and seek intermediate feedback (Calkins, Hartman, & White, 2005).

Since the 1980s, writing conference pedagogy has slowly made its way into elementary contexts, augmenting newly adopted process writing methodologies and, in principle, bringing more authentic writing practice into the classroom as it often supplemented or replaced more traditional forms of teacher-led instruction and written response. Hawkins and Razali (2012) explained that much of this expansion was born from two notable descriptive studies (Calkins, 1994; Graves, 1983) of the process writing/writing workshop model of instruction conducted with elementary student populations. From there, a strong process writing/writing workshop movement led by the National Writing Project and members of Teachers College (primarily Lucy Calkins and her research team)—a movement within which writing conferences played an essential role—blossomed through extensive outreach efforts and the publishing of a number of professional practitioner books.

Writing Conference Talk: Traditional Classroom Discourse, New Packaging

Writing conferences as portrayed in much of the professional practitioner literature stand in stark contrast to traditional school culture's characterization of teacher practitioners as architects and regulators of classroom discourse (Jackson, 1990). For instance, in traditional writing instruction teachers are seen as transmitters of knowledge whose role it is to lecture on the tenants of what counts as "good" writing and to evaluate the final written product against such criteria (Hawkins & Razali, 2012; Jackson, 1990). On the contrary, within the context of a

writing conference teachers are instead depicted as facilitators who help scaffold student learning through co-discovering the writing process with the student. Case in point, the role of the elementary writing teacher, as specified by Graves (1983), is to "follow the child, let the child talk, let the child understand that what the child knows is primary" (p. 101). Likewise, in this context students can no longer take on the role of passive beings waiting for their teachers to impart knowledge upon them. Instead they must take ownership of their own ideas, advocate for their own learning, express their own desires, and converse with their teachers as dialogic partners. As such, writing conferences are described by their advocates as embodying an innovative, student-centered process approach.

Yet, findings from research examining writing conference discourse have, in general, concluded that, more often than not, such interactions were not student-controlled, process-oriented conversations between a writer and a reader. Instead, writing conferences functioned largely as sites for delivering conventional teacher-driven instruction via traditional discourse patterns packaged into a new individualized format. For instance, one analysis of conference discourse in post-secondary composition classrooms demonstrated that while writing conferences had the potential to draw on co-occurring pairs of utterances as most authentic conversation does (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973), teachers often employed a specialized triadic pattern of turn-taking more indicative of that used in classroom recitation (Freedman & Katz, 1987). This triadic dialogue pattern, known as *Initiate-Response-Evaluate* or *IRE* (Cazden, 2001; Mehan, 1979), involved speakers in a three-part move. First, teachers initiated an interaction with students, often through the use of questions. Next, students responded to teachers, typically by providing answers to teachers' questions. And lastly, teachers evaluated students' responses, signaling a wrong answer or providing praise for a correct one before moving on to a new

initiating move.

Considerable teacher dominance and reversion to traditional classroom discourse patterns during conferencing were found in elementary (Daiute et al., 1993; McKeaney, 2009; Morse, 1994; Ulichny & Watson-Gegeo, 1989), secondary (Michaels, 1987; Morse, 1994), and post-secondary (Black, 1998; Haneda, 2004; Jacob, 1982; Jacobs & Karliner, 1977; Koshik, 2002a, 2002b; Park, 2012; Wong, 1988) contexts when teachers took on their customary role of "primary-knower"—as portrayed by Berry (1981)—and interacted with students utilizing chiefly closed, known-answer questions and directives, both thought by some to be unfavorable to the type of facilitative relationship writing conferences theoretically strive to achieve (Morse, 1994). For example, Daiute et al. (1993) observed, in an analysis of participant involvement and turn-taking practices during 32 writing conferences in one third grade classroom, that the teacher dominated talk during conferences, speaking, on average, almost four times more than students in each interaction. Likewise, in an analysis of the turn-taking practices, participant involvement, and communicative forms of talk utilized in six undergraduate composition courses, Jacob (1982) found that, in most instances, communication during writing conferences was unilateral, from instructor to student, and that most instructors greatly shaped and directed the conversation. This finding led him to contend that "the right interaction does not take place simply by the fact that instructor and student sit down on a one-to-one basis. The instructor must be willing to listen, the student willing to talk—and years of schooling and conditioning often prevent both teacher from listening and the student from talking" (p. V). Moreover, based on a serial token analysis of 20 conferences and an in-depth linguistic analysis of six focal conferences, Ulichny and Watson-Gegeo (1989) described the dialogue occurring during writing conferences in two sixth-grade classrooms as resembling monologic recitations by the teacher punctuated with short

fill-in-the-blank answers by the student during brief "find-and-fix" correction routines. More recently, McKeaney (2009) reached similar conclusions in an analysis of the type and dialogic potential of questions used during writing conferences occurring in three fifth grade classrooms; finding that conference talk in these contexts was highly directive and that conference interactions between teachers and students were predominantly structured in such a manner as to position teachers in a traditional authoritative role in which they both ask and hold answers to questions.

Research, such as that cited above, presents an image of conference talk (both past and present) as a simple repackaging of typical—and perhaps even antiquated—teacher-student discourse patterns, unwavering regardless of situation or participant. However, much of the literature on writing conferences in which frequent use of traditional classroom discourse patterns and conventional teacher/student roles were observed, explicitly involved a completed text that was, in fact, being revised/edited during the interaction. It is possible, then, that when conducting writing conferences, teachers purposefully choose to don a more authoritative role during revising and editing phases of the writing process, yet elect to structure talk in an entirely different manner during preceding phases. In the following section, I discuss two studies that suggest this possibility. I also review several additional studies whose findings suggest that writing conference enactment is heavily molded—to use Sperling's (1990) words—"by the players and by the game" (p. 306).

Writing Conference Talk: Complicated Interactions with Multiple Possibilities

In an investigation of the role that agency played in the enactment of 10 writing conferences between one instructor and seven undergraduate students, Strauss and Xiang (2006) noted that the ratio of teacher-student talk during earlier planning and drafting conferences

exhibited a well-balanced distribution, lending some empirical evidence to the possible importance of conference purpose in determining appropriate construction for a conference. This notion was further touted by Sperling (1990, 1991) in her study of 34 conference interactions between one teacher and six students in one ninth-grade classroom. She found that interaction patterns often varied not only for different students, but also for the same student, as the type of writing conference, its purpose, or its place in the sequence of written tasks varied. In other words, conference talk varied over time and task and under different conference conditions, implying that conferencing is a fluctuating and evolving process for those participants involved.

Several studies also suggest the influential power of the conversational participants, themselves, and the larger context within which writing conferences are conducted in shaping the enactment of a particular conference. For example, in a critical analysis of the discourse occurring in fourteen writing conferences between seven university instructors and their first-year undergraduate students, Black (1998) found that conference discourse varied based on teachers' and students' gender and cultural associations. Freedman and Sperling (1985), too, purported that students' cultural associations seemed to impact conference discourse in their fine-grained linguistic analysis of conference talk between one instructor and four undergraduate students. They also maintained that students' writing ability (or, perhaps, more likely perceived ability) appeared influential, as higher-achieving writers were more likely to elicit praise, more likely to receive elaborate invitations to return for future conferences, and less likely to initiate topics that alienated their teacher. In another detailed linguistic analysis of conference talk between four university instructors and eight undergraduate students enrolled in an ESL composition course, Patthey-Chavez and Ferris (1997) found that conferences with high-achieving writers were longer (in both time elapsed and number of words), had more even

distributions of talk, and were generally less directive and more likely to elicit students' opinions and ideas then conferences with low-achieving writers. Glasswell, Parr, and McNaughton (2003) drew similar conclusions in their quantitative linguistic analysis of talk transpiring in 108 conference interactions between nine first-, fifth-, and eighth-grade teachers and 54 students; observing that while teachers spent about the same amount of time in writing conferences with low-achieving and high-achieving writers, when interacting with low-achieving writers teachers generally allowed themselves to be interrupted more often and for longer, placed the majority of emphasis on grammar and mechanics, and promoted low-achieving writers' dependence on teachers by taking responsibility for their actions. McCarthey (1994) added, in her analysis of data collected during a comparative case study of four upper elementary students' internalization of writing conference talk, that students varied in the kind and quality of their writing conference interactions with the teacher and in what they subsequently internalized based largely on the level of shared meaning, or intersubjectivity, held between both participants during the conference. Similarly, in a self-study of 64 writing conferences with four first-grade students, Nickel (Nickel, Power, & Hubbard, 2001) found that a lack of intersubjectivity between herself and her students led them to disengage from the conference and resort to backchannel remarks (e.g., uh-ha, okay) or silence. Furthermore, in a comparative case study of two second grade teachers' writing conference enactments across 274 conferences with 56 students, Schltz (2012) found that teachers' prior knowledge and dispositions concerning writing and writing instruction, along with those curricular materials they drew upon, showed potential to influence conference practice in distinct ways.

Thus, while earlier cited research examining conference discourse paints a rather consistent, and some may contend undesirable, portrait of writing conference enactment, it is

possible that this uniform image may not adequately capture conference enactment in a given moment, with a specific teacher-student dyad, in a particular classroom; implying, instead, that actual conference enactment is far more complicated than this straightforward characterization suggests. Furthermore, whereas previous conference research has mostly focused on postsecondary settings, there is far less research at the elementary levels. For those few studies occurring with children in school settings, the research is unclear about how and why conference enactment might vary across participant, context, or purpose. Moreover, there is no empirical research that tracks child-teacher conference talk over time across the writing process. Therefore, more work is needed to understand the discourse structures of writing conference talk in elementary settings, those purposes that such talk serves overall, and the significance of their pedagogical appropriateness. This dissertation endeavors to do just that.

Overview of the Dissertation

This dissertation adopts an alternative format to report study results. As such, it is comprised of two journal-length manuscripts in place of the more traditional five-chapters commonly used. Both manuscripts stem from the same research project, a descriptive case study of teacher-student narrative writing conference enactment in two primary-grade settings, but differ as to their aim and intended audience. The first manuscript is written for researchers. Drawing on the format for a traditional report of research, it introduces the concept of a *conference genre* and builds a rationale for its use. Furthermore, it defines and characterizes four potential conference genres used to structure conference talk toward particular instructional goals during the production of narrative text in two primary-grade case study settings; each named according to the type of work it immersed students and teachers in (conferencing as *verbal rehearsal*, conferencing as *criterion specific* collaboration, conferencing as *transcription* activity,

and conferencing as *find-and-fix* correction). Implications for research and practice are also discussed. The second manuscript is written for teachers, literacy specialists, and teacher educators. It emphases the practical implications of conference genre usage and illustrates their ability to support *purposeful talk* in primary-grade writing classrooms. Recommendations for implementing such talk when conducting writing conferences are also offered.

The larger research project in which both manuscripts are based, addressed the following questions: (1) When conducting narrative writing conferences with primary-aged students, what conference genres do the experienced writing teachers in case study classrooms draw upon across the writing process in order to guide conversational interaction so as to perform specific work for specific instructional purposes? and (2) How, in general, does talk in case study classrooms operate within each identified conference genre in order to support conference purpose? In order to answer these questions a fine-grain linguistic analysis of the discourse occurring in 88 writing conferences collected during separate, but co-occurring units of instruction on personal narrative in two primary-grade case study classrooms (one kindergarten, one first grade) was performed. (Classroom participant demographics are included in Appendix A and B, and the coding scheme used, in part, for this analysis can be viewed in Appendix C.)

Although study of amateur practice can be telling in its own way, I strove to focus on expert practice in this research. Consequently, these two research sites were chosen because, in my judgment, they showcased experienced writing teachers engaged in thoughtful writing practice with their students. An opinion gathered while working closely with these teachers in my capacity as a university supervisor to intern teachers placed in their care the previous year, and shared by the school principal and district literacy specialist. Selection of these classrooms, then, was both purposeful and convenient. The attention to personal narrative, however, was

unintentional. While I would have liked to include writing conferences conducted with participants crafting text in a variety of genres (e.g., informational text, exposition, poetry, etc.), the timing of data collection (October and November) did not allow for this. Nevertheless, given its strong presence in primary-grade curriculum (e.g., Calkins, 2003; Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2010), exploration into writing conference enactment during narrative text production merits such focus in this initial work.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Kindergarten Student Participant Demographic Information

Table 1

Kindergarten Student Participant Demographic Information

Student Pseudonym	Gender (M/F)	Cultural Identification	Teacher Classification of Student Writing Ability Relative to Peers
Alex	M	White	Struggling Writer
Amy	F	White	Average Writer
Andre	M	White	Struggling Writer
Audrey	F	Biracial (White/Black)	Average Writer
Daniel	M	White	Struggling Writer
David	M	White	Average Writer
Emma	F	White	Average Writer
Erin	F	White	Average Writer
Ian	M	White	Average Writer
John	M	White	Average Writer
Joshua	M	White	Average Writer
Kimberly	F	White	Average Writer
Madeline	F	White	Advanced Writer
Mark	M	White	Average Writer
McKenzie	F	White	Average Writer
Morgan	F	White	Average Writer
Ryan	M	White	Average Writer
Samuel	M	White	Average Writer
Tate	M	White	Average Writer

APPENDIX B

First Grade Student Participant Demographic Information

Table 2

First Grade Student Participant Demographic Information

Student Pseudonym	Gender (M/F)	Cultural Identification	Teacher Classification of Student Writing Ability Relative to Peers
Anabelle	F	White	Advanced Writer
Anthony	M	White	Struggling Writer
Bianca	F	White	Average Writer
Brady	M	White	Average Writer
Camden	M	White	Struggling Writer
Chad	M	White	Average Writer
Courtney	F	White	Average Writer
Edward	M	White	Average Writer
Emily	F	White	Average Writer
Evan	M	White	Struggling Writer
Grace	F	White	Struggling Writer
Grant	M	White	Struggling Writer
Isabella	F	White	Average Writer
Kennedy	F	White	Average Writer
Lawrence	M	White	Struggling Writer
Lucy	F	White	Average Writer
Magnus	M	White	Average Writer
Matt	M	White	Average Writer
Nicolas	M	White	Advanced Writer
Piper	F	White	Average Writer
Rejanee	F	Black	Average Writer
Scott	M	White	Average Writer
Stacey	F	White	Average Writer

APPENDIX C

Writing Conference Discourse Coding Scheme

Table 3

Writing Conference Discourse Coding Scheme

Category	Code	Description	References
Patterns of Participant Interaction—Measures of Speaker Involvement	% Teacher words spoken/writing conference	Calculation: Sum of words spoken by the teacher during a particular writing conference / total words spoken.	--
	% student words spoken/writing conference	Calculation: Sum of words spoken by the student during a particular writing conference – teacher requested readings of text / total words spoken.	--
	Avg. words/teacher utterance/writing conference	Calculation: Teacher total # of words spoken / teacher total # of conversational turns.	--
	Avg. words/student utterance/writing conference	Calculation: Student total # of words spoken – teacher requested readings of text / student total # of conversational turns.	--
Patterns of Participant Interaction—Conversational Turn-Taking	Pairs of Utterances (Q-A, R-G, S-R)	Code when teacher-student dialogue patterns most closely represent conversational pairs of utterances. *(Examples: Question-Answer, Request-Grant, Statement-Response)*	Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974
	Triadic dialogue (IRE, IRF)	Code when IRE/IRF dialogue patterns are used	Mehan, 1979; Cazden, 2001
	Closed chaining (Chaining-C)	Code when triadic dialogue includes use of follow-up moves in third turn to further probe student response as opposed to initiate new topics, and sequence concludes with teacher feedback/evaluation.	Wells, 1999

Table 3 (cont'd)

Category	Code	Description	References
	Open chaining (Chaining-O)	Code when triadic dialogue includes use of follow-up moves in third turn to further probe student response as opposed to initiate new topics, and teacher feedback/evaluation is absent from final move of sequence.	Wells, 1999
Communicative Forms of Teacher Talk	Open authentic initial questions (Q/AQ-O)	Open questions are those that have multiple acceptable answers and often overtly seek a student's opinion. Authentic questions are moments when the teacher is genuinely unsure of the answer to his question. Code when open authentic questions occur in a teacher initiating turn.	Boyd & Markarian, 2013 (see Cazden, 2001; Chinn et al., 2001; Nystrand et al., 1997)
	Closed authentic initial questions (Q/AQ-C)	Closed questions technically seek a succinct, specific response. Authentic questions are moments when the teacher is genuinely unsure of the answer to his question. Code when closed authentic questions occur in a teacher initiating turn.	Boyd & Markarian, 2013 (see Cazden, 2001; Chinn et al., 2001; Nystrand et al., 1997)
	Open authentic contingent questions (Q/CQ-O)	Open questions are those that have multiple acceptable answers and often overtly seek a student's opinion. Authentic questions are moments when the teacher is genuinely unsure of the answer to his question. Contingent questions are those that explicitly build on contributions made within the preceding utterance(s) and function as follow-up questions to build upon and probe student response. Code when open authentic questions occur in a teacher follow-up third turn.	Boyd & Rubin, 2006

Table 3 (cont'd)

Category	Code	Description	References
	Closed authentic contingent questions (Q/CQ-C)	Closed questions technically seek a succinct, specific response. Authentic questions are moments when the teacher is genuinely unsure of the answer to his question. Contingent questions are those that explicitly build on contributions made within the preceding utterance(s) and function as follow-up questions to build upon and probe student response. Code when closed authentic questions occur in a teacher follow-up third turn.	Boyd & Rubin, 2006
	Display questions (Q/DQ)	Display questions are ones to which the teacher already knows the answer and is apparently seeking to evaluate student understanding. Code when such questions appear in teacher utterances.	Boyd & Markarian, 2013 (see Cazden, 2001; Chinn et al., 2001; Nystrand et al., 1997)
	Revoicings (R)	Revoicing of student language occurs when a teacher echoes either directly or indirectly what a student has offered in the previous turn of talk. Code when such statements appear in teacher utterances.	Boyd & Markarian, 2013 (see Cazden, 2001; Chinn et al., 2001; Nystrand et al., 1997)
	Didactics statements (DS)	Didactic statements are teacher talk designed to deliver direct instruction on a particular topic, often part of school-sanctioned knowledge. Code when such statements appear in teacher utterances.	Boyd & Markarian, 2013 (see Cazden, 2001; Chinn et al., 2001; Nystrand et al., 1997)

Table 3 (cont'd)

Category	Code	Description	References
	Directives to read text (D/DRT)	Directives are statements used by teachers to direct students to perform a certain classroom task. This code specifically applies to directives for students to read their text aloud to the teacher. Code when such statements appear in teacher utterances.	Boyd & Markarian, 2013 (see Cazden, 2001; Chinn et al., 2001; Nystrand, 1997)
	Direct statement directives (D/DSD)	Directives are statements used by teachers to direct students to perform a certain classroom task. Direct statement directives do so in an overt manner. Examples: "Add a period there.", "Go ahead and write that." Code when such statements appear in teacher utterances.	Boyd & Markarian, 2013 (see Cazden, 2001; Chinn et al., 2001; Nystrand, 1997); Tracy, 2002
	Prompts for student response directives (D/PD)	Prompts provide students with a hint in order that they might better comply with a teacher directive or answer a teacher display question. Examples: "/F/ /F//U//N/", "There's a letter chunk at the beginning of that word." Code when such statements appear in teacher utterances.	Boyd & Markarian, 2013 (see Cazden, 2001; Chinn et al., 2001; Nystrand, 1997); Tracy, 2002
	Query directives (D/QD)	Query directives offer suggestions that students might chose to take up in their text or strategies students might embrace in order to complete a writing task. Code when such statements appear in teacher utterances.	Boyd & Markarian, 2013 (see Cazden, 2001; Chinn et al., 2001; Nystrand, 1997); Tracy, 2002
	Read alouds (RA)	Code when the text of students' papers is read aloud by the teacher.	Van Horne, 2011

Table 3 (cont'd)

Category	Code	Description	References
	Feedback—Evaluation of student responses (F/ESR)	Includes evaluative feedback given by teachers in direct response to a students' preceding turn of talk. Code when such statements appear in teacher utterances.	Boyd & Markarian, 2013 (see Cazden, 2001; Chinn et al., 2001; ; Nystrand et al., 1997)
	Feedback—Evaluation of student text (F/EST)	Includes evaluative feedback given by a teachers in direct response to a students' text. Code when such statements appear in teacher utterances.	Boyd & Markarian, 2013 (see Cazden, 2001; Chinn et al., 2001; ; Nystrand et al., 1997)
	Explications (E)	Respond to students' challenges of teacher statement with a counter-argument. Code when such statements appear in teacher utterances.	Boyd & Markarian, 2013 (see Cazden, 2001; Chinn et al., 2001; ; Nystrand et al., 1997)
Communicative Forms of Student Talk	Succinct responses (SR)	Non-verbal (e.g., nods of the head), murmurs (e.g., uh-ha, phonetic sounds, alphabet letter names), one-word, or short phrases frequently (but not exclusively) directly responding to a closed question. Code when such responses appear in student utterances.	Boyd & Markarian, 2013 (see Cazden, 2001; Chinn et al., 2001; Nystrand, 1997)

Table 3 (cont'd)

Category	Code	Description	References
	Elaborated responses (ER)	Responses that provide more information than is typically required by a closed question. These are most often given in the form of a sentence or multiple sentences. Code when such responses appear in student utterances.	Boyd & Markarian, 2013 (see Cazden, 2001; Chinn et al., 2001; Nystrand, 1997)
	Responding by adding text (RAT)	Non-verbal responses to teachers' directives or questions that involve adding something to text. Code when such responses appear in student utterances.	--
	Teacher requested read alouds (TRRA)	Students read aloud their text in direct response to teachers' directives to do so. Code when such responses appear in student utterances.	Van Horne, 2011
	Willingness to challenge teacher (WCT)	Student talk that challenges the veracity of what the teacher has said. Code when such statement appear in student utterances.	Boyd & Markarian, 2013 (see Cazden, 2001; Chinn et al., 2001; Nystrand, 1997)
	Authentic student questions (ASQ)	Student-generated questions assume students are asking questions because they want to know the answer (so all are authentic questions). Code when such questions appear in student utterances.	Boyd & Markarian, 2013 (see Cazden, 2001; Chinn et al., 2001; Nystrand, 1997)

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MANUSCRIPT 1: PURPOSEFUL TALK: A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF FOUR NARRATIVE WRITING CONFERENCE GENRES AND HOW THEY SHAPE TEACHER-STUDENT INTERACTIONS IN PRIMARY-GRADE CLASSROOMS

Abstract

A common practice in today's primary-grade classrooms, teacher-student writing conferences are considered by accomplished writing teachers and process writing advocates to be a vital component of instruction. Moreover, it is suggested that how teachers and students interact while conferring is of critical importance to their utility as an educational tool. Building an understanding of the discourse that ensues during a writing conference, those purposes that such talk serves overall, and the significance of their pedagogical appropriateness, then, is essential. Typical examinations of the discourse structures used by conference participants, on their own, however, are not enough. In doing so researchers risk isolating the function of such talk to how it operates within a particular moment in a writing conference, while ignoring the greater function such talk might play. Instead, this article offers an alternative framework—the *conference genre*—that more fully accounts for purpose when examining writing conference talk. Four potential conference genres used to structure conference talk toward particular instructional goals during the production of narrative text in two primary-grade case study settings are defined and characterized; each named according to the type of work it immersed students and teachers in (conferencing as *verbal rehearsal*, conferencing as *criterion specific* collaboration, conferencing as *transcription* activity, and conferencing as *find-and-fix* correction). Implications for research and practice are also discussed.

Introduction

> *[I]n the classrooms of some teachers, children grow in leaps and bounds, while in the classrooms of other teachers, children make only modest gains. I am utterly convinced that the difference has everything to do with the two teachers' abilities to confer (Calkins, Hartman, & White, 2005, p. 4).*

The teacher-student writing conference. A seemingly simple concept, it is often described in teacher practitioner literature as involving brief one-to-one conversations in which students and teachers come together to confer on what the student is "doing today as a writer" (e.g., Anderson, 2000; Calkins 1994; Graves, 1983; Murray, 1968). More specifically, in teacher-student writing conferences—herein referred to simply as writing conferences or conferences—students and teachers are encouraged to sit beside one another to share, discuss, revise, or evaluate a piece of student writing or an idea for writing. Moreover, according to their promoters, conferences ideally involve a dialogic conversation in which both parties are immersed in the co-construction of ideas and meaning. The main purpose of such a practice, at least in theory, is to assist students in developing into critical readers of their own writing, while also facilitating their journey in becoming more reflective of, more in control of, and more independent in their own writing process (Calkins, Hartman, & White, 2005). A common practice in today's primary classrooms (Cutler & Graham, 2008), such conferences are considered by accomplished writing teachers (Freedman, Greenleaf, & Sperling, 1987) and elementary process writing advocates alike to be a vital component of instruction. For instance, Carl Anderson, a staff developer with Teachers College Reading and Writing Project and protégée of Lucy Calkins, tells teachers in his often-cited practitioner text on the subject,

"Writing conferences aren't the icing on the cake; they are the cake" (2000, p. 3).

Given the diverse needs of students and the dismal state of writing achievement in the US as measured by national assessments like the NAEP (NCES, 2011), the possibility afforded by writing conferences to spend time in one-on-one conversations tailored to students' unique writing needs, seems an instructional opportunity ripe with promise. The little prior research into conference enactment between teacher and child leads us to conclude, however, that many, if not most, of these interactions may fall far short of the dialogic conversational ideal portrayed in the description above. According to the larger body of literature, documented writing conferences at all grade levels were frequently not student-led conversations in which student writers expressed their intentions and sought authentic feedback from readers. They instead, functioned largely as sites for delivering conventional teacher-driven instruction via traditional discourse structures packaged into a new individualized format. For instance, one analysis of conference discourse demonstrated that while writing conferences had the potential to draw on co-occurring pairs of utterances as most authentic conversation does (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973), teachers often employed a specialized triadic pattern of turn-taking, known as IRE (teacher Initiation, student Response, teacher Evaluation; Cazden, 2001; Mehan, 1979), more indicative of that used in classroom recitation (Freedman & Katz, 1987). Furthermore, considerable teacher dominance and reversion to traditional classroom discourse structures were found during conferencing in elementary settings (Daiute et al., 1993; McKeaney, 2009; Morse, 1994; Ulichny & Watson-Gegeo, 1989), as well as in secondary and post-secondary contexts (Black, 1998; Haneda, 2004; Jacob, 1982; Jacobs & Karliner, 1977; Michaels, 1987; Morse, 1994; Park, 2012; Wong, 1988). Teacher dominance and a return to conventional classroom discourse structures typically occurred in this research when teachers took on their customary role of primary-knower (Berry,

1981) and interacted with students utilizing chiefly closed, known-answer questions and directives, both thought by some to be unfavorable to the type of facilitative relationship writing conferences theoretically strive to achieve (Morse, 1994).

It is important to investigate, then, whether or not the many potentially didactic, teacher-centric writing conferences taking place in primary classrooms are, in fact, fundamentally flawed; as such implementation is far-removed from the expressed intent of conference practice. Conversely, we might also consider the possibility that conference interactions akin to these are not inherently flawed, but proceed as such for a reason. Alexander (2006) contends that dialogic teaching need not privilege any one discourse structure, and instead argues for a repertoire of forms and functions that, when taken together, can be characterized as "reciprocal, collective, supportive, cumulative, and purposeful" (p. 28). Furthermore, Scott, Mortimer, and Arguiar (2006) make a case for the occurrence of appropriately varying degrees of authoritative and dialogic discourses within classrooms. I maintain, then, that within a writing conference interaction it is not only the discourse structures that teacher-student talk embody, but the purpose that such talk serves overall, that is significant in determining pedagogical appropriateness. Put another way, it is form in relation to function, not form by itself, which must be attended to.

It is this notion of purpose that is oddly lost in much of the scholarship surrounding conference discourse in general, and conference discourse in primary-grade settings in particular. Much of the literature on writing conferences in which frequent use of traditional classroom discourse patterns and conventional teacher-student roles were observed explicitly involved a completed text that was being revised/edited during the interaction. It is possible, then, that when conducting writing conferences teachers purposefully choose to don a more authoritative role

and draw, perhaps, upon more traditional classroom discourse patterns during revising and editing phases of the writing process, yet elect to structure talk in an entirely different manner during preceding phases. While there is a dearth of research that overtly tracks child-teacher conference talk over time and across the writing process, Strauss and Xiang (2006) have noted that the ratio of teacher-student talk during earlier planning and drafting conferences in one undergraduate classroom exhibited a well-balanced distribution, lending some empirical evidence to the possible importance of conference purpose in determining appropriate construction for a conference. This notion was further touted by Sperling (1990, 1991) in her study of conference interactions in one ninth-grade classroom. She found that interaction patterns often varied not only for different students, but also for the same student, as the type of writing conference, its purpose, or its place in the sequence of written tasks varied. In other words, conference talk varied over time and task and under different conference conditions, implying that conferencing is a fluctuating and evolving process for those participants involved.

Therefore, more work is needed to understand the discourse structures of teacher-student talk that ensue during writing conferences (particularly in conferences involving children), those purposes that such talk serves overall, and the significance of their pedagogical appropriateness. Like Mortimer and Scott (2003), I find problematic research in which "the analyses are carried out, and the findings reported, solely in terms of patterns of interaction, and the actual content of what is being taught and learned is not regarded as being a significant feature" (p. 101). Examining the overt discourse structures used by conversational participants during a conference interaction alone, then, is not enough, especially when such work involves conference interactions that are enacted largely for the same instructional purpose (revision/editing). In doing so we risk isolating the function of such talk to how it operates within a particular moment

in a writing conference (and within only a particular type of writing conference at that) while ignoring the greater function such talk might play in the conference as a whole. Moreover, while past conceptual frameworks primarily borrowed from the field of linguistics (e.g., the IRE framework, measurement of participant involvement, question type) provide a useful starting place for analysis, they do not afford a large enough lens to capture the bigger picture and are thus insufficient on their own for investigating the relationship between discourse structures and conference purpose. Therefore, I suggest, instead, a different conceptual framework—one that more fully accounts for purpose—for examining writing conference talk: the *conference genre*.

The Conference Genre: A Conceptual Framework for Examining Writing Conference Form in Relation to its Function

One way in which scholars might better enrich the field's understanding of writing conference enactment in the primary grades, while keeping the importance of purpose at the center of analysis, is to view the conference interaction as a kind of recurrent *speech genre*. Bakhtin (1986) defined speech genres as "relatively stable thematic, compositional, and stylistic types of utterances" born from those functions and conditions of specific speech communication (p. 64). Furthermore, according to Bakhtin (1986),

> We speak only in definite speech genres, that is, all our utterances have definite and relatively stable typical forms of construction of the whole . . . Even in the most free, the most unconstrained conversation, we cast our speech in definite generic forms, sometimes ridged and trite ones, sometimes more flexible, plastic, and creative ones . . . [For] if speech genres did not exist and we had not mastered them, if we had to originate them during the speech process and construct each utterance at will for the first time, speech communication would be almost impossible (pp. 78-79).

Put another way, within our native language and culture, speech genres exist for organizing the manner in which we interact with others towards particular communication goals. The choice rests, then, not in whether we will draw upon a speech genre during an interaction, but, instead, in *the particular choice of speech genre chosen to meet such purposes*. As such, this framework allows researchers to analyze similar interaction activities performed for similar purposes within similar contextual situations to identify possible recurrent genres, and examine how these genres function and what work they allow conversational participants to perform. For example, we could study the talk used by middle-class mothers and their young children at bedtime to construct a model or models of a *Putting Down to Bed* genre, examining the talk observed to determine how the genre functioned, what it could be used to accomplish, and why it was applied at all.

In spite of the conceptual possibilities of speech genres for building understanding of construction of talk relative to its larger purpose, they have yet to be used as a framework for examining writing conference interactions. However, similar concepts have been utilized productively to study other classroom literacy activity. For instance, Christie (2002) closely examined the talk that occurred during one particular literacy routine commonly used in primary classrooms at one local school. He then built a model of this morning news genre, detailing those patterns involved in its implementation and examining what affordances it provided. Christie conceptualized such talk patterns that transpired during specific, regularly occurring classroom instructional activity as specialized speech genres that he termed *curriculum genres*. And while I do not utilize Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) as Christie did in his work (for, in the spirit of Bakhtin, I conceptualize writing conferences as context-dependent interactions which are not well portrayed through SFL), here I borrow his notion of a curriculum genre—which I have

retitled *conference genres* due to the nature of this work—to refer to those speech genres drawn upon by conversational participants during writing conference interactions in classroom contexts.

During writing conferences educators construct and select particular conference genres based, ideally, on the goals they wish to accomplish with their students. This is because conference genres, themselves, function to structure talk in different ways to perform different tasks. I contend that knowledge of conference genres, then, is vital as it permits educators to be more purposeful in their writing conference enactment. Again, to reference Bakhtin (1986) on this point,

> The better our command of genres, the more freely we employ them, the more fully and clearly we reveal our own individuality in them, the more flexible and precisely we reflect the unrepeatable situation of communication—in a word, the more perfectly we implement our free speech plan (p. 80).

In simpler terms, in order to assist educators in making pedagogical decisions for structuring conference talk appropriate to task and context, it is crucial to build a scholarly understanding of what writing conference genres are possible, how they function, and why they function as they do. A conference genre lens, then, enables researchers to not only describe the discourse structures that occur during conferring, explore how such structures function under various conditions, and investigate what affordances or constraints use of such structures provide both teacher and student, but likewise allows for the examination and evaluation of these structures in relation to their intended purpose.

Employing a conference genre lens to the investigation of writing conference enactment, I share findings from a study conducted in two high-functioning primary-grade classrooms in which four distinct conference genres shaped one-to-one teacher-student interactions as teacher

participants conferred with their students during the production of narrative texts. These findings resulted from exploration of the following research questions:

1. When conducting writing conferences with primary-aged students, what conference genres do the experienced writing teachers in case study classrooms draw upon across the writing process in order to guide conversational interaction so as to perform specific work for specific instructional purposes?
2. How, in general, does talk in case study classrooms operate within each identified conference genre in order to support conference purpose?

What follows is a discussion of the research methods used in the study. I then present the results, an analysis of how talk in the four identified conference genres tended to operate across study settings utilizing summary descriptive statistics of the full dataset, and augmented with qualitative illustrations from prototypical examples which inform and extend these summary statistics. Finally, I discuss the significance of this study for research and practice.

Methods

In this research, I was interested in observing and understanding the ordinary, situated and everyday lived experiences of primary-grade teachers and their students as they gathered together to converse over a piece of writing or idea for writing in a speech event (Hymes, 1972) the field had come to recognize and label a "writing conference." As such, the methods of data collection and analysis for this study were consistent with assumptions from qualitative traditions (Erickson, 1986; Erickson, Florio, & Buschman, 1980), drawing on descriptive and sociolinguistic approaches and analyses. Furthermore, in order to best honor the situated nature and complexity of writing conference talk occurring in the primary grades, a case study design (e.g., Dyson & Genishi, 2005) was used.

Context and Participants

Lakeside Elementary is a PK-5 public elementary school located in a mid-sized, consolidated school district in the Midwestern United States. Lakeside serves a predominantly middle-class, largely Caucasian, community, whose members primarily work in the skilled trades, service industry, and skilled professions. While suburban in terms of size (and because of its close proximity to a mid-sized urban city), the area retains a small-town atmosphere. The school itself is open and welcoming, and prides itself in its high levels of parental involvement and strong student academic achievement. Moreover, Lakeside is recognized by the state as a Rewards School, ranking in the top 10-percent of schools on statewide standardized testing in reading, math, and writing.

In order to better understand the intricate relationship between conference purpose and conference discourse structures, and how this relationship is influenced by those organic and fluctuating contextual factors that are realized when actual students and teachers come together in everyday instructional situations, two primary-grade classrooms at Lakeside Elementary were studied. The first, a kindergarten classroom taught by Mrs. Linda Kelly. The second, a first-grade classroom taught by Mrs. Maggie Malone (all names are pseudonyms). While examining a larger number of classrooms could have offered further occasion for diversification in conference enactment, and thus possibly in conference genre use, I chose to limit my observation in order to afford the opportunity for greater depth than a large-scale surface sampling of many classrooms could allow for, while still providing opportunity for variation due to teacher or context to occur.

Both Linda and Maggie, veteran teachers at Lakeside each with 16 years' experience in the classroom, possessed strong local reputations as writing instructors. Students in these classrooms participated daily in an afternoon writing period which lasted anywhere from 30 to

60 minutes. The writing instruction that occurred during this period was largely based on workshop philosophies and practices; the current curriculum drawing mostly from Calkins (2003). This approach was one Linda and Maggie were comfortable with, as they had each utilized writing workshop practices—and writing conferences—for over a decade. Furthermore, it was an approach which students were immersed in at Lakeside across grade levels throughout their primary years. This writing workshop began with a 10- to 15-minute mini-lesson and practice session, highlighting a skill or process students could apply to their own writing, followed by a 20- to 30-minute period of individual writing time, and ended with a short share in which students were selected to read their writing aloud or where students were asked to share their work with a partner or small group.

Writing conferences in these classrooms occurred daily during independent writing time. In general, Linda and Maggie conferred with each student once every week or two, meeting with four to six students each day. To facilitate this, they often circulated around the room joining students they intended to confer with at their table or writing spot. Maggie, on occasion, would also ask a group of students back to her table to address a similar writing concern prior to conferring individually with these selected students. During this investigation, then, Linda and Maggie engaged in multiple writing conference interactions with a combined 46 students; 42 of which (19 kindergarteners and 23 first graders) consented to participation in the study.

Sources of Data

Linda and Maggie both chose to allow documentation of conference enactment in their classrooms in the months of October and November. During this time separate, but co-occurring, 14-day (in kindergarten) and 15-day (in first grade) units on crafting personal narrative text were taught, each spread over a four-week period. While I would have liked to include writing

conferences conducted with participants crafting text in a variety of genres (e.g., informational text, exposition, poetry, etc.), the timing of data collection did not allow for this. Nevertheless, given its strong presence in primary-grade curriculum (e.g., Calkins, 2003; Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2010), exploration into conference enactment during narrative text production merits such focus in this initial work. Over the course of these units students planned, drafted, and revised several personal narratives on self-selected topics; with participants eventually taking one piece through to publication. Prior to data collection initial interviews were conducted with both teachers to gather demographic information and descriptions of writing philosophy and practice. Several sources of data were collected daily (on all days that writing was taught) in each focal classroom across the units. First, the writing period, in its entirety, was documented (through observational notes and audiovisual recordings), and all artifacts germane to writing instruction or conference activity (e.g., handouts, rubrics, copies of relevant curricular materials, photographs of anchor charts, etc.) were collected. Second, during each observed writing period, all eligible writing conference interactions were audio- and video-recorded for later transcription and analysis. Third, all writing completed during each observed writing period from all eligible student participants was scanned, dated and saved.

Data Analysis

Identification of writing conference interactions and preparation for analysis. For this study I chose to concentrate on an analysis of the talk that occurred between focal teachers and their young students during writing conference interactions arising in the course of planning, drafting, revising, and editing student produced narrative texts. To facilitate such an analysis, these writing conference interactions first had to be identified in the dataset and transcribe. All audio and video recordings collected in each focal classroom were used to identify theoretically

relevant (Corsaro, 1985) dyadic patterns. For purpose of this study I defined a writing conference to be all sustained speech acts (Hymes, 1972) between a writing teacher and one pupil which had as their focus a piece of student writing or an idea for student writing. For a speech act to be considered sustained, there had to be uptake of the interaction by both conversational participants (specified here as including a sequence of talk consisting of no less than two conversational turns per participant), and the interaction had to last for a minimum of 60 seconds. This eliminated from consideration those times when students tended to approach teachers or interrupt current teacher-student dyads to request that teachers spell for them a single word (e.g., S: "How do you write Chicago?" T: C-h-i-c-a-g-o.) or simply share something from their texts aloud (e.g., S: "Mrs. Malone I'm going to write about when I got my cat." T: "Wonderful! I can't wait to see it later. Go ahead and get started."). This definition led to the identification of 88 conferences for analysis. These 88 dyadic patterns identified as writing conferences were then transcribed and numbered using the utterance (or conversational turn) as a unit of analysis, the length of each utterance determined by listening for a change in speaker (Bakhtin, 1986). Furthermore, all punctuation was decided by the researcher through listening to vocal inflections. When it appeared that a participant was reading a portion of a written text, those words were transcribed using all capital letters.

Identification of writing conference instructional purposes and conference genres. Conference genres are, by definition, purpose-driven, a means of exploring and evaluating writing conference form in relation to its function. As such, the instructional purposes served by each writing conference in the data had to be established before the identification of possible conference genres could be made and their associated discourse structures investigated. To accomplish this, all 88 writing conference transcripts were first read multiple times to gain a

general sense for conference enactment in these settings, after which I grouped together those conference transcripts that seemingly possessed conceptually similar instructional purposes. Initially, this led to the identification of two primary purposes for conferring, mainly content generation and content transcription. Closer inspection of writing conference interactions, however, further divided these primary purposes into four secondary purposes, including student-led content generation, collaborative content generation, drafting-oriented transcription, and correction-oriented transcription. These categories, first and foremost, emerged from the conference transcripts themselves (and readings of the transcripts within the larger classroom climates garnered from focal teacher interviews, corresponding curricular guides, and student writing samples) rather than being imposed on the data from the outside. Other sources that helped to inform category formation were the literature on conference pedagogy (e.g., Calkins 1994; Graves, 1983; Murray, 1968), conference enactment (e.g., Ewert, 2009; Freedman & Katz, 1987; Goldstein & Conrad, 1990; Haneda, 2004; Jacob, 1982; Jacobs & Katliner, 1977; Micheals, 1987; Sperling, 1990; Straus & Xiang, 2006; Walker & Elias, 1987; Wong, 1988), and my own years of experience conferring with young children.

It was these secondary purposes that seemed to profoundly influence the way in which conferences in the dataset operated and determined the type of work teacher and student participants could ultimately accomplish. On the basis of these four secondary purposes I, thus, identified and labeled four possible conference genres, each named according to the type of work they immersed students and teachers in: conferencing as *verbal rehearsal*, conferencing as *criterion specific* collaboration, conferencing as *transcription* activity, and conferencing as *find-*

Table 4

Summary of Conference Genres Observed by Conference Purpose

Primary Conference Purpose	Secondary Conference Purpose	Conference Genre	Conference Genre Description	# of Writing Conferences Observed
Content Generation	Student-Led Content Generation	Verbal Rehearsal	Affords students an open space to discuss, tryout, and orally rehearse new text or ideas for text with an interested and supportive listener prior to committing words to the written page.	33
	Collaborative Content Generation	Criterion Specific	Affords students a collaborative space to revise and generate content towards explicit criterion expectations with a knowledgeable, and sometimes critical, listener.	27
Content Transcription	Drafting-Oriented Transcription	Transcription	Affords students an opportunity to draft written text under the close guidance of a knowledgeable other that more closely approximates conventional norms of the culture (in terms of alphabetic letter formation, spelling, capitalization, spacing, and punctuation) for word- and sentence-level construction.	19
	Correction-Oriented Transcription	Find-and-Fix	Affords students an opportunity to better word- and sentence-level transcription so that it more closely approximates conventional norms of the culture (in terms of alphabetic letter formation, spelling, capitalization, spacing, punctuation, grammar, and word choice) under the close guidance of a knowledgeable other in the course of editing previously written text.	9
			Total	88

and-fix correction. The number of writing conferences observed in the data per conference genre along with associated conference purposes and genre descriptions are shown in Table 4.

Analysis of conference genre form in relation to its instructional purpose. In a second round of analysis I examined the discourse structures found within each proposed conference genre in order to search for patterns in the data which helped explain the different instructional work occurring in these two classroom contexts. One way to explore talk and how it operates within a particular conference genre, is to examine typical patterns of participant interaction found within that genre as it is employed in a variety of settings with a variety of conversational participants. Patterns of participant interaction characteristic of each genre were investigated through two means. First, two common measures of speaker involvement (percentage of total words spoken/participant and number of words spoken/utterance/participant) were calculated for each conference transcript. In order to more accurately represent student-generated responses in the data, both measures of speaker involvement were computed with student utterances coded solely as teacher requested read alouds of text removed. Second, an analysis of conversational turn-taking was performed. Here, each conference transcript was first coded for those adjacency pairs (e.g., question-answer, request-grant, statement-response; Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974) and triadic IRE/IRF dialogue patterns (teacher Initiation-student Response-teacher Evaluation/teacher Initiation-student Response-teacher Feedback; Cazden, 2001; Mehan, 1979) commonly used in linguistic analyses of writing conference talk. Furthermore, when triadic dialogue included the use of follow-up moves (Wells, 1999) in the third turn to further probe students' responses, as opposed to initiate new topics, the sequence of resulting teacher and student utterances was recoded as either closed chaining (when the sequence concluded with teacher feedback/evaluation) or open chaining (when teacher feedback/evaluation was absent

from the final move of the sequence). Frequency counts were calculated per conference transcript for each turn-taking pattern. Due to the discrepancy in conference length observed in the dataset (the shortest conference 60 seconds in length, the longest 8 minutes and 28 seconds in length), percentage breakdowns of conversational turn-taking patterns per writing conference were calculated and used for analysis.

Another way to explore talk across conference genre is to examine those communicative forms typically found within a genre. These communicative forms were derived from theory and prior sociolinguistic discourse work (e.g., Boyd & Markarian, 2013; Boyd & Rubin, 2006; Cazden 2001; Chinn, Anderson, & Waggoner, 2001; Nystand et al., 1997; Tracy, 2002; Van Horne, 2011). A variety of communicative forms of teacher talk were present in the data, including authentic initial questions (open and closed), authentic contingent follow-up questions (open and closed), display questions, directives (directives to read the text, direct statement directives, prompts for response directives, query directives), didactic statements, explications, read alouds, revoicings, and evaluative feedback statements (evaluation of student response and evaluation of student text). A smaller number of communicative forms were noted in the data for student talk, these included succinct (verbal and non-verbal), elaborated, and written responses to teachers' questions or directives, teacher requested read alouds of student text, and statements challenging prior teacher utterances. While student questions were occasionally present, they were rarely observed in this particular sampling of conference interactions, and, as such, were removed from analysis. All teacher and student utterances were coded for communicative form, and frequency counts tabulated for each writing conference transcript. Once again, percentage breakdowns were calculated from frequency counts to use in analyses; this time representing the percentage of total teacher or student utterances coded for each communicative form of talk per

writing conference. (A full version of the coding scheme developed for this study is available upon request.)

SPSS version 22 was used to obtain summary descriptive statistics for all variables of interest for each of the four proposed conference genre groupings (see Appendix). The aim here was not to find statistical relationships between the groups, but, instead, to develop quantitative descriptions of those discourse structures that tended to characterize each genre as it was applied in study contexts. What follows are comprehensive accounts of the four proposed conference genres and the talk that ensued within each. Summary statistics, along with qualitative examples from prototypical writing conferences, are used throughout in order to demonstrate how those discourse structures typical to each genre structured talk towards distinct instructional purposes. To help facilitate comparison across genres, presentation of subsequent findings will draw on figures presented in the first conference genre and proceed in a similar manner.

Results

Conferencing as Verbal Rehearsal

During the production of narrative text, the verbal rehearsal conference genre *afforded students an open space to discuss, tryout, and orally rehearse new text or ideas for text with an interested and supportive listener prior to committing words to the written page.* Within its bounds the teachers in this study dialogued with students to build a shared understanding of students' narrative focus, encouraged elaboration of student ideas, and periodically reformulated students' oral expressions to better approximate written registers and support future text transcription. Figure 1 displays an example from the data of a writing conference interaction classified as employing this conference genre. The conference took place between Linda Kelly and her kindergarten student, Samuel, during the early planning stages of his personal narrative

Figure 1

Prototypical Verbal Rehearsal Conference Example

001	Linda Kelly:	What are you working on as a writer today?
002	Samuel:	Umm, I'm working on when I went to the hospital.
003	Linda Kelly:	Oh my! You did? Why did you go to the hospital?
004	Samuel:	Umm . . . when, like, this stick thing went in my mouth.
005	Linda Kelly:	How did you get a stick thing in your mouth?
006	Samuel:	I was like, umm, going to brush my teeth in the bathroom. Like I was in my brother's room and umm . . . like . . . umm . . . the stick was in there and I accidently—
007	Linda Kelly:	--Was it from your tooth brush?
008	Samuel:	No. Umm, it was in my, umm, brother's room. It was like a stick thing. It was on the ground. I accidently, like, fell down and it came up and, umm, hit my tooth.
009	Linda Kelly:	Oh, so you fell and a stick fell in your—
010	Samuel:	--Yeah. It accidently got stuck in my mouth and like made blood in my mouth. And like made, like, a tiny hole in my skin.
011	Linda Kelly:	Okay, is that the hospital or your brother's room? [Teacher points to student's drawing.]
012	Samuel:	This is the, umm, bathroom. I went to the bathroom because I had to, like, wash the blood off.
013	Linda Kelly:	Oh, so here you're going to say, when I was in my brother's room I fell down and a stick made a hole in my mouth. It started to bleed so I went to the bathroom to wash the blood off?
014	Samuel:	Yeah.
015	Linda Kelly:	And then who said you needed to go to the hospital?
016	Samuel:	Umm, my mom said, like, I think we need to go to the hospital.
017	Linda Kelly:	So maybe on this page you're going to say, my mom said, "I think we need to go to the hospital." So what happened next?
018	Samuel:	Umm, then, umm, we were at the hospital. And you know how many minutes I had to stay?
019	Linda Kelly:	How many minutes?
020	Samuel:	Umm, 120 minutes.
021	Linda Kelly:	Wow that's a long time. What did you do at the hospital?
022	Samuel:	They had to, like, take my blood pressure and put a thing on my finger.
023	Linda Kelly:	What did they do for your mouth?
024	Samuel:	They just gave me medicine.
025	Linda Kelly:	They gave you medicine. For the hole?
026	Samuel:	Yeah.
027	Linda Kelly:	So here you're going to say, we went to the hospital. We were there a long time. They took my blood pressure and checked my oxygen level. Then they gave me medicine? [Student nods yes.] That's a great story! Oh my goodness! Go ahead then.

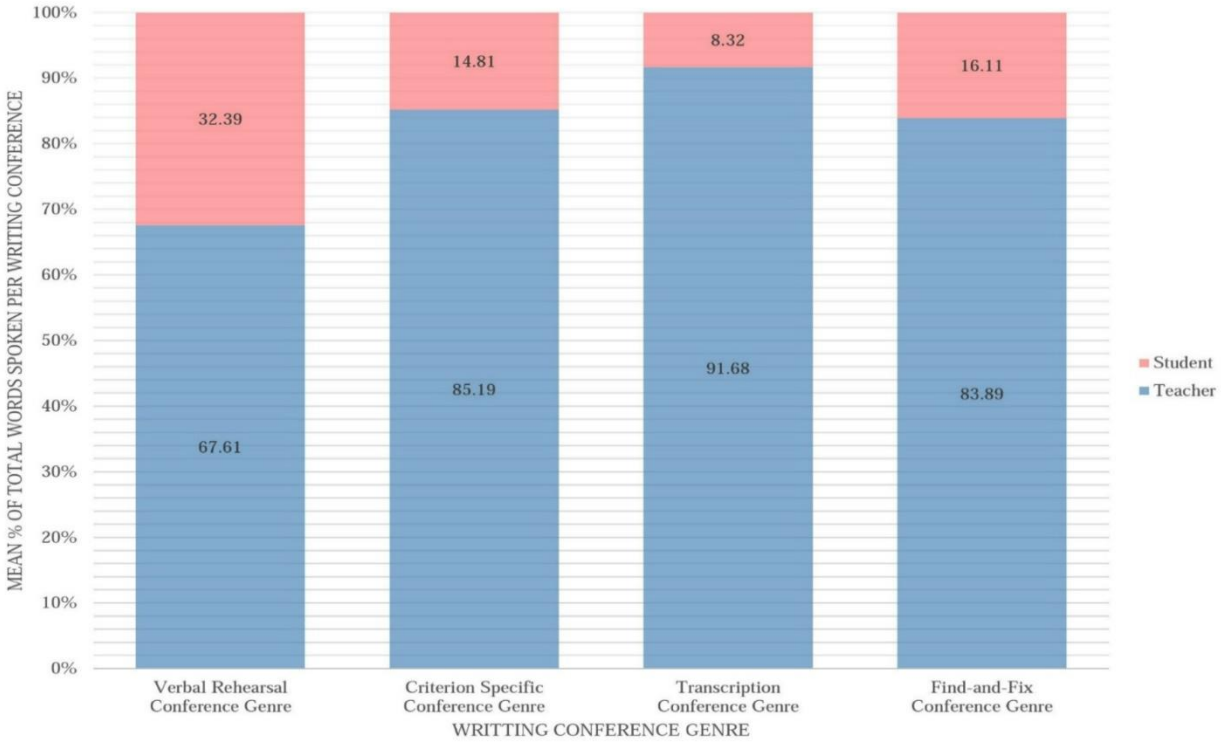
titled *Hospital*, and nicely demonstrates the form and function of a prototypical verbal rehearsal conference in these two contexts.

Characteristic patterns of participant interaction. While individual results varied across the dataset, of the four genres observed in these two writing classrooms the verbal rehearsal conference genre, as shown in Figure 2, allotted teachers and students the greatest opportunity for sharing of the conversational floor; with a mean percentage of total words spoken per writing conference of 67.61% for teachers and 32.39% for students. Moreover, teachers and students words were generally spread over fewer utterances and more closely aligned in terms of the average number of words per utterance than in other genres, permitting longer, more detailed exchanges between participants to occur (teachers averaging 13.10 words/utterance/writing conference to students 8.51 words/utterance/writing conference). Lengthier turns of talk and a more equal talk distribution are both exemplified in Linda and Samuel's conference.

Figure 3 showcases the mean percentage breakdown per writing conference of conversational turn-taking found within each genre. In the verbal rehearsal conference genre we see a heavy reliance on closed (41.70%) and open (19.15%) chaining, along with a minimization of the more traditional triadic pattern of talk (14.54%). Furthermore, when placed together the use of chaining (whether open or closed) was abundant, accounting for, on average, 60.85% of total participant turn-taking patterns utilized per writing conference. Unlike simple IRE, IRF, question-answer, or response-grant patterns of turn-taking, chaining occurs in a conference when teachers use their customarily third turn to engage with and further probe students' responses to their initiating move (Wells, 1999). One way this is accomplished is through contingent questioning (Boyd & Rubin, 2006) designed to clarify, expand, or challenge students' responses, which elongate the classic three-move sequence of classroom talk and allow for deeper

Figure 2

Patterns of Participant Interaction across Writing Conference Genre (Measures of Speaker Involvement)



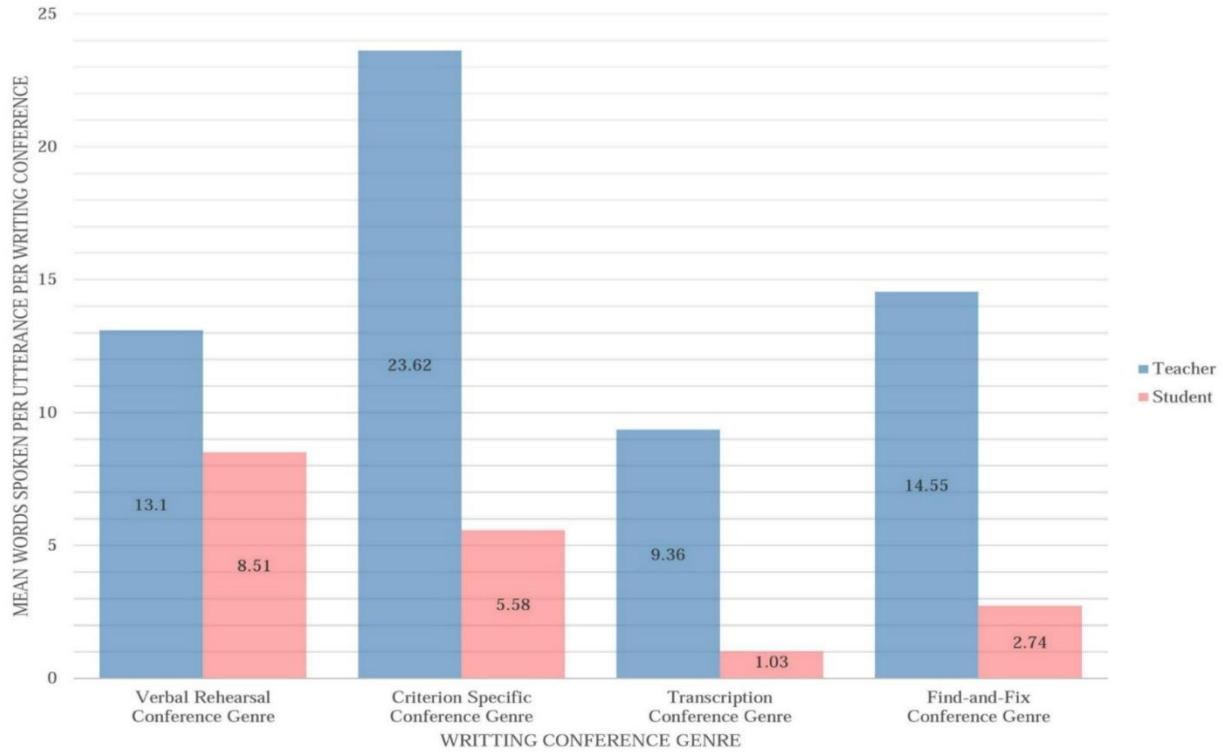
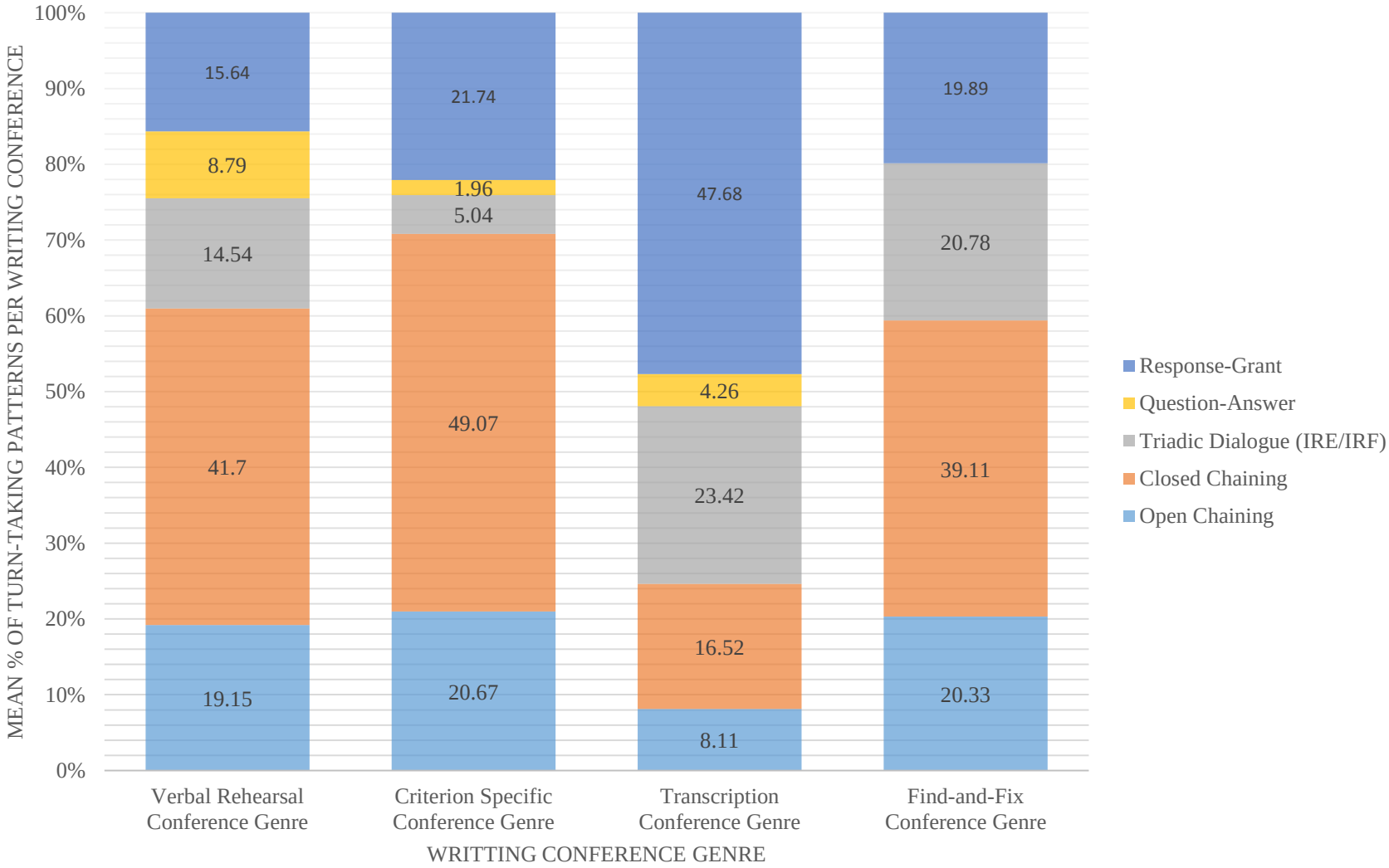


Figure 3

Patterns of Participant Interaction across Writing Conference Genre (Conversational Turn-Taking)



exploration of the conversational topic at hand. Take for instance the open chaining sequence found in lines 001-014 of the example conference. Here, Linda employed a series of contingent questions in order to build upon and clarify Samuel's story idea prior to suggesting wording for the first page of his text. Contrast this with the simple IRF pattern of talk that followed in lines 015-017, in which Linda asked a question, Samuel gave his response, and Linda offered her feedback on his response (in this case a suggestion for the wording of his second page of text) before transitioning to a new initiating move designed to shift the conversion toward a discussion of Samuel's last page of text.

Characteristic communicative forms of talk. By far, authentic questions (whether initial or contingent, open or closed) made up a large portion of the communicative forms drawn upon by study teachers when using the verbal rehearsal conference genre as exhibited in Figure 4; averaging 41.94% of total teacher utterances in each writing conference interaction. Linda and Samuel's conference is no exception. Here we see that Linda utilized authentic questions in lines 001, 003, 005, 007, 011, 015, 017, 019, 021, 023, and 025. Furthermore, many of these questions were contingent questions (lines 003, 005, 007, 011, 019, 021, 023, 025) and functioned to clarify for Linda (and I would contend for Samuel as well) the events and sequence of Samuel's personal narrative as they co-planned and orally rehearsed each page of his text. Contingent questions were also seen in the dataset at large, comprising roughly half of the 41.94% expressed earlier. Along with authentic questions, teacher revoicings of students' words appeared to be a key communicative form; making up an average 22.52% of total teacher utterances per writing conference. Revoicing in this genre was often utilized to give prominence to students' words, encourage them to say more, or assure shared understanding of an idea. Sometimes revoicing was used as a means to also offer a reformulated version of students' words in the form of a

Figure 4

Communicative Forms of Teacher Talk across Writing Conference Genre

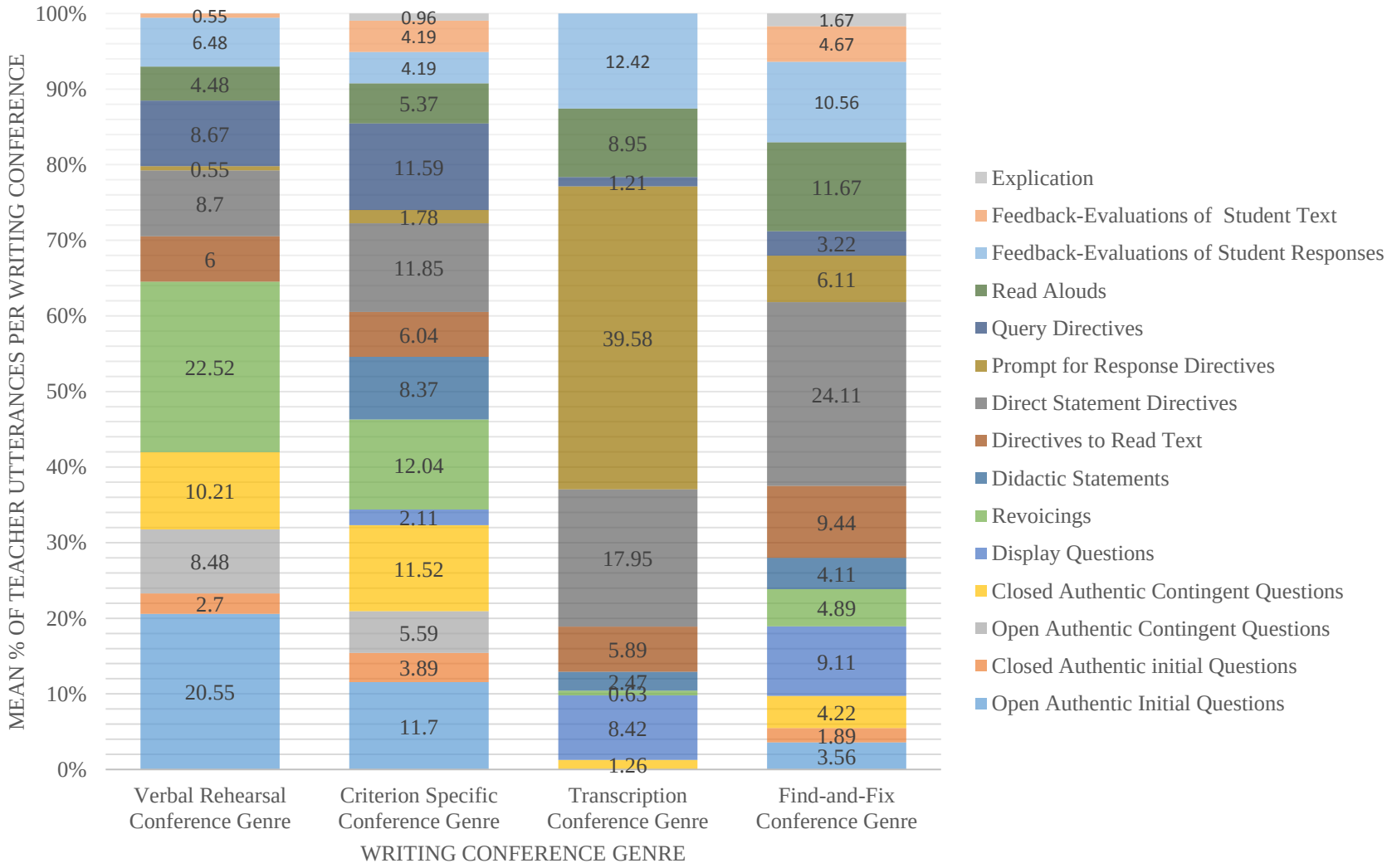
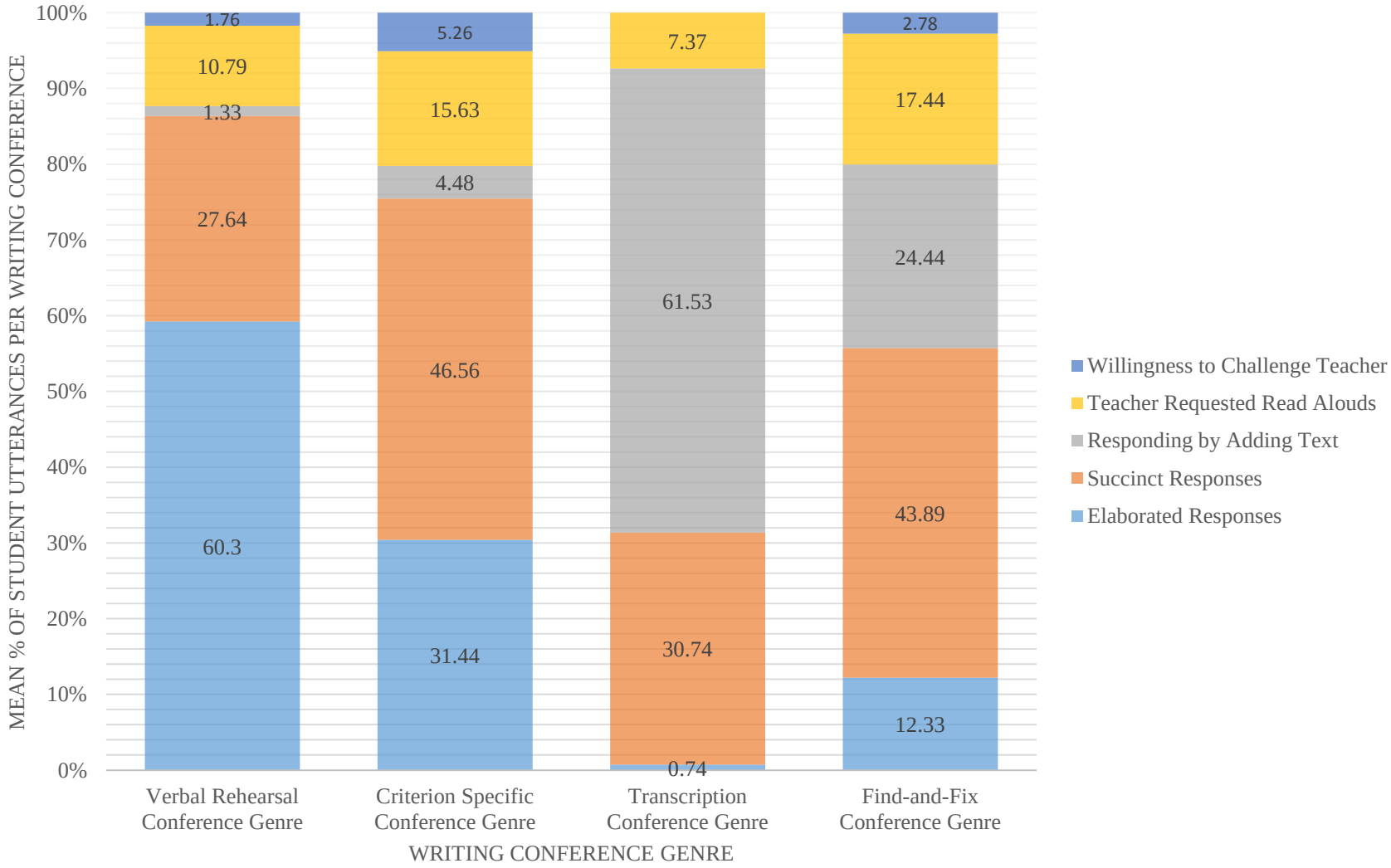


Figure 5

Communicative Forms of Student Talk across Writing Conference Genre



query directive (i.e., suggestion; 8.67%) for possible transcription. Linda, in particular, drew upon this form often in order to scaffold kindergarten students' oral to written language (see lines 013, 017, 027). From time to time revoicing and query statements were followed by direct statement directives (8.70%) instructing students to "write that" on their paper, further strengthening the oral language to written text connection central to this genre. Noticeably lacking, however, were more traditional display questions and didactic statements. Moreover, evaluations of students' ideas or written text (7.03%) were seldom provided, and critical evaluations were non-existent in the data for this genre. When evaluation was present it consisted, exclusively, of praise.

Student utterances within the verbal rehearsal conference genre, displayed in Figure 5, consisted, largely, of elaborated responses most often preceded by authentic questions about students' story content from teachers; encompassing 60.30% of total student utterances per writing conference on average. Interestingly, within this conference genre even closed questions, often associated with short one- or two-word answers (Cazden, 2001; Mehan, 1979) showed a tendency to illicit longer stretches of student talk as demonstrated in lines 007, 011, and 015 of Linda and Samuel's conference. As expected succinct responses (27.64%) were sometimes observed as well. These frequently followed teacher directives and presented as verbalized agreement or nods of the head. On the rare occasion students showcased a willingness to challenge teacher utterances (1.76%) in this genre—always in response to query directives suggesting possible content—teachers were quick to withdraw offending suggestions and praise student efforts.

Conferencing as Criterion Specific Collaboration

The criterion specific conference genre *afforded students a collaborative space to revise and generate narrative text content towards explicit criterion expectations with a knowledgeable, and sometimes critical, listener.* Within its bounds teachers in this study once again dialogued with students to build a shared understanding of students' narrative focus, but did so in relation to improving students' texts in substantive ways so that they better reflected an understanding, though arguably a simple one, of what "good stories have" or elements "readers expect to see" in a personal narrative. Within the two classrooms of study such conferences often attended to "setting the scene" of a story, "unfreezing" characters and events through the addition of detail and dialogue in order to create metal images for readers, "zooming in" and "telling a story in itsy-bitsy steps" so that it retained a singular topical focus, and drafting appropriate endings. Figure 6 displays an example from the data of a writing conference interaction classified as employing the criterion specific conference genre.

Figure 6

Prototypical Criterion Specific Conference Example

001	Maggie Malone:	Can I see what you have?
002	Matt:	Yeah.
003	Maggie Malone:	Okay, so where are you at in your story?
004	Matt:	Right here.
005	Maggie Malone:	Why don't you read that part.
006	Matt:	WE JUMPED AND JUMPED AND JUMPED. IT WAS FUN.
007	Maggie Malone:	Great. You know what I love, I love how you said jumped three times there. When you say jumped and jumped and jumped that really helps me picture it as the reader. It helps me picture that you must have done a lot of jumping that day.
008	Matt:	We did it for two hours.
009	Maggie Malone:	Wow! So, it sounds like you're almost ready to end your story. So what do you think, Matt, what could we say here at the end? We want to stay close to the story.
010	Matt:	Then we went back home.
011	Maggie Malone:	What could you say instead of then we went back home? . . . You

Figure 6 (cont'd)

		know what, sometimes writers like to end their stories with a big feeling. Like how they felt about the story. Like they might say something like, umm . . . Anthony's birthday party . . . was so much fun . . . I love having Anthony as my friend. That's a big feeling. It's helping your reader understand how you felt by the end of the story. That's one option. What do you think Matt? Something that's connected and helps us stay right in the moment.
012	Matt:	I could say that it was the end of jumping.
013	Maggie Malone:	You could, you know, say, it was time to end the party. I had so much fun.
014	Matt:	But we had a sleepover.
015	Maggie Malone:	Oh it was a sleepover! Well then, so, wait though. So then . . . you're jumping, but then where are you? You're probably not jumping at Danny's house are you?
016	Matt:	No. I already added that detail.
017	Maggie Malone:	Oh you did.
018	Matt:	WE ARE AT THE PLACE. IT IS CALLED SKYZONE.
019	Maggie Malone:	Ah. I see. So you know what, maybe you could end it by saying, you know, it was time to go back to Anthony's house for our sleepover. What do you think?
020	Matt:	Or we could add more pages.
021	Maggie Malone:	You could. But you know what, a Small Moment story really takes place in one moment in time. So you could add your ending here, and then you could have another book, kind of like a series, of what happened at the actually party at his house.
022	Matt:	Okay.
023	Maggie Malone:	Why don't you think about those couple of thoughts we just put together, and you think about how you'd like to end it, okay.
000	Matt:	[Student adds the following to his text: NOW IT IS TIME TO GO TO ANTHONY'S HOUSE. Student also takes up teacher's suggestion, as his next story is about the aforementioned sleepover.]

The conference took place between Maggie Malone and her first grade student, Matt, as they worked together to generate a suitable ending for his personal narrative titled *Anthony's Birthday*.

Characteristic patterns of participant interaction. As shown in Figure 2, when measured in terms of percentage of total words spoken per writing conference, participant interaction within the criterion specific genre was comparable to transcription and find-and-fix conference genres (both examined in subsequent sections); with a mean percentage of 14.81% for students and 85.19% for teachers. Yet, this statistic, on its own, is a bit misleading and downplays the importance of student contributions found within the genre. Instead, Figure 3 (showcasing a mean words spoken per utterance per writing conference of 5.58 for students and 23.62 for teachers) alongside Maggie and Matt's conference example provide a more accurate portrait. While, on average, students did not speak for as long as they tended to within the verbal rehearsal conference genre examined earlier, students did converse openly with teachers and contribute substantive responses overall. They did this, however, between long stretches of teacher talk. Furthermore, once a conference focus was determined, commonly through a combination of simple IRF, IRE, response-grant, and questions-answer patterns of turn-taking (see lines 001-009) and in conjunction with cues provided by students' written texts, participants tended to draw on prolonged open and closed chaining patterns to accomplish work pivotal to conference goals with 69.74% of all turn-taking patterns per conference on average classified as such. This pattern is exemplified in lines 009-023 of the example.

Characteristic communicative forms of talk. Turning attention once again to Figure 4, we see that those communicative forms most often found in a verbal rehearsal conference were also those drawn upon frequently by teachers in the criterion specific conference genre. Authentic initiating questions (15.59%) along with authentic contingent questions (17.11%) functioned, largely, to clarify (see line 015) and extend (see line 009) student content as before. Yet these questions also served to probe students' thinking, grounded in criterion expectations

for writing shared by teachers, as demonstrated in line 011 of Maggie and Matt's conference. Along with authentic questions, revoicings (12.04%) of students' words, and, in particular, query directives (11.59%) consisting of teachers' reformulations of students' words and ideas (exhibited in lines 011, 013, 019, and 021) were key communicative forms for scaffolding student thinking in this genre. Moreover, teacher didactic statements were observed in each writing conference within the data identified as invoking the criterion specific genre. As such, this communicative form of teacher talk could be considered a defining characteristic of the genre in conjunction with a focus on content generation (as opposed to content transcription).

Student utterances within the criterion specific conference genre, displayed in Figure 5, consisted, largely, of succinct (46.56%) and elaborated (31.44%) responses to teacher questions, comments, and suggestions. While within a verbal rehearsal conference all content suggested by students that "made sense" was accepted and praised, teachers set a higher threshold for content generated during a criterion specific conference; often questioning and reworking content that did not meet expectations while sharing explicit reasons for doing so (see lines 011and 021). True to writing workshop tenants advocated by Graves and Calkins, however, within this genre students were still, by and large, granted primary-knower status in terms of their content and allowed final say on what was ultimately chosen for inclusion in their texts (see line 023). Furthermore, students showed a greater willingness, on average, to challenge teacher utterances (5.26%) in this genre as we see Matt do in response to Maggie's suggestions in line 014 (in which he offered additional information negating her suggestion) and 020 (in which he countered her suggestion with one of his own), with teachers only occasionally exerting primary-knower status and defending their earlier claims through further explication (0.96%) as Maggie did in line 021.

Conferencing as Transcription Activity

The transcription conference genre *afforded students an opportunity to draft written text under the close guidance of a knowledgeable other that more closely approximated conventional norms of the culture (in terms of alphabetic letter formation, spelling, capitalization, spacing, and punctuation) for word- and sentence-level construction* during the production of narrative text. Within its bounds the teachers in this study led students to transcribe sentences word by word, pausing when mistakes were made, or when students were unable to comply independently, to assist by means of facilitating strategic routines for problem-solving, stimulating recall, or providing additional information. While, on occasion, teachers and students entered a transcription conference with content students had previously developed on their own, it was far more often the case that this genre was evoked immediately following a verbal rehearsal or criterion specific conference. Although this transcription conference genre tended to occur alongside another genre within the same teacher-student interaction, due to the abrupt and noticeable shift in discourse it produced these co-occurring genres were regarded as separate consecutive writing conferences in this research. Figure 7 displays a prototypical example from the data of a writing conference interaction classified as employing the transcription conference genre.

Figure 7

Prototypical Transcription Conference Example

001	Maggie Malone:	Okay, he . . .
002	Kennedy:	[Student writes HE on her paper.]
003	Maggie Malone:	Felt . . . You're going to put up a finger for every sound in this one.
004	Kennedy:	/F/ /E/ L/ /T/. [Student writes FLT on her paper.]
005	Maggie Malone:	Yep. HE FELT soft . . .
006	Kennedy:	/S/ /O/ /F/ /T/. [Student writes an S on her paper.]
007	Maggie Malone:	/OOO/ . . . put the octopus.
008	Kennedy:	[Student adds an O on her paper after the S.]

Figure 7 (cont'd)

009	Maggie Malone:	/S/ /O/ /F/ /T/.
010	Kennedy:	[Student adds an F on her paper after the O.]
011	Maggie Malone:	/T/.
012	Kennedy:	[Student adds a T on her paper after the F, writing SOFT.]
013	Maggie Malone:	Yep. HE FELT SOFT and . . .
014	Kennedy:	[Student writes AND on her paper.]
015	Maggie Malone:	Furry . . .
016	Kennedy:	/F/ /UR/. [Student writes an F on her paper.]
017	Maggie Malone:	/UR/.
018	Kennedy:	[Student adds an R to her paper following the F.]
019	Maggie Malone:	And when you hear /E/ at the end of a word, what letter is it usually? . . . It's usually a Y, so add that.
020	Kennedy:	[Student adds a Y to her paper following the R.]
021	Maggie Malone:	Yep. Good. And then you need to put—every word needs a vowel. It's a U in this word, so stick a U in there.
022	Kennedy:	[Student adds a U between her F and R, writing FURY.]
023	Maggie Malone:	HE FELT SOFT AND FURRY like . . .
024	Kennedy:	[Student writes LIKE on her paper.]
025	Maggie Malone:	LIKE a . . .
026	Kennedy:	[Student writes an A on her paper.]
027	Maggie Malone:	LIKE A stuffed . . . /ST/ . . . it's got a letter cluster in the beginning, right.
028	Kennedy:	[Student writes ST on her paper.]
029	Maggie Malone:	/U/.
030	Kennedy:	[Student adds a U to her paper following the ST.]
031	Maggie Malone:	/ST/ /U/ /F/ . . .
032	Kennedy:	F. [Student adds an F to her paper following the U.]
033	Maggie Malone:	/ST/ /U/ /F/ /ED/.
034	Kennedy:	[Student adds a T to her paper following the F, writing STUFT.]
035	Maggie Malone:	Yeah. Okay, animal . . . /AN/ /I/ /MAL/ . . . You know the word an, it's just like the first part of and.
036	Kennedy:	[Student writes an AN on her paper.]
037	Maggie Malone:	AN/ /I/.
038	Kennedy:	[Student adds an I to her paper following the AN.]
039	Maggie Malone:	/AN/ /I/ /MAL/ . . . /MMM/.
040	Kennedy:	[Student adds an M to her paper following the I.]
041	Maggie Malone:	/AN/ /I/ /MAL/ . . . /L/ . . . /L/ . . . What do you put at the end of that word?
042	Kennedy:	[Student adds an L to her paper following the M, writing ANIML.]
043	Maggie Malone:	LIKE A STUFFED ANIMAL. Good. Nice job.

It arose between Maggie Malone and her first grade student, Kennedy, following a criterion

specific conference in which the content was formulated for the sentence that severed as fodder for this conference.

Characteristic patterns of participant interaction. Focusing once more on Figure 2, we see that in direct contrast to the verbal rehearsal genre, the transcription conference genre permitted teachers and students the least opportunity for sharing of the conversational floor; with a mean percentage of total words spoken per writing conference of 91.68% for teachers and 8.32% for students. This discrepancy is further displayed when comparing mean words spoken per utterance per conference. Here, both teachers' and students' words were spread over a larger number of turns of talk in comparison to other genres, with students averaging only 1.03 words/utterance/writing conference to teachers 9.36 words/utterance/writing conference. This pattern of fragmented teacher phrases punctuated, intermittently, by student phonetic sound or single-word responses can be viewed in the example conference.

Likewise, when juxtaposed in terms of conversational turn-taking characteristic of the genre as shown in Figure 3, the transcription and content generation-focused genres (i.e., verbal rehearsal and criterion specific) again deviate widely from one another. Transcription conference genre participant conversational turn-taking was comprised extensively of response-grant (47.68%) and IRE/IRF triadic dialogue (23.42%), with closed and open chaining accounting for only a combined 24.63% of total student utterances per writing conference on average. Maggie and Kennedy's conference nicely illustrates how these patterns (response-grant, IRE, and chaining) functioned collectively in this genre as teacher and student worked to transcribe a sentence. For instance, Maggie began the conference utilizing response-grant and IRE patterns of talk in lines 001-005. Yet, when Kennedy showed signs of difficulty in transcribing the word "soft," Maggie shifted to a closed chaining pattern in order to assist in lines 005-013. Movement

between simple response-grant/IRE and lengthier closed chaining patterns of talk continued in this matter until full transcription of the sentence had been accomplished.

Characteristic communicative forms of talk. Directives assumed a large role in the transcription conference genre; encompassing, on average, 64.63% of total teacher utterances per writing conference. Display questions (8.42%), evaluative feedback on students' responses (12.42%), and teacher read alouds of student text (8.95%) were also notable communicative forms found in the data (see Figure 4). The example conference showcases how each of these forms of teacher talk tended to operate within the transcription genre. For instance, prompts for student response—the most prominent communicative form in this set, comprising 39.58% of all teacher utterances/writing conference on average—were utilized in several ways. First, prompts, along with teacher read aloud of student text, were employed in a majority of teacher initiating moves in order to draw attention to the current word of focus and urge students to attempt transcription independently (see lines 001, 003, 005, 013, 015, 023, 025, 027, 035). Second, prompts provided teachers a means to cue answers without directly providing them (see lines 007, 027, 035). Last, prompts offered an indirect method (although at times overt if rendered in conjunction with a direct statement directive as in line 003) for modeling "stretching a word out across one's fingers;" a common spelling strategy used with primary-aged children and observed across periods of closed chaining as in lines 005-012, 027-34, and 035-042 of Maggie and Kennedy's conference. As with prompts, display questions were also applied in order to stimulate recall of previously learned information and cue answers without openly supplying them (see lines 019 and 041). When prompts and questions failed, teachers drew on direct statement directives to specify remedies (see lines 019 and 021). Furthermore, evaluative

feedback tended toward nondescript praise, signaling that an acceptable approximation had been reached and shifting focus to the next word (or element of the sentence) in need of transcription.

While teachers drew on a variety of communicative forms in the transcription conference genre, student utterances were generally simple and frequently non-verbal; succinct student response and responding by adding text comprising, on average, a striking 92.27% of total student utterances per writing conference as displayed in Figure 5. This is unsurprising given that students' prime responsibility in this genre involved deciphering teacher cues in order to transcribe acceptable approximations of words and end marks. Moreover, those responses that were vocalized were often produced so as to further facilitate this transcription. Examples of Kennedy producing such responses are provided in lines 004, 006, 016, and 032.

Conferencing as Find-and-Fix Correction

Analogous to the transcription genre, the find-and-fix conference genre also *afforded students an opportunity to better word- and sentence-level transcription during the production of narrative text so that it more closely approximated conventional norms of the culture (in terms of alphabetic letter formation, spelling, capitalization, spacing, punctuation, grammar, and word choice) under the close guidance of a knowledgeable other, only this time doing so in the course of editing previously written text.* The find-and-fix conference—a term originally coined by Ulichny and Watson-Gegeo (1989) to describe a similar iteration of conference interaction found with older students—involves teachers and students in a particular correction routine, or series of routines, in which teachers draw attention to often word-level errors found in students' texts (e.g., misspellings, incorrect verb tense, punctuation errors, poor word choice), provide various cues to the nature of the correctables, and set up slots which students are expected to fill with correct answers. This genre was only drawn upon by teachers in this study under two

circumstances. The first, when students had finished drafting and/or revising text and, thus, were ready to move to publication. The second, if students' attempted transcriptions varied too far from accepted norms and impeded teacher or student readings of the text. Figure 8 exhibits a prototypical example from the data of a writing conference interaction classified as employing this find-and-fix conference genre.

Figure 8

Prototypical Find-and-Fix Conference Example

001	Maggie Malone:	Camden, what are you working on today my friend?
002	Camden:	I just finished this here. [Student points to picture on last page of text.]
003	Maggie Malone:	Hmm, it looks like you might be done with this one. Okay, read your story to me. Now remember, when writers re-read they point to the words and they ask themselves does it look right? Does it sound right? Does it make sense?
004	Camden:	WHEN I WOKE UP I WENT TO THE APPLE FESTIVAL. AND WHEN I GOT HOME I HAD INFINITY MARVEL.
005	Maggie Malone:	Okay, you know what, we need to do a little bit of work on this page to make sure that it looks right and sounds right and makes sense. Whenever writers write the word I, they write it like this. They do not write it like this. Now I'm noticing your word I looks like this, so can you make it look like this please.
006	Camden:	[Student changes lowercase i to capital I on his text.]
007	Maggie Malone:	There you go. Alright, let's re-read it again. Point to each word Camden.
008	Camden:	I—
009	Maggie Malone:	--Point to your words.
010	Camden:	WHEN I WOKE UP I WENT--
011	Maggie Malone:	--Now went is a popcorn word. You see it up there under the W?
012	Camden:	A. N. T.
013	Maggie Malone:	It's not an A.
014	Camden:	E. N. T.
015	Maggie Malone:	Okay, so you're going to fix it up.
016	Camden:	[Student changes WT to WENT on his text.]
017	Maggie Malone:	Okay, now re-read it.
018	Camden:	I—
019	Maggie Malone:	--Point to the words.
020	Camden:	WHEN I WOKE UP I WENT TO THE APPLE FESTIVAL. AND—
021	Maggie Malone:	--Look at AND. Does that look right?

Figure 8 (cont'd)

022	Camden:	Oh! A. N. D. not A.D.
023	Maggie Malone:	Fix it up.
024	Camden:	[Student changes AD to AND.]
025	Maggie Malone:	AND WHEN I—oops! What do you notice about that again?
026	Camden:	[Student changes lowercase i to capital I on his text.]
027	Maggie Malone:	WHEN I GOT HOME I HAD INFINITY MARVEL. Let's look at this word. HAD. Put up a finger for each letter sound in HAD. /H/ . . .
028	Camden:	/A/ /D/.
029	Maggie Malone:	Okay. Three letters, right.
030	Camden:	H. A. D. [Student changes HD to HAD on his text.]
031	Maggie Malone:	Yep. And then we put something at the end of our sentence to stop it.
032	Camden:	[Student adds a period to the end of his sentence.]
033	Maggie Malone:	Okay, good. Now you see what we've done. Do you see how we worked so carefully pointing to the words and asking if it looked right and sounded right and made sense. What I want you to do is re-read the rest of your book and point to the words just like we practiced on this page. See if you can fix some more up.

It transpired between Maggie Malone and her first grade student, Camden, toward the end of their class unit on personal narrative and upon completion of Camden's text titled *My Birthday*.

Characteristic patterns of participant interaction. The find-and-fix conference genre, like the transcription genre before it, was, for the most part, a teacher dominated one; with a mean percentage of total words spoken per writing conference of 83.89% for teachers and 16.11% for students (see Figure 2). More telling, however, is the difference in mean spoken words per utterance per writing conference. Here, we see teachers' 14.55 words/utterance/writing conference contrasted with students' 2.74 words/utterance/writing conference. As suggested by these numbers and demonstrated in Maggie and Camden's example, teacher utterances tended to be longer within this genre than those witnessed in the transcription conference genre. On the

other hand, with teacher requested read alouds of the text removed, student utterances mirrored those of the transcription genre, once again punctuating teachers' words in short bursts.

In terms of conversational turn-taking patterns, participants applying the find-and-fix conference genre showed a tendency to employ an eclectic mix (see Figure 3), with chaining (both open and closed) displaying sizable use; comprising a combined 59.44% of total teacher utterances/writing conference on average. Such chaining was most often utilized in this genre when correctables arose that students were unable to fix on their own. Examples of two different chaining patterns applied toward this purpose can be seen in lines 011-016 and 027-031 of Maggie and Camden's conference. Outside of these chaining events in which teachers assisted students in achieving suggested edits to their texts, much of the remaining participant turn-taking made use of response-grant (19.89%) and non-chaining IRE/IRF (20.78%) patterns; IRF feedback patterns more likely at the beginning and in the closing turns of a particular conference interaction then elsewhere.

Characteristic communicative forms of talk. Unlike transcription conferences, selection of the find-and-fix conference genre was seldom predetermined. Instead, teachers often initiated these writing conference interactions with authentic questions to students in order to ascertain what they were currently working on as writers. Students' responses to such questions, along with visual cues from students' written text, were generally utilized to establish if a find-and-fix genre was warranted. Therefore, it is not unexpected in this genre to see a portion of total teacher utterances per writing conference coded as authentic initial questions (5.45%) in Figure 4. We see an example of this take place between Maggie and Camden in lines 001-003. Furthermore, authentic, though closed, contingent questions (4.22%) sometimes occurred within the body of a find-and-fix conference when teachers required clarification of students' words or

content in order to determine if they "made sense" as written. Directives comprised a large portion of teachers' total utterances per conference, averaging 42.88%, yet these directives tended to operated somewhat differently from those in the transcription conference genre. Teachers still employed display questions (9.11%) and prompts (though to a far lesser extent at 6.11%) in order to stimulate recall of previously learned information and cue answers (see lines 011, 013, 021, 025, 029, and 031). However, a greater reliance on direct statement directives (24.11%), didactic statements (4.11%), and teacher requested reads alouds of student text (9.44%) were present as well. Directing student to "point to their words" as they read so as to determine if something they wrote "looked right, sounded right, and made sense," and directing them to "fix up" text that did not meet expectations, accounts for much of this difference. This teacher move, which modeled for students a strategy for editing that could be exercised in future contexts, is displayed prominently across the example conference. Moreover, while evaluative feedback of student responses (10.56%) were largely reliant on praise, critique of student text (4.67%) at the word- or sentence-level was sometimes offered.

Aside from elaborated responses (12.33%) to teachers' opening authentic questions, student total utterances per writing conference consisted largely of succinct verbal and non-verbal responses (43.89%), responding by adding text (24.44%), and teacher requested read alouds of students' texts (17.44%) (see Figure 5). While a small percentage of students did show a willingness to challenge teacher utterances (2.78%) in this genre, teachers tended to exert primary-knower status and defend their earlier claims through further explication (1.67%).

Discussion and Implications for Practice

A close look at the transcripts of four individual representative conferences framed by summary statistics from the larger dataset yielded interesting descriptions of four possible

conference genres operating in two primary elementary settings to structure teacher-student talk during the composition and revision of student-produced narrative texts. The important question, however, remains; what do these depictions mean for teachers of primary-grade writing? Findings indicate that what has often been considered in the pedagogical literature to be the same approach to individual writing instruction in primary classrooms (the teacher-student writing conference), is, in actually, unlikely to be the same at all. This mimics earlier discussed research conducted by Sperling (1990, 1991) and Strauss and Xiang (2006) with secondary and post-secondary students.

Case in point, writing conferences within the verbal rehearsal conference genre functioned, in essence, to provide student participants a supportive space in which they might, with assistance, orally generate, structure, and rehearse future narrative text content—an especially important task for young developing writers who, in general, show a tendency to spend little time on planning, and for whom the chore of transcribing text itself can be daunting (McCutchen, 2006). Given that the principal purpose of a verbal rehearsal conference was student content generation, students within this genre were afforded primary-knower status (Berry, 1981), a role traditionally reserved for teachers. As such, they were expected to embrace a more active speaking role, for it was now their knowledge that must be tapped in order to move conference interaction forward. Teachers, on the other hand, were, in general, facilitators who "follow the child" (Graves, 1983, p. 101); listening to students' ideas, asking authentic questions in order to clarify and encourage student content, and parroting back students' own words. While criticism of content, itself, was avoided, teachers were allotted the opportunity to scaffold (Bruner, 1996) students' oral to written language, which was accomplished through reformulated revoicings of earlier generated content and offered as suggestions for inclusion in students' texts.

This is the vision of conferring most often presented as ideal in popular elementary practitioner text (e.g. Calkins, 1994; Calkins, Hartman, & White, 2005; Graves, 1983); with conferences that deviate from this image often evaluated as undesirable. Although well suited to early-stage content generation and planning in the personal narrative genre as demonstrated by study results, such content generation is one of many instructional purposes a writing conference might serve. Take for instance those writing conferences employing the transcription conference genre. In many ways, this genre deeply resembled the teacher-dominated/product-centered conferences documented in research and often cautioned against. Recall, however, that curriculum genres, by definition, function to structure talk in different ways in order to help conversational participants perform fundamentally different tasks (Christie, 2002). Accordingly, instead of discounting such conferences as unsuccessful, we are urged to consider why the conference genre was chosen and whether it was appropriate to meet participants' goals.

Unlike older students many primary-aged children do not yet have a firm grasp on the basic conventions of writing (McCutchen, 2006). When crafting written text, therefore, young children frequently struggle with recording their ideas on the page. Deficiencies in basic transcription skills have been shown to adversely affect writing production and quality (e.g., Graham, McKeown, Kiuhara, & Harris, 2012). As such, devoting time to these skills is understandable in primary-grade contexts and, perhaps, even warranted. Because teacher participants were far more versed in English conventions for transcribing written text, it seems reasonable that they would assume primary-knower status and chose a genre which allowed them to efficiently impart knowledge. Furthermore, I maintain that teachers in this study may also have utilized this genre to explicitly guide students through strategic routines for spelling words—strategies that students could then apply to future writing contexts. Yet, this same

pattern of talk would make little sense if they wished to, instead, invite dialogue and allow their students' a place to formulate and try out ideas.

Educators, for this reason, need to thoughtfully select conference genres that are best suited to the intended focus for each unique writing conference interaction and also responsive to students' needs in the moment. This is no easy task. While educators often give thought to the content of their talk, the ways in which they deliver that content—or the talk itself—receives considerably less attention (Alexander, 2006; Cazden, 2001; Christie, 2002). And yet how talk functions is, I suggest, of critical importance to the success of the writing conferences as a pedagogical tool. Conceptualizing conference practice as consisting of diverse genres that might be selected to meet differing purposes, provides a means within which to think about the type of talk used and to what end. Accordingly, this concept can be drawn upon by literacy coaches and teacher educators to assist classroom practitioners in reflecting on and building a stronger understanding of conferencing practice; as it provides a meta-language that can be employed to evaluate practice and how it aligns, or not, with philosophies and goals for conferring. Doing so has the potential, then, to directly improve teachers' practices of the writing conference as they become more aware of their and their students' own language and more sensitive to the notion of purpose in their talk. Or, in simpler terms, more sensitive to knowing the right type of feedback to offer students at just the right moment.

Suggestions for Future Research and Study Limitations

This study showcased both a new conceptual lens for analyzing writing conference talk and provided an illustration of how doing so has the potential to uncover conference genres whose discourse structures function in diverse ways to accomplish different instructional purposes. It is important to note, however, that due to the presentation of mean data and

prototypical examples, a false sense of uniformity within genre may be garnered. Variation did exist in the data. And while some variability in writing conference enactment amongst a particular grouping would be expected—as conference genres should not be regarded as rigid structures—extreme outliers do provide reason for pause. It is with these extreme variations that we might expect disconnect between form and function to occur. As such, future investigation into conference genre outliers—those whose supposed instructional purposes place them within particular conference genres, but whose chosen discourse structures vary widely from the usual—could be fruitful.

Furthermore, although four primary-grade conference genres were identified in this study, I do not wish to imply that these are the only conference genres possible. Nor do I wish to suggest that the depictions offered here are definitive representations; especially given that all focal conferences were conducted during the production of one text genre (personal narrative). Instead, this work is meant to offer possibilities. Continued examination of writing conferences utilizing a conference genre lens in settings that are similar to this one, as well as contrasting settings showcasing diversity in factors such as teacher experience, cultural and linguistic identification, SES, grade level, instructional philosophy, and text genre are needed. These added observations could then be used both to affirm and to revise the depictions of conferencing as verbal rehearsal, conferencing as criterion specific collaboration, conferencing as transcription activity, and conferencing as find-and-fix correction offered here. Prolonged exploration could also better define additional conference genres. Moreover, such work might be utilized in future research to examine how talk occurring in various conference genres manifests itself in children's texts.

If writing conferences are, as Linda, Maggie and other workshop advocates like themselves believe, "a huge piece of the puzzle" that without which it would be difficult for children to reach their full potential as writers, then they deserve far more attention than they have received, thus far, in the research literature. A curriculum genre lens provides a fresh and potentially potent avenue for such work. From which, we can better grasp exactly what work conversational participants are capable of performing within its boundaries.

APPENDIX

Table 5

Means and Standard Deviations for Dataset Codes

		Verbal Rehearsal (n=33)	Criterion Specific (n=27)	Transcription (n=19)	Find-and-Fix (n=9)
% Teacher words spoken/writing conference	M	67.61	85.19	91.68	83.89
	SD	10.802	8.871	5.334	12.713
% Student words spoken/writing conference	M	32.39	14.81	8.32	16.11
	SD	10.804	8.871	5.334	12.863
Avg. words/teacher utterance/writing conference	M	13.10	23.62	9.36	14.55
	SD	3.351	7.506	5.085	6.166
Avg. words/student utterance/writing conference	M	8.51	5.58	1.03	2.74
	SD	5.228	3.888	0.744	2.030
Percentage of Each Conversational Turn-Taking Pattern per Writing Conference:					
Open chaining	M	19.15	20.67	8.11	20.33
	SD	25.112	23.721	9.585	21.266
Closed chaining	M	41.70	49.07	16.52	39.11
	SD	27.960	30.768	11.752	27.733
Triadic dialogue (IRE/IRF)	M	14.54	5.04	23.42	20.78
	SD	19.247	14.368	26.17	17.219

Table 5 (cont'd)

		Verbal Rehearsal n=33	Criterion Specific n=27	Transcription n=19	Find-and-Fix n=9
Question-answer	M	8.79	1.96	4.26	0.00
	SD	14.017	7.298	15.136	0.000
Response-grant	M	15.64	21.74	47.68	19.89
	SD	16.340	18.697	25.695	19.959
Percentage of Teacher Utterances per Communicative Form per Writing Conference:					
Questions	M	41.94	34.81	9.68	18.78
	SD	13.199	7.153	7.676	7.981
Authentic questions	M	41.94	32.70	1.26	9.67
	SD	12.857	9.029	2.136	6.500
Open authentic initial questions	M	20.55	11.70	0.00	3.56
	SD	11.822	7.493	0.000	4.157
Closed authentic initial questions	M	2.70	3.89	0.00	1.89
	SD	5.235	4.941	0.000	3.018
Open authentic contingent Questions	M	8.48	5.59	0.00	0.00
	SD	8.614	6.344	0.000	0.000
Closed authentic contingent questions	M	10.21	11.52	1.26	4.22
	SD	8.598	7.303	2.156	4,868

Table 5 (cont'd)

		Verbal Rehearsal n=33	Criterion Specific n=27	Transcription n=19	Find-and-Fix n=9
Display questions	M	0.00	2.11	8.42	9.11
	SD	0.000	4.117	7.351	7.373
Revoicings	M	22.52	12.04	0.63	4.89
	SD	10.756	6.105	1.640	5.061
Didactic statements	M	0.00	8.37	2.47	4.11
	SD	0.000	3.733	2.796	3.655
Directives	M	23.92	31.26	64.63	42.88
	SD	13.700	8.102	10.934	13.461
Directives to read text	M	6.00	6.04	5.89	9.44
	SD	7.053	4.848	7.141	4.333
Direct statement directives	M	8.70	11.85	17.95	24.11
	SD	8.879	6.329	8.093	11.709
Prompt for student response directives	M	0.55	1.78	39.58	6.11
	SD	1.804	2.900	15.643	7.785
Query directives	M	8.67	11.59	1.21	3.22
	SD	8.841	6.761	3.029	4.055
Read alouds	M	4.48	5.37	8.95	11.67
	SD	7.181	5.759	4.564	7.810

Table 5 (cont'd)

		Verbal Rehearsal n=33	Criterion Specific n=27	Transcription n=19	Find-and-Fix n=9
Feedback-evaluations of student responses	M	6.48	4.19	12.42	10.56
	SD	7.459	5.061	6.602	11.001
Feedback-evaluations of student text	M	0.55	4.19	0.00	4.67
	SD	1.752	4.616	0.000	8.078
Explications	M	0.000	0.96	0.00	1.67
	SD	0.000	2.941	0.000	5.000
Percentage of Student Utterances per Communicative Form per Writing Conference:					
Elaborated responses	M	60.30	31.44	0.74	12.33
	SD	19.605	20.436	2.579	17.514
Succinct responses	M	27.64	46.56	30.74	43.89
	SD	17.546	21.625	16.802	10.203
Responding by adding to text	M	1.33	4.48	61.53	24.44
	SD	4.342	9.125	23.145	16.920
Teacher requested read alouds	M	10.79	15.63	7.37	17.44
	SD	11.818	11.881	8.776	12.521
Willingness to challenge teacher	M	1.76	5.26	0.00	2.78
	SD	7.098	10.365	0.000	8.333

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MANUSCRIPT 2: THE RIGHT FEEDBACK AT THE RIGHT MOMENT: THE POWER OF PURPOSEFUL TALK IN THE PRIMARY-GRADE WRITING CONFERENCE

Abstract

When making determinations about how to teach students educators often give thought to the content of their talk. However, the ways in which they deliver that content—or the talk itself—receives considerably less attention. Yet how talk functions is of critical importance to the success of the teacher-student writing conference as a pedagogical tool in primary-grade settings. In this article, two illustrative writing conference interactions are shared from one high-functioning first-grade writing classroom that showcase how teacher talk, and especially teacher talk in relation to overall conference purpose, greatly shapes the nature of work young children are able to accomplish within a particular conference. Recommendations for implementing *purposeful talk* when conducting writing conferences in primary-grade classrooms are also offered.

Introduction

It is a typical October afternoon in Maggie Malone's classroom at Lakeside Elementary, a small-town PK-5 elementary school located in the Midwestern United States. The hustle and bustle of the lunch period has ended, and her first-grade students have moved into one of their favorite times of day—the writer's workshop (Calkins, 2003). Maggie has just finished a fourteen-minute mini-lesson on how to "plan and grow a story" in "itsy-bitsy steps" across the pages of a booklet; and, as students move from their meeting spot on the carpet to their independent writing spots scatter around the room, she calls a few children over to her back table to meet with her individually about their writing.

Similar to a number of primary-grade settings across the United States (Cutler & Graham, 2008), brief conversations—or conferences as they are often referred to—in which teachers meet one-on-one with students to share, discuss, revise, edit, or evaluate a piece of student writing or an idea for writing are a widely-used, important pedagogical tool in Maggie's classroom (Calkins 1994; Calkins, Hartman, & White, 2005; Freedman, Greenleaf, & Sperling, 1987; Graves, 1983; Murray, 1968, 1979). Here, such conferences provide a space for participants to recognize and articulate individual student strengths and goals, as well as try out new writing strategies in order to move students toward greater independence as writers. Moreover, they function as a type of formative assessment that aid the teacher in her understanding of where students are in relation to the mini-lesson and what steps are needed to nudge their writing to the next level.

As part of a larger study on writing conference enactment in the primary grades (see Hawkins, 2015a), I chronicled (via video recordings of each writing period, additional audio recordings of all teacher-student writing conferences, field notes, classroom artifacts, and the collection of student work samples) Maggie Malone and twenty-three of her first-grade students'

journeys through a four-week unit on crafting personal narratives. Maggie, a veteran teacher of sixteen years, was chosen for this study for her strong reputation as an educator and extensive experience with writing workshop methods and conferring. The environment she created for her young writers was one in which workshop advocates such as Lucy Calkins or Donald Graves would be proud. Her shelves brimmed with mentor texts. Her classroom walls adorned with anchor charts crafted during writing mini-lessons. One large corner of her classroom devoted to an open area where her and her students met daily to discuss writing and share texts. Despite her wealth of knowledge, exemplar writing practice, and years of experience with conferring, Maggie still found writing conferences to be "the most challenging part of her instruction." The challenging nature of conferring with writers resulting mainly from the concern that writing conferences were not something she could plan for in advance. This left Maggie wondering if her engagement with her students "in the moment" was as productive to their growth as writers as it could be.

The principal concern here, then, is one of talk and its impact on learning. According to Alexander (2006), for classroom talk to be productive "we must know where the talk is going, and do what is required to lead it there" (p. 49). In other words, in order to scaffold student thinking from present to desired understanding, educators must consciously structure their talk in relation to those overarching goals they are trying to achieve. When making determinations about how to teach students, educators often give thought to the content of their talk. However, the ways in which they deliver that content—or the talk itself—tend to go unnoticed (Alexander, 2006; Cazden, 2001; Christie, 2002). And yet how talk functions is, I suggest, of critical importance to the success of the writing conference as a pedagogical tool in primary-grade settings. In this article, I share two illustrative writing conference interactions between Maggie

and her students that showcase how teacher talk, and especially teacher talk in regard to overall conference purpose, greatly shapes the nature of work young children are able to accomplish within a particular conference interaction. I then offer recommendations for implementing *purposeful talk* when conducting writing conferences in primary-grade classrooms.

Purposeful Talk in Primary-Grade Writing Conferences: Aligning Form and Function with Instructional Purpose

During writing conferences, as is the case with all instructional interactions, educators construct and select particular *speech genres* (Bakhtin, 1986), or to borrow Christie's (2002) term *curriculum genres*, based, ideally, on the goals they wish to accomplish with their students. This is because curriculum genres, themselves, structure talk in different ways to perform fundamentally different tasks. A curriculum genre lens, then, enables researchers to not only describe the talk that occurs during conferring, explore how such talk functions under various conditions, and investigate what affordances or constraints use of such talk provides both teachers and students, but likewise allows for the examination and evaluation of talk in relation to its intended purpose. Previous research (Hawkins, 2014a, 2014b, 2015b) suggests that teachers have several *conference genres* (a term I've derived in connection to Christie's curriculum genres) in which to draw from in their conferencing practice, each suited to performing distinctly different work. As such, when conducting writing conferences it is essential that educators thoughtfully select those conference genres that are best suited to their intended purpose for each unique interaction.

Below I offer a micro-analysis of classroom discourse closely examining two representative writing conferences from Maggie Malone's classroom. These examples were purposefully selected from the 56 writing conferences collected during her four-week unit on

personal narrative, in order to demonstrate the importance of alignment between conference form and conference function and its connection to conference purpose. (For full analysis procedures and a detailed account of how conference genres operated in this classroom, see Hawkins, 2015a.) In the first example, a writing conference between Maggie and Evan, we see clear alignment between teacher instructional purpose, conference form, and conference function. In the second, a writing conference between Maggie and Camden where Maggie's instructional purpose is more ambiguous, however, alignment between form, function, and intended purpose is unclear and conference utility in question.

Evan's Conference: From Conferencing as Verbal Rehearsal to Conferencing as Transcription Activity

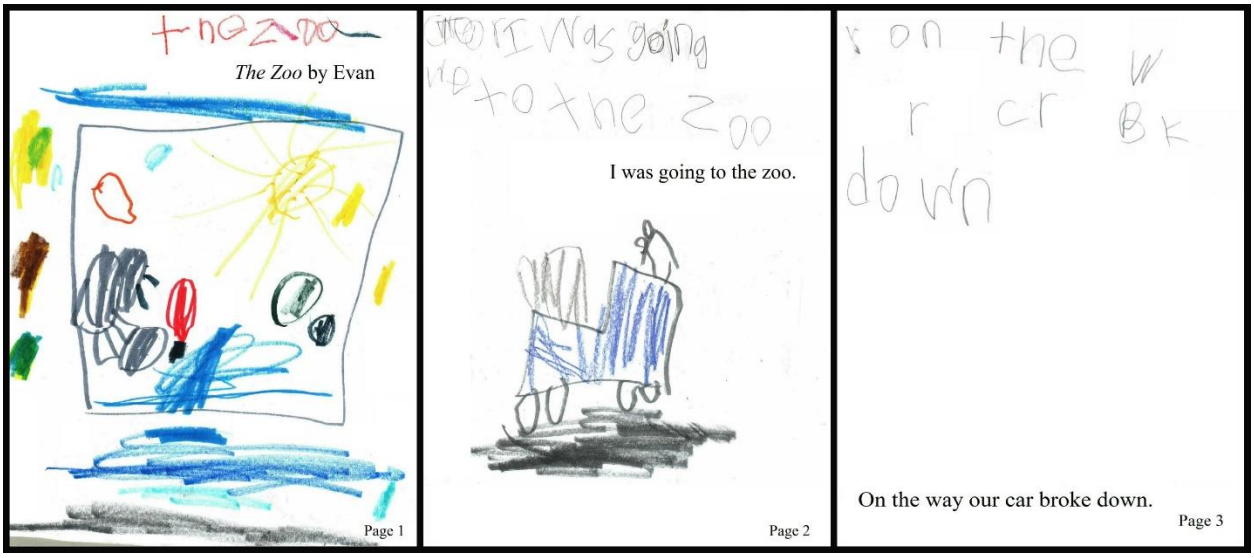
Maggie was at her back table conferring with Rejanee when movement caught her eye. Looking up, she glimpses Evan once again chasing after a wayward crayon on the floor. She asks him to join her at the table with his writing and, upon seeing what little he had accomplish this afternoon on his personal narrative titled *The Zoo*, decides to hold an impromptu conference. Maggie described Evan as a reluctant writer who struggled with both letter formation and transcribing text in conventional ways. Whereas at this point in the unit many students where wrapping up their first stories or already beginning a second, Evan had completed only two one-sentence pages beyond his title page (see Figure 9).

Despite her worry for Evan's lack of progress on his piece thus far, Maggie does not lead with this concern. Instead, through use of a broad authentic question, she opens the conversational floor for Evan to talk about his writing or process from his prospective in line 001.

001 Teacher: Okay Evan, how's it going today?

Figure 9

Evan's Pre-Conference Work Sample "The Zoo"



Inviting writers to respond to their own writing prior to offering feedback or evaluation aligns well with Maggie's stance of teachers as facilitators within a writing conference. A role in which the adult participant is expected to act less as a "teacher" and more a mirror for children to "see *their* intent, *their* needs, *their* problems" (Murray, 1979 as cited in Lerner, 2005, p. 201). Evan takes up Maggie's invitation, reading his text aloud in line 002 and then sharing his intention to move on to the next page of his story in line 004.

002 Evan: Umm . . . ONE DAY I WAS GOING TO THE ZOO. ON THE WAY OUR CAR BROKE DOWN—

003 Teacher: --Uh-no! On the way.

004 Evan: Yeah. I was going to the next page after.

In this brief initial exchange Maggie makes two important conclusions that help determine the form and function of the talk to follow. First, that Evan is finished—at least in his mind—with the two pages of text he has shared aloud. Second, that he needs some assistance

"growing" his story across the remainder of the pages in his booklet, seeing as he had added no additional words or pictures to his text in the proceeding twenty minutes of the independent writing period. In order to support Evan to further grow his story Maggie draws on what I have termed a *verbal rehearsal conference genre* as her guide. A verbal rehearsal conference functions, in essence, to provide writers an open space to discuss, tryout, and orally rehearse new text or ideas for text with an interested and supportive listener prior to committing that work to the written page; an especially important task for young developing writers who, in general, show a tendency to spend little time on planning, and for whom the chore of transcribing text itself can be daunting (McCutchen, 2006).

During a verbal rehearsal conference, the teacher adopts both an active and a passive role; conversing with students to build a shared understanding of their focus, listening to their ideas and parroting them back, encouraging elaboration through the use of authentic questioning, and periodically reformulated their oral expressions to better approximate written registers and support future text transcription. Furthermore, students are persuaded to take on an active speaking role, for it is their knowledge that must be tapped in order to move the writing forward. We see something akin to this occurring between Evan and Maggie in lines 005-012 as she guides him through a retelling of the subsequent "itsy-bitsy steps" in his story in order to generate content for the next page of his text.

005	Teacher:	ON THE WAY OUR CAR BROKE DOWN. Then what happened?
006	Evan:	We—we had to call someone to pick us up.
007	Teacher:	So you had to call someone to pick you up.
008	Evan:	Yeah. It was kind of a long time, because the zoo was—like we

broke down right where the zoo is.

009 Teacher: Did you even make it to the zoo?

010 Evan: We did. But—

011 Teacher: --You did make it.

012 Evan: Yeah. But it was past an hour. And we had to call some—a limo to pick us up because it was too dark.

Here, Evan shows active engagement in his conference, both through his sheer volume of words (an impressive 57% of the total words spoken during this verbal rehearsal conference belonging to Evan) and the elaborated nature of many of his turns of talk (averaging 11.71 words/utterance) to his teacher's 8.71 words/utterance). Moreover, Maggie does not add her own thinking or push Evan in any particular direction at this point. Nor do we see her evaluate the correctness of his ideas. Instead, she acts as a sounding board, revoicing his words and encouraging him to say more. Even her closed question (a form of teacher questioning that traditionally seeks succinct, specific responses such as a yes or no answer) in line 009 functions as an authentic one that an interested listener might ask and moves the conversation forward.

Throughout this exchange Evan and Maggie's words are contingent upon what occurred in the previous turn of talk. Building upon one another over time in order to aid participants in reaching a joint understanding of the text they are attempting to generate together. It is only once this joint understanding is reached that we see Maggie (in line 013) steer Evan back to his writing with a suggestion for a sentence he might wish to include on the next page of his text.

013 Teacher: Okay, so could you say, it was night so we had to call a limo to pick us up?

014 Evan: [Student enthusiastically nods yes.]

True to the nature of a verbal rehearsal conference this suggestion takes the form of an authentic question to the writer and incorporates a reformulation of the writers' own words. And while Maggie might have pressed Evan to generate his own sentence prior of offering him one of her own, Evan shows agreement with and appreciation for this scaffold in his enthusiastic nod up and down in line 014.

Evan and Maggie's writing conference could have ended after this suggestion was made. With, perhaps, Maggie restating her suggestion and explicitly drawing attention to the generative process for text creation they had undergone. Such an interaction would meet Maggie's general goals for conferring, as it would nudge the student forward toward the accomplishment of his current intention (to move to the next page in his story), improve his written text (through the addition of an "itsy-bitsy step"), and offer the possibility of improving his future process. Many of Maggie's observed verbal rehearsal conferences concluded in this manner, especially those involving idea generation during the initial planning stages of a new story or a student more capable of conventional text transcription. However, on this occasion Maggie chose to continue her work with Evan in order to help him draft the words they had generated during the verbal rehearsal onto his page. As we will see, this new purpose invoked a distinctively different pattern of talk for these two participants from that which proceeded it.

Upon determining the content of his ensuing page, Maggie abruptly switched the focus of her conference with Evan from idea generation to the written transcription of content. With this change, we see Maggie shift from a verbal rehearsal conference to drawing on what I have labeled a *transcription conference genre*. Unlike older students, many primary-aged children, like Even, do not yet have a firm grasp on the basic conventions of writing (McCutchen, 2006). Moreover, deficiencies in basic transcription skills have been shown to adversely affect writing

production and quality (Graham, McKeown, Kiuhara, & Harris, 2012). For instance, beyond a list of sight words available to him on the classroom word wall, Evan struggled with how to alphabetically represent written words in ways a reader, including himself, could later interpret. Writing, therefore, was a painfully slow process for Evan, his ideas, at times, lost in the lengthy time it took to transcribe them. The transcription conference, then, provides students an opportunity to draft written text under the close guidance of a knowledgeable other that more closely approximates conventional norms (in terms of alphabetic letter formation, spelling, capitalization, spacing, and punctuation) for word- and sentence-level construction. Within its bounds teachers most often lead students to transcribe sentences word by word, pausing when mistakes were made, or when students were unable to comply independently, to assist by means of facilitating strategic routines for problem-solving, stimulating recall, or providing additional information.

Take, for example, the talk in lines 015-025 following Evan and Maggie's earlier described interaction.

015	Teacher:	Okay, it . . .
016	Evan:	/I//T/ . . . I. T. [Student writes IT on paper.]
017	Teacher:	IT was . . .
018	Evan:	[Student writes WAS on paper.]
019	Teacher:	IT WAS night . . .
020	Evan:	/N/. [Student writes N on paper.]
021	Teacher:	Okay, put your fingers up. What do you hear next?
022	Evan:	/N//IGHT/ . . . T. [Student writes T on paper.]
023	Teacher:	Put your fingers up. /N//III//T/ . . . What goes in the middle?

024 Evan: [Student adds I on paper between the N and T.]

025 Teacher: There you go. IT WAS NIGHT so . . .

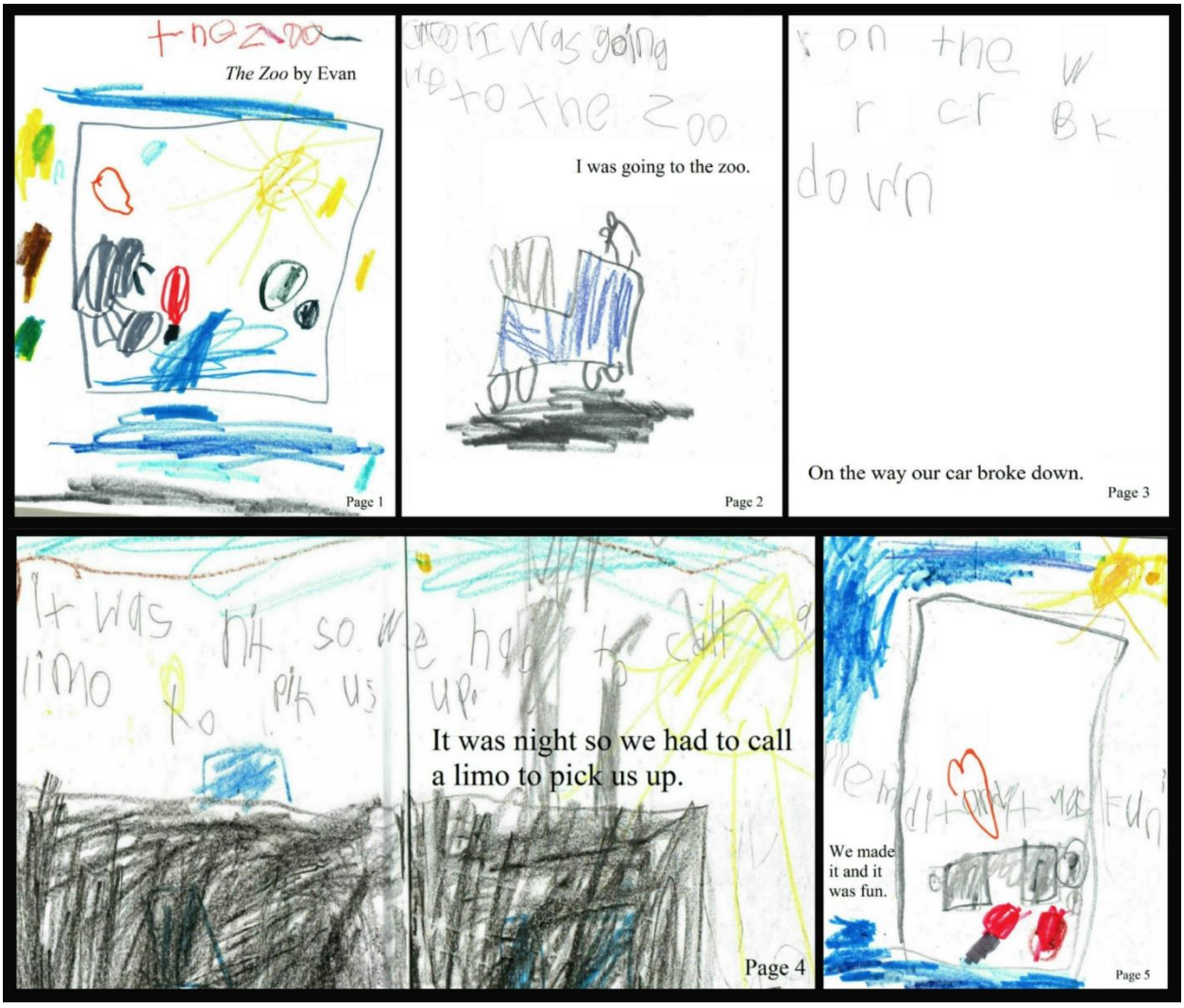
Here, we see Maggie directly guide Even through each word of their previously generated sentence; first giving him the word, then providing a space for him to transcribe the word onto his paper. When Evan's attempts meet Maggie's standard for correct transcription for him at this point in the year (as they did in lines 016 and 018), she repeats what has been written and prompts for the next word in the sentence. This continues until one of Evan's attempts fail, in this case with the word NIGHT. In line 020 we see Evan offer up only a first-letter representation of NIGHT. Maggie deems this representation unacceptable in line 021 with her directive for him to put his fingers up and display question (a form of inauthentic question seeking information the teacher already possesses) asking him what he hears next. This triggers Evan to add a final letter representation to his paper in line 022, which is once again deemed unacceptable by Maggie. While Maggie does not expect a conventional representation of the –IGHT chunk, in line 023 she pushes Evan to isolate and include the audible middle sound with her directive to once again put his fingers up, prompt for the long /I/ sound, and display question referencing the missing vowel. Evan's correct response in line 024 is, then, followed by Maggie's validation in line 025 and quick shift to the next word. This pattern of talk between Maggie and Evan continues through the completion of his sentence. With similar assistance to that of the transcription of NIGHT occurring for the words HAD, CALL, LIMO, and PICK.

Contrary to when the idea for this sentence was conceived, Evan's verbal participation during the transcription portion of his conference was exceedingly low (Evan voicing only 17% of the total words spoken during this time, and averaging 2.13 words/utterance to his teacher's 10.42 words/utterance). Likewise, the talk found in their transcription conference can be

described as decidedly more aligned with conventional classroom discourse (Cazden, 2001; Jackson, 1990; Mehan, 1979). Seeing as Maggie was far more versed then Evan in English conventions for transcribing written text, she shifts her role from facilitator to that of a keeper of knowledge, who, over the course of the conference, imparts her wisdom and leads her student to correct answers. As such, instead of authentic questions and the positioning of Evan as primary-knower (Berry, 1981), in this conference Maggie's talk consists heavily of display questions, directives, prompts, and didactic statements, all common forms used in traditional teacher telling

Figure 10

Evan's Post-Conference Work Sample "The Zoo"



(Cazden, 2001; Mehan, 1979). Evan's responses were also characteristically succinct in nature and often overtly evaluated for their correctness. I would argue, however, that Maggie drew on this more traditional pattern of teacher-student interaction not only for the purpose of teacher telling, but to also model a transcription strategy (first stretching an unknown word across his fingers to isolate the sounds he hears, then going back and re-reading his sentence to determine what his next word should be) Evan might use in order to work more independently in the future.

Upon the conclusion of his conference with Maggie, and when once again left to work on his own, Evan quickly adds to his text; printing "WE MADE IT AND IT WAS FUN" to a previously blank page prior to the end of the writing period (see Figure 10). Words reminiscent of those spoken earlier with Maggie.

Camden's Conference: Conferencing as Verbal Rehearsal, Conferencing as Criterion Specific Collaboration, or Conferencing as Something Else Entirely?

One day prior to her conference interaction with Evan, Maggie met with Camden. Camden, with his big eyes and lopsided grin, was a social child. Someone who got along well with his classmates and teacher despite his being retain the year before. His teacher regarded him as a struggling writer for his age, though his written performance seemed on par with many of his present classmates. Maggie had ask Camden back to her table this particular afternoon as part of a small group of students all in need of assistance in "setting the scene" for their texts. After a brief lesson on how to set the scene, Maggie transitioned from group work to one-on-one writing conferences with the following:

000 Teacher: Alright. So I want you all to take a look at your beginning right now. Re-read it to yourself, and I'm gonna kind of lean in and help you with your ideas for adding to your beginning.

Accordingly, Maggie planned to focus her conferring work on generating ideas for text that better set the scene for students' personal narratives then the current text comprising their beginnings. In Maggie's classroom such a focus on idea generation would normally trigger one of two conference genres. The first, a verbal rehearsal conference genre (as we saw with Evan) within which Maggie could encourage her students to openly talk through their ideas for beginnings, urge them to say more when warranted, and offer reformulations of their words as suggestions for inclusion in their texts. The second, what I have come to term a *criterion specific conference genre,* within which Maggie and her students—utilizing talk structures similar to those found in a verbal rehearsal (e.g., authentic initiating and follow-up questions, revoicings, suggestions)—could develop a shared explicit understanding of why a particular beginning was not working and what might be done to improve upon it. Yet, as we will see momentarily, on this day her work with Camden more approximated the talk found in Evan's transcription conference segment then talk commonly seem in a genuine verbal rehearsal or criterion specific conference.

Camden had already finished re-reading his text (see Figure 11) when Maggie turned to him. Moving closer, Maggie read his writing aloud and immediately expressed confusion with his beginning using a series of authentic, though mostly closed, questions in line 001.

001 Teacher: *THE TRIP*. Let's see what you've got here. IT WAS—IT WAS FIVE-HUNDRED DAYS. For what? Did it take you a long time to get there? Where were you going?

Closed but authentic questions used to clarify meaning are not unusual in verbal rehearsal or criterion specific conferences, and often function within these conference genres to open larger dialogues between readers and writers as they build meaning together. Be that as it may, after Camden answers one of Maggie's questions in line 002 with a brief two-word phrase, Maggie

Figure 11

Camden's Pre-Conference Work Sample "The Trip"

immediately provides him with her recommendation for a revised beginning in line 003.

002 Camden: South Carolina.

003 Teacher: South Carolina. Okay, so what if you said something like this—we can add that you went to South Carolina, right. And it seemed like it took a really long time.

With these words Maggie no longer positions herself in her conference with Camden as a knowledgeable reader wanting to discuss a potentially confusing story opener and generate possible alternatives, but, instead, as someone capable of revising his flawed beginning.

Whether intentional or not, this positioning of the teacher shifts the focus of this conference from idea generation to an emphasis on resolving a problem in the text itself. A shift that, if allowed to become the sole purpose for a conference, can promote a more authoritative role for the teacher, a tendency toward the employment of conventional teacher talk forms (e.g., display questions, directives, prompts, evaluative feedback), and a low level of student verbal participation (as seen in this conference, Camden speaking only 6% of the total words uttered, and averaging only 2.60 words/utterance to his teacher's 28.57 words/utterance).

004 Matt: It was endless.

005 Teacher: It was endless. Matt remembers that big word that we learned that means it goes on and on and on.

006 Camden: It wasn't really endless.

007 Teacher: Well I know. Remember that we said the word endless doesn't really mean it really was endless. It can be used to mean something that seems to take a really long time. Did it seem to take a really long time?

008 Camden: Not really a really long time.

009 Teacher: Well you know what, though, you had said it took five-hundred days. Wouldn't that be a really long time, five-hundred days?

Here, for instance, we see Maggie's original recommendation followed in lines 004-006 by a brief interruption from a fellow student, Matt, and a further recommendation for revision which is hastily rejected by Camden. Maggie interprets his rejection as misunderstanding in line 007 and, after providing further explanation, poses a closed question (Did it seem to take a really long time?) in which she expects Camden to agree. Upon hearing his repeated rejection in line 008, Maggie challenges this rejection in line 009 with her continued explanation of the word's appropriateness to the context of his text as she has interpreted it, and another closed display question (Wouldn't that be a really long time, five-hundred days?).

Receiving no response from Camden, Maggie drops her proposal to directly revise IT WAS 500 DAYS in line 010. Instead, she provides a sentence that adds to his beginning and pointedly asks Camden if this is what happened. Camden agrees that this statement is factual to his story in line 011, leading Maggie (in line 012) to validate his response and slowly articulate her proposed sentence once more, indicating to Camden that it was time to transcribe her words onto his page.

010 Teacher: You don't have to use that word. But, Camden, what if you start something like this, one time my family and I drove to South Carolina. Is that what happened?

011 Camden: Yeah.

012 Teacher: Yeah. Okay, ready. One time my family and . . . [Teacher turns to answer a question from another student. Then returns to Camden

Figure 12

Camden's Post-Conference Work Sample "The Trip"

> who has added the following to his text: WU TIM MY FAMLE AND I WENT TO SUL CRULINU.] ONE TIME MY FAMILY AND I WENT TO SOUTH CAROLINA. Good. Now you're ready for your itsy-bitsy steps.

Interestingly, Camden not only adds Maggie's words to his beginning, but, in the end, does choose to replace his original beginning with them (see Figure 12). This effort is praised by Maggie; his new text now meeting his teacher's expectations for what a suitable story beginning should entail.

The Right Feedback at the Right Moment: Implementing Purposeful Talk in Primary-Grade Writing Classrooms

Authentic questions, responsive revoicing, and encouraging abundant student talk are all important communicative devices, and I in no way wish to diminish the affordances they permit students when used in primary-grade writing classrooms. Even so, when conferring with students they are not the only legitimate interactional structures one may choose from. Recall that conference genres, by definition, function to structure writing conference talk in different ways in order to help participants perform fundamentally different tasks. In Evan's conference with Maggie the selected conference genres (in both form and function) align well with the teacher's two opposing instructional purposes for the conference, and allowed the student to perform the type of work expected within each genre's bounds. But what happens when intended purpose and selected conference genre are out of sync with one another? When purpose and talk, perhaps, conflict?

If the purpose of Maggie and Camden's conference is defined as the rectification of Camden's first page of text by the teacher so that it resembled a more accurate beginning

(according to the teacher) in the personal narrative genre, then it can be inferred that the implementation of his conference, in form and function, and the resulting work it allowed for supported the intent of their time together. Likewise, if the purpose was the elimination of Camden's ambiguous statement "IT WAS 500 DAYS," then the same would be true. Many teachers, including Maggie, however, have grander expectations for their conferring practice then the fabrication of teacher revised and corrected texts. Instead, they want their students to take what they've learned in a conference interaction and apply it to their future work as writers (Calkins, 1994; Calkins, Hartman, & White, 2005). In other words, they wish to improve not only the piece of writing but the writer himself.

With its authoritative teacher positioning and limited student verbal engagement, Camden's conference as currently structured provided little space to openly discuss his potentially confusing beginning, critic its strengths and weaknesses, build a shared understanding of what might constitute a stronger narrative opening, or collaboratively formulate possibilities for new text. It is not surprising, then, that, when left to his own devices, Camden was unable to craft a beginning that "set the scene" in any of his personal narratives that followed. As such, a verbal rehearsal conference genre, or, perhaps more fitting still, a criterion specific conference genre (with its unique balance of retaining students' primary-knower status over content, while also positioning teachers to candidly discuss and critique such content in relation to explicitly shared criterion expectations for writing within a specific genre) make far more sense for aligning form, function, and purpose in this case.

Maggie Malone's conference with Camden was unusual—an anomaly, of sorts, among an otherwise impressive primary-grade conferring practice. While an "off" writing conference every now and then is bound to happen to the best of us, misalignment between conference

purpose and conference talk on a regular basis could limit the potential growth possible within these interactions. Accordingly, as writing teachers interested in making the most of our one-on-one engagement with students, we must regularly examine our own writing conference enactment for such alignment. Literacy specialists and teacher educators can also urge those inservice or preservice teachers they work with to reflect on a sampling of self-recorded conferences from their classrooms utilizing a conference genre lens. To better facilitate this, Table 6 provides a list of recommended questions for reflection, along with a summary of four potential conference genres primary-grade teachers might draw upon and their associated forms and functions for reference. Just as there is not one purpose for conferring, no one conference genre is ideal in all situations. As such, like Goldilocks, we must select the conference genre that is "just right" for responding to our students' needs in the moment; for it is here—when form and function align with instructional intent—that purposeful talk can take place.

Table 6

Recommendations for Teacher Reflection and Summary of Potential Primary-Grade Conference Genres

Questions for Teacher Reflection	Associated Forms and Functions of Each Conference Genre	Primary-Grade Conference Genres (Conferencing as . . .)			
		Verbal Rehearsal	Criterion Specific Collaboration	Transcription Activity	Find-and-Fix Correction
What is my intent in this conference? What appears to be the child's intent? What work are the student and I able to perform in this conference, and how does this work align with my intended goals for this conference? With my intended goals for conferring in general? How has this conference improved the student's current piece of writing? What potential does it have for also improving the writer?	Conference Genre Functions	Content Generation A *verbal rehearsal conference genre* affords students an open space to discuss, tryout, and orally rehearsal new text or ides for text with an interested and supportive listener prior to committing words to the written page.	Content Generation A *criterion specific conference genre* affords students a collaborative space to revise and generate content towards explicit criterion expectations with a knowledgeable, and sometimes critical, listener.	Content Transcription-Drafting A *transcription conference genre* affords students an opportunity to draft written text under the close guidance of a knowledgeable other that more closely approximates conventional norms for word- and sentence-level construction.	Content Transcription-Editing/Correction A *find-and-fix conference genre* affords students an opportunity to better word- and sentence-level transcription so that it more closely approximates conventional norms for word- and sentence-level construction under the close guidance of a knowledgeable other in the course of editing previously written text.

Table 6 (cont'd)

Questions for Teacher Reflection	Associated Forms and Functions of Each Conference Genre	Primary-Grade Conference Genres (Conferencing as . . .)			
		Verbal Rehearsal	Criterion Specific Collaboration	Transcription Activity	Find-and-Fix Correction
How do I interact with the student during the conference? What types of questions are being asked and to what ends? How do I respond to student's responses? Do I build on them? Probe them? Evaluate them and move on?	Conference Genre Forms	Authentic questions Revoicing of student talk Teacher suggestions for text derived from student talk Teacher talk builds on student responses	Authentic questions Revoicing of student talk Teacher suggestions for text derived from student talk & teacher knowledge of text genre criteria Teacher talk build on, probes, and sometimes critiques student responses Teacher telling/didactic statements	Display questions Teacher directives Teacher prompts for correct answers Teacher telling/didactic statements Teacher sharing of strategies for text transcription Limited student talk; succinct student responses	Display questions Teacher directives Teacher prompts for correct answers Teacher telling/didactic statements Teacher sharing of strategies for text transcription Limited student talk; succinct student responses

Table 6 (cont'd)

Questions for Teacher Reflection	Associated Forms and Functions of Each Conference Genre	Primary-Grade Conference Genres (Conferencing as . . .)			
		Verbal Rehearsal	Criterion Specific Collaboration	Transcription Activity	Find-and-Fix Correction
		Large amount of student talk; mostly elaborated student responses	Student talk may be less abundant then with verbal rehearsal; elaborated and succinct student responses may be present		
How have I positioned myself in this conference? Who speaks and when?	Conference Genres Participant Roles	Teacher positioned as supportive facilitator	Teacher positioned as primary-knower over text genre criteria	Teacher positioned as primary-knower and authoritative resource	Teacher positioned as primary-knower and authoritative resource
		Student positioned as primary-knower	Student position as primary-knower over text content, and often given final decision-making power over what changes/additions to implement in text	Student positioned as active or passive learner	Student positioned as active or passive learner

APPENDIX

Table 7

Observed Discourse Structures by Conference

Observed Discourse Structures		Evan (Verbal Rehearsal)	Evan (Transcription)	Camden
Measures of Speaker Involvement	Total # of words	143	304	213
	Teacher total # of words	61 (43%)	250 (83%)	200 (94%)
	Student total # of words	82 (57%)	51 (17%)	13 (6%)
	Teacher total # of utterances	7 (50%)	24 (50%)	7 (54%)
	Student total # of utterances	7 (50%)	24 (50%)	5 (38%)
	Avg. length of teacher utterance (in words)	8.71	10.42	28.57
	Avg. length of student utterance (in words)	11.71	2.13	2.60
Communicative Forms of Teacher Talk	Teacher questions	3 (37.5%)	5 (10%)	5 (29%)
	Authentic questions	[3 (37.5%)]	[--]	[3 (18%)]
	Open authentic questions	[2 (25%)]	[--]	[1 (6%)]
	Closed authentic questions	[1 (12.5%)]	[--]	[2 (12%)]
	Display questions (closed)	[--]	[5 (10%)]	[2 (12%)]
	Teacher revoicing	3 (37.5%)	--	1 (6%)
	Teacher didactic statements	--	1 (2%)	1 (6%)
	Teacher directives	1 (12.5%)	31 (63%)	5 (29%)
	Direct statement directives	[--]	[9 (18%)]	[4 (24%)]
	Prompts for response	[--]	[22 (45%)]	[1 (6%)]
	Query directives	[1 (12.5%)]	[--]	[--]
	Teacher read alouds of text	1 (12.5%)	7 (15%)	2 (12%)
	Teacher evaluation	--	5 (10%)	1 (6%)
	Teacher explications	--	--	2 (12%)

Table 7 (cont'd)

Observed Discourse Structures		Evan (Verbal Rehearsal)	Evan (Transcription)	Camden
Communicative Forms of Student Talk	Student elaborated responses	5 (71%)	--	--
	Student succinct responses	2 (29%)	18 (45%)	2 (40%)
	Student responding by adding to text	--	22 (55%)	1 (20%)
	Student willingness to challenge teacher	--	--	2 (40%)

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