**LET'S TALK ABOUT TEXT:**
**A CASE STUDY OF EARLY ELEMENTARY TEACHERS REFINING THEIR**
**PRACTICE TO FACILITATE WHOLE GROUP TEXT-BASED DISCUSSION WHILE**
**SUPPORTING ELL STUDENTS**

By

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**ABSTRACT**

LET'S TALK ABOUT TEXT:
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This qualitative case study provided insights into the journey of two first grade teachers as they attempted to negotiate learning goals and refine their practice to facilitate whole group text-based discussions while supporting ELL students. This study shares the voices, perceptions, and experiences of these two teachers as they planned, implemented, and reflected on their lessons, thus, sharing their challenges and successes along their journey. The teachers selected areas within the Dialogic Instruction Tool (DIT) (Reznitskaya, 2012) as professional development goals. The findings revealed that although both teachers made progress in working towards their professional goals as identified by the DIT Teaching Indicators, neither teacher moved beyond the beginning stages of shifting from monologic toward dialogic teaching during the study. However, the gains that they were able to accomplish did influence the opportunities for their students to engage in different levels of thinking (Costa, 2001). Unfortunately, the ELL students in both of the two teachers' classes did not appear to actively benefit from this increase by taking up opportunities to speak and share their thoughts and ideas through different levels of thinking.

*Key Words: literacy; elementary teaching; text-based discussions; ELL students; sociocultural theory.*

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Finally, I would like to dedicate my dissertation in loving memory of my cousin, Wendy Asplundh. Throughout my childhood, terrible teens, and into adulthood, Wendy inspired me to dream big without any fear. She celebrated life as an adventure, just waiting to engulf you in beautiful surprises beyond your imagination. We swapped stories of worldly escapades over tea and laughed while an ocean breeze tickled us. I was so lucky to have such an amazing, loving, giving role model to show me how to live a good, generous, and beautiful life. She is dearly missed and I hope I have made her proud.

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

It is widely believed that interactive whole-group text-based discussions hold strong potential to increase students' opportunities for meaningful learning of important literacy skills and content learning (Lawrence and Snow, 2011). Engaging students in whole-group text-based discussions holds the potential to provide learning opportunities to use higher-level thinking skills such as application, synthesis, and evaluation. However, the majority of whole-group classroom-based instruction occurs in the form of recitation (Almasi, 1996; Applebee, Langer, Nystrand, and Gamoran, 2003). Recitation is used in classrooms to check student comprehension by asking questions that require short, one-word answers that engage the students in lower-level thinking such as remembering, recalling or retelling (Cazden, 2001). Students need opportunities to engage in a variety of levels of thinking within the classroom context to fully master their potential as learners. One way to provide this opportunity is by using whole-group text-based discussions in the classroom. This is especially important for English language learners (ELLs) who need multiple opportunities to engage in a variety of modes of input and output such as speaking and listening as well as an array of thinking levels to enhance their comprehension and language skills. Over the last two decades, research in support of whole-group text-based discussion has been growing. Yet, the actual discursive teaching practices in classrooms have been slow to change. Thus, further research regarding how teachers learn and refine their practice of supporting ELL students while facilitating interactive whole-group text-based discussions is a critical issue in the context of today's diverse classrooms.

# PURPOSE AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe how two first-grade teachers attempted to negotiate instructional goals and serve a variety of students' needs during whole group text-based discussions. Specifically, I examined how these two early elementary teachers negotiated instructional goals for students who they identified as English Language Learners (ELLs) during whole group text-based discussions. The main research question for this study was: *To what extent and how do two first-grade teachers negotiate instructional goals and provide opportunities during whole group text-based discussions to engage students, including students identified as English Language Learners, in different levels of thinking?* The following sub-questions also informed this study*:*

1. *How do two first-grade teachers negotiate instructional goals through constructing intended curriculum for students who are identified as English Language Learners (ELLs) and provide opportunities to engage students in different levels of thinking during whole group text-based discussions? What did they say are the elements that influence their negotiation (e.g. school curriculum, district pacing guides, standards)?*

2. *How does the enacted curriculum provide opportunities for ELL students to engage in different levels of thinking during whole group text-based discussions? What did they build into the lesson to specifically support ELL students?*

This research holds great promise in helping teacher educators and teachers to think about ELL students' needs, research-based practices, and pedagogy to negotiate the complexity of teaching literacy through whole-group text-based discussions that enhance ELL students' opportunities in literacy learning and development of higher-level thinking skills.

# REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

This literature review will first describe the traditions found in classroom discussions to better understand text-based discussions. For the purpose of this study, the term text-based discussions is defined by active learner exchanges between the teacher and students and/or between or among students themselves to share thoughts, ideas, and connections through oral discourse around a text. Then, literature will be reviewed on two different initiatives that support the use of discussion in the classroom as a means to engage students in higher-level thinking around texts. Next, two theoretical perspectives that have become important considerations for both research and practices in early elementary text-based discussion will be shared: the cognitive perspective and the sociocultural perspective. These perspectives advocate for the inclusion of oral discourse in classrooms in the form of whole group discussions and/or collaborative conversations. Subsequently, I will analyze current research to illustrate the use of text-based discussions during whole group instruction in the early elementary classroom and explain how this study fulfills an evident need in the educational research. I will explain how this research applies to early elementary teachers facilitating whole group text-based discussions that include English Language Learners. The terms English Language Learner (ELL) or English Language Learners (ELLs) refer to any student or students who speak another language besides English in the home context as a native language.

## The Traditions of Classroom Discussion

Over the last two decades, educational research and policy support for classroom discussion has been growing. In 1991, Gamoran and Nystrand conducted research focused on eighth and ninth grade students and teachers and found that students were engaged in discussion for less than a minute each day in typical classrooms. Over a decade later, similar results were

uncovered as illustrated by Applebee, Langer, Nystrand, and Gamoran's (2003) research in middle and high school classrooms that demonstrated student-led discussion typically accounted for two minutes of a sixty-minute class. The lack of opportunities for students to engage in discussion around text as a means to comprehend and synthesize content is not only an issue faced in middle and secondary classrooms but in elementary classrooms as well. For instance, Almasi (1996) and Lawrence and Snow (2011) examined elementary classroom talk during literacy lessons and found the discourse patterns that occurred were teacher centered and promoted student participation through recitation.

Recitation in classrooms is generally formatted through Initiate-Response-Evaluate (I-R-E) (Cazden, 2001). During I-R-E, teachers initiate a question that they already know the answer to, students respond, and teachers evaluate the responses compared to their own answers. As a result, questions that are asked during recitations often require short, one-word answers through remembering, recalling or retelling. Gee (2008) criticizes recitation by stating "institutions reward expository talk in contrived situations" (p. 56). For example, a teacher will ask a question that can be explicitly derived from the text that does not require the student to apply his or her personal thought, evaluation, and critique or the author's opinion. Gutierrez (2011) also argues that traditional dialogue such as recitation in classrooms produces "synthetic stupidity" which is a "school induced form of knowledge production" (p. 25). This form of school induced knowledge can be illustrated by teachers asking questions that typically require reporting facts about events in stories and recalling characters that have already been made explicit through written text. These questions promote and engage students in lower level thinking skills and withdraw opportunities for students to negotiate meaning and have a sense of ownership of the generated knowledge (Gutierrez & Larson, 1994). Teachers do need to check literal student

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comprehension by engaging in I-R-E because remembering, recalling, and retelling are important

foundational skills of literacy comprehension.  However, questioning levels should not only

focus on lower level thinking but across the levels once teachers have assured that the students

comprehend the text because the educative process should encourage students to apply, analyze,

synthesize, and evaluate as a means to help them become critical thinkers.

**Current Initiatives to Support Text-Based Discussions in Classrooms**

In an effort to expand students' opportunities to engage in higher-level thinking, there are

different teaching initiatives that are currently influencing teaching practices during text-based

discussions in classrooms. Two of these initiatives are *Teaching Works* and *Common Core State

Standards*. First, I will describe the two initiatives as examples of ways teachers are encouraged

to revise their discussion-based practices. Then, later in this chapter, I will elaborate on the

research base.

The *Teaching Works* Project identifies leading whole-class discussions as a high-leverage

practice by drawing on current arguments in the field made by such scholars as Ball and Forzani

(2009) and Grossman, Compton, Igra, Ronfeldt, Shahan et al. (2009).  A high leverage practice

is defined within this line of research as a discrete teaching practice that, when carried out

skillfully by a teacher, will have a positive impact on student learning outcomes and

opportunities (Ball & Forzani, 2009; Grossman, Hammerness & McDonald, 2009; Shanahan,

Callison, Carrier, Duke, Pearson et al, 2010). The purpose of leading whole group discussions as

a high leverage practice is "to build collective knowledge and capability in relation to specific

instructional goals and to allow students to practice listening, speaking, and interpreting"

(*Teaching Works*, http://www.teachingworks.org/work-of-teaching/high-leverage-practices,

Retrieved on March 24, 2014). Hence, facilitating whole group text-based discussions is an

instructional practice or teacher move intended to engage students in higher-level thinking through group talk. Two other discrete teaching practices identified as high-leverage practices by the *Teaching Works* Project also support whole class discussions: eliciting and interpreting individual students' thinking (e.g., Almasi, 1995; Matsumura, Slater & Crosson, 2008) and establishing norms and routines for classroom discourse central to the subject-matter domain (e.g., Hansen, 2004; Wiseman, 2010; Lampert, Beasley, Ghousseini, Kazemi, & Franke, 2010; Martin & Hand, 2009). In order to elicit student thinking, the teacher asks carefully thought out open-ended questions. To encourage individual students' thinking and interpretation, the teacher promotes and shares the responsibility with the class to agree, disagree, or refine proposed thoughts. Therefore, the process of establishing norms and routines for classroom discourse central to the subject-matter domain goes beyond turn-taking routines by making explicit how people in the field construct and share knowledge. Hence, current research identifies specific teaching skills to support text-based discussions that should be developed to increase students' opportunities for meaningful learning of important literacy skills and content learning (Ball & Forzani, 2009; Grossman, Compton, Igra, Ronfeldt, Shahan et al., 2009).

The *Common Core State Standards* (CCSS) also promote the use of discussion in classrooms. The CCSS in English Language Arts were designed to enable students to demonstrate the "capacities of the literate individual" in an effort to prepare youth to be "college and career ready" (NGA & CCSSO, 2010). According to the CCSS, part of being a literate individual is the ability to gain understanding and to adapt communication to one's audience through speaking and listening:

> An important focus of the speaking and listening standards is academic
>
> discussion in one-on-one, small group, and whole-class settings. Formal

presentations are one important way such talk occurs, but so is the more informal

discussion that takes place as students collaborate to answer questions, build

understanding, and solve problems. (NGA & CCSSO, 2010).

Thus, the CCSS advocate for a variety of discursive practices to be utilized within the classroom

context. Whole group formal instructional presentations are encouraged as well as other less

formal grouping options such as individual, partners, and small group.  Using a variety of

discursive contexts and practices holds the possibility to increase opportunities for student

engagement and participation to create space for higher level thinking skills. These higher level

thinking skills include opportunities to "build on others' talk in conversations by linking their

comments to the remarks of others" and "ask for clarification and further explanation as needed

about the topics and texts under discussion" (NGA & CCSSO,

http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/SL/1/, Retrieved on March 24, 2014). The

development of these skills can be observed specifically under the English Language Arts

Standards Strand of Speaking and Listening (SLK.K.1.B, SLK.1.1.B, and SLK.2.1.B).

According to this strand, all K-2 students are expected to be able to ask for and give clarification

as needed during discussions. However, the expectations regarding the required demonstrated

skills needed to participate in discussions increases at each grade level. For example, under this

strand, students in Kindergarten are required to engage in conversations through multiple

exchanges. Meanwhile, in first grade, students are required to build on each other's talk during

multiple exchanges. In second grade, students are required to build the conversation through

linking their comments to the previous statements of others.

Engaging students in whole group text-based discussions can be especially challenging

for teachers of ELL students who bring with them unique learning needs. In general, many

teachers lack specific training regarding how best to serve ELL students. To illustrate, 41% of the nation's teachers reported serving ELL students in their classroom yet only 13% reported having eight or more hours of training in this area (Ortiz & Artiles, p. 252). Therefore, the lack of background knowledge of how to best serve ELL students in combination with refining a practice such as whole group text-based discussions that opposes current participation norms in the classroom (recitation) can create a challenging context for teachers to navigate. However, it is important for teachers to refine their practices while learning to best support the ELL students that they serve in their classrooms.

According to McIntyre (2010), there are six principles for teaching ELL students. These six principles infuse strategies to meet the linguistic needs of ELL students with culturally responsive teaching (Ladson-Billings, 1994). The six principles are: joint productivity activity (group work with a definite product), language and literacy (oral and written language experiences), curricular connections (connecting curriculum to students' backgrounds, interests, and linguistic strengths), rigorous teaching and curriculum (engaging students in all levels of thinking), instructional conversations (carefully planned content discussions), and family involvement (involving families both in and out of school). The principle of rigorous teaching and curriculum invokes holding high standards and expectations of learning for all students. The principles of curricular connections and family involvement affirm the value of cultural backgrounds of diverse students. The remaining three principles all focus on supporting ELL students to develop their English oral language development (EOLD). Hence, these principles go beyond the concepts of "good teaching for all" by specifically addressing the additional linguistic needs of ELL students. This is important to note because some teachers have the misconception that "good teaching" is enough for addressing the learning needs of ELL students.

Therefore, the task of helping teachers to provide support for "all students" while also modifying lessons to meet the specific needs of ELL students can be doubly challenging.

One important linguistic need of ELL students is the opportunity to develop academic language. ELL students require at least four to six years to develop the academic language proficiency of native English speakers (Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders, & Christian, 2006). Thus, it is very important to provide opportunities for ELL students to work on their EOLD in academic settings. However, ELL students rarely get the opportunity to interact with their peers in situations that promote learning because they require extra time to navigate the content and linguistic complexities, which tends to cause their English speaking peers to cut the verbal interactions short to finish the learning task (Goldenberg, 2010). For example, English speaking peers will just tell the ELL students to write down the answer instead of discussing the process or reasoning. Therefore, these opportunities must be very purposeful and explicitly planned by the teacher to maximize ELL student participation.

Another important aspect to consider is influence of EOLD on the text-based literacy development of ELL students.  ELL students have been found to make comparable progress as their English-Only (EO) speaking peers during the early emergent reading stages such as letter sound correlation and sight word recognition; however, as the cognitive demands increase (i.e. academic content vocabulary and syntax) a learning gap develops between the ELL students and EO students (NLP; August & Shanahan, 2006). As a means to provide additional support to their ELL students, teachers need to enact instructional modifications (Goldenberg, 2010). Research has shown that if ELL students cannot receive instruction in their primary language, they can still benefit from learning in English-Only classrooms when teachers use a mixture of explicit and interactive instruction as a means of instructional modification (Genesee, Lindholm-Leary,

Saunders, & Christian, 2006). For example, ELL students need multiple modes of input (i.e. auditory and visual), support to orally and mentally synthesize texts, experiences with vocabulary, extended learning opportunities with peers and teachers, targeted instruction of content and EOLD in every lesson (Goldenberg, 2010). Hence, regular classroom teachers who serve ELL students must also carefully and purposely plan their whole-class lessons to include explicit instructional modifications that support their students' EOLD.

In light of current reforms and accountability, teachers are under growing pressure to improve their practice and increase student learning outcomes and opportunities across various subject matters and using a variety of teaching strategies. Text-based discussion practices are but one important teaching strategy emphasized under these two teaching initiatives, *Teaching Works* and *Common Core State Standards*. Therefore, it is important to examine what broader research-based evidence exists to support text-based discussion practices as a means to improve student learning and achievement within classroom contexts around texts. Hence, I will now elaborate further on the broader research based supporting the use of text-based discussions.

**Theoretical Perspectives and Text-Based Discussions**

Two theoretical perspectives advocate for the inclusion of text-based discussions: the cognitive-based perspective and the sociocultural perspective. Brown, Collins, and Duguid (1989) distinguish these two theoretical concepts as "knowing what" and "knowing how" (p. 32). "Knowing what" represents a cognitive-based perspective by favoring the delivery of abstract concepts out of context while the "knowing how" represents the sociocultural perspective by highlighting the importance of the learning that takes during authentic activity within a context (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989). Thus, the cognitive-based perspective sees discussion as a means to develop required literacy knowledge (McKeown &Beck, 2006) and the sociocultural

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perspective views discussion as a process of providing support and scaffolding for novice literacy development as students are apprenticed into literacy practices (Lave and Wenger, 1991). For example, a cognitive-based lens sees text-based discussions as a way to develop literacy knowledge such as vocabulary while the sociocultural lens views discussions as providing students with an opportunity to negotiate meaning in relation to socio-historical contexts and personal connections (Gee, 2008). Both theoretical perspectives assume that discussions provide space for higher-level thinking.

**Cognitive-based perspective.** The cognitive-based perspective argues that students benefit from participating in text-based discussions with adults as a means to build their literacy knowledge. One specific way that young children benefit from listening to adults read books is by learning new words (Hargrave & Senechal, 2000). Vocabulary is one component of oral language necessary for reading comprehension (Perfetti et al., 1996). Early vocabulary skills are indirectly associated with comprehension during the first years of instruction (Share & Leiken, 2004) and have been found to have a direct long term relation to reading comprehension in grades three and four (Storch & Whitehurst, 2002). For example, as part of a cognitive-based theoretical framework, teachers will specifically introduce vocabulary words found in read aloud texts to their students before text-based discussions to allow them access to new words and understandings. This strategy is believed to be particularly supportive of ELL students to learn new words and concepts as a means to increase comprehension (Goldenberg, 2010). Consequently, providing opportunities for children to have text-based discussions with an adult has positive literacy learning results by increasing vocabulary skills.

**Sociocultural perspective.** In contrast to the cognitive-based perspective that focuses on explicit literacy concepts, the sociocultural perspective focuses on the social and historical

context and the role that a community of practice (classroom) serves when students engage in classroom talk to learn new literacy concepts. According to Lave and Wenger (1991), the interactive nature of participation in classroom discussions allows students to learn how "to" talk not just learning "from" talk (p.109). The process of learning how to talk means gaining an awareness of what stories are ignored, valued, normed and told (Gee, 2008). According to sociocultural perspectives, classroom discussions hold the possibility to create an opportunity for the negotiation of meaning and knowledge (Gutierrez & Larson, 1994).

Students negotiate meaning and knowledge during text-based discussions by elaborating and extending interpretations of texts and engaging in higher levels of thinking. In order for students to engage with text at this level, they must grapple with social, cultural, historical and political levels that produce and maintain the concept of knowledge within their classroom community (Mahiri, 2008). Whole group text-based discussions affirm the "ever-present cultural multivocality" or multiple perspectives that exists in classrooms (Bruner, 1996, p. 14). This means that students may be given the opportunity to voice and share lived experiences and cultural values during whole group text-based discussions. Gutierrez and Larson (1994) argue that classroom interaction that encourages multiple perspectives and negotiation of meaning allows for student agency. For example, a student might use and explain vocabulary from their home or community. This sense of agency allows for the student to construct a narrative that includes a space for himself or herself within the world as he or she experiences it (Gutierrez & Larson, 1994).

Within and across these theoretical stances, researchers agree that text-based discussions hold the strongest potential to influence and enhance children's language and literacy development (McKeown & Beck, 2006). The strength of text-based discussions to enhance

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students' language and literacy development is illustrated by the research of Saunders and Goldenberg (2007) who examined the literal comprehension and conceptual understanding outcomes of fourth grade transitional bilingual students participating in text-based discussions versus traditional recitation. During the study, the authors found that student learning at the literal level took place in both the control (recitation dominant) and experimental (text-based discussion) groups, however, the students that participated in the text-based discussion groups were able to "articulate a more sophisticated understanding of an important concept" (Saunders & Goldenberg, 2007, p. 249). Thus, the students were able to gain and voice deeper understanding when participating in text-based discussions. The authors argue that this is due to the fact that during text-based discussions less time is spent on recalling the literary details of the story and more time is spent on allowing and guiding students to analyze and interpret story content.

In conclusion, this research has given us perspectives on how upper-elementary and adolescent students use text-based discussions to build meaning and understanding of stories. Text-based discussions are especially important to ELL students because they provide an opportunity to enhance language and literacy development (Saunders & Goldenberg, 2007). Specifically text-based discussions hold potential for meeting three of McIntyre's (2010) six principles for teaching ELL students. These three principles are: joint productivity activity (group work with a definite product), language and literacy (oral and written language experiences), and instructional conversations (carefully planned content discussions) Now, it is important, for the purposes of this study, to look specifically at early elementary classrooms and how text-based discussions are used with young children for their literacy learning and meaning-making experiences around texts.

**Text-Based Discussions in the Early Elementary Classroom**

Recent literacy research of the early elementary classroom has focused on exploring text-based discussions based on student thinking and learning. These studies have illuminated two themes regarding the implementation and use of text-based discussions in grades Kindergarten through second grade: (a) teacher and student interactions explored through utterances and roles that engage students in higher level thinking, and (b) reading knowledge awareness and development. The first theme, teacher and student interactions, tends to favor the sociocultural theoretical perspective, while the second theme, reading knowledge awareness and development, supports the cognitive-based perspective. These themes build towards the common goal of improving efficient and effective literacy development in students as they interact with a variety of texts within the classroom contexts (McKeown & Beck, 2006). In the following section, I will share a few selected studies to illustrate the two themes.

**Teacher and student interactions and utterances for higher-level thinking.** Current research within the last ten years on text-based discussions has explored the verbal interactions of teachers and students through spoken words or utterances as well as their participation or roles in early elementary classrooms (e.g., Hansen, 2004; Wiseman, 2010; Sipe, 2000; Pantaleo, 2007). These studies specifically looked at what kind of talk is happening during text-based discussions and how this talk can shape discussion. First, I will share a summary of the findings within these studies that focus only on teachers. Then, I will share the findings of some studies that focus on students.

**Teacher roles, utterances, and perceptions around text.** Teachers' roles, utterances, and perceptions of students influence text-based discussions. During text-based discussions, teachers assume the role of facilitator. A teacher's instructional moves used to facilitate text-

based discussions can be named, described, and made explicit. Hansen (2004) studied how a Kindergarten teacher facilitated interactive text-based discussion with the instructional goal of engaging students to respond to literature as a means to promote literacy development. She found that the teacher facilitated the read aloud by setting the climate, using a variety of questioning techniques, responding to student statements, and monitoring student conversation. In order to set the climate, the teacher makes the purpose of the lesson and sharing out norms explicit and creates a safe space for students to share ideas and thoughts. An example given in Hansen's study was a teacher encouraging students to gather and sit comfortably in a circle around the edge of a carpet to listen to the text so they could all see and hear each other. Next, the teacher actively prepares students to participate by encouraging them to be present in the discussion by using specific comprehension strategies such as visualization to ground the conversation in the text. Finally, the teacher creates and supports norms of the discussion such as taking turns to talk one at a time to the whole group without raising hands. This is significant because the norms of text-based discussions often challenge the norms of typical recitation based classrooms (Reznitskaya, 2012). Thus, setting the climate is essential when planning and enacting text-based discussions.

After creating a climate for students to share ideas and thoughts, early elementary teachers use a systematic approach to facilitate text-based discussions through the use of verbal utterances (e.g., Hansen, 2004; Wiseman, 2010). These utterances include using a variety of questioning techniques (Hansen, 2004) and verbal responses (Wiseman, 2010). Hansen (2004) identifies four distinct questioning techniques that focus upon: (a) comprehension- to support students to remember events in the story; (b) reflection- to encourage students to self-assess whether they were following the discussion norms; (c) transactional- to promote responses to the

story; and (d) literary response- to reward the thoughts of children. This study helped to articulate the types of questions that foster an increase in student talk during text-based discussions. Knowledge of a variety of questioning strategies that engage students in different ways of thinking assists early elementary teachers to plan and enact text-based discussions.

In a study exploring a Kindergarten teacher's responses to students during interactive text-based discussions, Wiseman (2010) found that early elementary teachers also use verbal responses to facilitate text-based discussions. Wiseman defines responses as verbal utterances that confirm and model thinking aloud, extending ideas, and building meaning. Confirming verbal responses highlights student thinking for group acknowledgement. Within this study, as an example, Wiseman provides an excerpt of the teacher restating and agreeing with a student's comment to the whole group. The teacher shared her own thought processes as a proficient reader to make her comprehension strategies explicit (modeling). To illustrate, she extended ideas by drawing attention to details from the text and asked the students to consider explanations for purpose. Wiseman (2010) asserts the teacher used responses to extend ideas and build collaborative meaning by asking students to agree or disagree with each other and explain why. This study is important because it extends the concepts of facilitating text-based discussions beyond asking types of questions to implementing strategies for responding to students' thinking. The insights from these studies focus on teachers facilitating text-based discussions with students who are native English Language speakers; since this research did not focus on ELL students, further study is needed.

When teachers specifically work with English Language Learner (ELL) students, it is important to note that a teacher's perception of ELL students can cause variations within the enacted curriculum (Torres-Guzmán, 2011). The overall goal of text-based discussions is to

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increase student comprehension by providing learning opportunities that engage them in higher-level thinking and literacy understanding. This being said, teachers' perception of students' assumed abilities could influence the learning opportunities they provide students.  For example, Torres-Guzmán (2011) explored how a deficit perspective of ELL students caused one teacher to focus on text simplification while another teacher without a deficit perspective provided culturally sensitive background knowledge and connections. Torres-Guzmán argues the culturally sensitive approach provides richer learning opportunities. To illustrate a culturally sensitive approach, Torres-Guzman provided the example of a teacher adding the Spanish linguistic or cultural expressions "Ay, Dios" while reading the story to Cuban students to add emphasis to part of the story (2011, p. 232). Therefore, teachers who serve ELL students should examine their perceptions of students for biases and look for evidence of how it is impacting their enacted curriculum. Together, this research on teacher roles, utterances, and perceptions has taught us that teachers profoundly influence text-based discussions in early elementary classrooms. Teachers set the climate, facilitate the discussion through utterances such as questions and responses, and influence the quality of the discussion based on their perception of their students.

**Student utterances and thinking around text**. Engaging Kindergarten through second grade students in text-based discussions allows early elementary teachers to hear how students are interacting with and making sense of the text. Early elementary student thinking can be demonstrated through verbal utterances (Sipe, 2000; Martinez-Roldan, 2005; Pantaleo, 2007; Lopez-Robertson, 2012). This is significant because early elementary students typically have novice literacy skills and knowledge, best displayed through talk. For example, early elementary students' speaking and listening skills are typically more advanced than their writing and reading

skills. Thus, student verbal utterances help make student thinking explicit to the teacher and expose how the students are trying to negotiate meaning and comprehend the text.

During text-based discussions, students negotiate meaning and comprehension through verbal utterances. In Pantaleo's (2007) study of the roles and oral participation of students during interactive text-based discussions, she describes first grade students' talk that takes place during text-based discussions as collective thinking through verbal utterances. In the early elementary grades, peer collective thinking or student talk is important because it makes interpretations and storylines explicit to everyone participating in the text-based discussions and expands overall understanding. Pantaleo (2007) gave an example illustrating how students demonstrate their collective thinking by talking with each other to describe and explain an event in the story. For example, the students discussed the illustrations and text features to interpret the meaning of events. This is also related to how students may use specific verbal utterances as a way to explore a text through such things as its illustrations or language use. During text-based discussions, most of the students tend to focus on the author and/or illustrator's purpose by exploring the language use, illustrations, and narrative meaning (Sipe, 2000). Thus, students think collectively and deeply by producing talk and hearing other student utterances during text-based discussions while practicing literacy knowledge as novices. Knowing how students think and talk about a text can help guide teachers in assessing and facilitating text-based discussions. One specific way early elementary students use talk and collectively think around texts is by creating links to personal connections with texts.

As early elementary students think and talk during text-based discussions, they attempt to make sense of the text by comparing it to their personal lived experiences (Sipe, 2000; Martinez-Roldan, 2005; Lopez-Robertson, 2012). For example, Martinez-Roldan (2005) looked at the

verbal utterances of second grade bilingual students participating in text-based discussions and found that students used talk to negotiate meaning on a personal level. Specifically, the students in her study used talk to understand how critical issues impacted the characters of the book as well their own lives. Lopez-Robertson (2012) also explored how second grade bilingual students' talk is used to negotiate meaning through personal connections. She noticed that the students frequently grounded their discussions in personal stories. For example, Lopez-Robertson (2012) found that the students typically started text-based discussions by sharing parts of the text that reminded them of their lived experience and other students acted and reacted through the use of their own personal stories. Thus, both Martinez-Roldan (2005) and Lopez-Robertson (2012) found students tried to make sense of texts by sharing personal experiences or reactions as a means to connect to the text and peers. Although all students make personal connections with text, it is possible that creating space for personal connections might provide a path to culturally sensitive background knowledge and connections to engage students in higher-level thinking. Hence, it is important for teachers to examine opportunities for personal connections during text-based discussions (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992).

A possible reason that text-based discussions allow for personal connections encouraging higher-level thinking is due to the negotiation of meaning that takes place during student talk. Martinez-Roldan (2005) argues when children engage in discussions they confront and challenge multiple perspectives by learning in collaboration with others. An example of a discussion that may challenge or confront multiple perspectives of thinking that took place during Martinez-Roldan's study involved gender roles. During this discussion, students placed themselves in the position of the character and argued for the outcome that aligned with their own personal beliefs. Learning through text-based discussions encourages students to provide explanations, reasoning,

and evaluations as a means to negotiate with their peers (Martinez-Roldan, 2005). Therefore, teachers can create authentic learning experiences by encouraging early elementary students to provide explanations, reasoning, and evaluations during text-based discussions to afford students with higher level thinking opportunities.

**Building Reading Knowledge and Strategies in Text-Based Discussions**

Similar to the first theme, the second theme also provides evidence to support the planning and enactment of text-based discussions by increasing literacy comprehension of early elementary students through text-based discussions. However, the second theme differs as it focuses on the specific learning goal of fostering reading knowledge awareness and development. Current research involving developing reading knowledge during text-based discussions tends to involve vocabulary and genre. First, I will discuss vocabulary development during text-based discussions by looking at early elementary instructional moves and student learning outcomes. Then, I will examine how text-based discussions are used during genre reading.

**Vocabulary.** Vocabulary is an important indicator of literacy comprehension. Therefore, explicit strategies to teach vocabulary are an important factor in early elementary classroom instruction. In general, early elementary teachers use a variety of instructional strategies in order to teach vocabulary during text-based discussions (Kindle, 2010). The instructional strategies that Kindle (2010) identified were questioning, providing the definition, providing a synonym, giving examples, clarifying or correcting student responses, extending a student generated defini-tion, labeling, using imagery, and morphemic analysis. These instructional strategies increase students' vocabulary, which leads to an increase in overall comprehension and understanding of texts. However, early elementary teachers tend to rely only on questioning as the primary

instructional strategy to teach vocabulary (Kindle, 2010). For example, teachers might ask, "Can anyone tell me what permanent means?" Kindle (2010) argues that it might be beneficial if students are exposed to a variety of purposeful and explicit teaching moves to promote vocabulary development. For instance, the teacher might give a synonym of permanent such as everlasting or use imagery by showing superglue to represent the concept. When teachers use multiple modes of input to teach vocabulary, student learning can positively benefit.

The use of purposeful and explicit teaching moves with multiple modes of input during text-based discussions to promote vocabulary development has been proven to benefit early elementary native English speaking students and ELL students (Silverman, 2007). Silverman (2007) found the use of multiple modes of input increased both native English speaking students' and ELL students' vocabulary development. Text-based discussions that focus on vocabulary knowledge through the use of multiple modes of input may also hold potential for students to engage in higher-level thinking. Hence, it is important for teachers to deeply examine the link between learning goals, enacted curriculum, and opportunities for early elementary students to engage in higher-level thinking.

**Genre knowledge.** Genre Knowledge is also an important indicator of literacy comprehension. Therefore, it is important for early elementary teachers to use a variety of genres in text-based discussions. However, Kraemer, McCabe, & Sinatra (2012) have found teachers tend only to focus on the use of fiction during text-based discussions. Duke, Bennett-Armistead, and Roberts (2003) claim that early elementary students benefit from exposure to a variety of genres, especially non-fiction texts. They argue that the use of a variety of genres during text-based discussions has a positive impact on student learning because it develops a reader's awareness in decoding, text meaning, and language use. Some of the current research involving

the use of genre during text-based discussions has focused on non-fiction genres (Kraemer, McCabe, & Sinatra, 2012). The non-fiction genre is based on real life facts and is sometimes referred to as informational expository texts (Kraemer, McCabe, & Sinatra, 2012). Now, I will share a study to illustrate the use of non-fiction genre in text-based discussions with early elementary students.

Kraemer, McCabe, and Sinatra (2012) explored the effects of using non-fiction books during text-based discussions on literacy comprehension within early elementary classrooms. The authors found that having text-based discussions with early elementary students using non-fiction books resulted in an overall increase in listening comprehension scores. However, the authors also discovered that teachers do not frequently choose to read and discuss non-fiction books with their students. Instead, teachers preferred to use fiction books when facilitating text-based discussions. It is interesting to note that the authors observed that students demonstrated a preference to read non-fiction books during free-choice reading. However, unlike the use of non-fiction during text-based discussions, which increased student listening comprehension scores, students independently reading non-fiction books during free-choice did not result in an increase in comprehension scores. Therefore, students benefit more from the learning opportunities provided during text-based discussions using non-fiction texts than just independently reading them. This study helps us see the importance of using non-fiction texts during text-based discussions as a means to increase student comprehension. This being said, more exploration is needed regarding how text-based discussions are facilitated by teachers to best support students navigating non-fiction texts to increase overall comprehension and engage in higher-level thinking.

**What We Have Learned and What Is Missing**

In conclusion, early elementary teachers set the climate, facilitate the discussion through utterances such as questions and responses, and influence the quality of the learning during discussions based on their perception of their students. For example, early elementary teachers' perceptions of ELL students can drastically reduce the quality of student learning opportunities during text-based discussions if teachers have a deficit view of them. Text-based discussions are important because they allow early elementary teachers to hear student thinking and know how students are making sense of the text. During text-based discussions, students tend to focus comments around the author and/or illustrator's purpose by exploring the language use, illustrations, and narrative meaning, and making personal connections with the text (Sipe, 2000). It is important to note that ELL students have been found to make personal connections with the text to strategically create and understand meaning (Martinez-Roldan, 2005; Lopez-Robertson, 2012). The comments, questions, and remarks that early elementary students make during text-based discussions make student thinking explicit. The opportunity to hear and capture students' explicit thinking can influence teachers' abilities to assess and facilitate student learning. Therefore, using text-based discussions to make student thinking explicit can support teachers' ability to guide the learning of early elementary students.

The literature reviewed in this chapter shows that text-based discussions with early elementary students in grades Kindergarten to second can foster reading knowledge. Specifically, recent studies have provided evidence of text-based discussions improving early elementary vocabulary (Silverman, 2007; Kindle, 2010) and genre knowledge (Kraemer, McCabe, and Sinatra, 2012). Vocabulary and genre-reading knowledge are important to students and text-based discussions because it can increase overall reading comprehension. For example,

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both ELL and native English speaking students benefit from learning vocabulary through text-based discussions.

In general, the studies that focus on the advantages of text-based discussions tend to use exemplar teachers who have benefitted from extensive professional development before the studies took place. However, most early elementary teachers have not had access to the same extensive professional development. Teachers' lack of opportunity for professional development and guidance to support learning how to facilitate text-based discussions particularly with ELL students whose needs go beyond what is "just good teaching" might help explain the disconnect between the unsuccessful promotion of text-based discussions in policy and research and teachers' reliance on the enacted practice of recitation. There is also a gap in the literature describing early elementary teachers' attempts to implement and facilitate whole-group text-based discussions while also trying to specifically support the learning of ELL students by maximizing ELL student participation and EOLD. Thus, more research is needed to explore the journey that teachers encounter as they attempt to set professional goals to refine the high-leverage practice of facilitating whole group text-based discussions while serving the diverse linguistic needs of their students. Specifically, more research is needed that shares early elementary teachers' voices as they negotiate written and enacted instructional goals during whole group text-based discussions to engage ELL students in different levels of thinking.

The remainder of the dissertation is organized into seven chapters. Chapter Two presents the research questions and methodology. Chapter Three shares a deeper view of the study's context and the two first-grade teachers, Lola and Sasha, whose practices are the focus of the study. Chapter Four provides an analysis focused on changes in Lola's practice during three lessons and Chapter Five provides an analysis of changes in Sasha's practice during three lessons

as they both worked toward their self-identified professional development goals. Chapter Six

provides insight into the teachers' learning and experiences as they reflected on their

professional learning and growth. Finally, Chapter Seven presents the implications, limitations,

and next steps of this study.

**CHAPTER 2**

**METHODS**

In this chapter, I will present the methodology used in this study. First, I will share the purpose and research questions. Then, I will explain the theoretical frameworks that informed my study. Finally, I will discuss my research design and methodology.

**PURPOSE AND QUESTIONS OF THE RESEARCH STUDY**

The purpose of this research was to expand the research on text based discussions to include how early elementary teachers think about their practice regarding implementing instructional goals and opportunities for students to engage in different levels of thinking. Specifically, my research goal was to deeply explore how teachers try to support the learning needs of ELL students in whole group regular classroom settings during text-based discussions while attempting to move beyond lower level thinking recitation.

The main research question for this study was: *To what extent and how do two first-grade teachers negotiate instructional goals and provide opportunities during whole group text-based discussions to engage students, including students identified as English Language Learners, in different levels of thinking?* The following sub-questions also informed this study*:*

1. *How do two first-grade teachers negotiate instructional goals through constructing intended curriculum for students who are identified as English Language Learners (ELLs) and provide opportunities to engage students in different levels of thinking during whole group text-based discussions?  What did they say are the elements that influence their negotiation (e.g. school curriculum, district pacing guides, standards)?*

2. *How does the enacted curriculum provide opportunities for ELL students to engage in different levels of thinking during whole group text-based discussions? What did they build into the lesson to specifically support ELL students?*

My first sub-question explored how teachers perceive what they are trying to do while the second sub-question explored the instructional moves that they use to accomplish these goals.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

As discussed in Chapter One, researchers draw upon both cognitive and sociocultural perspectives to understand classroom discussions. Therefore, this study was grounded in sociocultural approaches to understand discourse, practice, and learning. Two sociocultural theories informed my study. I used Cole's (1996) context/practice/activity theory to examine two teachers' everyday practices as they facilitated text-based discussions with their students and Costa's (2001) Levels of Inquiry provided insight into the teacher's questioning moves and the students' opportunities to engage with different levels of thinking during text-based discussions. I will now outline how these theories were important to the research questions of interest for this study.

### Context /Practice /Activity Theory

To analyze how two teachers negotiated instructional goals and provided opportunities during whole group text-based discussions to engage students, which are considered everyday human activity in a naturally occurring setting, it was important to explore the notions of context, practice, and activity. I used Cole's (1996) context/practice/activity theory to explore what contextual elements the teachers stated influenced their negotiation of learning goals (see Figure 1). For example, a teacher might have stated that she must negotiate the district's mandated curriculum and pacing guide when planning lessons and developing learning goals. Cole (1996)

explores the notion of "contextual whole" by contrasting two conceptualizations of context: (a) context as that which surrounds and (b) context as that which weaves together (p. 132). The notion of one's context, or "that which surrounds," is originally represented with five concentric circles of interactions (Cole, 1996). In my modified representation of Cole's contextual whole, I represented a slice of the concentric circle through layers (see Figure 1). Although I presented the concept in a linear fashion, the concept is actually holistic and fluid; hence, the arrow showing a flow in both directions. This flow signifies that linear consequence of actions does not exist; instead influence can happen in both directions. The layer depicted on the left represents the macro level of context and the layer on the right represents the micro level. The left layer represents the community organization, which is made up of the interactions among parents, school district, and other sociocultural institutions. As we move in from the macro level towards the meso level, the next layer is the school organization represented by the principal and the following layer is the classroom organization represented by the teacher. As the layer moves to the right to represent a shift from the meso towards the micro level, the context of the lesson and the teacher are presented. Finally, the farthest right layer represents the micro level of teacher and pupil exchange that occurs during the lesson. This layered system engages individuals indirectly or directly throughout the macro to micro levels of interaction and influence (Cole, 1996).

However, this theoretical model does not address the fact that individuals at different levels of the context have unequal power status. This is significant in classroom research because sociolinguistic factors such as power relations affect children's speech patterns, conversational acts and utterances (Cole, 1996). Cole (1996) argues that context is something that is constructed through influencing factors imposed on a situation from different layers of the system and cannot

be reduced into only what surrounds an event that occurs within a specific layer. Thus, context is more than a single event; it is the weaving together of meaning through activity. Cole (1996) argues that to understand an "act in context" one must be able to weave together all of the factors to approach a "relational interpretation of mind" (p. 136). This being said, a combination of goals, tools, settings, and other circumstances and characteristics are used to construct meaning in a context specific way.

According to the practice theory, within this combination a deep connection between subject, object, and artifact exists (Cole, 1996; see Figure 2). The subject (teacher) is connected to the object (text-based discussion) by transforming the artifact (teaching resources). Hence, the artifact represents the essence of the producer and serves as a "medium, outcome, and precondition for human thinking" (Cole, 1996, p, 137). In other words, activity and practice are the foundation for community and discourse. Practices communicate the norms and meaning as modes of social interaction (Cole, 1996). For example, in the classroom setting during a traditional read aloud (object) a teacher (subject) frequently sits high on a chair holding a book (artifact) with children at her feet. This positions the teacher in a place of power. Cole (1996) asserts practices create the social system and can be used as a unit of analysis that can stretch beyond the individual versus social. This being said, individuals are not bound to their practice or completely free of it due to dispositions, past experiences, and influencing factors of the moment.

The activity system integrates the subject, the object, and the tools into a unified whole, thus, incorporating production and communication as inseparable (Cole, 1996). Specifically, activity theory includes six interactive components: mediating artifacts (e.g., text selection, curriculum materials, grade level assessment rubric), subject (e.g., teacher), community (e.g.,

school district, parents, local employers, school (administrator), classroom (teacher and student interactions based on lessons and learners), object (e.g., text-based discussion), division of labor between students and teacher (e.g., who evaluates responses, asks questions, selects topics to discuss), and classroom rules  (e.g., students calling on each other verses raising hands and waiting for the teacher to call on them) (Cole, 1996; see Figure 3). The concepts presented earlier in the practice theory are represented in half of the circle, which includes the subject, mediating artifact, and object. The subject is the individual. The mediating artifact represents a level of transformation of an object. To illustrate, the district scope and sequence dictates the lesson learning goals, which influence the purpose of the text-based discussion. In this example, the object is the text-based discussion. The further transformation occurs on the mediating artifact (district scope and sequence learning goal) due to the subject (teacher) acting upon the object (text-based discussion). In a classroom, this is illustrated by how the teacher plans and enacts the text-based discussion to support students in meeting the learning goal. However, all action only exists in relation to the components of rules, community, and division of labor. Community represents those that share the same general object. The community can be considered widely as represented by the key stakeholders in the education system and more narrowly by the classroom participants in the whole group text-based discussion.

For the purpose of this study, the community will be defined on the macro level as the school and the meso level as the classroom.  Rules signify the norms of in the classroom of participating in text-based discussions. To illustrate, the classroom norm might encourage students to shout out questions or they might need to raise their hand to speak.  The division of labor represents the division of object–oriented actions within the community. In a classroom, this describes the roles that the students and teacher enact during the text-based discussion. For

example, the teacher and students can possibly share such roles as evaluator (assessing the

response of another participant) or inquisitor (requesting additional information or reasoning).

Through understanding and analyzing the teachers, their transformation, and enacted text-based

discussions using notions of context, practice, and activity theory, this research was able to

deeply explore everyday human activity in a natural setting. The natural setting within this study

was the everyday activities, practices, and contexts that occurred within two first grade

classrooms.

**Costa's Levels of Inquiry**

I used Costa's (2001) Levels of Inquiry to define and analyze the intended and enacted

opportunities for students to engage in different levels of thinking within text-based discussions

by examining the teacher's learning goal and questioning moves within the context of the lesson

and classroom. Costa (2001) identifies three levels of inquiry that teachers attempt to engage

students in through questioning strategies (see Figure 4, adapted from Costa, 2001).

Level One includes questions that are text explicit. This means that readers can point to one

correct answer right in the text. Words found in this type of questions require students to define,

observe, describe, name, identify, recite, note, and list. For example, a teacher might ask, "What

does illuminate mean?" Level Two Questions are text implicit.  Therefore, readers must infer

answers from what the text implicitly states by finding answers in several places in the text.

Words found in Level Two Questions ask students to analyze, group, synthesize,

compare/contrast, infer and sequence. For example, in Level Two Questions, a teacher may ask,

"How are the two sisters the same? How are they different?" Level Three Questions are

experience based and require readers to think beyond what the text states. Answers given to level

three questions are based on reader's prior knowledge/experience and will vary and they require

what is considered higher-level thinking. This are sometimes referred to as open-ended questions. Words or actions found in this type of questions encourage students to evaluate, judge, apply a principle, speculate, imagine, predict, and hypothesize. For example, a teacher might ask the students to imagine by asking, "If you were the main character, what would you do?" This theoretical framework allowed me to categorize opportunities for students to engage in different levels of thinking based on the teacher's moves within the context of the lesson and classroom.

In conclusion, Cole's (1996) context/practice/activity theory enabled me to examine everyday human activity in a natural setting such as text-based discussions as an instructional practice in an early elementary classroom context. While examining the text-based discussions as an instructional practice in an early elementary classroom context, I used Costa's (2001) Levels of Inquiry to help me identify students' opportunities to engage in different levels of thinking based on the teacher's questioning moves.

## RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This qualitative research study provides a detailed description of the how two first-grade teachers planned for and enacted text-based discussions in their early elementary literacy classrooms. These detailed descriptions are a form of storytelling (Stake, 2004). My storytelling shares my experience of researching two teachers' experiences of facilitating text-based discussions in first-grade classrooms while negotiating instructional goals and students' opportunities to engage in a variety of levels of thinking, and while balancing providing support to ELL students in whole group regular classroom settings. Thereby, the knowledge transfer from researcher to reader is accessed through the use of descriptive storytelling, allowing for a

reader's schemata to infuse with the data collected. Storytelling is a unique way to capture the teachers' instructional moves and intent that occur during text-based discussions.

The storytelling was framed through a case study. Merriam (1998) defines case studies as a form of qualitative research that consists of "intensive descriptions and analysis of a single unit or bound system" (p.19). Therefore, I created a case study for each of the two participating teachers' text-based discussions to encourage deep analysis of the intended and enacted curriculum during several discussions that took place in their first-grade classrooms. In general, my goal was to understand what the teachers were trying to do and why they chose certain instructional moves as a way to achieve these goals. Specifically, my case study focused on the influence of teacher negotiated instructional goals for ELL students during whole group text-based discussions and the students' opportunities to engage in a variety of different learning levels of thinking. Since I focused on two teachers in first-grade classrooms during text-based discussions, my research is labeled a multiple case study. A multiple case study involves collecting data and analyzing across more than one case (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 2006). Although case studies cannot be generalized, they can suggest hypotheses and provide questions for further study.

I view my study as a form of collaborative intervention. Collaborative intervention is a step further than participant observation. I consider my role as a researcher in this study in between participant observer and an actual intervention because I was working with the teachers beyond the classroom context to set goals and support their efforts to work toward them. Hence, it was not a classic intervention because I shaped the intervention based on each teacher's individual goals in response to her own self-identified professional needs. Thus, the teachers and I collaborated to see what outcome was possible within the confines of this study. As I supported

each teacher with resources and ideas to help them achieve their own self-identified professional goal, I listened and focused on the teachers' inner process and thinking as they attempted to implement dialogical instruction during text-based discussions to support ELL learners during whole group instruction.

**Participants and Setting**

  **Participant recruitment and goal setting.** I specifically looked for teachers who were interested in improving and examining their practice of facilitating whole group text-based discussions while also serving the needs of ELL students. My goal was to interrogate a common problem of practice faced by many, if not all, general education teachers regarding how to best serve ELL students in their classroom during daily instructional practices while also serving a general student population. I recruited teachers by contacting former colleagues whose teaching styles I had admired.  This led to three possible leads for participants. In the end, I selected two participants, Lola and Sasha. I had a previously worked with Lola and she recruited Sasha to participate in the study. The selection of two teachers was necessary for practical purposes. By only focusing on two teachers, I was able to spend more time observing whole group text-based discussions in each of their classrooms and talking with them about their lessons to gain a deeper understanding of their personal and professional contexts.

  Focusing on two teachers allowed me to be more responsive to their personal and professional time constraints that were created by these contexts. For example, both of the teachers had young children at home. Therefore, they did not want the study to interfere with their home-life. In addition, the teachers' school day schedules were filled with such everyday necessary activities as instructional planning and lesson materials preparation. The teachers were also required to participate in fieldtrips, faculty and grade level meetings, and end of the year

student assessment analysis. Thus, my flexibility as the researcher was critical in allowing me access to the teacher's classroom and thinking. Hence, limiting the number of participants in the study was necessary.

Another purposeful move that helped me be more responsive to the professional time constraints of my teachers was the fact that I worked with two teachers at the same school in the same grade level. The same school was helpful because I could move back and forth between the classrooms during my school visits quickly within the morning literacy block. The teachers had enough scheduling autonomy that they were able to plan independent times for their observed text-based discussions to ensure I could be in both places in the same day. The same grade level was helpful because they typically attended the same faculty or grade level meetings and fieldtrips so their schedules were not conflicting and I was able to plan visits when they were both available.

Even though the two selected teachers worked in the same school district, school, and grade level, they provided two different perspectives based on their unique experiences within their classrooms. Both of these two teachers were at a different comfort and skill level with their ability to serve ELL students based on background experiences and knowledge. In addition, they also had different comfort levels in their ability to facilitate whole group text-based discussions. I hoped to acknowledge and meet the needs of the teachers in my study at their personal comfort levels. One way I accomplished this was by having the teachers identify their own professional goals for working with ELL students during whole group text-based discussions. Providing the teachers with an opportunity to set their own professional goals and discuss their rationale and needs for such a goal provided me with a window into their thinking about their intentions and actions. Once their individual professional goals were set, I collaborated with each teacher to

identify resources to influence the enactment of text-based discussions to meet their self-identified goal. In this study, each teacher conducted all of the lessons with the students, while I observed, provided supportive resources, and guided their reflections on their practice of facilitating whole group text-based discussions and ELL student learning opportunities.

My collaboration with and support of my two teachers was intended to be responsive to their needs. As I interviewed and collaborated with the two teachers to support them in identifying an individualized professional goal to move from a monologic stance and instructional practice towards a more dialogic one, I provided them with appropriate resources and engaged them in reflection regarding the alignment of their intentions and enacted practice. Thus, jointly, we identified a specific area of focus for professional development focused on text-based discussions within the confines of their teaching context. I set parameters for the teachers' self-identified goals by using a tool that defines a journey of professional development growth towards text-based discussion that is considered dialogic (vs. monologic) through quality descriptors.  This tool, the Dialogic Inquiry Tool (DIT) (Reznitskaya, 2012), will be discussed more in detail later in this chapter. Thus, the teachers were included in identifying the specifics of their professional goal but the general, overarching goal of working toward increased dialogic interaction during whole group text-based discussions had already been established within the study.

**School district.** This study took place in a high achieving suburban public school district in the Midwest named Lakelake School District (pseudonym). As a public school district, the teachers and students at Lakelake School District are held to the student learning expectations and outcomes presented in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The district serves almost 3,000 students in pre-Kindergarten through twelfth grade. It is made up of four schools. The

schools are located together within walking distance in a u-shape near the school administration building. One side of the U-shape is made up of two separate elementary schools. One elementary school serves pre-Kindergarten to third grade. The other elementary school serves fourth to sixth grade. The bottom on the U-shape is the middle school serving grades seventh and eighth grade. The remaining side of the U-shape is the high school serving grades ninth through twelfth. The middle of the U-shape provides parking for visitors and staff. The opening of the U-shape is directed at the athletic fields and student parking.

Lakelake School District has a reputation for being an extraordinary achieving school district with a high graduation rate. The majority of graduating Lakelake students that take the ACT rank above both the state and national standards. The district has received many awards for quality and excellence, which are displayed boldly on its district's website. The state testing requirements for Lakelake School District changed from a content knowledge test to a skills-based test in 2012. For both types of State-level testing assessments, the Lakelake students scored above state averages across all content areas and grade levels tested. However, the testing results also demonstrated a pattern in student scores across grade levels that identified reading as the consistently lowest area of student learning outcomes.

Due to its reputation of excellence, the district's student population is growing consistently both within district enrollment and through open enrollment. The growth has been significant enough that the school district's website provides links to local realtors. The student population is predominately white. Roughly 15% of the students represent non-dominant student populations. The top non-dominant student populations are identified as Asian (8%), Hispanic (6%), multi-racial (5%), and African-American (2%). The district identifies about one percent of its students as English Language Learners. Seven percent of the students have individual

education plans. Thirteen percent of the students are eligible for free and reduced lunch. With the significant student population growth, the student demographics have been changing toward a more diverse student population. This had led to an increase in student linguistic diversity.

**ELL students.**  In the past, Lakelake School District's served an ELL student population mainly identified as the transient children of Spanish-Speaking migrant workers. As time has passed, some of the Spanish-Speaking families transitioned into non-migratory jobs and remained in the school district as traditional yearlong students. Some of the teachers at Lakelake School District speak Spanish due to personal and professional interest in the language. To illustrate, the state's most prominent public university with a nationally recognized teacher education program requires two years of high school foreign language for admittance and the other public state universities highly recommend it. Therefore, some of the teachers had exposure to Spanish language classes at the high school level. Foreign language classes are valued in the district. Spanish is offered as a world language starting at the elementary level at Lakelake school district and French, Chinese, and Spanish are offered at the Middle and High School level. Spanish is the most highly enrolled world language in the district.

A recent trend that has occurred within the ELL student population is the new addition of international students from India joining the student body due to the global hiring practices of a large medical supplies facility in the area. India has a very rich and diverse linguistic heritage based on geography, culture, and religion. Due to the fact that the international Indian students come from distinct regions across India, they speak a variety of different dialects. It should be noted that the Indian constitution does accept English as an official subsidiary language. However, the English language has a complex history in India. On one hand, it represents imperialism and a loss of personal culture and history. On the other hand, it is seen as a personal

commodity used to gain power and wealth. Many of India's elite speak English and complete their higher education in English. Therefore, the chance to learn in English with native English speakers may be seen as a highly desirable opportunity by the international families. In addition, due to the overwhelmingly mono-cultural context of the Lakelake School District, the international parents may also wish for their children to be mainstreamed to help them "fit in" socially or they may be unaware of the legal requirements to provide student services to support English Language Learners in the classroom.

**ELL services.** Although Lakelake School District is rich in general education resources, the resources provided to teachers serving ELL students are limited. The district has one part time ELL teacher who serves all of the ELL students across the four schools. She is scheduled to work three days a week. Under the district website, she has her own webpage. It has had almost 2,400 views or "hits." On this webpage, she provides ELL links, demographic information, and resources. The ELL links provide a connection to a free translation site, a free short article on providing ELL students with comprehensible input from a teaching website, and a state supported website that shares blogs from a preschool teacher, a third to fifth grade teacher, and two content area high school teachers describing how they have supported an ELL student by differentiating instruction based on the student's English Language Proficiency level.

**ELL student demographics.** The ELL teacher's website shares a PDF file called ELL dashboard that shows charts and graphs depicting information about the district's ELL student population demographics. One graph shows the changes in ELL student enrollment from 2007 through 2011. It depicts a high enrollment in 2007 at 32 ELL students and a low enrollment rate during 2008 and 2010 both at 23 ELL students. The most recent year shared, 2011, shows 27 enrolled ELL students at the district level. There are ten different languages spoken by the ELL

students in Lakelake School District. The majority of these ELL students spoke Spanish (7) or Indian dialects (8) such as Tamil (1), Hindi (4), and Telugu (4). Other languages spoken by the ELL students were Chinese (1), French (1), Palauan (1), Ukrainian (1), Serbian (1), and Russian (1). There are two noticeable inconsistencies across the reports presented on the website. First, of the 32 ELL students identified and enrolled in 2007, only 24 of them received services as part of the ELL program. Second, the ELL program served the most students (27) in both 2009 and 2011, although these years did not represent the highest ELL student enrollment rates. Looking specifically at the year 2011, a more consistent number of 27 enrolled ELL students were both identified and served. The ELL student demographic information provided has not been updated in the last four years. It appears that there has been a growth in ELL students' enrollment within the district based on Lola and Sasha's experience and perception of an increase in ELL students within their classrooms. However, the majority of their students that they identified as ELL students were not identified as such by the school district.

**Identifying and serving ELL students.** The inconsistences of identifying and serving enrolled ELL students may be due to the process of identification. Lakelake School District's first step of ELL student identification is a Home Language Survey completed by the parents. After the school office receives the completed survey from the parents, they share it with the ELL teacher. Then, the ELL teacher will give the student an English Language Proficiency assessment required by the state. Therefore, the ELL student service request must begin with the family to see if the student qualifies for a Student Service Support Plan. As mentioned earlier, some of the parents may have reasons that they do not wish or prefer not to have their students identified as ELL. Therefore, some ELL students may be non-identified.

Although the district's plan meets all of the legal requirements, it differs from the state's recommended ELL student Identification and Placement procedures. For instance, in addition to the Home Language Survey, an academic history of the ELL student is also recommended for consideration of ELL student identification and placement. This is important because it creates an additional ELL identification source by allowing the teacher to note any student that may have a language barrier that creates a challenge for the student to obtain growth similar to his or her grade level peers. Hence, the state recommends that teachers can provide evidence and request an initial English Language proficiency assessment in addition to parent survey results. It is important to note that the state law requires that the parents of an ELL student receiving services must be notified within two to four weeks depending on the student assessment in correlation to the start of the school year. This being said, parents of ELL students can deny services. Thus, in both contexts, at the district and state level, the parents play a critical role in accessing or declining ELL student support services.

**ELL resources.** The district ELL webpage has resource files for students, parents, and teachers. The student and parent resource files are marked "under construction" and were last updated about two years ago. The three teacher resource files include descriptions of English Language Proficiency Levels, Frequently Asked Questions, and a Structured Immersion Observation Procedure lesson plan template. The teacher resource file is open to the public.

The English Language Proficiency Levels document describes what characteristics qualify a student at each of the seven levels as defined by their ability to understand, speak, write, and read English in an academic context. To illustrate, Level one (Beginning/Preproduction) represents a student who does not understand or speak English with the exception of a few isolated words or expressions. Level four (Advanced Intermediate) identifies a student who can

understand and speak conversational English, but may struggle to understand and speak academic English. Level six (Formerly Limited-English Proficient/Now Fully-English Proficient) denotes a student who was formerly limited-English proficient and is now fully English proficient due to the fact that he or she can read, write, speak and comprehend academic English within the classroom. Level seven (Fully-English Proficient/Never Limited-English Proficient) means that the student was never identified as Limited English Proficient or does not meet the legal state or federal definition for designated status.

There is a frequently Asked Questions document that gives suggestions how to serve ELL students defined as "new-comers" or international students and "transfer" students or ELL's from another school district.   It suggests looking at the student's records and creating a warm, welcoming environment by smiling, seating the student near the teacher's desk, and assigning a student "buddy" to help assist the ELL student. The document informs readers that the World Language teachers and the ELL teacher might be available to provide translation services if contacted in advance and time constraints allow.  It also suggests the use of online websites for translation services. Finally, the document describes the linguistic support provided by the part-time ELL teacher. This support includes sharing the state required Student Service Support Plan, receiving staff input to answer concerns or questions, discussing standardized testing assistance, scheduling student observations, and sharing appropriate ELL resources via email. Finally, the document gives suggestions to teachers who are serving an ELL student such as creating opportunities for the ELL student to speak with peers, using authentic assessments, developing projects that help create connections between the ELL students' home culture "with ours," and trying to look at one ELL resource a week.

Finally, a blank Structured Immersion Observation Procedure (SIOP) lesson plan template was provided on the ELL teacher's website. Two things make this lesson plan template unique for ELL students. First, the lesson plan template has space for a content learning objective and a language objective. Second, the template also has a section for key vocabulary words in the lesson. The SIOP was originally created for administrators to assess classroom lesson implementation strategies to serve ELL students. Therefore, on the SIOP lesson plan template, there is a box with listed features under six categories: preparation, integration process, scaffolding, application, grouping options, and assessment. Within each of these categories, specific planned and enacted teacher moves are identified to qualify how the teacher is serving ELL students during the lesson. The preparation category characterizes if and how the teacher actively adapts the content (e.g. sentence frames or uses word banks), links to student background knowledge and past learning opportunities, and/or incorporated strategies such as the use of first language cognates. The integration process considers the opportunities within the lesson for the students to speak, listen, write, and read. Scaffolding notes teacher moves such as modeling (teacher thinking aloud while doing the learning objective), guided practice (teacher supporting students attempting the learning objective), independent practice (students practicing the learning objective) and comprehensible input (refining the content to be accessible to the students' level of understanding while encouraging specific learning growth). The application is assessed by the lesson's ability to create hands-on, meaningful, engaging, student learning opportunities that are linked to the learning objective of the lesson. The grouping options are whole class, small group, partners or pairs, and independent. Multiple grouping options may take place in one lesson. Finally, the assessment options are marked as individual, group, written, and oral.

**Elementary school.** This study took place in the District's PreK-3 school, Small Lake Elementary School (pseudonym). Small Lake Elementary School serves almost 950 students. Each grade level is clustered near each other within the school. For example, the first grade level has nine separate classrooms serving about 200 students. In alignment with the school district, Small Lake is a well-funded, high achieving school rich in resources for serving the mainstream student population but limited in resources to support classroom teachers serving ELL students. Therefore, teachers often research, create, and implement lessons with materials they identify as "good for all students."

**Teachers and their students.** The participants, Lola and Sasha (pseudonyms), both taught at Small Lake Elementary School in first grade classrooms. Lola served 22 students and Sasha served 22 students. They both had over ten years teaching experience and held a Master's degree in Education. They both also had three ELL students whose native language was not English in their classrooms. Within this ELL student population that the teachers identified as needing linguistic support, the majority were non-designated ELL students who did not receive services from the district.

Lola's classroom served 22 students. Eleven of the students were girls and the other eleven were boys. Two of the students received free and reduced lunch and none of the students had an individual education plan. One student was formally identified as an English Language Learner and two students were not formally identified but spoke a primary language other than English in their home. The languages represented in the students' homes are Spanish and two different dialects from India. Fifteen of the students in Lola's classroom were White and their dominant language was English. The remaining eight students represented non-dominant student

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populations. These student were identified as Indian (2), Hispanic (1), multi-racial (4), and African-American (1).

Sasha's classroom also served 22 students. Ten of the students were girls and the other twelve were boys. None of her students received free and reduced lunch and none of her students had an individual education plan. Sasha informally identified one of her female international students as an English Language Learner who needed additional linguistic support.  The other two male international students were also not formally identified as needing linguistic support and spoke a primary language other than English in their homes but Sasha did not feel as though they needed linguistic support. The languages represented in the international students' homes were different dialects from India but Sasha was not aware which ones. Eighteen of the students in Sasha's classroom were White whose dominant language was English. The remaining four students represented non-dominant student populations. These student were identified as Indian (3) and multi-racial (1). The mixed racial student was identified as Hispanic and Filipino. Sasha believed this student spoke Spanish at home with his family but did not feel he needed additional linguistic support in the classroom.

**Classroom environments.** Lola and Sash both had large, well-organized classrooms rich with literacy resources that afforded their students a variety of opportunities for literacy development. The classrooms were brimming over with student books. They had access to technology such as document cameras and projectors. The classrooms also had access to a shared cart full of student laptops. In the chapter three, I will further describe each teacher's classroom to demonstrate how these seasoned teachers set up the literacy spaces to engage their students in literacy practices. The purpose of this description is to highlight that the teachers had created a thoughtful, resource rich, positive, learning environment. Thus, my research was not to describe

what resources were lacking but what the teachers were specifically doing with ELL students in this context during whole group text-based discussions.

**Data Collection**

This multisite case study included a variety of qualitative tools such as interviews, classroom observations, artifacts, videotaped lessons, and field notes over a five-week period. These types of qualitative data helped to build my case study and answer my research questions.

**Interviews.** The interviews were a primary data source regarding the context and intended curriculum of the whole group text-based discussions as well as intended learning goals for ELL students. The interviews were critical to my study because they allowed insights into the teachers' perceptions of what they were trying to do in the classroom and what factors were influencing their decisions. I conducted two types of interviews with the teachers.

**Semi-structured interviews.** The first type of interview was a formal semi-structured interview given at the beginning and end of the study (see Appendix A). The beginning semi-structured interview focused on current practices in place for text-based discussions and how the teachers viewed and articulated opportunities for all students, and ELL students in particular, to engage in different levels of thinking in their classroom. I inquired about the district, school, and classroom levels to learn about the context.

I introduced the Dialogic Instruction Tool or DIT (Reznitskaya, 2012) during the beginning semi-structured interview to help them identify possible areas that they might wish to work on as an individualized professional development goal (see Appendix B). The DIT (Reznitskaya, 2012) outlines a spectrum of professional attributes that define a journey from monologic to dialogic instruction. This was helpful to my project and the teachers because it creates a vision of indicated potential for facilitating an interactive text-based discussion. The

DIT's scale indicates the level of monoligic or dialogic instruction based on the following six inquiries: authority, questions, feedback, connecting students' ideas, explanations, and collaboration. The level of authority is indicated by who takes responsibility of the text-based discussion. The Question level is indicated by the types of questions (recall or open-ended) asked during the text-based discussion. Feedback given at the monologic level is non-specific, while at the dialogic level invites further exploration. Meta-level reflection encompasses three of the six inquires and is described as instructional moves that connect students' ideas, provide explanation, and encourage collaboration. On the DIT, it is indicated as dialogic when the teacher connects student ideas and monologic by the teacher not doing so. Explanation is indicated at the monologic level when the teacher does not expect the students to explain their thinking and is represented at the dialogic level when students are pressed to give explanations that include reasoning and examples. Collaboration is considered to be monologic when the student responses are disjointed and dialogic when they build off of and react to each other.

As mentioned earlier, this tool was used in my study to help teachers select their own professional goal and reflect on how they were enacting whole group text-based discussions. It was used to help them assess their current practice and set a professional goal for improvement within one of the six inquiries regarding the enactment of whole group text-based discussions. The DIT provided an opportunity to consider specific indicators individually as part of the general enacted practice of facilitating text based discussions. This individual level of focus on one specific indicator was intended to support teachers in attempting to refine their practice versus focusing on the practice as a whole during a limited amount of time. However, it is important to acknowledge that the DIT was not designed to specifically support teachers to refine their practice of serving the needs of specific groups of students such as ELL students. Therefore,

during this study, I had to look for additional ways to help the teachers refine their practice of facilitating text-based discussions while considering ways to weave elements of McIntyre's (2010) principles of teaching ELL students such as paying attention to culture.

I also asked the teachers about the current instructional strategies or moves they used to support diverse learners such as ELL students in the classroom. Finally, I asked them to identify goals and challenges regarding their practices in working with ELL students in whole group text-based discussions. I spent about an hour with each teacher individually during the beginning semi-structured interview. Lola's interview was 64 minutes and Sasha's interview lasted 58 minutes. Due to the length of the interview, the interview for both teachers was completed in two parts. Lola completed her first and second interview in her classroom over her lunch period when the students were out of the room. Sasha completed her first interview during her lunch period while the students were out of the room and her second interview after school via a video conference call with screen sharing capabilities.

The final formal interview was semi-structured and took place approximately the week after the school year ended at the end of the study (see Appendix A). This interview focused on the changes, if any, of instructional goals and practices the teachers made for serving ELL students during whole group text-based discussions and their reflections or insights on the influence they had on ELL student learning opportunities. I explicitly asked them to reflect on the extent to which they were able to meet the professional goal they had set during the first interview using the tool that defined dialogic discussion through quality descriptors. Specifically, I asked questions regarding what insights they had while enacting teacher moves to support ELL students during whole group text-based discussions and how their professional goal has shifted based on their understanding of the learning needs of ELL students. I followed up with asking

whether and how district, school, and/or classroom context factors influenced their ability to perform interactive text-based discussions. The teachers requested a group interview because it allowed them to interact, reflect, and learn from and with each other as colleagues. To respect the teachers' wishes and time constraints, I complied with their request. Therefore, the final formal semi-structured interview was completed with both teachers together face to face in one of the teacher's homes. This collaborative interview lasted one hour and fifty-one minutes. We ended the interview when the teachers' children arrived home from school on the bus.

**Informal interviews.** The second type of interview that I conducted was an informal interview with the teachers before and after my observations. The pre-lesson interview was a short interview or statement to inform me of the instructional goals of the lesson before the lesson was observed. It was very important that I worked closely with the teachers to gain as much insight as possible into their perceptions of what they were trying to do regarding the intended curriculum and what factors they felt influenced their practice. One possible approach to understand the intended curriculum was to see written lesson plans. However, I was unable to get explicit insight into the teachers' perceptions of intended curriculum through lesson plans because these seasoned teachers did not write detailed lessons as a part of their classroom planning practice. This being said, nor did the teachers use the SIOP lesson planning template mentioned earlier in the district's ELL resources. It was unclear if the teachers didn't know about the SIOP template offered as an ELL resource, or if they actively chose not to use it, as it was never mentioned or discussed during the interviews.

Therefore, a pre-lesson interview regarding the instructional goals of each lesson before the lesson was observed was important. I wanted teachers to reflect upon the following statements: (a) what are all students to going to learn during the text-based discussion (b) are

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there any additional learning goals for the ELL students (c) what specific teaching moves are intended to support ELL students during the discussion (d) how they plan to achieve their professional goal within the lesson in relation to supporting ELL students. Due to the important need of this insight and out of respect for the teachers' busy schedules, I was very open to the format of this interview. I encouraged the teachers to decide if they preferred to discuss these statements orally in person, email a written response, or through a voicemail message. Lola chose to provide me with hand-written responses on index cards and stationery to the pre-lesson prompts. She completed four responses out of the twelve lessons that I observed during the study. Sasha decided to email me typed responses to the pre-lesson prompts and also completed four responses out the ten lessons that I observed.

After I observed and videotaped a lesson, I conducted a post-lesson debriefing interview with each teacher. During the post-lesson debriefing, I asked questions such as (a) were there any differences between the intended lesson and the enacted lesson (b) what went well (c) what did not go well (d) how they evaluate their teaching practice based upon their self-defined enacted practice goal to serve ELL students, and (e) what next steps they feel they should take to improve their practice to increase ELL student learning.

I had originally hoped to observe both teachers and debrief with each teacher on each day that I was able to visit the classroom. My plan was to rotate the debriefing schedule for each observation day by meeting with one teacher during their lunch in person and the other teacher via an online conference call after school. Unfortunately, my scheduled online meeting with Lola after school was cancelled when she fell asleep at 8pm on the couch after finishing work, helping her two children with their homework, making dinner for her family, tidying up her home, and preparing her children for bed with baths and teeth brushing. With empathy for the

time constraints faced by the teachers in their personal and professional lives, I decided to create a more realistic schedule of rotating the debriefing interviews between the two teachers during their lunch schedules only. Lola completed four debriefing interviews and Sasha completed three. Each debriefing interview lasted between 35 and 40 minutes. These pre-lesson interviews and post lesson debriefing interviews helped me gain access to the teachers' voice and purpose for instruction.

   **Videotaped classroom observations.** I observed Sasha ten times and Lola twelve times over a period of four to five weeks. I tried to observe the teachers three days a week as their schedules permitted. Originally, I wanted to observe one teacher for three consecutive days of observations and then rotate teachers to allow time for the participants to self-reflect upon our debriefings and their professional goals. Due to the short time frame at the end of the school year and the close proximity afforded by working with teachers in the same school, I changed this plan to observing each teacher on the same day to ensure maximum observations. Based on their individually selected professional goals, I planned out a procedure that would support teachers to review their lessons and assess their progress. I used current research based literature to identify what would be the best scaffold based on each teacher's individual professional goals. For example, Lola wished to focus on the area of sharing authority with her students as her professional goal. Therefore, I provided her with Almasi's (1996) descriptions of teacher's and students' roles as a tool that would help scaffold her reflection and perception of how students and the teacher can share the responsibility for the process and content of the conversation.

   During my observations, I specifically studied the teachers' literacy instruction to explore the enacted curriculum of supporting ELL students' learning opportunities during whole-group, text-based discussions. To do so, I observed the teachers reading books to their entire class of

students as a means to engage ELL students in learning through interactive talk about the text. The purpose of the observations was to document and record teaching practices and lesson implementation. This helped me gain understanding and insight as to how the enacted lesson rewarded or thwarted the teachers' attempts to provide opportunities for their ELL students to engage in higher level thinking during text based discussions. Therefore, I videotaped and transcribed the whole group lesson observations. To be in compliance with IRB requirements for video recording normal classroom activity with students who were minors, I did not capture the images of the students. The transcriptions enabled me to focus on the specific wording of the teachers' instructional utterances while the video taped observations allowed me to capture and reflect on the body language and physical moves the teacher used to implement the lesson. However, as a guest in the classroom, I wanted my observations to be as non-disruptive as possible.

I also wanted to capture the interactions between the teacher and ELL students as well as the interaction between the English-Only and ELL students. Therefore, during the whole group text-based discussions, I sat on the carpeting with the students manning the camera so it focused only on the teacher. The proximity to the students allowed me to catch the students' voices during activities such as think-pair-share. I specifically tried to sit near an ELL student if possible. If a student moved into the line of the video camera, I turned the camera away to avoid recording the student. This was challenging because many of the students found the video camera exciting and some wanted to see what I was recording while others who were more outgoing wanted to be featured on the recording. To avoid this issue as much as possible, I filmed over their heads while sitting in the back of the group since I was taller than the students. During student discussions, I focused the video camera on the floor or carpeting and used it just

to record audio. Due to the fact that the students were not identified on the film, there were times that I needed the support of the teacher to assist me in identifying the students that were speaking.

After the observations, I wrote general observation notes regarding any unusual circumstances in the lesson, style of teaching, quality of the instruction, details of the context of the lesson, and the teacher's progress of working towards his or her professional goal in relation to supporting the needs of ELL students. These general observation notes guided me in my debriefing follow up questions with the teacher.

**Curriculum materials.** During interviews and observations, I was highly aware of what curriculum materials were mentioned or used. If I heard about or noticed a curriculum material, I followed up and asked to examine it more closely. The curriculum materials that I collected included a teaching manual on text-based discussions, district scope and sequence of the year-long first grade reading units of study, samples of first grade team lesson planning materials, and the district's first grade assessment rubric for literacy standards. The curriculum materials helped me understand the implicit factors that impacted the instructional goals and how they influenced the enacted curriculum. Specifically, I looked for factors that pertained to ELL students. However, a wider lens was also needed to broadly explore whole group text-based discussions within the larger context. I looked at the curriculum materials with the teachers to develop an understanding of their perception in relation to their professional goals. For example, the text-based discussion teacher manual had one page of instructional moves that specifically applied to ELL students. Thus, I asked why or why not the teachers chose to implement or ignore such resources as it related to their self identified goal.

***Teaching manual on text-based discussions.*** Both Lola and Sasha had a purchased curriculum program for using read alouds effectively in the classroom that encouraged student talk provided by the district. This program focused on reading comprehension and vocabulary development using trade books. It encouraged family connections by providing a reproducible one-page family letter in English and Spanish that provided the families with the six focused vocabulary words for each story and encouraged them to use the words with their children. The vocabulary words and definitions section was only provided in English although the body of the letter was in Spanish. The program provided teachers with detailed lesson plans for twenty trade book text-based discussions in a professional guide or teaching manual. The lesson plans included sticky notes for specific pauses in the story. These pauses are places in the story that the teacher was directed to model how they make sense of the text or vocabulary, ask open-ended questions that connect story ideas, or prompt student thinking by asking them to summarize, identify problem and solution, recognize story structure, clarify story ideas, make inferences, and integrate prior knowledge. In addition, a chart was provided to track the students' use of and exposure to new vocabulary from the text in their daily life.

The program encourages teachers to spend five sessions on each story. The first two times the story is read the teacher focuses on comprehension. The manual provides a discussion task prompt such as "ask children to think of the most important event in the story." Then, it provides an observational assessment that aligns with the prompt for example, "Are the children able to tell the story in a condensed form? Are children building meaning based on the text rather than relying on their prior knowledge?" The third and fourth session focuses on vocabulary. The manual may request that the teacher discusses and summarizes the new word by explaining the

meaning and having students identify when to use it. Other vocabulary activities might be orally filling in a missing word or using shared writing to create a semantic map of the word.

The purchased curriculum program provided a bulleted one-page resource with five suggestions to "bridge" or scaffold ELL students learning needs while using text-based discussions in the classroom. In general, the curriculum suggests providing small group settings for the ELL students so the teacher can "clarify, correct, and elaborate as needed." When serving ELL students, the program encourages teachers to adapt content, emphasize key vocabulary, tailor instructions, tailor interaction, and use coherent strategies. Teachers can adapt content by linking student background with the text, paraphrasing, and using visuals, gestures, and body language. To emphasize key vocabulary, teachers can provide contextualized definitions and review them. Teachers can tailor instruction by modifying their speech such as enunciating and using simple sentences, explaining clearly, adjusting the pace of their speech and lesson, and reviewing key concepts. Tailoring interaction involves the teacher giving students feedback, encouraging student interaction, and providing wait time. Teachers can use coherent strategies to support their ELL students by modeling (e.g. dramatization), scaffolding consistently, and providing hands-on materials, and integrating all language skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking). Instead of ELL support provided for each specific text discussion, there was a small red and yellow circular reminder to see the one page ELL suggestions on the top of the page in the introduction of the lesson for each of the twenty books.

*District reading scope and sequence.* The district's reading scope and sequence provided an outline of the first grade yearlong units of study based on strategies. This scope and sequence was outlined September through June. Each month had an overall learning theme. September introduced procedures and routines of the classroom library and reading strategies.

October focused on retelling (characters and settings, simple stories, story structures and elements). November concentrated on monitoring for meaning (stop and think while reading) and character development (describe, explain, compare). December centered on making connections (schema). January was asking questions about a book (before, during and after reading). February was visualizing (using five senses and mental pictures). March was selected for teaching about inferring (using schema, text and picture cues to make predictions and looking for evidence). In April, teachers taught about evaluating (determining important events and author's message). The focus of May was synthesizing (using all of the strategies while learning, reading, talking, and experiencing). Due to the shortness caused by the end of the school year, June was considered a time for review of the strategies as needed. Within each month's theme, each day held a specific learning objective that supported the monthly overall learning goal.

As discussed in more detail below, I planned my visits to the school during May. This allowed me to see a variety of comprehension strategies, as the students were encouraged to synthesize their learning. The specific student learning goals in May focused on understanding that "as we learn, read, talk, and experience our schema changes." In addition, students were urged to explain, "How their thinking changed as they read." I felt that these learning goals were especially conducive to student focused text-based discussions and afforded the teacher with the opportunity to engage students in a variety of levels of thinking based on their questions and learning objectives.

*Lesson planning materials.* The first grade team of nine teachers had collected a variety of literacy resources to share as a grade level resource and put them in a binder. These resources were hard copies of blank graphic organizers to support student literacy learning that were easily

reproducible. Graphic organizers are specifically important to ELL students because they create visual and coherent way to organize key learning concepts. Some of the graphic organizers included in the binder were Venn-diagrams for comparing and contrasting, tables and lists to support such things as organization, and word webs, which can be used for a variety of things such as semantic meaning or organizing big idea and details. One example of a table provided as a graphic organizer supported students in using context clues to define words. In the first column, the students wrote the word. In the next column, they wrote what they thought it meant. In the last column, they wrote their reasoning. The binder was organized to align with the district's literacy scope and sequence.

Sasha added to her binder by writing the learning goals for each lesson from the district's literacy scope and sequence with ideas for modeling and when to add an anchor chart. For example, for a lesson teaching that "good writers stop when something doesn't make sense and use their strategies," she wrote a note to use a strategy checklist to decode words and add it to the anchor chart about good readers. In addition, Sasha would add a post-it note when she found a book that worked well with a certain graphic organizer within a unit of study. To illustrate, she wrote the title and library call number of a book on Turkeys that she used during a lesson to introduce schema as a comprehension strategy at the end of November around Thanksgiving before the official unit started in December. Sasha was observed using her document camera to share graphic organizers during her lessons. Lola did not add these details to her binder nor was she observed using her document camera to share graphic organizers during her lessons. Reviewing these literacy resources helped me understand how the teachers selected and developed lesson plans and materials. This was helpful because the teachers did not write detailed lesson plans.

***Evaluation rubric for literacy standards.*** The first grade evaluation rubric aligned with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and was divided into three packets representing each grading term. The packets were fifteen to seventeen pages long. Many of the standards were copied directly from the CCSS. However, specific CCSSs were not cited or referred to in the packets. The first packet was used to assess the students in December during the first academic grading term. The second packet was used to assess the students in March during the second grading term. The third packet was used to assess the students in June based on the final grading term. The grading periods build upon each other as mastery of certain skills was expected during each grading terms. The rubric was based on a four point scale: one (below expectations, two (approaching expectations), three (meeting expectations) and four (exceeding expectations). The literacy standards included reading-foundational skills, reading-literature and informational text), writing, language, and speaking and listening.

For the purpose of this study, I looked specifically at the speaking and listening section of the rubric. The standards for speaking and listening were: listens attentively to others; participates in class discussions, taking turns, and staying on topic; asks and answers questions to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood; expresses thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly. These standards were each rated with the following descriptors: one (seldom), two (sometimes), and three (consistently). The descriptors for a four rating, or exceeding expectations, were given in three of the four speaking and listening standards. To receive a four in participation, a student needed to provide "comments (that) consistently add to the quality of the discussion." Exceeding expectations for asking and answering questions, were "questions asked consistently address higher level thinking of the topic." Finally, exceeding expectations on student expressions were demonstrated by "expressions (that) are consistently

made and supported with examples, reasons, opinions, etc." These standard descriptors were consistent across all three grading terms. Looking deeply at the speaking and listening standards afforded me an understanding and insight into the district's expectations for student contributions during text-based discussions and other lessons.

## DATA ANALYSES

I used my research questions to organize my data analysis process. My data analysis had three distinct steps. First, I analyzed the intended curriculum to understand what Lola and Sasha were trying to do. Then, I analyzed the enacted curriculum within my two distinct case studies. Finally, I looked across the two case studies to examine patterns of similarities and differences between Lola and Sasha experiences.

My first research question was: *How do two first-grade teachers negotiate instructional goals through constructing intended curriculum for students who are identified as English Language Learners (ELLs) and provide opportunities to engage students in different levels of thinking during whole group text-based discussions? What did they say are the elements that influence their negotiation (e.g. school curriculum, district pacing guides, standards)?* This question was focused on the intended curriculum. I used the data obtained from interviews (e.g., pre and post-lesson) and artifacts such as the curriculum materials to understand what each teacher was trying to do. My second research question was: *How does the enacted curriculum provide opportunities for ELL students to engage in different levels of thinking during whole group text-based discussions? What did they build into the lesson to specifically support ELL students?* This question focused on understanding the enacted curriculum. I used information provided by lesson observations, artifacts relevant to specific lessons, post-lesson interviews, and

transcripts of classroom interactions to better understand what actually happened during the lesson.

I begin with an overview of my approach to analysis, which will be followed by more specific examples. Organizing the data analysis based on the research questions provided an approach that allowed the analyses of the three data sources (interviews, classroom observations, artifact analysis) to occur both independently and interactively as I developed in-depth cases and broad analytic descriptions to answer my research questions (Merriam, 2009; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). I used triangulation from the three data sources to crosscheck and affirm interpretations of the data (Charmaz, 2004; Merriam, 2009; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). My research questions and theoretical framework provided my initial categories to use as a foundation for analysis. As the analysis progressed, I used a more inductive approach to refine the categories based on specific patterns that were forming. This interactive discovery and development based on interaction with the data is an important feature of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Merriam, 2009). I used the qualitative method of grounded theory and constant comparison to refine my categories regarding the factors that influenced the teachers' practice in relation to the contexts of enacting whole group text-based discussions. This being said, the categories were refined through constant comparison using both inductive and deductive reasoning to detecting patterns and theory while analyzing the data sources (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). As outlined in Table 1, I analyzed selected portions of the classroom observations, teacher interviews, and curriculum materials and developed my interpretations based on concepts presented in the theoretical frameworks used in this study.

**Analysis of Intended Curriculum**

When analyzing the intended curriculum, I wanted to understand what Lola and Sasha intended to accomplish during their lesson in regards to student learning, supporting their ELL students, and refining their ability to facilitate whole group text-based discussions. To accomplish this task, I analyzed their individual contexts and factors of influence. First, I examined their educational background experiences such as where they went to school, their degrees and certifications, and previous work experience in the field of education. In doing so, I was looking for their perceptions of how these background experiences influenced their current practice and provided any personal resources for working with ELL students. This information was mainly provided in the beginning semi-structured interview. After I transcribed these interviews, I carefully read through the transcriptions and highlighted information that provided insights to their background experiences. Then, I used these highlighted excerpts to create memos summarizing the information. Next, I examined their classroom context such as classroom organization and student descriptions and demographics. In general, I was trying to gain insight on how they organized their classrooms to support student learning, especially ELL students, and their perceptions of their students. Once again, I used information from the beginning semi-structured interview along with classroom observations. Similar to my analysis of their background information, I highlighted information from the interview transcription and notes from my classroom observations that pertained to their classroom organization and student demographics. Then, I summarized these two sources of data into a memo about their classroom contexts.

Next, I analyzed their perceptions and use of resources. First, I made a list of all of the possible resources that were available for Lola and Sasha. This was important to help me keep

track of which resources they leveraged and which resources they chose to not use. Then, I examined the beginning formal interview transcriptions, informal pre and post-lesson interview transcriptions, and classroom observation transcriptions. I highlighted any reference to or actual use of a resource found in these data sources. Then, I wrote a memo to summarize my findings of which resources they mentioned and used. Next, I returned to my list of potential resources to add commentary regarding which resources they did not utilize such as the ISIOP lesson planning template provided by the school district. Mainly, I was interested in what resources they used or had access to for planning differentiation strategies to support their ELL students such as curriculum materials. However, Lola mentioned other factors such as a lack of district resources for ELL students in our beginning formal interview. She also shared her perception of her administrator's role in supporting her. In contrast, Sasha did not share many details about her perceptions about these two factors of influence in her teaching context until midway through the study during post lesson interviews and explicitly in the final formal interview. It appears that she became more comfortable and trusting as we interacted over the time of the study.

Finally, I analyzed factors of influence as they related to Lola and Sasha's individualized self-selected professional development goal as it related to the DIT (previously discussed above). I used information gained from the beginning semi-structured interview to build my understanding of each teachers' own perceived strengths and weaknesses of facilitating whole group text-based discussions and what path they felt they should take to refine their practice. I also examined the semi-structured beginning interview to discover their reasoning for selecting their specific Teaching Indicator and how they thought this refinement might support their ELL students. To accomplish this, I highlighted the excerpts from the transcript that mentioned their

professional development goal and their reasoning for selecting it. Once again, I summarized this information in a memo.

Once Lola and Sasha selected their personalized professional development goal, I was able to better understand and anticipate their intended targeted area of improvement. Using the inquiry areas that each teacher selected within Dialogical Instruction Tool (DIT) (Reznitskaya, 2012), I analyzed their intended professional goals by looking specifically at the descriptors within their area of focus. I used these descriptors to identify areas that signified an attempt to work towards their professional development goals. To illustrate, Lola selected to refine her practice of facilitating whole group text-based discussions based on the Authority Teaching Indicator as represented in the DIT. Therefore, I analyzed her intended professional development by examining her intentions of creating space for students to participate by sharing the responsibility to call on students, shift topics, evaluate the answers, and ask questions as she discussed them in the pre and post lesson interviews. I will explain these categories in more detail when I describe the analysis of the enacted curriculum. Sasha chose to refine her practice of facilitating whole group text-based discussions through the DIT Feedback Teaching Indicator. Therefore, I used the data provided in pre and post lesson interview transcriptions to analyze how she wanted to provide feedback to her students and how she felt this feedback would support her students' learning. As mentioned earlier, I will define these categories in more detail when I describe the analysis of the enacted curriculum.

I utilized data provided in the pre and post lesson informal interview during my analysis across the three lessons to observe and describe any insight to their reasoning as they navigated working towards their professional development goals. To do so, I highlighted excerpts of the transcripts whenever Lola and Sasha shared information about how or why they planned or were

attempting to enact a certain teaching strategy to support their professional development goal. I also highlighted their comments about how they hoped or believed these instructional moves would support the learning of their students, especially their ELL students. Then, I used the highlighted data to write a memo about their intended practices.

**Analysis of Enacted Curriculum**

Next, I analyzed the enacted curriculum to answer my second research question. I used information provided by lesson observations, transcripts of classroom interactions, artifacts relevant to specific lessons, and post-lesson interviews to better understand what the teachers actually did and why during three distinct lessons.

I chose the three distinct lessons for each teacher based on two factors. The first factor was that I wanted to select a lesson from the beginning, middle, and end to capture any changes in their practice over the length of the study. The second factor was selecting lessons that included a corresponding post-lesson informal interview. This was important because I wanted to include the teachers' voices by sharing their reasoning and purpose behind they enactment. Therefore, the exact first, middle and last lessons were not chosen. Instead, I analyzed Lola's second, fifth, and eighth lessons and Sasha's fourth, seventh, and ninth lessons. I analyzed the lessons in three stages.

**Stage one.** First, I used the lesson observations, transcripts of classroom interactions, artifacts relevant to specific lessons, and post-lesson interviews to identify the lesson context, learning goals, and any challenges the teacher identified for each of the three lessons for both teachers. In this stage, I used the lesson observation to provide data needed to describe the context of the lesson, the text, and any resources used such as graphic organizers, anchor charts, or document camera. I also used the lesson observation and post lesson interview to determine

the learning goal. At times, the learning goal identified in the post lesson interview and enacted in the lesson differed slightly. For example, in one lesson Sasha worked toward the learning goal of having students document and share their thinking while reading a text. However, during the enactment of the lesson Sasha struggled to move the students beyond recalling events that occurred during the text. In this, situation, I attempted to acknowledge what the teacher tried to teach and what learning opportunities she enacted with the students. I also used the lesson observation, transcripts of classroom interactions, and post-lesson interview to identify successes and challenges within the lessons.

For the lesson observation, I took notes on items that I noticed as helping or hindering the teachers achieve their professional goal. I used the transcripts of classroom interactions to provide specific examples of the teachers attempting to implement verbal support to the students to achieve the learning goal while working towards their professional development goal. Then, I reviewed the post-lesson interview transcripts to ascertain the teachers' perception on what went well or provided a challenge during the lesson and my recommendations to them. I highlighted excepts that pertained to these topics and summarized these three data sources to provide insights into the general perception of how each teacher was attempting to move toward their professional development goal in a memo.

**Stage two.** The second stage of my analysis focused on examining the transcriptions of the classroom interactions using DIT Teaching Indicators mentioned earlier from each teacher's self identified professional goal. I used this tool to discover what instructional practices occurred or did not occur to support their professional development goal and how they perceived this to influence the ELL students' experience and learning during the lesson. I will now explain how I

used the DIT Teaching Indicators to analyze Lola and Sasha's enacted practice in relation to their individually selected professional development goals.

**Lola: authority teaching indicators.** In order to analyze Lola's lessons in regards to the DIT Authority Teaching Indicator (see table 2), I used the transcripts of classroom interactions. In doing so, I examined the level that she provided space for student participation in regards to the shared responsibility for the process and content of the conversation. I used the descriptors within the indicator to develop the categories and codes to evaluate the level that she shared responsibility with her students. These categories and codes were: calls on students, shifts topics, evaluates the answers, and asks questions. I will now describe these categories.

*Calls on students.* The "calls on students" category defined who and how permission to share was given during the whole group text-based discussion. I examined the process of the conversation by coding whether Lola called on students by name or a physical gesture or whether students called on each other or freely participated. To illustrate, I counted how many students Lola called on by name and how many times each student was called on. As mentioned earlier, in compliance with IRB I was not able to capture the students' images in the recording. Therefore, the students that Lola called on by name was used as my main gauge of who participated and the frequency. However, I was able to record student voices so I was able to determine if a student called on another student or directed a question to the group.

*Shifts topics.* The "shifting topics" category represented who decided on the topics discussed as the content of the whole group text-based discussion. To analyze who and how decided which topics to discuss, I examined who set the purpose, suggested new topics, and which topics were ignored or focused upon during the discussion. This category helped me describe if and how Lola shared authority with her students in regard to the content of the

discussion. Due to the fact that Lola determined each lesson's learning goals, I also had to consider how she presented herself as open to students shifting topics within the lesson such as answering a student's question, acknowledging a students suggested prediction, or complimenting the class for contributing to the discussion.

*Evaluates answers.* The "evaluates answers" category represented who provided an evaluation of the responses or comments presented by participants of the whole group text-based discussion. To analyze who evaluated answers, I looked at who provided feedback in reply to response to comments made during the discussion. This category also helped me consider if and how Lola shared authority with her students in regard to the content of the discussion.

*Asks questions.* The "asks questions" category illustrated who asked questions during the whole group text-based discussion. I coded when Lola asked a question and when students asked a question. Since I found that Lola asked the mass majority of the questions during the discussion, I decided to look deeper at the types of questions she asked her students. This analysis was different from my later analysis of levels of thinking that I used to answer the second question because it looked at the types and purposes of her questions as a pedagogical move, not the level of thinking the question evoked. I found that Lola used questions to check for comprehension, request reasoning, ask for personal connections, encourage group participation, add multiple perspectives, follow up with a student, clarify a student comment, highlight a student comment, and request peer evaluation. Below, I will describe the coding process used for the types and purpose of questions within this subcategory.

Lola used questions to *check for comprehension*. These questions were subcategorized and coded as comprehension questions. Comprehension questions allowed Lola to check for student understanding during the text-based discussion. These questions tended to be text explicit

(directly answered from the text) or text implicit (inferring might be needed). Examples of this type of question were: "What is Cristobel doing right now," "Is Mateo doing what she wants him to do," and "How did she feel at the beginning of the book?" In some cases, selectively identifying questions was challenging because on occasion Lola asked a sequence of questions without stopping to ask for student input. These series of questions crossed over the types or purposes categories. For example, Lola asked, "How is what Mateo doing bringing him above something that is scary? What is scary that he is doing? What are the other kids scared of?" In this example, Lola's first question asked for reasoning, but before the students answered, she asked two comprehension questions about what is happening in the book. Therefore, each question was subcategorized and coded separately instead of the entire sequence.

Lola also used questions to request students to *explain their reasoning*. These questions were subcategorized and coded as reasoning questions. She used these questions to make the student thinking explicit because they often encouraged students to cite evidence from the text, personal experience, or inferences. By making student thinking explicit, she provided peer support. This peer support helped make sense of events in the text. It also created space for students to agree, disagree, or add to another peers reasoning. Examples of this type of question are: "How is that rude," "Why would Willow feel bad about what she did," and "Why?" These types of questions required students to describe how or why they came to a certain conclusion.

Lola activated prior background knowledge of the concepts presented in the text by asking questions that engaged the students in *making self to text connections*. These questions were subcategorized and coded as personal connections. An example of this would be: "Think about how you handled it. What did you do? Is anybody willing to share with us what they did?" and "What happens to your body when you feel nervous worried and scared?" These types of

questions activated students' background knowledge and encouraged them to share their lived

experiences with their peers that connected to the text. Personal connection questions were

identified when one student responded. If more than one student responded, as in the case of a

choral response, then the question was subcategorized and coded as encouraging group

participation.

Lola increased student participation and engagement by asking *group participation*

*questions*. These questions were subcategorized and coded as group participation questions and

were identified by the response Lola received from the students as a group. At times, these

questions required students to provide non-verbal responses such as "thumbs up." At other

times, these types of questions required students to respond chorally or together all at once. In

the instance of choral responses, students shouted out their responses to the question. These

shout outs tended to be shorter one-word responses. Another way that Lola provided

opportunities for all students to respond at once was through the use of think-pair-shares.

Examples of group participation questions from Lola's lessons were: "Do you think that

Cristobel learned that lesson?" and "Do you like being around people who are rude?" These

questions were challenging to code because they crossed over several different categories. For

example, "What just happened? Turn and share with your partner." The question itself required

students to engage in summarizing their comprehension of the event in the text. However, since

there was also an explicit direction that provided an opportunity for all students to share their

response, it was subcategorized and coded as group participation.

Lola used questions to provide opportunities for students to *share multiple perspectives*.

These questions provided space for students to hear alternative answers, responses, and insights.

These questions were subcategorized and coded as adding multiple perspectives. Example of

questions that added multiple perspectives to the text-based discussion were: "What did they rest of you do or how did you handle or react when this happened to you," "What do you think about that," and "How else would you describe her feelings right now?" The first example demonstrated Lola's use of adding a multiple perspective question to an already existing personal connection question. The second and third examples provided opportunities for students to agree, disagree, or add to another peers thinking. These questions helped create an understanding that there was more than one way to understand or interpret the text. Since these questions were similar other types of questions, this subcategory and code was only used when Lola explicitly encouraged another student to answer the same question that had already been answered by another student previously. Therefore, the context and sequence of the question needed to be considered when subcategorizing and coding this type of question.

Lola used questions to *follow up and expand* or check in on student thinking. These questions were subcategorized and coded as follow up questions. This type of questioning was rare. It only happened twice during the fifth lesson analysis and did not appear in the other two analyzed lessons. The first example of a follow up question is when Lola pressed with additional information regarding the student's personal experience. The student had already made a personal connection to the text; however, Lola followed up with a question that expanded this personal connection and experience for the whole group as demonstrated in the following example.

> Lola: What did they rest of you do or how did you handle or react when this happened to you, Debbie?
>
> Debbie: Well, I just walked away without telling her because I didn't want to hurt her feelings.

Lola:  So Willow just might walk away. Did you continue to do what that friend wanted you to do?

Debbie:  I just walked away and kind of did what I wanted to do.

Lola first asked a personal connection question that added multiple perspectives due to the same question being asked to multiple students demonstrated by the "what did the rest of you do" wording. To respond, Debbie shared that she walked away and provided her reasoning. Then, Lola connected Debbie's actions to a possible prediction of what Willow, the main character of the story, might do. In addition, she followed up with a new question to expand the personal connection by asking, "Did you continue to do what that friend wanted you to do?" Debbie provided the group with her personal connection of not feeling forced to do what a friend wanted and by walking away and doing what she chose to do instead. The other time Lola asked a follow up question was to make an abstract comprehension objective more explicit. After the students demonstrated confusion or misunderstanding regarding Willow's lesson in the text, Lola revisited it by asking, "And what's that lesson again?" The topic had already been discussed using both comprehension and reasoning questions; therefore, Lola revisited the topic to confirm student understanding and retention of the concept.

Lola also asked *clarification questions*. One of Lola's personal goals was to not repeat student responses because she worried that she might misrepresent their thoughts. She also felt this undermined student authority within the discussion. She was conscious of moments of missing words and incomplete thoughts during student responses. When she noticed students struggling to present complete thoughts, she asked questions to facilitate whole group understanding of their thoughts. These questions were subcategorized and coded as clarification questions. She asked clarification questions to prompt students to fill in missing words and incomplete thoughts when sharing with the whole group. For example, she asked:  "Do what,

sweetheart," "No, what?" and "So if Willow wants to play with Cristobel for one day, she can

because it is Cristobel's birthday party?" In the first two examples, she was prompting students

to expand their incomplete thoughts that were unclear to bring understanding to the group. In the

third example, she reworded a student response and asked the student to confirm her

understanding and wording.

Another strategy Lola used to avoid repeating student responses was presenting questions

to the group that *highlighted student comments*. These were subcategorized and coded as

highlighting questions. These questions were posed to bring focus and attention to important

student contributions to the whole group to increase understanding and interpretation of the text.

Examples of these questions were: "Ok, did you hear what Debbie said?" and "Can someone

repeat what Lee said so that everyone gets an opportunity to hear now?"  These questions may

have helped position students as valued members of the discussion.

Another way that Lola, attempted to position students as valued members of the

discussion was encouraging students to agree and disagree with other student contributions.

These questions were subcategorized and coded as *peer evaluation* and typically asked students

to explicitly assess and respond to other student comments. Examples of these types of questions

were: "Did anyone else agree with Annabelle that that was there favorite part," "Would you

agree that is the lesson that Willow learned, friends," and "What do you think about what Jose

said?" The first two examples demonstrated the focus on prompting agreement and disagreement

with peers. In contrast, the third example provided a more open opportunity for assessment and

interaction between the previous student comment and the current responding comment.

It is interesting to note that my initial interpretation of Lola's professional growth was

positive while engaging in the study because I noticed an increase in student participation. In

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addition, she seemed to decrease her use of long monologues sharing her interpretations, thoughts, and reasoning during her lessons. To analyze Lola's professional growth, I used the transcripts of classroom interactions to analyze who called on participants during the text-based discussion. I read the transcripts from each lesson to examine if any students called on each other. I found that during the lessons, students did not call on each other and only Lola initiated who's turn it was to talk during the discussion. Therefore, I created a list of pseudonyms of all students that Lola called on by name during each analyzed lesson. If the students were called on more than once, I added a check behind the name to indicate how many times the students were called on. I used the same student pseudonyms for each lesson analysis to look for patterns if certain students were consistently called on more frequently.

Next, I used the transcripts of classroom interactions to see if there were *shifts in topics* and whether Lola or the students initiated them. I wrote a note when a shift occurred in the lesson such as Lola asking questions about the genre and then shifting the topic by asking students to share their favorite part of the text. I also noted if the students shifted topics. To illustrate, Lola was facilitating a discussion on the genre and the students became interested in discussing the ax that was used in the text. I compared the number of times Lola shifted topics in contrast to the number of times the students shifted topics.

Then, I analyzed the transcript of classroom interactions for each lesson to determine if Lola or the students were *evaluating answers or responses* during the discussion. I highlighted the exchanges in the transcript in yellow when Lola provided a response to a student statement that was evaluative such as, "Good," "You're right," and "Ok." Then, I highlighted instances when students evaluated a response in green. Students typically stated their evaluation with "I

agree" or "I disagree" statements as prompted by Lola. This allowed me to compare how many times Lola assessed comments versus how many times the students assessed comments.

Finally, I analyzed the transcript of classroom interactions to explore how Lola and the students *shared the responsibility* of asking questions during the discussion. I highlighted each question Lola asked in blue and questions asked by students in pink. This allowed me to compare the quantity of questions Lola asked in contrast to the number of questions students asked during the analyzed lessons.

Once I completed this first level of analysis, I discovered that Lola made only small gains, if any, in regards to the Authority Teaching Indicator of sharing space with students to call on students, shift topics, evaluate the answers, and ask questions. This conflict between my initial interpretation and initial analysis inspired me to look deeper within the categories from the Authority Teaching Indicator. Specifically, I looked at the types and purposes of her questions. This helped me to gain an understanding how she used questions to facilitate the discussion and create space for students to perform some of the Authority Teaching Indicator such as evaluate answers. To do this, I looked for patterns in how Lola used her questions to facilitate the text-based discussion. I noticed that Lola purposely used questions in the nine ways described earlier. However, Lola used some questioning strategies more frequently than others. To understand her frequency and purpose of using questions, I created an excel spreadsheet with the nine categories of questions. I used the transcript of classroom interactions and coded each question that Lola asked by type and purpose. Then, I counted the number of questions that occurred in each category to understand the frequency of their occurrence within the analyzed lesson.

**Sasha: feedback teaching indicator.** In order to analyze Sasha's three lessons in regards to the DIT Feedback Teaching Indicator (see Table 3), I used the transcripts of classroom

interactions. In doing so, I examined the level that she provided feedback to her students. I used the descriptors within the indicator to develop the categories and codes to evaluate the level of feedback that she provided. These categories and codes were: generic feedback and explicit feedback.

First, I examined the quantity or how many times she provided feedback to her students. To do this, it was necessary to differentiate moments when Sasha was responding to a student versus when she was initiating student responses as both instances could potentially be posed as a question. It was only counted as feedback when Sasha responded to a student's comment. Due to Sasha's concern about providing feedback versus remaining silent to create space for student talk, it was important to document the quantity of feedback she provided.  I analyzed the quantity of her feedback by copying and pasting both the student comment from the transcript of classroom interaction and Sasha's feedback into a word document. Then, I counted how many times she provided feedback during the lesson. I wanted to capture both the student comment and Sahsa's feedback to provide a context for the feedback statement.

Then, I looked at the quality of her feedback. I categorized and coded her feedback as generic or explicit. Generic feedback was considered teacher responses that appeared to accept student responses as presented while explicit feedback encouraged students to provide more details or reasoning.  Since I found that Sasha was engaged in actively listening to the students, I decided to look deeper at the two types of feedback to decide if they were generic comments or if they were explicit. Below, I will describe the categorizing and coding process used to identify the types of feedback Sasha provided her students.

*Generic feedback.*  At first glance, this categorizing and coding process seemed to be pretty obvious. I had planned to categorize and code any time that Sasha responded to a student

comment verbally with a yes, no, almost, not quite or other short reaction or if she non-verbally nodded her head to indicate a response. However, as I examined Sasha's feedback, I noticed the influence of active listening on her responses. Sasha frequently repeated the student's comment as a means to provide feedback to show that she 'heard' them. I understand that this was an indication of her beginning to shift from a monologic toward a dialogic teaching stance in regards to feedback; however, the feedback was still quite generic and did not provide explicit information to push students to explore their reasoning. In addition, she often provided affirmation or negation before repeating the student comment. Thus, her feedback was not neutral. The following exchange captured this. In this exchange, Sasha asked the class why the flamingo might want to make friends with the bear.

> Lyla: That's because all of the other ones (flamingos) are wearing glasses and not a bowtie. He wasn't like the others and those might be friends. And those might be friends and he is not close to the group so he wanted to be friends with the bear.

> Sasha: Yeah, maybe he feels like he doesn't belong or fit in with the flamingos so why not try being friend with a bear? Kyle?

> Kyle: Maybe he doesn't have a friend.

> Sasha: Maybe he doesn't have a friend.

After Lyla provided her reasoning as to why the flamingo wanted to make friends with the bear, Sasha affirmed the statement by saying "yeah" and summarized Lyla's response. Kyle raised his hand to add to the conversation and Sasha called on him. Kyle agreed with Lyla that it appeared the flamingo did not have any friends. Although she did not verbally affirm Kyle's statement, she repeated it word for word as she had already affirmed the idea in her earlier feedback to Lyla. In both instances, the feedback was coded generic because it did not push either student to explore their reasoning although it did display active listening. Thus, restating a student

comment did not qualify as providing explicit feedback even though it did demonstrate active listening.

*Explicit feedback.*  The category and code explicit feedback was used whenever Sasha provided comments or questions in response to student talk that pushed the students to further explore their reasoning without judging the conclusion. The use of the code was not influenced by whether or not the teacher feedback was successful in prompting students to provide reasoning or evidence. Instead, it only focused on the attempt Sasha made to inspire exploration of reasoning. In addition, the feedback needed to appear neutral and not prompt or influence a certain outcome of reasoning. For example, a student suggested that content meant happy. In response, Sasha stated, "Let's see if that makes sense. Let's see if that is a synonym." This was coded as explicit feedback because it guided students in applying a reasoning strategy for checking the possible meaning of a word while appearing neutral.

The examples in Table 4 illustrate Sasha's use of explicit feedback to press for reasoning and appear neutral at the outcome. As seen in these examples, much of the explicit feedback was presented as a question. However, there were instances when Sasha would use non-verbal prompts and statements to provide explicit feedback that appeared neutral and pressed for reasoning. The following exchange captured this.

> Student:  When I was playing baseball with water balloons, I was afraid that I would hit it and it would blow up in my face and I would get wet and I would be embarrassed.
>
> Sasha: And (holds up the book)
>
> Student:  So like Hugo. He didn't want to get embarrassed and fly at all.

In this example, a student shared a personal connection of being afraid and embarrassed while trying something new. Sasha provided feedback that appeared neutral and pressed for his

reasoning for sharing a personal connection by making an explicit connection to the text by simply stating, "And?" and holding up the text as a physical reminder. Thus, simple verbal responses also held potential for explicit feedback depending on the context and physical movement enacted by Sasha.

Once I had developed my categories for coding the types of feedback Sasha provided her students as described above, I was able to analyze the quality of her feedback. To accomplish this task, I used the previously created word document to determine the quantity of feedback she provided to students. Then, I color-coded the feedback statements. I left generic feedback statements plain and I highlighted the explicit feedback statements in green. Next, I counted how many feedback statements were generic and how many were explicit. This allowed me to analyze any growth or changes as she worked toward her professional development goal by providing data that showed the quantity and quality of her feedback as she participated in the study.

**Stage Three.** During the third stage of my analysis of the enacted curriculum, I analyzed the lessons to describe the opportunities the teachers provided for students to engage in different levels of thinking. I looked at the levels of thinking provided by the overall learning objective for each lesson and by every question asked within the lessons. Although I looked at questions (as described above in relation to pedagogical moves) in relation to the DIT, this third level of analysis provided insights into opportunities for students to engage in different levels of thinking as the teachers supported students in meeting the learning goals by asking questions (not the purpose of their questions in relation to their professional development goal). To analyze the opportunities for students to engage in different levels of thinking, I used Costa's (2001) Levels

of Inquiry:  level one (text explicit), level two (text implicit), level three (background knowledge and previous learning). Now, I will describe the process for identifying the levels of thinking.

*Level one: text explicit.*  Level one was used to categorize and code questions that required answers found explicitly in the text.  These questions were usually recalling or retelling such as: Where did they say the setting was, what did he choose to do with it, what do we notice about elephant, and who is Piggy talking to? Level one questions were often posed by the teacher to assess general comprehension of the text and typically used question starters such as what, who, and where.

*Level two: text implicit.*  Level two was used to categorize and code questions that required answers found implicitly in the text. For example, the students may have needed to synthesize various parts of the text to develop a response. These questions were used to encourage students to provide reasoning with their response. Examples of level two questions were:  Why do you say that, but how do we know that elephant is confused, why would piggy say that, and what is the lesson Gerald learns throughout the book? Level two questions were used by the teacher to a deeper interpretation of the book and sometimes used question starters such as how and why.

*Level three:  experience-based.*  Level three was used to categorize and code questions that required students to think beyond the text by reflecting on their prior knowledge and experiences. Specifically, questions that did not have answers provided explicitly or implicitly in the text. These questions were the most challenging for me to code because I felt a tension between the teacher supporting students to use their experiences to hypothesize, evaluate, and predict versus asking questions to simply activate student background knowledge and experiences.  To illustrate this tension, the question, "Why do you sweat when you are nervous?"

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versus "What happens to your body when you feel nervous, worried, and scared?" Both questions needed background knowledge and experience to answer and were labeled level three. However, the first question appeared to require a more detailed general response versus the second question was based only on personal experience. In addition, both questions definitely required background knowledge and experience but it is unclear if the students needed to perform such thinking as hypothesizing, predicting, or evaluating to respond. After much thought, I would argue that the higher level of thinking already took place when the student actually processed the experience that enabled the background knowledge. Therefore, it was not always present in the actual wording of the question itself. Thus, I coded questions that involved the use of personal background knowledge and experience as level three. Examples of level three questions were: What did they rest of you do or how did you handle or react when this happened to you, Do you like being around people who are rude, and is it ok in order to make yourself feel better, you make someone else feel bad? These questions were related to the text but not answered in the text because they required an individual reflection upon previous experience.

   ***Analyzing levels of thinking.*** I used the transcripts of classroom interactions and pre-lesson interview or classroom observation to analyze the lessons of both teachers to explore the opportunities for students to engage in different levels of thinking. To do so, first I examined the overall learning goal to decide the general thinking level of the lesson. This required me to negotiate the stated learning goal from either the lesson observation or pre-lesson interview and what the students were actually presented as a learning goal during the lesson. As mentioned earlier, sometimes the stated and enacted goals aligned and other times they did not. The purpose of my analysis at this stage was to explain what actually happened. Therefore, I acknowledge if

there was a discrepancy but gave priority over what was observed to be the enacted learning goal.

I used the transcription of classroom interaction to analyze every *content question* that was asked by the teacher during each lesson. I created an excel spreadsheet with a columns for each of the three levels of thinking, discussed below. I copied and pasted each question into the column based on the level of thinking. Then, I counted the number of questions in each of the level columns. This allowed me to see the number of opportunities in general that students had to engage in each level of thinking during the lesson.

Next, I analyzed the transcription of classroom interaction for opportunities provided to ELL students to engage in different levels of thinking during the lessons. First, I identified each question that was directly asked to the ELL students. Once these questions were identified, I coded them based on the level of thinking to depict the opportunities ELL students were directly given to engage in different levels of thinking. I further agitated this data to examine questions asked to specific ELL students within each class during the lesson. As I organized the analysis from the three lessons, it allowed me to compare any changes in the opportunities for the students to engage in different levels of thinking between the lessons and during the time of the study.

Since I coded and counted based on the descriptors within the Teaching Indicators selected from the DIT during the enacted curriculum, I was able to look for patterns of growth for each teacher in relation to her self-identified PD goal. This information in addition to the analysis of opportunities for students to engage in levels of thinking based on the teachers' questioning moves across the three lessons provided insights regarding how and if the patterns of growth influenced students' engagement in different levels of thinking. Thus, I was able to

measure and describe the teachers' professional development growth and the students'

opportunities to engage in levels of thinking during the study to show if there were any changes.

**Analysis Across Cases**

Finally, I analyzed across the two cases to understand Lola and Sasha's perceptions of

their experiences of refining their practice to facilitate whole group text-based discussions while

supporting ELL students. I used the semi-structured final interview in consideration with the

results of the previous analyses to think about influences on their progress and their perceptions

of their progress. First, I highlighted in yellow excerpts from the final interview regarding how

they described their practice at the end of the study and what resources they found helpful or

unhelpful on their journey. Then, I highlighted in green comments they made regarding how or if

they perceived any differences in their students, specifically their ELL students. Finally, I

highlighted in pink any comments concerning their perceptions of their growth in relations to

their professional development goals throughout the study and how they felt it influenced their

ELL students' experiences during whole group text-based discussions. I used these three areas of

content to develop a summarizing memo about their experiences. In doing so, I looked for

patterns of similarities or differences between the two teachers. As mentioned, the main source

of the data was the semi-structured final interview. However, when Lola and Sasha identified a

specific event or interaction to illustrate their experience, I integrated the main results of my

analysis of their lessons from the case chapters to fill in any missing details. In addition, I used

the analysis from the case chapters to support any description of growth of changed. This

allowed me to present a more holistic view of their reflections while triangulating the data.

In the following chapters, I will share my findings from this study. Chapter Three will

provide the personal and professional background of the teachers, Lola and Sasha, as they began

the study. Chapters Four and Five will provide a detailed analysis of their enacted lessons during

the study. Then, Chapter Six will provide a final reflection from the teachers as they

contemplated on their learning opportunities and experience as participants in this study. Finally,

in Chapter Seven, I will share the implications gained from my research.

# CHAPTER 3

## SETTING THE CONTEXT

In this chapter, I will introduce the two teachers from my study, Lola and Sasha, to share the context of my study. Lola and I had established a professional and personal relationship because we had worked together ten years ago in the same district. Lola encouraged Sasha to participate in the study and introduced me to Sasha. This being said, Lola was very comfortable openly reflecting with me. In contrast, Sasha and I were building a relationship and trust during the study and this appeared to limit Sasha's comfort level in sharing her reflections with me.

As I discuss the context, I will use the term "read aloud" to represent Lola and Sasha's wording. As the researcher I will use the term "whole group text-based discussion" to present my findings based on my analysis of their lessons in Chapters Four and Five. I will use their term read aloud in this chapter because it captured their initial understanding and conception of a whole group text-based discussion. The contrast of their initial concept of a text-based discussion and their final understanding during their reflection in Chapter Six becomes an important finding and indicator of change. The concept of a read aloud represented to the teachers reading a text and asking students questions as used in monologic instruction or traditional recitation, as defined in Chapter One. In contrast, the concept of a text-based discussion focused on strategies of dialogic instruction in accordance with the research cited in Chapter One. First, I will share background information about Lola and her teaching context. Then, I will share Sasha's background information and teaching context.

## LOLA

To begin, I will share information about Lola's background, including her professional and personal history. Then, I will share information about her classroom and students.

Specifically, I will share information about her three ELL students. Next, I will share Lola's perspectives about her use of "read alouds" in her classroom regarding her strengths and weaknesses, concerns for her ELL students, and her professional goals. Finally, I will share how she utilized her professional resources.

**Personal and Professional History**

Lola has been teaching for twelve years. She began her teaching career straight out of college as a long-term substitute. Throughout her teaching career, she worked at four different school districts identified as suburban and rural. The rural elementary was a high-needs school. She has been at her current suburban school in a first grade classroom for six years where she served as the first grade team leader. She was certified Pre-Kindergarten through sixth grade and grandfathered in under the state's old certification process as a "professional educator." She completed a Bachelor of Arts in elementary education at a highly ranked private school with religious affiliations in the Midwest. She completed a Master's of Arts in Education in differentiated instruction across the content areas after serving in the classroom for six years at a small, private, predominately female, religious university in the Midwest while teaching fulltime. Lola speaks Hmong, English, and Spanish. Her family's home language was Hmong. She learned English outside of the home context and took Spanish classes in High School.

When Lola was in elementary school, she was identified as an ELL student whose family spoke Hmong and received services. She remembered having "a great experience" as an ELL student in elementary school due to her teachers. She described her teachers as filling her with a desire "to inspire" students. She specifically admired an ELL teacher who helped make her safe and provided a comforting environment. When she visited the ELL classroom and teacher for support, she thought, "This is a good place to be." She felt that "the ELL teacher allowed [her] to

be who [she] was" as a culturally and linguistically unique student in the school context. She also appreciated that one of her regular classroom teachers "always challenged" her academically by having high standards and "not accept[ing] what you were doing." She believed this teacher always encouraged growth and refinement of all students, including her ELL students. Lola stated that she became a teacher because she "always wanted to do what they did."

**Lola's Classroom**

Lola liked to keep her classroom "minimal" in the sense that she did not want to overwhelm her students with sensory issues. For example, she didn't hang things from the ceiling and only displayed things on the walls. She was very thoughtful about how she set up her classroom and what she displayed to ensure that it served a purpose. Lola preferred to have desks in her room so students had easy access to their individual supplies. However, she grouped the desks into clusters to encourage group or community work because she wanted the students to support each other's learning. Student collaboration is important for ELL students because it provides them with the opportunity to listen and speak with peers.

Her classroom had a designated library reading space with over a thousand books. It provided students with the opportunity to practice their novice literacy skills such as decoding or comprehension independently with a book of their choice. Books were organized by genre, series, and reading levels. Organizing the books by genre helped the students gain experiential knowledge of genre features. Genre feature knowledge can assist students in comprehension. Organizing books by series can help students learn about character development. The leveled books created a system of text complexity that can be matched to a beginning reader's developmental needs. The students were each provided with an individual book bin collection of self-selected books that they were motivated and interested in reading by themselves or with

partners. By providing students with the option to select books that they are interested in and motivated to read, students' desire to read can increase.

Lola used individual, small and whole grouping strategies during her literacy instruction. For example, she used conferencing during writing and reading as part of her individual grouping strategy. This allowed her to set individualized instructional goals and give specific support to help her students meet those goals. She used literacy stations for a small grouping strategy. Literacy centers provided students with a variety of independent and small group opportunities to practice literacy skills. A whole group strategy that she used was shared writing. Shared writing exposed the students to modeled writing through teacher think alouds. This was designed to help students gain metacognitive literacy skills. The area designated for whole group activities had document camera, laptop and projector. These resources afforded an increase in visibility. For example, a read aloud book could be projected on the whiteboard allowing students to follow along with the text and see details in the illustration that would not be possible with a small book and twenty-two students. This is important because the visual picture cues help support the comprehension of ELL students.

Lola's displayed Anchor charts in her classroom. Anchor charts serve as a visible reminder of a key concept from a previously taught lesson. These anchor charts reminded students about literacy skills such as reading comprehension strategies, genre studies and the writing process. These visual reminders are helpful in supporting ELL students understand the learning goals and expectations. To illustrate, one of the anchor charts she displayed provided a genre specific word bank and another provided sentence starters to use when talking about a book for example, "I liked that…," "I've noticed…," and "I'm wondering…" The word bank provided options and reminders to students, and especially ELL students, of a writing genre

feature while the sentence starters had to potential to help frame students' thinking and provided valued ways to talk about a book. Sentence frames are especially helpful to ELL students who are organizing their thoughts in second language and learning the cultural and academic norms of the classroom.

Lola utilized a vast collection of resources in her literacy instruction.  She posted sight words described as "priority words" from a purchased, packaged spelling program on a word wall. Word walls serve as a reference for students during reading and writing. Word walls can support ELL students by providing visual reinforcement of commonly used words. As a seasoned teacher, she was able to evaluate the resources and found ways to supplement them as needed. For example, she felt the priority words were not extensive enough so she provided other resources to help students with spelling such as student dictionaries. She also had access to purchased or packaged curriculum to support students with handwriting, guided reading, and reader's workshop. She supplemented these programs with trade books that she purchased or borrowed from both the public and school library. Lola shared that the school was currently using small group guided reading instruction based on students' reading levels, but the school was trying to move away from that instructional approach towards strategy groups. This meant that each classroom would not group students based on reading levels but instead work with students who struggled with the same reading strategy such as text structure, word identification, decoding, and comprehension.

**Lola's Students**

Lola described her students as a "pretty good group of kids." She had one designated female ELL student with an Indian background. She also had two male students that were non-identified ELL students whose families spoke a different language than English at home. One

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English-only speaking student received targeted intervention in addition to his core instruction for reading and math. This extra support was not due to an Individual Education Plan (IEP) but because the student was identified as "needing a boost." Students were assessed in literacy and math by a standardized computer test. The classroom teachers administered this assessment program, but the school or district interventionists analyzed the data to standardize the student learning outcomes. The students in her classroom ranged near or above grade level reading expectations. The school district had capped the testing ranges for first graders so the actual reading level of her advanced students was not tested. Although enrollment in her classroom was at 22 students, there were frequent changes in student attendance. Lola explained, "There is a lot of turnover. Two kids moved out of the state and two kids moved into the district" since the school year began.

**Lola's ELL Students**

As described above, Lola had one designated ELL student and two non-identified ELL students in her classroom. She stated, "There are three students who speak another language than English at home." Lola felt these students should all be identified as ELL. However, she explained that many ELL parents within the district did not wish to have their children designated or identified as an ELL student because they saw it as a negative or deficit label with a social stigma. Although all three of the students that Lola identified as ELL were on target for grade level literacy reading achievement, she felt that not properly identifying ELL students can result in some of the students struggling without proper support in the classroom. She asserted, "Now a days, with all of the politics, you cannot give them support without the label."

**Identified ELL student: Navi.** Navi was a young, Indian female student. She was the oldest child and the first one in her family to experience the American education system. She and

her family spoke an Indian dialect called Teluga. Lola had never had any contact with Navi's mother as all school communication was with her father. Lola believed that the fact that all home-school connections had been only with the father may have been due to the cultural expectations of gender roles within Navi's native culture. Navi entered Small Lake Elementary School part way through Kindergarten. At that time, she did not speak social or academic English. After the last year and a half attending the school, she appeared to speak social English quite fluently. Lola felt that at this point in time, most people would not have assumed that Navi was an ELL student. Lola shared, "She's super social so that's why I'm like how come you're not talking on the carpet. You know, come on. I know you can talk. I know you've got a lot to say, too." This being said, Navi seemed to have advanced her basic social communication in English beyond the status of being a "newcomer." However, she still struggled with academic language in English. Navi was at the grade level reading target for first grade. Lola noticed that Navi "is fine" when orally reading and decoding, but could struggle with comprehension depending on the type of book and the background knowledge that was needed.

Lola believed that Navi had background experience that differed from the other students and was "hesitant to offer to share ideas" so "she must be called on to respond." Lola found that Navi needed extra time to respond and understand what others said. In addition, Navi acted "distracted and occasionally tunes out." Lola thought that Navi "does not advocate for her own learning." For example, Navi did not ask for help. Instead, she quietly waited until Lola noticed that she was not doing what she was supposed to be doing because she was struggling. Lola found this unique because most of the children in the classroom asked for help when they needed it. Navi's unwillingness to ask for help was challenging at times because Lola relied on the students' ability to self-assess their own learning to indicate who needs additional support. For

example, after a whole group lesson, Lola asked students to self-assess their learning by putting their heads down and raising their hand if they understood the learning goal. Lola noticed that Navi always raised her hand even when she needed help. Lola explained this was probably due to the fact that all students want to feel successful and "be a star." During this study, Navi was only present for the first six of the twelve classroom lesson observations because she suddenly moved from the school district.

  **Non-identified ELL students: Jair and Jose.** Lola had two male students, Jair and Jose, who were non-identified ELL students whose families spoke a different language than English at home. At home, Jair's family spoke an Indian dialect and Jose's family spoke Spanish. Jair excelled academically across the content areas, including reading. However, he struggled with behavior expectations. Lola felt that his behavior struggles stemmed from the fact that "he is not encouraged to be responsible at home." She did not feel that language issues had dramatically impacted Jair's academic outcome and growth.

  In contrast, Lola believed that language issues have impacted Jose's learning outcome and growth. For example, Jose came into first grade barely reading at a beginning Kindergarten level. After receiving intensive intervention in addition to core instruction in literacy for the first semester of first grade, he managed to reach near first grade level literacy learning goals in reading.  However, once the intensive intervention ended, Jose had not shown any growth and was stagnant at his current level. In addition to language issues, Jose's stagnant growth level might have been due to his level of motivation and background knowledge. Lola speculated his home environment or cultural background might have influenced his lack of academic achievement. Lola thought that Jose "is resistant to doing the work." She noticed that when Jose "tells his mom no she can't make him do it." Lola wondered if this was part of the machismo

perspective of the Hispanic culture where even a male child felt as if he was the "man of the house" and entitled to make the decisions. She felt that he brought this cultural belief into the classroom and challenged her authority. She stated, "He has the mentality of I don't want to do this so why should I do this?" Lola said that his background knowledge also affected his learning. She felt he possibly lived a bit of a "sheltered life" because "he is not able to experience some of the same things that the other students have." Lola shared that Jose's mother did most things for him and this contributed to him being coddled or sheltered. Both Jair and Jose were present for all twelve of the read aloud observations. Lola appeared to be highly conscious of the cultural norms and home environmental influences that her students brought into her classroom.

**Administrative Support**

Lola felt supported by her administrator and found her administrator's feedback helpful. This was her administrator's first year serving at the school. Since Lola served as the grade level team leader, she was required to meet with her administrator to represent her grade level team members. These meetings allowed Lola to feel as though she was building a relationship with her administrator. Therefore, Lola felt comfortable talking to her administrator about more than just curriculum concerns. She explained that as a team leader it was her responsibility to share concerns beyond that curriculum that occurred within the grade level team such as "how some relationships aren't working so well and get feedback on things like that, too."

Lola was respectful of her administrator. She tried to balance the needs of her grade level team while maintaining a professional relationship with her administrator. She shared, "I can't go up to her and say I'm really stressed out right now because I feel like we should have had this information already or these decisions aren't being made and we need them as teachers. That's

where I'm like, I draw the line with that." Lola was also aware of the time constraints and challenges her administrator faced. For example, this year was Lola's summary year for evaluations. This means that Lola was "supposed to be observed three times informally, one formal observation and then a couple pops in here and there."  However, Lola had only been observed once formally and once informally.  Lola valued her administrator's feedback and would have liked more but understood, "with the building of this size, she can't give more than that, truthfully." Therefore, she depended on her coworkers more than her administrator to provide her with feedback on her daily lessons and teaching because "they are kind of in the grind more."

**ELL Support**

Lola did not feel that the district provided adequate support for teachers to serve their ELL students. For example, she shared that since the district only had one part-time ELL teacher for the entire school district the services provided to the students were very limited. She explained, "The way I see it is all she (the ELL teacher) does is give them ACCESS (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners**)** tests." The ACCESS test was a state mandated assessment for ELL students. Lola acknowledged the ELL teacher attempted to provide support by occasionally emailing teaching tips for ELL students to the district's entire teaching staff. However, Lola did not find these emailed teaching tips helpful because " you think about it, you look at it, and you're like I can't implement that in my classroom on my own." Thus, the emailed tips were not considered realistic or implemented in her classroom and instead Lola relied on the resources and strategies that she already had access to and felt she could implement independently without additional outside support.

Lola believed the teachers in her district and the ELL students would have benefited from having active involvement with an ELL teacher. She shared, "I came from a background where there was always an ELL teacher. She was there. And she would actually make contact with those kids and they would have a relationship with that person. So that if you did actually need support, you could say, hey, I need you to come in and help me. I don't, we don't, have that here." Lola has found it challenging to advocate for the needs of the ELL students and the teachers in supporting them due to the resistance shown by the school district. She explained, "I've been told that studies show that that (having an ELL teacher) always isn't the best thing to help ELL students learn. The classroom teacher does it. And I'm like, and thank you for giving me that, you know, that vote of confidence, but sometimes I need help." Lola believed that having an active ELL teacher co-teach in classrooms, sometimes referred to as "pushing in," or having the ELL teacher "pulling out" ELL students into a separate learning context as a means to support the teachers to best serve the ELL students collaboratively was more ideal than the district's current process and practice.

One specific example that Lola identified as a needed area of help for regular classroom teachers was translation services to communicate with non-English speaking parents, for example, during parent teacher conferences. She shared that the district's current practice was to request another teacher to serve as a translator who was able to speak the students' native languages such as the Spanish teacher. Lola reflected on a conversation with a Spanish teacher that was asked to help translate during conferences. This conversation helped her problematize relying on other staff to provide translation services not only requires them to perform additional duties outside of their job description but can also impact the relationship that the translating teacher has with the ELL student's family. Lola shared that the teachers who were typically

asked to translate wanted to help the ELL students and have often worked hard to develop good relationships with the families.  The challenge occurred when the translator was asked to share the "bad news that your child isn't doing well in school" and the families then "associate that with the relationship." Lola felt this issue could be resolved by having an ELL coordinator or teacher that was bilingual. She stated, that if they had an ELL teacher that "could just speak Spanish, she could be the person that everything filters through because that's her role and the parents would see her in that role." Instead, Lola felt the bilingual world language teachers were being asked to bear this additional burden and it confused the parents.

Lola felt a qualified, hands-on ELL classroom teacher could best help the mainstream teachers serve the district's ELL students. Lola had concerns regarding the background and role of the currently designated ELL teacher. She believed the ELL teacher had a background in facilitating staff and an administrative role and served as a coordinator instead of a teacher. Lola would have preferred a person with a background in ELL and who had worked with ELL students in the past. She did not believe that the current ELL teacher had either of these traits. She explained her frustration by sharing that the district had "given me no one to help (with the needs of the ELL students) but just someone to do the paper pushing. I need someone to help." The lack of required background and experience for the role of an ELL teacher had created an environment that did not provide the type of support that Lola believed would best help her serve her ELL students. She described her ideal role of an ELL teacher as "someone who knows the culture and knows, you know, how to think outside the box."  Lola felt that this type of ELL teacher could help individualize the suggested classroom modifications and accommodations to meet the needs of ELL students.

Lola had concerns regarding the quality of the district's suggested recommendations for classroom modifications and accommodation to support ELL learners. She found the recommendations suggested by the support team an "eye opener" regarding the ineffectiveness of the suggestions.  She shared a story about asking for help to serve an ELL student who spoke Mandarin Chinese and "didn't know a lot of English." First, she explained that the ELL teacher did not participate in the support team. The only suggestion offered by the support team was "just label everything in English and Mandarin. Just, we've got a Mandarin teacher at the high school. Just have her come over and just help you label everything. And I'm like, that doesn't work but okay." After the support meeting, Lola approached the child's mother and shared the team's plan.  The mother explained that her daughter doesn't read Mandarin. Lola reflected, "Duh, Yeah. Just because you speak something doesn't mean you read it. Think of all the kids who can talk to me but are reading at a beginning level."  Lola believed that educators serving ELL students needed to use research-based practices. She stated, "We can't just throw things out there like that… because that's such a ready answer of just label everything. (The ELL students) will pick up and learn English then. Like no. It doesn't work that way." Although Lola was doing the best she can, overall, she felt that she was in need of much support to best serve her ELL students.

**Read Alouds Versus Text-Based Discussions**

As mentioned earlier, Lola described her current practice of sharing texts with her students as a read aloud. She described her enactment of a read aloud as reading a text to her students and stopping to ask them questions during and after. Lola used read alouds roughly three to four times a week as part of mini-lessons for reading and writing. Typically, she used the texts as mentor texts to help illustrate the concept behind the unit of study in her classroom

instruction. She also used read alouds as entertainment to promote literacy once a week in the school library setting. She regularly included think-pair-shares as an instructional move during read alouds. During think-pair-shares, students turned and quickly talked to a partner in response to a teacher's prompt or question. For read alouds, she used traditional texts versus digital texts during in her lessons. She used digital texts during snack.

During her read alouds, Lola believed that was important to have "the kids keep the same book in mind for a discussion as they share ideas" with their partners. Students were able to share ideas with their partner during the think-pair-shares mentioned earlier in response to the question that Lola asked. Lola felt the text provided a sense of unity or common ground of understanding as the basis for student talk. She also considered her read aloud times as important opportunities for all of her students to have rich experiences with engaging texts. She stated, "Some of my lower readers do not have engaging texts [during reading instruction] and it [read aloud] allows them to be part of the discussion" without the need to focus on decoding. She also attempted to use read alouds to help students explore a concept or explicit message. For example, she noticed many of her students tended to readily give up when things felt difficult. In response, she selected many texts to use during read alouds that focused on perseverance to share with her students. Finally, she wanted students to have an opportunity to learn how to discuss, give each other constructive criticism, and learn how to communicate with each other. She also wanted them to express their thoughts and back it up with evidence from the book. She felt her students were "very technology savvy but they need to learn how to discuss and carry on a social conversation." Thus, her reasons for wanting to share texts with her students in her classroom were not only academic but social as well.

**Resources and planning.**   Lola pulled from a variety of resources when planning read

alouds for her classroom. Although the school district provided purchased curriculum packages

for all of the teachers, it did not have a mandated literacy program. Instead, Lola shared that

teachers had access to a "hodge-podge" of resources collected for the grade level team by the

teachers. The teachers selected their collection of grade level resources in alignment with the

reading strategy monthly theme as well as the needs of their students. Lola considered two

factors when selecting a text and planning a read aloud. These factors were student learning

goals and social goals.

The majority of the time, Lola focused on academic goals. For example, when Lola

planned a read aloud lesson to support her students to achieve a learning goal such as character

development, she picked a mentor text with a strong example regarding how a character changed

during the story and a graphic organizer depicting a character map. This thoughtful selection of a

mentor text and graphic organizer helped make the learning goal explicit to the students.  When

planning a lesson for a student social learning goal, she selected texts that tended to be a thematic

book that she personally enjoyed and wanted to share with her students. Typically during read

alouds with social learning goals, she wanted to have everyone participate by sharing an idea,

feed on each other, and add on to the discussion. She said they could share, "Whatever they want

and what they are getting out of the story." She found the lessons that she planned for social

learning objectives led to the best discussions because she did not feel she had to direct the

students' thinking and instead allowed them space to enjoy and interact with the text.

Although Lola had the freedom to implement a variety of resources, she found the

district's monthly teaching and learning goals, which focused on specific literacy strategies,

restrictive at times.  Lola felt that teaching the students isolated reading skills seemed

unauthentic because good readers needed to use multiple strategies. For example, her school district just focused on visualization in isolation for one month. Instead of just focusing on one strategy while engaging with the text as the district's pacing guide and learning goals encouraged, Lola believed that the packaged curriculum encouraged multiple ways to interact with the text. Therefore, she appreciated the district's purchased curriculum package for engaging students with texts. She felt this resource helped students to "look at a book differently because it has them talking about so many other aspects of reading" through vocabulary and comprehension questions. Thus, Lola felt the district's pacing guide and monthly teaching and learning goals provided a narrow focus; however, she believed the packaged curriculum afforded a means to expand the focus.

**Differentiation.** Lola used several instructional practices to differentiate or scaffold the lesson during text-based discussions. These practices included partnering students for think-pair-share, think time, asking questions during the text, and using visual cues. She didn't use the school district's SIOP lesson plan template discussed previously in Chapter Two or think of adding differentiation specifically for her ELL students. Instead, she felt that differentiation "has just become what you do" as a teacher. She believed that the resources from her purchased curriculum helped support the ELL students as well as her English-Only students. For example, the anchor charts from her writer's workshop curriculum incorporated visuals. Lola acknowledged that the use of visuals supported general students' learning as well as the specific needs of ELL students. Thus, Lola focused her differentiation on general strategies that she believed would help most students comprehend the learning objective. She believed that she could improve her teaching and prompt her ELL students' thinking more by pre-teaching background concepts. However, she did not feel she had the additional time to provide such

individualized instruction. She stated, "But honestly, I don't. Sometimes I just kind of, you run out of time."

Lola believed that partnering students for think-pair-share was one of the "easiest" differentiating strategies to incorporate into a read aloud as a means to make the content comprehensible to the majority of all students. She called this "buddy pairs." Sometimes, she partnered students based on ability, or at the same level, to help students not feel overshadowed. Other times, she sometimes partnered students with someone that she interpreted as "better thinkers to help spark the other students' thinking" when she felt that the concept of the text might be challenging for the students.  One specific strategy she used when partnering students was to identify one student who struggled coming up with their own ideas with another student who was capable of expressing his or her thoughts. She had a lot of students that wanted to share comments but when she asked them why or pressed for their reasoning, the students could not articulate their reasoning or express themselves. She said that she "can tell they have something to share and in their heads and just do not know how to say it." Lola felt that hearing a peer's idea could trigger their own thoughts and allow them to work out their thoughts verbally while participating in a lower risk environment in contrast to the whole group setting. She understood that working through incomplete thoughts verbally in a large group setting could be intimidating for some of her struggling and non-native English speaking students.

Lola struggled to have students provide reasoning with text-based evidence. She argued that her advanced or higher-level readers were "not always (her) best thinkers" because she had noticed that they tended to focus on surface level responses. So, she tried to scaffold the students to give reasoning in two ways depending on their confidence level. For confident students, she tried to encourage deeper thinking by directly asking them to provide their reasoning. For

example, she asked, "What makes you think that?" Next, she encouraged the other students in the classroom to respond to their reasoning. She wanted the students to understand that other people may agree or disagree with them. For example, during a read aloud, one student asked the group, "If you don't tell anyone, does it matter if it really happened?" Lola asked the class to respond. After the students had responded to this question, Lola returned to the inquiring student and asked if his opinion had changed. With students who were struggling to gain confidence with giving comments to support their reasoning, she stated that she is less likely to encourage other students to openly challenge their thinking through agreement and disagreement and other constructive comments because she did not want to "burst their bubble." Instead, she herself provided thoughtful prompts and feedback to handle the students more delicately. She didn't feel this aligned with the philosophy of a text-based discussion because she was overtly inserting herself in the discussion instead of encouraging peer interaction. She explained her reluctant acceptance of the misalignment between her teaching philosophy and teaching methods by stating, "But sometimes, sometimes you just kinda have to play with the kids that you have and kind of work around it that way." Thus, she was aware that she needed to modify her teaching moves when interacting with individual students.

Lola incorporated other practices in her teaching that she felt helped all students during read alouds. She used anchor charts, wait time, asking questions during the text, and visual cues. The anchor chart that she used for read alouds had sentence starters or frames to prompt students and provide ways to talk about a text. The anchor chart had the following sentence starters: I liked that, I've noticed that, I'm wondering, I liked/didn't like, That reminds me of, Maybe, The author might mean, I'm picturing, and I was surprised by. She had noticed that her struggling students sometimes looked directly at the anchor chart and read the sentence starter before they

before they continued with their thoughts. Having her students use the anchor chart to prompt their thoughts helped Lola see how the students needed to directly engage in processing ideas. Students' direct engagement with the content took time. Therefore, she was much more conscious of the need to provide wait time for her students during read alouds. Another intentional teaching move that she did to support her struggling students was to stop as she reads and ask questions throughout the text. She felt that "chunking" the story helped the students process the text along the journey of the read aloud instead of attempting to remember the whole text when answering her questions about it at the end. Sometimes, she provided visual support by using her document camera to help the students see the details in the illustrations.

She liked to use texts with ethnic or multicultural background that pertained to the backgrounds of her students. For example, she recalled reading a book about a Quinceanera dress (a Latino coming of age birthday party dress) that had Spanish vocabulary infused into the text. She was pleased to notice that her student with a Spanish language heritage felt like, "Hey, I know these words and I can participate in this discussion." She felt these types of texts not only provided important text-to-self connections for her multicultural students but also benefited all students by helping expose her dominant, English-Only speaking students to another world and language. She continued the text-to-self connection by guiding students in discussions about schema. She believed it is important for students to be able to connect the text to their own lives. For example, to create a schema and text-to-self connection of what an engineer was, she asked the class, "Who likes to build things?" as a way to help them understand what engineers do. She also used her knowledge of the students' home lives to make connections and develop schema. For example, when she was reading the book about the Quinceanera dress, she infused the life experiences of Navi's dresses that she wore for her Indian dance classes and shows on the

weekends. For the English-Only students, she compared the dress to Sweet Sixteen party dresses. She felt this common theme of cultural dresses helped the students share their cultural connections.

**Strengths and Weaknesses and Setting Professional Goals**

Lola felt that she had strengths and weaknesses that would influence her ability to refine her practice to facilitate whole group text-based discussions. She felt most confident in her reading, knowing when to stop, and her questions. She felt confident in her ability to read a text to her students because she read with expression and fluency that engaged the students with the text. She appreciated her ability to know where to stop in the text to create space for discussion. She stated, "I feel like I know when's a good spot to stop and to really let them think about it or to really let them talk about it." She also felt confident in her ability to form questions about the text that inspired student thinking and discussion. In general, she felt pretty confident about the aspects of reading a text with her class and checking for comprehension.

Although, Lola felt "really good" at reading and assessing, she worried about her level of authority and control as she attempted to refine her practice to facilitate whole group text-based discussions. She stated, "Sometimes I feel like I might overpower my kiddos." For example, she noticed that she restated the students' comments and wondered if she was accurate in describing or restating their thoughts. She wanted to learn when and how to step back from leader to facilitator of the discussion. She wondered if she would be better off to just leave the students' comments "out there to be interpreted" by others. She described this as an act of "just let it be" and allowing for "whatever discussion comes out of that come out of it." Thus, Lola felt a tension between encouraging the natural flow versus guiding the discussion toward her own learning agenda for the students. She described it as a "fine point" of "how far do you go" to

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advocate for the learning goal or "or do you just let the discussion be the beauty of it?" In conclusion, Lola felt confident in her ability to read to and question her students. However, she had concerns about her ability to facilitate the discussion with less authority.

**Concerns about serving ELL students.** Lola had concerns about meeting the learning needs of her ELL students in whole group text-based discussions. She wondered about her ELL students' ability to understand the academic language in the books. To illustrate, Lola shared an example of reading a text about perseverance and to provide linguistic support she followed up with the phrases, "never give up" and "make mistakes and keep going" to offer more concrete meaning. She also wondered if her ELL students were able to make personal connections to the texts and see their own life in the struggles of the character in the texts. She felt that it was hard to gauge the ELL students' thinking, specifically with her female ELL student, because she was so quiet. She also admitted that it was very easy to call on students with their hands up instead of calling on her quiet female ELL student that did not willingly share with the whole group. One way that she overcame this challenge was by making an effort to specifically listen in on her ELL students' buddy sharing discussions. She stated, "I try to, as much as possible, listen in on their conversations, her and her partner's conversation when possible, too, to make sure that even if she's not sharing, she's at least participating in that aspect and sharing something." Thus, she did worry about meeting the needs of her ELL students during whole group text-based discussions.

**Refining her practice.** Lola felt that engaging students in discussion was beneficial in all areas of students learning. She suggested that requiring students to think thoroughly in literacy could possibly transfer into other areas of their learning. She related it to the school district's commitment to Math Talk. The term, Math Talk, was used by the school district to

describe whole group mathematical discussions. She felt Math Talk was a big part of the mathematical process because it encouraged students to explain their thinking, defend their opinion, and provide evidence. Her administration and building goals supported whole group text-based discussions. Lola explained these administration and building goals as creating a context, "when there is some kind of shared topic that kids are commenting on, but they don't just comment on the topic, they comment on each other's comments as well." She further explained, "They need to give evidence to support their comments or have to give an opinion. And it needs to be, like an environment where they feel comfortable disagreeing with each other, too." This being said, Lola wanted to have a comfortable learning environment where students shared their comments and opinions with evidence and reasoning with each other and were also challenged by the presentation of new or different opinions.

Lola felt that she could grow in her ability to facilitate whole group text-based discussions and was motivated to do so. Although literacy was always a "big push every year," the literacy coach had presented a teaching strategy to enact whole group text-based discussions at the beginning of the year. The literacy coach used the term and concept of Accountable Talk when presenting professional development on whole group text-based discussions. Accountable Talk is a concept for practice that focuses on engaging students in three areas of accountability: accountability to the learning community, accountability to accurate knowledge, and accountability to rigorous thinking (http://ifl.pitt.edu/index.php/educator_resources/accountable_talk, retrieved 4/14/16). Accountability to the learning community defines how and what students speak to each other. The students are encouraged to speak loudly, clearly and accurately and also listen to each other. Accountability to accurate knowledge requires students to be as accurate and specific as possible

so individuals and the learning community can "get the facts straight." Accountability to rigorous thinking is having the students develop a logical argument based on reasoning. Accountable Talk does not value sharing or collecting students' personal experiences or opinions. In contrast, in this study I worked with the teachers to promote a more dialogic conception of text-based discussions that sees teachers and students as collaborators who share responsibility in generating and evaluating new interpretations of texts to better understand the world, themselves and each other (Reznitskaya, 2012). Thus, I wanted to help the teachers learn to integrate integrating students' personal experience and opinion with the evidence provided in a text to create meaning.

Lola understood that she was expected to enact text-based discussions in a certain way but she was unclear of what that exactly looked like in practice. Lola shared, "That's an expectation and I want to be good at it. I don't want to just, you know, do what I think it is. I want to do what, what will really challenge the kids." She did not feel she was currently planning and enacting her use of sharing texts with her class in a way that was challenging her students. She wanted to see the students more engaged in the process and content. She stated, "I don't personally think that I'm doing enough to allow my kids to get the most out of it that they can and I want to see them more engaged than their current level right now." She wanted to improve her ability to facilitate whole group text based discussions.

**Setting goals.** After looking at the DIT (Reznitskaya, 2012) together, Lola self-identified the specific area of authority as her professional development goal. As mentioned in Chapter Two, the DIT outlines a spectrum of professional attributes that define a journey from monolithic to dialogic instruction based six indicators. The descriptor of authority was represented by the level the teacher provides space for student participation. Specifically, authority addressed the

level that the teacher and students shared the responsibility for the process and topics addressed during the discussion. For example, with shared authority, the students call on each other or speak freely versus the teacher calling on students to take turns talking. A motivating factor for her to select this goal was due to the fact that she felt the students identified her as the audience of the conversation instead of interacting with each other. She stated, "I still feel a lot like the kids turn to me and I want them to kind of turn to each other." This concern also caused her to consider having collaboration as her professional development goal. The descriptor of collaboration is the level students interact to co-construct knowledge. She struggled to decide between the authoritative and collaborative indicators because she felt that the roles intertwined. She shared, "It's kind of those two pieces because when I think of accountable talk, I think there's the teacher's role and there's the students' role. Authoritativeness kind of goes with my role and then this collaboration really kind of goes with the kids." Accountable talk was the term used by the school district to represent engaging students in discussions specifically about literacy. Lola struggled to just focus on herself as part of her professional goal through the authoritative descriptor because of her concerns for her designated female ELL student, Navi. She wanted to help Navi learn to be more "active" in the class discussions and "assertive in her thoughts and her comments." She also wanted Jose and Jair to have a stronger sense of ownership and motivation over their learning process. Therefore, she appeared to have an explicit agenda to involve students, specifically ELL students, in actively engaging with the classroom practice of speaking, sharing, and advocating for their learning.

Lola wondered which goal to focus on to best help her serve her students. She viewed her authoritative practice as monologic. She saw her current role as calling on students, asking questions, shifting topics, and evaluating the answers. These were all important actions for the

teacher when facilitating a discussion. However, she was the only one engaging in these activities. Lola wished to share this responsibility with her students to help them develop a sense of ownership of their learning process. Therefore, Lola decided on the authoritative indicator as a goal because she hoped that changing her behavior might impact or influence her students' behavior.  She reflected, "Maybe I should focus on just me because I can't control my seven year olds." This being said, Lola desired to move toward a more dialogic teaching stance of students and the teacher sharing the responsibility for the process and content of the conversation during text-based discussions.

**Reflecting on practice.**  Lola relied on internal self-reflection and her colleagues to help evaluate her lessons. She shared that teachers "intuitively know how something goes" when they were teaching a lesson. Therefore, sometimes, after a lesson, she wrote herself quick reference notes with ideas to improve her lesson if she decided to use the same lesson ideas or materials again.  She explained, "I will like take down notes on post its and put it on, you know, the lesson for next year, to come back and look at." However, she preferred to reflect with a colleague and "talk it out." Reflecting with a colleague was supported well within the school district because the district pacing guide typically aligned the teachers' learning goals. Therefore when Lola struggled she could approach another grade level team member and ask for support because they were typically working on a similar goal and they may have used a different approach.

Lola found that she reflected with her colleagues in different ways depending on her comfort level with the colleagues. During grade level meetings, Lola tended to focus her reflection on the planned curriculum and meeting grade level goals due to the different personalities and teaching approaches of her colleagues. She shared, "Sometimes it's hard to just say what you want to say because not all ten people have the same mindset so it's more of like a

superficial reflection." Lola considered this reflection superficial because she did not share her personal experiences and struggles during grade level meetings.  However, in smaller, more private, conversations with select colleagues, Lola shared her personal reflections quite openly. These personal reflections included the details of the enacted curriculum and how the lesson was implemented in the classroom. Lola felt that it was very important to trust the colleagues that she shared these personal reflections with. She explained that personal reflections occurred with "the people that you trust most, that you can really lay it on the line and you know that they will give you, you know, really honest opinions." In addition to trust, Lola also valued their honest opinion and wanted their advice.  She stated, "I can go to like Sasha and say, I taught that lesson today and it bombed. What am I supposed to do? The kids didn't react. Then we can have that conversation right away."  Lola relied on these close and trusted colleagues as a form of deep reflection for planned and enacted curriculum.

## SASHA

Sasha's background includes her professional and personal history. I also will share information about her classroom and students. Specifically, I will share information about her ELL student, Jasmine. Finally, I will share Sasha's perspectives about her current use text-based discussions in her classroom regarding her strengths and weaknesses, concerns for her ELL students, and her professional goals.

**Personal and Professional History**

Sasha was a White teacher who spoke English both in her home and at school who had experience serving predominately White, English-Only speaking students. Sasha felt that her desire to help and provide care led her into the field of teaching. She explained, "When I was growing up, I always liked helping people and so that just kind of evolved into becoming a

teacher."  This awareness of her early desire to help and care for others developed when she was six years old and her mother had more children. She found that she enjoyed taking care of her younger brothers. When she was younger, she viewed teachers serving a role that was "in line with daycare providers." She decided to officially enter into the field of teaching when she entered college.

She attended a public state university in a rural area that had a well-known education certification program serving undergraduate and Master's level students. She was part of the state's first cohort of teachers to participate in a new portfolio based certification process. She stated that she "was one of the few that got out in four years." As part of this education program, she served as an intern for one semester in a suburban elementary school as part of her student teaching. The internship required her to co-teach in the morning with her mentor teacher. Then, Sasha served as the lead teacher in the afternoon while her mentor teacher taught students designated at risk for reading. She credits this intensive internship for allowing her the ability to "get a job so quickly fresh out of college."

Sasha has taught in her current position as a first grade teacher as Small Lake Elementary for ten years. When she applied for her position, she competed with about three hundred applicants for her one position. She considered herself "spoiled" because this position was her "first job… only job." She believed that due to the fact that she didn't have the opportunity to teach in different districts where she felt new teachers struggled more such as in a nearby urban, high needs district she was not as "cultured" as some other teachers.

After three years of classroom experience, Sasha enrolled in a Master's in education program. It was a hybrid online Master's program at a private, co-ed, suburban University with a religious affiliation. She felt that "they had a great program" because "you could do it online

during the school year and then in the summer, you went to their campus for just a couple weeks and it was like [a] year and a half or so program." She explained, "The goal to get your master's …if you didn't get your master's, you never got paid anything" because the pay scale was based on years of service and graduate credits. According to her district's pay scale, teachers were given an increase of pay based on the number of earned graduate credits in addition to the annual pay increase for years of service. The pay scale was organized on a spreadsheet. For each year of service, teachers moved up the vertical column for years of service and received a pay increase. In addition to the years of service pay increase, teachers could also move across the horizontal lanes on the pay scale based on increments of the number of graduate credits they acquired. Therefore, Sasha clarified that she felt a need to "hurry up and move across as many lanes as you could quickly, otherwise, you topped out." She completed her Master's degree within two years and her thesis was on math automaticity.

The following year after completing her Master's degree, she continued to enroll in graduation credits because "the more credits you had, the more money you earned." She focused on obtaining the credits required to achieve the maximum salary offered by her school district. She explained, "I started on the thirty plus graduate credits and cranked that out as fast as I could." Therefore, when she considered where to enroll in graduate credits, she looked for programs that offered "convenience and speed, quickness." She stated that her goal was to "get it done as fast as I could." So, she found an out-of-state program that offered graduate credits. She shared, "You could send in paperwork and ask for the materials. They would send you a book with the questions that you had to answer. Then you would type up the questions and send it in and then they would send you a grade." She completed all of her thirty plus graduate credits through this program.

When she reflected on her coursework, she felt the instructors probably "didn't read any of it" because of the sheer amount of student work that was submitted. She explained, "Each question had to be a page, there was ten pages times how many people." Although it appeared that Sasha did not get valued feedback from her instructors, she appreciated that the program allowed her to "get through things as fast as possible, in as least amount of pain as possible." Sasha shared that she didn't believe that her learning acquired during her Master's or thirty plus graduate credits was actually influenced her current teaching practices. She explained, "It just seems ages ago and even the way that I taught then is not anywhere near the way that I teach now." Instead, she felt that her teaching practices were more strongly influenced by "recent training that the school district has offered." Even after ten years of serving in the classroom, Sasha did not feel like a "seasoned" teacher because the field of education was "always changing." One of the constant changes that she noticed was the curriculum. She explained, "Even though I've been teaching first grade in here for 10 years, some days I still feel like I don't know what I'm doing because the curriculum just changes so much all the time."

**Sasha's Classroom**

Similar to Lola's classroom, Sasha's classroom also provided a rich literacy environment with over a thousand children's books. Sasha's classroom was the same size as Lola's and the student desks were clustered to provide space and opportunity for student collaboration through peer support and discussion. Like Lola, Sasha had a reading library area with the books organized by genre, series, and levels and her students had individual book bins. She also incorporated different grouping strategies to support her students' learning through conferencing, small groups, and whole group activities. Her whole group work area had a document camera, laptop and projector too and she displayed a word wall and numerous anchor charts in her

classroom. As mentioned earlier, anchor charts highlight previous learning concepts and make literacy norms explicit. One particular anchor chart presented "Accountable Talk" sentence starters (e.g. "Can you tell me more?", "This reminds me of …because….", "Why do you think that? Couldn't it also be…", "Where can I find that in the book?", "I respect your opinion but…."). These sentences were intended to help the students connect their thoughts and build off of peers' responses by asking for reasoning, evidence when agreeing or disagreeing. Sentence starters can help scaffold ELL students written and oral language development by providing a starting point with an open end. Something that Sasha did differently than Lola was that she presented the daily learning objective for each of the content areas through written "I can" statements. The written "I can" statements were intended to help the students identify the purpose of the lesson. Setting the purpose for the lesson is important to help the students focus on their learning goal and understand the expectation.

**Sasha's Students**

Sasha's students represented a spectrum of academic ability. She shared, "And every year, I always have a mix. That's the good and the bad of first grade. You always have really high kids and you always have really low kids. You always have kids in the middle." The specific year of our study, the majority of her students were able to meet the grade level academic goals. She explained, "This year, I've got a good mix of average and then high average and then high, I would say. I don't have that many low students." None of Sasha's students had Individual Education Plans (IEPs). IEPs are legal documents that outline additional required support students need to be successful in the classroom based on their individual learning needs. Sasha believed that this mixture of students "has helped" her better meet the needs of her struggling students. She also commented that her students were "talkative this year."

Sasha's students also represented a spectrum of socioeconomic demographics. She described the majority of her students' socioeconomic status as "pretty average or above average" She shared, "There's a couple, every year, there's always some kids on free and reduced lunch." The year of our study, there was one student who received free and reduced lunch. However, she added that a "couple" of students this year "couldn't pay for field trips and things." She noted that the school's Parent Teacher Organization "helped" these students with the needed monetary fees. Although a few students in her classroom experienced financial needs, Sasha doesn't' feel she or her students had a deep understanding of the impacts of poverty on day to day life. Therefore, she used critical literacy texts to broaden and enhance her students' view of different lived experiences. For example, she read *Those Shoes* by Maribeth Boelts. In this text, a young boy wanted specific tennis shoes like everyone else at his school. He found the shoes at a thrift shop at a price his family could afford but they were the wrong size. The boy was so determined to have the shoes that he got them anyway. After trying to wear the poorly fitting shoes, the boy discovered the importance of meeting needs verses wants. Sasha feels that due to the fact that she has only taught in her current district, she has become acclimated to working with students who typically have their needs and wants met. She explained, " I don't see things, like in the story we read and the kids don't understand, obviously, that poverty piece of things." Therefore, she felt it was important for her to bring it into the classroom through critical issues and critical literacy.

**Sasha's ELL Students**

Sasha stated that the majority of the students who are English Language Learners were from India. She noticed that students from India joined the school at varying times throughout the school year. She commented, "Some of them are straight from India." She also shared that

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some of the students who were originally from India attended a school in a different state before joining Small Lake Elementary. Hence, these international students seemed to have transient educational experiences as they frequently moved to accommodate their parents' employment opportunities. Sasha explained that the international students' frequent moves were due to the fact that "the dad probably gets a different job." She said that she and the rest of the school staff "assume" a lot of the parents worked at the local medical equipment manufacturing company. She shared that sometimes the student moves are temporary. For example, some families visited family in India for a few months and return to Small Lake Elementary. She felt the Indian families were starting to integrate into the community because a temple that meets the religious needs of the Indian families was built in town. She noticed that there appears to be an increase of international students moving in the spring due to the medical equipment company's needs in their European manufacturing facility. Sasha explained that, "It does tend to be typical that we get more students moving in April, I believe. The reason behind that is that the schools in Europe are on a different timeframe throughout the school year, throughout the calendar year." She reflected that last year she had a student who finished first grade in France according to the European school year but when he moved to the United States he didn't meet the age requirement to be in second grade so he repeated the last few months of school enrolled in first grade. Thus, Sasha believed that the student demographics in Small Lake Elementary were in a state of flux as students with different cultural, linguistic, and family backgrounds transitioned into and out of the school district. She explained that the teachers sometimes found the increased diversity challenging when trying to meet the academic needs of their students. She shared, "It's almost like we need our own culture class because we don't always understand" the lived experiences of our students.

**Jasmine.** Sasha had three international students in her classroom from India, however, none of them were officially identified as ELL students. She shared, "ELL students are usually from India and their parents don't want them to be considered ELL." She was aware that one of the Indian students, Jasmine, had a family that spoke a different language at home but she did not state which language or dialect they spoke. She explained that she noticed the parents' English was "very broken" in emailed correspondence and when they spoke with her in person. Jasmine attended Kindergarten in Virginia before moving to Small Lake elementary. Thus, she had one year of educational experience in the United States. Sasha noted that Jasmine's English was "pretty broken too." Since none of the international students were officially identified as English Language Learners or received ELL services, Sasha used her professional opinion to decide which international students needed linguistic support acquiring English language development opportunities. For the purpose of this study, Sasha wanted to focus on supporting Jasmine during the text-based discussions because she felt the other two students had proficient English language skills. Without district assessments given to determine the international students' proficiency levels, Sasha appeared to assess her students' need for ELL support based on her ability to understand their communication. In addition, Sasha did not seem to know or share information about the other two international students' backgrounds or home contexts and I failed to probe for additional information about this. This was potentially problematic because the international students might have demonstrated proficient basic communication skills but still have needed support with academic language acquisition.

**Read Alouds Versus Text-Based Discussions**

Sasha read to her students every day. She used reading as a form of entertainment during snack time. She also occasionally planned purposeful learning opportunities as part of lessons for

readers' workshop. When reading to her students for entertainment, she sometimes utilized animated talking picture eBooks provided through online resources. She frequently used eBooks at the beginning of the year because she was "so busy." She explained, "I was like, well, if they'd just watch the book on tape, then I can do this, this and that." However, she preferred using actual books when reading to her students because she found that she really missed "having that connection with them when you're reading a book and they get excited or they interrupt you to talk about something." She did not feel that using eBooks encouraged this type of interaction. In addition, she "really wanted to make sure the kids experience" certain texts that were not available online as eBooks. Sasha had a large repertoire of children's literature that she wanted to share with her students.

Sasha's large repertoire of children's literature allowed her to share a variety of texts for a variety of purposes. Her knowledge and awareness of books that she finds interesting and fun pieces of literature motivated her text selection. Sometimes, her text selection was planned and other times it was an open selection. She reflected on her text selection process as a tension between finding a text to meet her learning goals and finding the time to strategically plan how to use text to support her learning goal. She explained, "I planned on reading this book for this reason and other times, it's oh, shoot, I need a book. What do I have?" She viewed her overall purpose for text selection to support her goal "to get kids to love books and want to be lifelong readers." She explained, "There's stories that I really love that I want to share with them so that they love them." Therefore, she selected texts that she personally enjoyed and that she felt were engaging for first graders. One way that she encouraged student interest in literature was providing an area of featured books. For example, she featured the author, Robert Munch, and placed a collection of his books in the designated area. She commented that her students they get

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"really excited about my recommendations." To illustrate, she shared, "If I say, oh, when I was a little girl, I used to love reading *Little Critter*. Then guess what they want to do? Read *Little Critter*." She reflected, "You can just see that how much influence you can have on them." Thus, she encouraged her students to explore literature.

Sasha also read texts to her class for the purpose of supporting specific learning goals. These goals typically aligned with her reader's workshop learning objectives. Sometimes, this involved author studies or character development. To illustrate, she shared an example of using books by author, Tomi Depaola. She said that she found her students "especially get excited when you read *Strega Nona* and then you read *Big Anthony* story and then you read all of those other stories about the characters that they just get excited to hear." She also used cultural literature that made connections to traditional fairy tales. To illustrate, she read *Goldy luck and the Three Pandas* by Natasha Yim which is a Chinese-American retelling of Goldilocks and Three Bears. This story infused aspects of Chinese-American culture such as pandas, rice porridge, and futons instead of beds while following a similar story line to the traditional fairy tale. She used this book to model using a Venn diagram comparing and contrasting the two different yet similar fairy tales. As mentioned earlier, she also used critical literacy texts to expand her students' world perception such *Those Shoes* by Maribeth Boelts. Although she was familiar with a large repertoire of children's literature, sometimes she used the Internet to search for books that were recommended for Accountable Talk. If she did not own a copy of a recommended book, she felt comfortable asking her grade level colleagues if she could borrow theirs. Sasha did not like to borrow books from the school library because the books were organized only by the first letter of the author's last name and this made it challenging to find specific books. This challenge occurred when she looked for *Those Shoes* by, Maribeth Boelts.

She explained, "I had to borrow it from a different first grade teacher because I couldn't find it in our library. There's tons of books in there and they're just in the Bs. I'm like, I'm not looking through all these B books." Thus, Sasha read text to her class for a variety of academic purposes and felt confident selecting which text to use but the time required locating each text was a concern.

Sasha noticed that when students were engaged and enjoyed a text they really wanted to talk about it. She found the student talk "hard" at times because "when they're really into a book, all they do is interrupt you constantly and as a teacher that sometimes drives you crazy. She found it challenging to encourage student enthusiasm about the text while discouraging constant interruptions. She explained that although the interruptions drove her "crazy" as a teacher, she also thought, "Oh, my gosh. This means they've really enjoyed the book." Therefore, her appreciation of student active engagement and a desire to not encourage interruptions caused a tension for Sasha while reading to her students because she found it "hard to find that balance." She was also concerned about how norms that allowed student interruptions during literacy would impact her lesson delivery in other subject areas. She stated, "When you allow them to do all of that interruption, then that's how they are constantly about everything in every subject." One teaching strategy that she used while reading texts to her class to create space for student talk was "turn and talk" also known as think-pair-share.  She explained that turn and talk was part of the readers' workshop model that was encouraged for literacy instruction.

Sasha believed readers' workshops and writers' workshop are valuable approaches because they lend themselves to differentiation. For example, readers' workshop allowed children to read books at their specific level instead of using the same text for everyone. However, she finds the task of conferring with individual students "hard." Conferring required

her to give specific feedback to individual students to support their literacy skills. She stated, "It's a very hard skill and one that I definitely struggle with." One reason she found conferring "hard" was due to a sense of lacking successful implementation. In an effort to gain more awareness and skill to implement this practice, she participated in a book study on conferring with students with her colleagues. She shared, "No matter how many books I attempt to read or try to read, it just, there's no perfect answer to how to confer…like you can read something and get all these ideas but it's still putting things into practice doesn't work so I do struggle with conferring." Thus, she lacked confidence in the effectiveness of her approach to conferring with students. She shared, "I would say that I can play the game when it's time to play the game, if that makes sense. Like if you're going to come and observe me to evaluate me, then I think I'll be okay but I struggle with it a lot." Thus, Sasha believed that she could improve on conferring with her students and actively participated in professional development on the topic. This lack of confidence may have also influenced her concern regarding her ability to provide feedback to students during whole group discussions. However, she felt the expectation to refine her instructional practices "to be above a gold" across all subject areas was impracticable. She explained, "I don't know how to solve that problem while I still have to teach all the other subjects. We talk a lot as colleagues about if I could just teach math, then I could be a great math teacher." Sasha felt very confident facilitating math talks; however, she felt pressure from the expectation "to teach every single subject and be the expert at all of it."

**Curriculum Resources**

Sasha used multiple resources to plan reading a text to her class. However, similar to Lola, she did not use the SIOP lesson planning template provided by the district. As mentioned earlier, she had a vast classroom collection of children's literature books. In addition, she shared

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and borrowed books with her colleagues. She also utilized resources from the Internet. For example, she used a website called Pinterest to find an example of an accountable talk anchor chart which she recreated for her classroom. The district encouraged the concept of Accountable Talk during literature discussions. Sasha described accountable talk as "I pick a book that I think will lead to discussions but sometimes it always doesn't… it's just a book where we would like sit in a circle and talk about and scaffold their thinking." However, at times, she struggled to implement the concepts and utilize the curriculum materials provided by the district.

One resource provided by the district that she did not fully use was a packaged literacy curriculum program to support teachers to engage students with text. At first, all of the first grade teachers were required to use this packaged curriculum. Then, the teachers were required to only use half of the provided lessons because it was challenging to find time to follow the scripted lessons on all twenty books included in the package. After the principal who implemented the program retired, the teachers were not required to use it anymore. Sasha was unsure if the new principal was aware of this resource. This year, Sasha recalled using texts provided in the packaged curriculum such as *Strega Nona* by Tomi Depaola but not the scripted lesson prompts. The main reason that Sasha did not choose to use the program was that she found it limited the opportunities for student thinking. She explained, "I feel like it always prompted you to like stop and recall. Like every page, it felt like you were like reading it, okay, let's stop and let's talk about what we know already." She valued the program's focus on teaching vocabulary. She commented, "There was a whole list of vocabulary which was a good aspect of it." However, she did not implement the vocabulary sections of the lessons because she had other goals to accomplish. She stated, "I'm expected to do everything all the time, all day long." She rationalized that the packaged literacy curriculum was "just something I never really

got into. I think sometimes it's just hard to follow a program when you have a million other things, too, that you're supposed to be doing. So you've got to be choosy."

Part of being "choosy" required her to select literacy lesson materials from a "mumble jumble of stuff that somebody has pulled off the Internet and stuck in a binder." Every teacher in her grade level was provided with a binder of literacy lesson materials. She described her binder as being so big it was "ridiculous." She attempted to organize her literacy lesson materials binder to help streamline her planning process.  She explained, "I can't have this stuff in the binder because I've got a binder here, I've got papers here, I've got books there. Whenever I teach a new unit, I got to find it all and it drives me crazy so I was trying to reorganize it." While she was in the process of reorganizing the literacy lesson materials binder, the new administrator announced that the school would be implementing a new packaged curriculum program designed to support Reader's Workshop.   Sasha shared, "We found out that we're going to abandon all of that…Now we have to switch our mind thinking, too, to something else. So half of it's in a binder, half of it's trying to be organized in a different way." Thus, the changing curriculum requirements created a fluid environment for the selection and use of literacy lesson materials provided by the district.

**Facilitating Text-Based Discussions**

Sasha described the context of her current practice of using read alouds as "loud." She encouraged students to whisper to each other during turn and talk but she understood the noise level created by the students. She stated, "For a while, it was always like, you need to whisper and I get why they don't. They're six or seven."  She added that her students "like the turn and talk sometimes. Sometimes they don't." To illustrate, she shared, "The book that I read yesterday got a little long and you can tell when the kids like get antsy and they're all fidgety and it's time

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to wrap it up and move on."  She admitted, "Sometimes, like I said, I don't read the book ahead of time. I think it depends on if I'm reading at snack or if I'm reading at like today, was accountable talk." Due to her broad knowledge of children's literature she was typically had exposure to the texts that she used in her classroom. However, sometimes, a longer length of time had passed since she had read the text. She reflected, "I had heard that story before but it was a couple years since I heard the story. I remembered the gist of it and I remember thinking it would be more purposeful if I found, if I had marked spots where I should have them stop and turn and talk instead of just wing it." At times, finding the time to reread and plan text-based discussions was challenging for Sasha. For example, the day that required her to "wing" the read aloud her daughter needed to stay home from school because she was sick and Sasha had to find a care provider in the morning before she was able to leave for work.

**Strengths and Weaknesses and Setting Professional Goals**

Sasha felt confident in her ability to select texts to use while facilitating whole group text-based discussions. She appeared to really have the ability to relate to texts and remember texts that she enjoyed.  She also felt confident in her ability to evaluate if the text connected with her students. She explained that when she felt excited to share a text with the students she watched her students for reactions to evaluate their level of connection and enjoyment with the text. Thus, Sasha felt confident in selecting texts that her students enjoyed.

Sasha did have concerns regarding her ability to facilitate text-based discussions because she was uncertain of the expectations and roles. She explained that facilitating text-based discussions "has been hard because I don't feel like I've been trained enough to really exactly know what it is we're supposed to be doing." She attempted to build her background knowledge on the subject to gain confidence to facilitate the discussions. Sasha considered text-based

discussions to be defined by her district's training on Accountable Talk. The district used the term Accountable Talk to describe discussions focused on literacy. However, she did not feel as though she was fully prepared to implement the teaching strategy successfully. She shared, "Got a beautiful poster. Found a book that was recommended for Accountable Talk. And when we were doing it, I just don't think that it went the way that it was supposed to go but how it's supposed to go, I guess I don't really know either. Does that make sense?" In response to how she felt a text-based discussion should sound like, she stated, "They're (students are) supposed to, I think, listen to each other and then build off of that." She shared that her students were successful because they were able to include comments such as, "I agree with you or I disagree with you." She believed that her students successfully demonstrated the concept of listening to somebody else and then agreeing or disagreeing. However, she was concerned about the content of the discussion. For example, during the discussion using the book *Those Shoes,* the students listened to each other and made statements to demonstrate agreement and disagreement with peers as they made personal connections to the text. Nevertheless, Sasha felt the quality of the discussion was not as successful. She wanted the students to use more evidence from the text and focus on the actions of the character. She explained, "Our topic wasn't about the book, I didn't think. They were making connections with the book but I feel like they were supposed to talk more about the actions of the characters. We didn't really talk about the book other than he shouldn't be worried about his shoes." Thus, Sasha saw both successes and struggles in her ability to facilitate text-based discussion based on student talk. However, she did not know how to facilitate the text-based discussion to encourage student talk to focus on the text and actions of the character.

Sasha's struggle to facilitate text-based discussions to encourage student talk to focus on the text and actions of the character exposed her concern regarding her role in the discussion. She shared, "There was times where I wanted to step in and say something or lead the discussion more but when you're doing the accountable talk, I'm supposed to be not there in a sense." Her concern about stepping in was grounded in her presence influencing the interactions between the students. To illustrate, she lamented, "They look at me and they talk to me even though they're all sitting in the circle but the purpose of the circle is to look at each other and talk with each other but they're trained to look at the teacher." She noticed that her students focused on her when they spoke during the discussion and watched her facial expressions or body language such as a nod for approval. She shared that she tried structuring students in different ways during discussions to discourage them from focusing on her as the intended audience. For example, she positioned six students sitting at a table and she stood behind them instead of sitting in a chair as a participant in the discussion. She found redirecting the students' intended audience to focus on peers instead of her as the teacher really challenging because "all they want is your approval and to know that you are listening to them." Hence, Sasha felt she needed to have a passive role while facilitating text-based discussions to encourage peer interaction.

**Refining her practice.** Sasha did "not really" have concerns about meeting the learning needs of her non-identified ELL students during read alouds. She explained, "I feel like a lot of the times, they're just being exposed to different things and sometimes exposure is the key. So I guess to be honest, I don't really think about my ELL students when I'm selecting things or making choices." Instead, she considered her own likes and dislikes when selecting texts and her students' needs as a whole when planning lessons. Thus, she did not do any anything different for her ELL students than her English-only speaking students. Instead, she looked for resources

that would fit everyone. She typically searched for these resources on the Internet and in her grade level literacy lesson material binder. In addition, her literacy lessons aligned with the monthly school identified literacy learning goals and objectives and were not modified for ELL students.

When prompted why she was interested in refining her practice of facilitating whole group text-based discussions, Sasha responded, "Why not, right?" She disclosed, "There's always room for improvement everywhere. I would never consider myself perfect with anything." Basically she was willing to participate in the study, since I was "here and looking for a subject." After discussing the Dialogic Inquiry Tool (DIT) (Reznitskaya, 2012) discussed in Chapter Two, Sasha was asked to consider which indicator she would like to focus on as a professional development goal. At our following meeting to discuss her professional goal, she shared, "I didn't give it any thought. I was hoping you could tell me what to do." Therefore, we reviewed the possible professional goals based on the DIT indicators to prompt her decision. Sasha decided to focus her professional development goals on the feedback DIT indicator. She selected the feedback DIT indicator because she felt during discussions "the kids are just talking to me even though they are not supposed to be just talking to me and I am just sitting there smiling and nodding because I don't know if I am supposed to be there facilitating." Hence, she thought that focusing her professional development on providing feedback through a dialogical stance could help clarify her role during discussions.

By focusing her professional development on providing feedback, Sasha anticipated that her increased involvement in the discussion would support her ELL students. She said, "I think that this area could help them to have more explanations as they are listening to peers talk about things." Thus, she hoped that her feedback would encourage students to provide more detailed

statements with explanations to support her ELL students' learning. She felt this was important because she was concerned about how her ELL students' background knowledge and experiences impacted their comprehension during read alouds. She explained, "As I am reading the book, they (the ELL students) still might not understand, not exactly, what it is that is happening because they might not have had those experiences so the exposure could help their understanding."

**Reflecting on practice**. Sasha had a very busy professional and personal life, which influenced her opportunities to reflect on her teaching practices. She did not mention reflecting with her administrator or colleagues. Instead, she explained that she reflected on her lesson implementation and planning at any free moment. For example, she reflected on her teaching practices when she was in the shower or driving home in the car. She typically reflected on what aspects of her lesson were successful or non-successful and attempted to identify contributing factors for both outcomes. She was also in a constant state of reflection during the lesson. To illustrate, she monitored her students' behavior and comprehension while reading a text. If she noticed that her students were restless and having trouble focusing, she modified the lesson. When planning, she reflected across the students she has taught throughout her teaching career by remembering what went well and what didn't and was motivated to try different things to improve lesson outcomes. Thus, the majority of her reflection process occurred privately without influence or feedback from her colleagues.

In the following two chapters, I will provide a deep analysis of Lola and Sasha's lesson planning, reflection, and enactment as they worked toward their professional development goal of moving from a monologic toward a dialogic teaching stance within their self-selected DIT indicators.

# CHAPTER 4

## LOLA'S LESSONS

I analyzed three of the twelve lessons that Lola taught while working toward her professional development goal of sharing authority. Lola focused on her professional development goal of refining her ability to share authority with her students. Reznitskaya*'s (2012) Dialogic Instruction Teaching Indicator* (DIT) (see Table 2) on Authority allowed me to examine the level that Lola provided space for student participation. The DIT provided specific indicators to guide her attempts as she shifted from a monologic teaching practice toward a dialogic stance. In monologic teaching, the teacher calls on students, asks questions, shifts topics, and evaluates the answers. When progressing or shifting toward a more dialogic stance, there are occasional open student discussions or only a few students participate. During dialogic teaching, students and the teacher share the responsibility for the process and content of the conversation. For the purpose of this study, I explored if and how Lola provided space for student participation during three text-based discussions and if this influenced her students' opportunities to engage in different levels of thinking. These three lessons were chosen based on Lola's availability to debrief afterwards to ensure the opportunity to capture her voice, purpose, and reasoning within the study. My goal for this chapter is to describe her attempt to progress from monologic to dialogic facilitation based on the DIT Authority Feedback Indicator and look at students' opportunities for engaging in different levels of thinking.

I will present information regarding Lola's lesson planning, reflection, and enactment as she worked toward her professional development goal. For each of the three lessons, I will share Lola's voice and perspective regarding the context, learning goals, and challenges. I will also state the recommendations that I suggested after each lesson. Then, I will provide a detailed

analysis with respect to the DIT using the Authority Teaching Indicator for each lesson and the opportunities for students to engage in different levels of thinking. Finally, I will summarize the influence of her professional development growth on her students' opportunities to engage with different levels of thinking, specifically, her ELL students.

## LESSON 2: *STUCK*

**Lesson Context**

This lesson used the book, *Stuck*, by, Oliver Jeffers (2011). This book won the Italian Orbil Prize in 2013. This was the second lesson of our collaborative intervention. As mentioned above, Lola focused on her professional development goal of transforming from a monologic teaching practice toward a dialogic stance as designated by the Authority Teaching Indicator. Thus, I explored if and how the students and Lola shared the responsibility for the process and content of the text-based discussion. Navi, the identified ELL student was absent. Both Jose and Jair, the non-identified ELL students, were present during the lesson. The book was about a little boy whose kite became stuck in a tree. Attempting to knock the kite out of the tree, the boy threw increasingly silly items up in the tree, for example, a cat, a whale, and a neighbor. Eventually, his kite fell down but all of the other items remained stuck and the boy seemed not to notice.

**Learning Goals**

Lola stated that she had three different learning goals for this lesson. The overall learning goal was to explore the realistic fiction genre through the use of *Stuck* as a mentor text. She noticed that during writing the students were struggling to create realistic fiction. She thought this might have been caused by a sense of confusion about the genre and a lack of exposure to it. She explained, "All year, we've been working more on small moments, so things that have truly

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happened to them…More real, like more nonfiction type of writing. Now that they're given opportunity to be creative, they're not sure what that means anymore." Small moments were a theme presented in the district's packaged writing curriculum. The theme of small moments guided students to write focused, detailed, personal narratives. In an effort to support students to grow beyond just writing small moments, Lola wanted to show the students an example of how a piece of writing could start with an actual or real idea, that truly could potentially happen, but the author continued the story with information so "farfetched that it becomes just completely fiction instead of realistic." Her second goal was to encourage students to make a connection to the story because many of the students only wanted to write about true small moments. She wanted them to see "how you can take a small moment in your life but then instead of just reciting what happened to you, you can switch it up." She wanted her students to connect with the realistic idea of the book of having something stuck and trying to get it unstuck.  She hoped that the students realized how their real world connection was different because the author changed it into a fictional perspective. Her third goal was to have her students find some part of the story enjoyable.

**Additional ELL student learning goal.**  Lola had an additional learning goal for her identified ELL student, Navi. This learning goal was focused on helping her develop her life skill of persevering. This life skill was about problem solving and "what to do if you get stuck." Lola commented that she was "noticing a lot that with my ELL student (Navi), she's, I don't know if it's like a, you know, a product of her upbringing but when she's stuck, that's like it." She wanted to encourage Navi to become resilient in the face of adversity and show her that "you can be stuck but let's be creative with ideas that can help us figure out a solution." In addition to this life skill, she wanted Navi to practice two literacy skills. She hoped that Navi connected with the

text or found it interesting and practiced asking questions. Lola thought that using a text that was explicitly fictional could prompt Navi to pause and wonder. For example, Lola hoped that Navi might question, "Why would you throw a cat up there? Well, why would… just starting to ask those types of questions to allow her to think outside the box a little bit more." Thus, Lola considered life and academic skills when serving her ELL students' needs.

Lola planned support for Navi during the text-based discussion. One support was encouraging students to make connections with the text. She explained, "I was hoping that she could pull something from her life that would help connect her to that, that concept of, you know, when something happens, what do I do kind of thing." Another support was linking to previous learning. Lola integrated the recent science content from their weather unit on clouds and the water cycle to help students understand the concept regarding "when things get too full, something has to give."  She anticipated this as a hard concept so she tried to remind students of a similar concept that they explored in another content area. She shared, "We had been talking about weather lately and other things like that so I thought, well, maybe someone will draw that connection. And it just didn't quite happen." The final support that Lola used in the lesson was the opportunity to talk with a partner during that lesson. For example, she asks students to "share your favorite part with a partner." Unfortunately, as mentioned earlier, Navi was absent for this lesson.

**Self-Identified Professional Learning**

Lola was interested in developing her ability to grow within the area of the "authority" descriptor. Her goal was to create space for student participation. To accomplish this goal, she planned to provide more wait time and to not restate what students shared with the group. She was hopeful that increased wait time would give the students more time to develop what they

would like to say and increase participation. She believed not restating student comments would encourage students to listen and interpret each other's comments. She shared, "if what the kids are saying seems confusing to me, maybe I just need to let it go and let the other kids try and interpret it on their own instead of me like restating it because sometimes, they can pick up on what the other child is saying." Therefore, she wanted to share the responsibility of listening to and interpreting but also found it challenging. She reflected that she was becoming more aware of when she was restating student comments. During one such moment of awareness, she shared that she thought to herself, "Oh, you know, this would've been a good moment to just shut your mouth. Just like be quiet and just let them take it in."

She found it challenging not to restate students' comments because she viewed it as a way to support student learning by organizing student thoughts through a clarifying statement and/or drawing attention to an important concept or thought. She explained, "When I know that a student is trying to say something and they just can't get out, I want to help them say it. I want to help them get their point across. And also when I think it's a good point, it's like I want everyone to get it so let me just say it again." Therefore, she used the instructional move of restating student comments to support students' understanding and creating meaning of new or important concepts. This being said, Lola's concept of shared authority did not acknowledge the important teacher role of facilitating the discussion. Instead, her concept of shared authority at this point in her professional development included a neutral or silent teaching stance. She explained, "I know I need to just kind of step back and just let it happen. Naturally. And when it does happen, that'll be that really momentous moment of they got it. You know the heavens are opening up."

**Shared Reflections**

After Lola taught this lesson, we debriefed together. Lola was able to identify some positive moments from the lesson. She noticed, "Everyone seemed to be really engaged." She also shared that she "liked that everyone had different favorite moments" during the think-pair-share because it helps the students "understand that different things can be enjoyed by different people." Thus, Lola was pleased with student participation and felt the students were successful in meeting her third learning goal, but had concerns about student learning and understanding in relation to her first two learning goals of making connections with the text. She wanted the students to make connections to better understand the text and consider the genre in relation to their writing unit.

Unfortunately, Lola had planned additional learning goals specifically for Navi, her identified ELL student, but she was absent. Nonetheless, Lola noticed some positive moments with her two non-identified ELL students, Jose and Jair, during the lesson regarding an increase in their participation. Lola viewed Jose as someone who usually took on "that macho role of, I don't need to do this. Like he doesn't seem very connected to things. He's connected to the kids but not the content a lot." In today's lesson, she felt Jose "was really excited about the book" and "thought it was funny" because she "could see him smiling and wanting to share with his partner." She considered this as a "really, a really good moment for him" as a student because "normally when it's time to turn and talk, he'll just kind of sit there and just kind of watch what's happening. Like this has nothing to do with me." Witnessing Jose's participation made Lola "really happy" as a teacher. Lola described Jair as academically strong because he "always wants to talk and share." However, she noticed that he has a tendency to be off-task or "not on point with what he's saying." In today's lesson, Lola noticed his comments and conversations with his

partner were aligned with the text.  She wondered if the boys "tend to enjoy the silly books a little bit more" which resulted in an increase of participation because they seemed more engaged with the lesson.  She believed it would have been interesting to see if Navi would have engaged more with the text as well due its "silly, kind of humorous story."

      **Identified challenges.**  Lola shared that her lesson did not go as planned because the students struggled to make personal and academic connections to the text. She commented, "I just thought they would draw a connection a lot easier to the topic. But they didn't. They just didn't." Many students did not raise their hand when asked if they had ever had the personal experienced getting something stuck and tried to get it down. In addition, the students did not make connections between the mentor text and the genre study in writer's workshop. Lola was hoping that a student would have mentioned the connection between writing and reading and the book on his or her own to the group. She stated, "It didn't happen. That's okay, maybe next time." Lola explained the students appeared confused by the author's use of the fiction genre and reality. She stated, "They were really stuck on the whole idea of throwing the cat up into the tree which I was kind of surprised by. Like they were more accepting about the whale going up there and the orangutan and the house but why would you throw a cat? I'm like… It's fiction." Therefore, she wondered if the students truly understood the terms, fiction and non-fiction. When she conducted a whole group assessment by asking students to chorally respond if this book was fiction or non-fiction, she received a mixed response. She considered, " maybe it's time to like step back and not say fiction and nonfiction but real and make believe." However, she wanted her students to know and understand the appropriate genre terminology and did not want to over-simplify the terms.

In previous lessons, she created anchor charts for both genres to help the students learn the genres and their characteristics. She felt "strongly that they truly understand what nonfiction is and they know the features of it" and the author's purpose. She believed that fiction was more challenging for the students to understand because some of it was realistic fiction that seemed like it could really happen. She thought the students "don't necessarily understand the difference between real life versus what an author makes up in their head" because they appeared to be very literal in their interpretation of texts.

**Self-identified professional learning.** Lola was critical of her effort to meet her self-identified professional goal of providing more wait time and not restating student comments as a means to give more space to the students and share the authority of the discussion. When I asked her how she would assess her ability to meet this goal, she stated, "I did some of that. Not as much as I had hoped. But you know, I think as a teacher, you become stuck in a pattern…I have to work on wait time." She explained that she valued and understood the importance of wait time but found it challenging to enact during a lesson. She wanted to "get comfortable with just letting the kids process and like just say whatever is on their mind" because she wants her students to feel "like they're being heard" and "they're part of the conversation." She believed wait time could help students articulate their thoughts to the whole group. Lola was also hopeful that providing time for students to process and articulate their thoughts would influence her current practice of frequently restating student comments. She worried that when she restated their comments, her students thought, "Oh, she didn't get what I said" or "Mrs. Lola feels like she has to tell what I'm saying again." She did not want her students to feel that way. She blamed her challenges with wait time and restating student comments as a struggle with "control" and that she has to learn to "let go."

One solution that Lola considered to help share the authority of facilitating the text-based discussion was to create an anchor chart with sentence starters to increase student participation by actively engaging in the conversation. She thought about implementing some of the sentence starters that a colleague used in her classroom.  For example, one sentence starter was, "I agree with…because…" This sentence starter helped students connect to each other's comment and provide reasoning. The second sentence was, "I didn't quite understand what so and so said. Can you explain it again?" This sentence starter helped students ask for clarification. She was hopeful that these frames could provide scaffolding for the students to process and articulate their thoughts. She explained, "If that's what they're thinking, they can turn to that and at least still be part of the conversation instead of sitting back and going I'm not sure how to say this or I'm not sure how to ask for someone to clarify what they're saying." Since Lola sometimes restated student comments to provide clarification for the whole group, sentence starters might provide a means to share the authority of facilitating the text-based discussion with her students. She thought that the she should provide modeling and guided practice with the students regarding how to use the sentence starters before expecting them to use the sentence frames on their own. She stated that she will "just teach it more explicitly at first and then let the kids kind of like run with it on their own."

This being said, Lola did have a displayed anchor chart with sentence frames for "How to Talk About a Book" but did not refer to it during the lesson. This anchor chart displayed sentence frames such as I liked, I didn't like, I'm wonder, and I've noticed. Lola communicated that they worked with I wonder statements during the questioning strategies unit earlier in the year. She noticed that her students struggled to admit when they did not understand something. She shared that when she calls on students to share during a text-based discussion, the students

"always say, oh, I forgot, Miss Lola." She assumed that some of these students did not actually forget what they wanted to say, but rather did not understand or know how to respond. She stated that when a student says he or she "forgot," she replied, "It's okay to say you don't know." Lola stated this because she wanted the students to feel safe sharing their confusion during whole group discussions so they would ask for clarification.

Although Lola wanted to support all of her students to gain comfort and confidence in their ability to participate in whole group discussions, she specifically felt a need to help her ELL students with this goal. She explained that as her ELL students "become more comfortable with just sharing their thoughts and opinions with friends," she anticipated that increased engagement would positively impact their learning. She believed that as the ELL students became more comfortable, confident, and engaged in participating in the discussion, they "will understand more of what's being discussed" because a shift will take place regarding the function and importance of asking questions. Instead of viewing student questioning as a representation of the negative assumption of someone not understanding, she hoped that the ELL students would see that asking questions deepens understanding. She wanted her ELL students to feel confident and comfortable so "they're able to question without feeling like, 'They're going to think I don't get, I don't understand.' It's more of a clarification versus I just don't get it." Lola believed that it is very important for ELL students "to know that they can always ask for clarification."

**Recommendations During the Debrief**

During our debriefing interview, I shared two resources and made one suggestion regarding her teaching practice to support her professional development growth in relation to the DIT (Reznitskaya, 2012) Authority Teaching Indicator. First, I brought her attention to a seminal piece of literature regarding the possible roles that students and teachers perform during

discussions during dialogic instructional (Almasi, 1996).  To present the roles, I created a table in advance and shared it with her during our debriefing. The first role I shared was inquisitor. This drew attention to the opportunity for students to feel open to asking a lot of questions to encourage better understanding of the text and the construction of meaning instead of the teacher asking most of the questions. The second role was facilitator of interactions.  This role demonstrated the students encouraging each other to participate and taking responsibility for ensuring that all members stay on track and take turns versus students being called on and managed by the teacher. The third role was facilitator of interpretation. When this role was shared, students, as well as the teacher, restated or questioned the text or discussion if something is not clear. For example, during dialogic instruction, students related topics or issues to their own experiences in order to assist the whole group's understanding to facilitate interpretation. The fourth role was respondent.  When this role was shared, students responded to each other's questions as well as the teacher's questions. The final role was evaluator. When students served in the role of evaluator, they tried to challenge each other's ideas by stating whether they agreed or disagreed and told why. My purpose of sharing these roles with Lola was to open the possibilities and increase awareness of how students could participate in text-based discussions as a means for Lola to share authority with her students in a more dialogical way.

My second resource was the concept of following up versus filling in (McKeown & Beck, 2006). This concept encouraged teachers to follow up with questioning prompts instead of filling in by providing information during text-based discussions. To illustrate, a teacher could "follow up" a student statement with a question asking for reasoning if reasoning was not given instead of stating the reasoning themselves. When the teacher provided the reasoning or clarification during their own statement, that statement was considered "filling in." My purpose

for sharing this concept was to help Lola understand that she had an important function during interactive text-based discussions. I wanted her to see that her intention for restating was an important part of facilitating text-based discussions. Therefore, sharing authority with her students during dialogic instruction did not require standing back completely from the discussion, but actually maintaining her teaching role while also asking for more from the students. Instructional moves such as asking for clarification and reasoning modeled possible roles for students to try themselves during the text-based discussion. In addition, following up could alleviate Lola's concerns regarding if she was interpreting student comments accurately when she restated them because she asked for more clarification instead of restating.

**Serving ELL Students**

As Lola focused on refining her practice of facilitating whole group text-based discussions, I also considered her progress in learning to meet the needs of her ELL students during this lesson. In accordance with the six principles for teaching ELL students (McIntyre, 2010), I could see that Lola was meeting four of the principles. First, she implemented rigorous teaching and curriculum. In doing so, she attempted to engage the students in a joint productivity activity. The joint productivity activity was participating in a whole group discussion to produce the final product describing realistic fiction. She carefully planned the content discussion in alignment with the principle of instructional conversations. She supported the principle of curricular connection by selecting a story her students were able to connect to and were interested in due to the humor and outlandish actions of the main character. She created space in her lesson for literacy development by focusing the literacy learning goal on realistic fiction. However, she did not create a language learning goal. In addition, although she attempted to create space for students to make personal connections to the text, she did not address the

principle of family involvement during the lesson. Therefore, Lola was making significant progress towards four of the six principles for teaching ELL students during this lesson.

Next, I examined Lola's instructional modifications to support ELL students during this lesson (Goldenberg, 2010). This lesson provided four of the six recommended instructional modifications. Lola provided explicit interactive instruction and learning opportunities for her ELL students to interact with peers. She provided two forms of input: oral and visual. The oral input was provided through teacher and peer comments and the visual input was picture cues in the text. She supported her ELL students to orally and mentally synthesize the text by providing wait time and prompting student responses by asking questions. However, as mentioned earlier in the reflection on her progress toward meeting the six principles of teaching ELL students, she only provided content instruction, not explicit EOLD instruction or vocabulary experiences.

## LESSON 2: ANALYSIS

In this lesson, Lola worked toward her self-selected professional development goal to create space for student participation as represented within the DIT (Reznitskaya, 2012) Authority Teaching Indicator. Therefore, my lesson analysis focused specifically on the Authority Teaching Indicator to explore if and how the students and Lola shared responsibility for the process and content of the text-based discussion during this lesson by examining who called on students, asked the majority of the questions, shifted topics, and evaluated student answers.

**Process and Content Responsibility**

During this lesson, Lola provided some openings for student participation. However, she maintained the majority of the responsibility for the process and content of the text-based discussion as evidenced by the fact that she was the only participant that actively called on

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students to share during the lesson. She verbally called on the students by name or she non-verbally indicated their turn to speak during the discussion by pointing, nodding, or looking directly at them. Lola specifically called on ten different students by name during this lesson. Therefore, Lola created space for about half of the class to participate. Three students were called on multiple times by name. These students were Lee, Don and Jair. Lee was called on three times and Don and Jair were both called on two times. Lola specifically called on both of the two non-designated ELL students during the lesson by name, Jose and Jair. She called on Jose to answer one question. She asked him, "Anyone else like the whale part? Jose, yes, no?" Jose answered, "No." She interacted with Jair twice during this lesson. She asked him what he thought a character was thinking and to share his favorite part with the group.

There were students who were called on non-verbally without their names being mentioned. In compliance with IRB, I did not focus the camera on the students. Therefore, students who were called upon with non-verbal gestures or indicated by name could not be included in the tally for participation. In conclusion, it appeared that Lola attempted to create space for more than a few of the students to participate in the discussion. However, the process of the text-based discussion was not equally shared between Lola and her students as illustrated by the fact that students did not call on each other or directly ask each other questions to clarify shared ideas. Therefore, this was an area that Lola could improve upon during the collaborative intervention within the Authority Teaching Indicator. In addition, Lola held the majority of the responsibility for content during the text-based discussion because she asked the majority of the questions, shifted topics, and evaluated student answers.

**Questions.** During this lesson, Lola asked the majority of the questions. Altogether, she asked twenty-eight questions before, during and after sharing the text. In contrast, the students

asked eight questions. Lola asked different types of questions to serve different purposes in facilitating the discussion. The majority of the questions Lola asked focused on reasoning (10) and adding another perspective (10). The third most frequent type of question (4) used was whole group questions that required the students to provide a choral response. Hence, Lola used questions to guide the content and process of the text-based discussion. Her reasoning and perspective questions guided the content by focusing on certain details in the text. Her choral response questions guided the process by increasing the number of students who responded. Lola also frequently used questioning strategies in combination. The following excerpt demonstrated this.

> Lola: "So let's think about this, my friends. This was a really funny book. Wasn't it, my friends? Just when we thought that the saw was going to save the day and he was going to cut the tree down and everything was going to come down, that's not what Floyd chose to do with it. What did he choose to do with it?"
>
> Student: "Keep throwing it up."
>
> Lola: "And why did it make the kite fall down, Hank?"
>
> Hank: "Because it hit the kite."
>
> Lola: "You think it is because it hit the kite. Erica, can you tell me what you think?"
>
> Erica: "Because there is no more room."

Lola first initiated the discussion with a comprehension question. She shared her assumed ordinary solution of sawing down the tree to get the kite and then asked the realistic fiction solution regarding what the boy did with the saw as a solution. A student responded that the character threw the saw up into the tree. Then, Lola asked another student, Hank, to share his reasoning why the saw was able to get the kite out of the tree. Hank shared his reasoning that the

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saw hit the kite. Next, Lola restated Hank's reasoning and added another student perspective by asking, "Erica, can you tell me what you think?" Erica provided another possibility for the kite falling out of the tree because there was "no more room."

After the reading, to close the lesson and highlight the learning objective of understanding realistic fiction versus fiction, Lola used four whole group questions that required the students to provide a choral response as demonstrated in the following exchange.

Lola: "Can a kite get stuck up in a tree?"

Students (chorally): "Yes"

Lola: "Absolutely. That can happen. Can you possibly throw a shoe up into the tree to try and knock the kite down?"

Students (chorally): "Yes."

Lola: "Can you even throw a second shoe up?"

Students (chorally): "Yes."

Lola: "Would you ever throw a cat up to knock it down?"

Students (choral mixed response): "yes" "no."

Lola voiced over their responses with a loud, long, "nooooo."

In this exchange, Lola gave examples from the text to illustrate how and when the author switched from writing realistic fiction text to fiction. After the opportunity for students to analyze the realistic and fictitious examples provided by Lola during the choral responses, she explicitly explained the difference between the two genres. She stated, "So when Floyd went to that third step of throwing the cat up in the tree that's when this became just fiction and not realistic anymore. Is it starting to decipher for you what is just fiction and what is realistic

fiction?" Thus, Lola used choral responses to assess and clarify the learning objective during this lesson while providing students with an increased opportunity for participation.

**Shifting topics.** Lola shifted topics three times during the lesson. During the read aloud, her questions mainly focused on comprehension and the genre. However, when reading about how the tree became too full as the boy threw up the last object and the kite popped out, she attempted to shift the topic to integrate science content about the water cycle. She wanted the students to make a connection between the water cycle regarding clouds becoming oversaturated during condensation causing precipitation and the tree becoming too full and releasing the kite. After reading, Lola shifted the topic to the students' favorite part of the story.

During the reading, Lola she focused the topic on comprehension and genre. She performed think alouds to guide student comprehension. For example, she read word bubbles and explained who the character was talking to or provided details such as a missing door. In reaction, students interacted with the text by shouting out comments. Some of the student verbal responses to the text were "Uh-oh," giggling, and "what?" These verbal responses indicated the students' engagement with and comprehension of the text. Lola encouraged some of the student responses to text implicit concepts by retorting with comments such as, "This is getting kind of ridiculous, don't you think?" and "It sounds like some inferring is happening. Some predictions are happening." At other times when students shouted out text explicit questions such as "Where is the tree?" and "But what about the other stuff?" Lola nodded her head and continued reading. When students commented on details in the story that made the text fiction such as "How would a tree lift that all?" or "Where did he get that thing (orangutan)?" Lola explicitly commented on the genre by asking, "Is this book fiction or non-fiction?" and making statements such as "Fiction, fiction, it is all make believe, buddy."

The shift of topic from comprehension and the genre to the connection between the water cycle and the kite falling appeared to be inspired by a student's comment. A student, Erica, stated that she believed the kite fell out of the tree when the boy threw up the saw "because there is no more room." Lola then asked the whole group, "Can you think of any other example that would match what Erica said?" This question highlighted Erica's comment. Next, Lola called on a student who did not share another example that matched Erica's thinking. So she stated, "Let's think about what Erica said. It is not that the saw hit the kite and knocked it down. But it is just that the tree, when the saw went up there, the tree was just too full and the tree had to get rid of something and the kite fell down instead. Can you think of any other instances or examples where that happens? Something gets too full and it has to let go of something for there to be space?" Once again, Lola highlighted Erica's comment and encouraged students to share a similar example. After calling on two more students who offered reasoning such as the saw shook the tree and it could all fall down, Lola explicitly asked, "How does it rain friends? Why does it rain, Paris?" Although it is uncertain if Erica herself would have made this connection, Lola shared the similarity between clouds getting too full of water and too many things in the tree.

In contrast to the connection between the water cycle and the tree, the students appeared to be more interested in the saw itself. This is evidence by the questions students asked about the saw regarding if it was dangerous and the size. Thus, the students were thinking realistically about the saw and its use. Lola redirected the students' thinking by shifting the topic back to the realistic fiction genre by highlighting the unrealistic action of the character with the saw because the boy threw the saw up into the tree instead of cutting it down. Hence, she guided students toward thinking about the learning goal regarding the features of realistic genre.

Another shift in topics during the text-based discussion was during the think-pair-share after the reading. Lola stated, "I want you to think about your favorite part of this book? Maybe what is your favorite thing that Floyd threw up there? The funniest? Whatever it is, I want you to turn to your partner and share what it is." In response, students shared their favorite "silly" item that got stuck in the tree such as a hippopotamus and an orangutan. During the lesson, I sat on the floor next to Jair, a non-designated ELL student. Therefore, I was able to hear and record his comments during the think-pair-share. It was interesting to note that while listening in on the think-pair-share between Jair and his English-Only student partner, the two students started to discuss the items that would be noticeable in distinguishing between realistic fiction and fiction.

Jair: "It was impossible to get it to carry all of that stuff."

Student: "It was impossible for it to carry that house."

Jair: "Yeah."

Student: "It is impossible for a little person to carry a house."

During the think-pair-share, the students had an open opportunity to share their favorite part of the story. During this open think-pair-share, it could be assumed that students could go "off topic" and discuss other ideas or thoughts. However, the two students that I was able to listen to during the activity began exploring Lola's topic of distinguishing between realistic fiction and fiction by providing specific examples of what could not occur in real life. Thus, students supported each other in meeting the learning goal of exploring aspects of realistic fiction.

**Evaluating student responses.** Lola evaluated student answers regarding the genre but not their reasoning regarding why the kite eventually fell out of the tree or their favorite parts. For example, after the reading during the discussion about the author shifting from a realistic action to a fictitious one, she loudly voiced "no" over the students when they replied, "yes" to

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throwing a cat up in a tree as a realistic action. In contrast, when students shared their favorite parts, she asked if others if they "agreed" or had "something different" to share. She also solicited them to provide reasoning by asking, "Why was that your favorite part" and "Why did you think that was funny?"

There was only one explicit opportunity for students to evaluate another student's response. This occurred when Lola asked, "Did anyone else agree with Annabelle that that was their favorite part?" Thus, she provided an opportunity for students to agree or disagree with a peer. However, I was able to overhear an independent conversation that occurred between peers that involved a student evaluating a peer's comment. This conversation was independent of the whole group and Lola's instruction because it was not spoken openly for others to hear. Instead, it was shared just between the two students. Lola read that Floyd was able to pick up his newly fallen kite and went back inside to go to bed while all of the objects that he had thrown up in the tree remained stuck. While sitting next to Jair and his English-only speaking partner, I heard the following exchange between the two students about what Floyd had forgotten outside (left stuck in the tree.)

Lola read, "That night, Floyd kept thinking there is something that he is forgetting."

Jair shouted out, "His kite outside."

Another student responded, "There are lots of animals on there."

Jair responded, "Oh yeah."

This exchange between the two students illustrated one student's (Jair) comprehension on the problem of the story, acquiring the kite, but not the new problem the solution created. When Lola read that Floyd felt like he had forgotten something with an illustration of him tucked in bed, Jair immediately assumed it was the kite outside. In response, the other student, responded by

pointing out all of the "animals" still in the tree shown in the next page's illustration of all the things, people, and animals left in the tree. Thus, in this example of peer interaction the students supported each other by evaluating a response and clarifying thinking.

**Levels of Thinking**

I analyzed the learning goals within the lesson by using Costa's levels of Inquiry (2001) to assess the students' opportunities to engage in different levels of thinking. The three lesson goals focused on two different levels of thinking. The overall learning goal was to explore the realistic fiction genre. This goal represented a level two learning goal because the students needed to analyze the text to understand the features of the genre. The lesson's second goal was to encourage students to make a connection to genre and their writing. This was also a level two learning goal because the connection would require students to compare and contrast the features of the genre and their writing. The lesson' third goal was to have her students find some part of the story enjoyable. This was a level one learning goal because the students identified a part of the story. Although, it could be argued that the learning goal was at a higher level because the students had to evaluate which part was their favorite, I consider it level one because the majority of the responses were simply identified or recalled objects that were thrown up into the tree. Thus, two of the three learning goals attempted to engage the students in mid-level thinking and the third learning goals encouraged lower level thinking. Overall, this lesson was semi-supportive of different levels of thinking. It attempted to guide students into low and mid level thinking but did not support higher-level thinking.

Next, to specifically analyze the enacted levels of thinking within the lesson, I used Costa's levels of Inquiry (2001) to examine the twenty-eight questions Lola asked her students. As illustrated in Table 5, the majority of her questions were at the second level, and she also

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asked one level one question and six level three questions. The level one question was text explicit and focused on checking to see if students were able to comprehend the text. To illustrate, she asked, "What did he choose to do with it?" This question asked how the character used the saw. It was a closed question that required a short answer that the boy threw it up in the tree. In contrast, she asked twenty-one level two questions. These questions were text implicit and focused on the genre, reasoning, and favorite parts. For example, "Is this book fiction or non-fiction?" "And why did it make the kite fall down?," "What is your favorite part?," and "Why do you think that was so funny?" Eight of the level two questions were closed and required short or one-word responses. To illustrate, she asked, "Can a kite get stuck up in a tree?"  Thirteen of the level two questions were open ended such as "Can you tell us what you are thinking?" This type of question encouraged more detailed student responses.  The six level three questions were all open-ended. For example, she asked, "Why does it rain?" and "What happens to the clouds?" These types of questions required the students to think beyond the text and apply previous learning and experiences. The majority of these questions occurred during Lola's topic shift to connect the water cycle to the fullness of the tree.

There was not as much variation between the level of questions that Lola explicitly presented to Jose and Jair. Jose was asked one closed level two question that required him to only answer yes or no. It did not quite reach an evaluative status to qualify as a level three nor did it require simple recall to be considered a level one question. The question Lola asked Jose was "Anyone else like the whale part? Jose, yes, no?"  Jose responded, "No." Lola did not follow up to ask him his favorite part or his reasoning for not liking it.

Lola asked Jair two questions during this lesson. First, she asked him what he thought a character was thinking.  The first question was level two because it required Jair to use text

implicit clues to consider the perspective of the character. Next, she asked him to share his favorite part with the group. This was a level two question because by stating his favorite part he was required to think beyond level one which required simple recall to highlight a part of the story that he valued. Jair shared that his favorite part was when the whale was thrown in the tree. Lola did not ask him to share his reasoning. Instead, she connected Jair's comment to another student who also liked that part the best and asked for his reasoning. In conclusion, there was not much variation presented by the opportunities to engage in different levels of thinking posed by the questions Lola asked Jose and Jair. In addition, all three of the questions that she asked Jose and Jair did not technically have only one correct answer and both students were not directly asked to provide their reasoning.

In conclusion, this lesson analysis showed that Lola demonstrated indicators of monologic teaching practices during text-based discussions because she did not share the responsibility for the process and content of the text-based discussion with her students. Although Lola created space for about half of the class to participate, she was the only participant in the discussion who called on students and she asked the majority of the questions. In addition, she designated the majority of topics that were discussed and was the main evaluator of student responses. However, there were instances of opportunity that appeared for Lola and her students to share space to shift topics and evaluate student answers that could possibly be further developed in future lessons. The overall learning goal focused on a level two thinking during this lesson and the majority of the questions that she asked provided opportunities for students to engage in level two thinking. This being said, both of her non-identified ELL students were also asked to respond to at least one question that provided them both with an opportunity to engage in level two thinking.

## LESSON 5: *WILLOW FINDS A WAY*

**Lesson Context**

The fifth lesson of our collaborative intervention used the book, *Willow Finds a Way*, by, Lana Button (2013). As indicated earlier, Lola's professional development goal focused specifically on the Authority Teaching Indicator to explore if and how the students and Lola shared the responsibility for the process and content of the text-based discussion. All three of the ELL students were present during the lesson: Navi, the identified ELL student, and Jose and Jair, the non-identified ELL students. The book is about a little girl who is excited about a classmate's upcoming birthday party that everyone in the class is invited to attend. That is until the birthday girl, Cristobel, started manipulating classmates into only doing what she wants by threatening to un-invite them to her party. The main character, Willow, understands that this behavior is not right and eventually thinks of how to stand up for herself and her classmates as a bystander. Lola chose this book to use as a mentor text to continue building on the students' sense of realistic fiction. In addition, she also wanted the students to notice how authors can write stories about how a character changes and grows during a story. To accomplish this second goal, she read two books that featured Willow as the main character by the same author over a two-day period as lessons four and five of our study together. This is the second lesson or second day of this character study.

**Learning Goals**

Lola explained that she chose these books as mentor texts for the realistic fiction genre because she "wanted to give them something that was truly a realistic fiction that they could connect to… things that hopefully they've had experienced in the classroom before and just so that they can make more of a connection to it." She also felt these books did a good job of

modeling character development regarding "how characters are truly important and how you really need to understand how they change throughout a book to truly understand the book itself." Therefore, she explained her goal was "twofold" to support readers and writers understanding realistic fiction and character development. Lola wanted to focus on character development in addition to realistic fiction due to a student comment during a whole group writing lesson about how as an author "you can love a character so much that you want to write lots of stories about them." During this conversation one of the children, who hadn't started reading chapter books yet, asked, "How do you do that, Mrs. Lola?" Lola realized that students that hadn't been exposed to chapter books were not getting an opportunity to explore the concept of character development, so she wanted to integrate it into an interactive read aloud discussion. Lola wanted to draw the students' attention to how an author uses the same character in a series, who continues to grow in each story and not appear stagnant, instead of just writing "about something fluffy."

Lola attempted to make the author's writing moves explicit to the whole group by sharing how writers follow an arc in the story. This concept was displayed on an anchor chart magnetically attached on the white board next to her read aloud chair close enough so she could touch it during the text-based discussion. The lower left side of the arch was labeled "Beginning" with bullets stating: describe setting of character, dialog between characters, and tell what caused the exciting event. The height of the arch was labeled "Middle" and highlighted with bright yellow stars with bullets asserting: exciting event, huge problem, and emergency. The lower right side of the arch was labeled "End" with bullets emphasizing: problem is solved, lesson was learned, and character's feelings or behavior changes. She felt this arc anchor chart was a "really helpful" tool to support her ELL students. In addition, she consciously reread key parts of the

story to highlight character development. She explained, "Whenever we talked about how she was changing throughout the book, I tried to go back in the book to show that spot and to re-read certain parts of the story that were mentioned to help focus the ELL students' thinking so they were "clued in" to what everyone else was thinking or talking about."

**Additional ELL student learning goal.** Lola had an additional goal for Navi, the designated ELL student, to focus on the narrative flow of a story but she did not have an additional goal for Jose and Jair, her non-identified ELL students. She explained, "When I checked her writing the day before, she was telling things, like just making observations more than having it be like a story. Having it flow, like a story would. So that was kind of my hope for her is that she would see how an everyday event can become a story." Specifically, Lola wanted Navi "to break down her events more and tell the details that led up to it." She shared that Navi's writing sample was about going to the park. Navi basically wrote, "We went to the park. We played. We had fun." Thus, Lola wanted Navi to see how she could inject the smaller moments and build the story with interesting details and narratives such as "So we walked down the street to the park. It was a beautiful day…we heard the birds sing." To support Navi's specific learning goal, Lola disclosed that during the read aloud she made an effort to explicitly point out well-written details in the story to highlight the author's writing moves. She further explained, "I kept going back to say do you see how the author did this? She led up to what happened and that kind of thing."

As an observer of the lesson, I wondered if Lola specifically chose these books because she knew Navi was moving. Lola had commented earlier in our first interview that Navi was shy and both text selections depicted the main character struggling to learn to speak up for herself. I also noticed this concept seemed to be a topic of the discussion with the students. I shared with

Lola that I wondered if it was "one of those like hidden curriculum moments where you were like, go forth, speak your voice." She laughed and responded, "Ah, no. I wasn't thinking that. That's high depth. Oh, no, but that could be. Sure, I'll take it!" I found it interesting that she selected texts for the character study that really celebrated learning to speak up for yourself and others.

**Shared Reflections**

Due to time constraints, Lola watched both lesson videos on her own after school hours. Then, we met the day after her second lesson to discuss her reflections. Lola shared that during these lessons she "purposely" changed two things about her teaching to move toward her professional development goal of shared authority. First, she explicitly "set the purpose right away." Second, she consciously decided to create space to allow the conversation to go where the children "took it when they noticed different things."

Lola shared that she intentionally changed the way she introduced the text-based discussion because we had talked about explicitly stating her learning goal at the beginning of the lesson to help focus the students' thinking. Lola explained that she felt " like, I'm just going to do it. I'm going to tell them what I want them to get out of this by the end so they can think about it." She reflected that she explicitly stated, "I want you to really look at the character and look at how she's changing from the beginning to the end and what things cause her to change." She believed that this teaching move helped the discussion to be "so much better" because the students "clued in on what I was looking for" and she "didn't have to like dig and dig and dig." Although, she did not give an example, she did explain that she assumed that her decision to explicitly state the learning goal of the lesson seemed to provide the whole group with a conscious "focal point to go to" instead of attempting to share random thoughts.

Another specific change to Lola's teaching was a decision to attempt to share the content of the discussion with her students. She wanted to "let the kids lead the discussion in the sense that if someone says something or someone notices something, I'm going to go with it." Lola felt that on occasion her preplanning of page-by-page questions and activities thwarted her ability to be responsive to the students' initiated conversation starters. Lola cited the example of her non-designated ELL student Jose saying, "Wow" at the end of the story when the character, Willow, spoke up for herself. Lola found this to be an important moment for the whole group text-based discussion because "a kid who normally doesn't say much, he said something and he clued in and keyed in on something." Therefore, she wanted the group to "talk about it" and as a teacher she wanted to "take the time to talk about it" because "if he's feeling that way, then hopefully the other kids were, too." She noticed that Jose "had a hard time explaining why it was a wow moment for him but the other kids got it and they could like jump in and join in on the conversation." Thus, Lola noticed an opportunity to share the content of the discussion with her students and also provide space for her students to build off of each other. However, Lola did feel it was challenging to share the content with her students. She explained, "I wanted to do a lot more talking today but I, mentally had to tell myself, it's their opportunity. We just have to let it go. Like just reinforce it here and there but just let it go." Hence, she had to mentally affirm her professional goal during the text-based discussion with her students to remind herself to share the responsibility of the content.

Lola shared that while providing an opportunity to share the content of the discussion with her students and space for her students to speak to each other, she was "still able to" meet her learning goals with her students. She evaluated the students "were still able to understand that the character was changing and to understand all the steps that led up to her changing and

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how the big ta da moment at the end really changed who she was" through a text-based

discussion. Lola's repeated use of "still able to" regarding the students' meeting her learning

goals for the lesson, might indicate her changing or growing acknowledgement of a different yet

effective approach to enacting a lesson and impact on student learning.

Lola shared that she was concerned with her students' exposure to different perspectives.

She felt that they needed more opportunity to develop the social skills to negotiate perspectives

during discussions. She stated, "They're so used to being in their own little world. Like we grew

up playing board games and playing outside with our friends and, you know, arguing about who

wanted to jump in the jump rope first. They don't do that anymore because they're so into their

own electronics that they don't have that." Therefore, she felt it was important for students to

gain exposure and practice negotiating different perspectives during a text-based discussion. She

held a vision to provide these types of dynamics in a read aloud setting through discussion to

provide an opportunity for the students "to learn how to deal with" disagreement and negotiation.

**Identified challenges.** Lola shared that she felt encouraged that the previous text-based

discussion "went so well" and she thought her students "could handle" participating in a

discussion so she was willing to take a risk and share her authority with her students. She

explained, "In my mind, I was just like, I'm going to step back and I'm just going to read the

story and have them discuss it at the end." However, Lola found it challenging to facilitate this

lesson's text-based discussions due to student behavior. One change she made was allowing the

students to sit next to whoever they wanted instead of sitting with their reading partner. This

resulted in some off-task behavior such as talking and giggling. Due to some challenging student

behavior, Lola reflected, "I guess I was just ready to just hand it off to them completely and it

just, clearly, I need to like take steps back." She felt her students' off-task behavior impacted the

class' ability to have a text-based discussion. For example, Lola shared, "Halfway through today's discussion, I was like, oh, my god. They're antsy."

Lola found it challenging to negotiate behavior management while trying to share authority with her students. She shared, "I think behavior management wise, it's easier when the teacher's in charge because she can call on anyone at any moment she wants an answer." Lola believes this teaching strategy can help improve student behavior because it holds all students accountable for expressing their learning. She also worried that sharing the process of the discussion with the students would result in less student participation. For example, she was concerned that if she shared the responsibility of process with her students they might assume an "I'm not going to raise my hand so they won't call on me" stance and avoid sharing. She also believed that sharing the responsibility of process would make it harder to "include kids who won't naturally include themselves" due to shyness or lack of interest in participating. Lola wanted the authority to tell all students, "I asked you all to do this. You should have something to share." Thus, she felt that her control on the process of the discussion created an increase in student participation and she was concerned that if she released it student learning would possibly suffer.

One of the challenges that Lola shared about using a book series to show the author's continued development of a character with a follow-up book was the timing of the follow up lesson. The lessons were two to three days apart because of scheduling conflicts. Due to the spacing of the lessons, Lola was interested to learn if they would "remember the story and remember how Willow had changed in the first book and how she changed, if she's changing, in the second one." Lola shared that her students were successful in noticing the changes in the character development. She believed the books provided a "good discussion" because she "liked

how they were starting to draw similarities between the book and themselves." She felt she had to be cognizant about the text topic of speaking up for yourself and others because one of her students was a non-speaker in four-year-old Kindergarten and the first part of five –year-old Kindergarten in prior years. This made her "hesitant" to use the books because she "didn't want to make him feel like on the spot." During the read aloud, she heard a few students comment, "Hey, that's like what Tony was like." She thought, "Oh, my god, please don't take it there. You know. But they didn't, and they kind of kept it true to Willow and the story, which was good." However, Lola did admit to "hoping" that Tony would be inspired by the text to realize it is important to "speak my mind" because she felt that even though he isn't silent anymore, he is very quiet and in the background taking everything in. For example, if the other kids want to go get something in their backpacks, they will just walk out the door and go. However, Tony will come up and say, "Ms. Lola, I kind of forgot something. Can I, can I go get it?" Lola felt that although he now spoke in class, she was still "breaking him into" feeling comfortable and confident in the classroom setting.

**ELL students.** Although Lola believed moving toward her professional development goal was "going well," she admitted that it was also a struggle. She explained that facilitating a text-based discussion was "hard for the teacher because you truly have to play a different role. You know, it really is listening to your kids more and really not just, not just listening to them but hearing what they have to say." Lola expanded that listening and hearing students also included a need to notice small moments in the discussion that highlight student engagement and thinking. She said, "I'm noticing that my little Jose, he may not, he's not necessarily speaking up more but he's paying more attention" based on a comment that he made. She thought that Jose was paying more attention because there was a little bit of freedom during the discussions due to

the fact that she wasn't the only one asking questions. She shared that she thinks providing an

opportunity for students to ask questions is especially important for ELL students because "they

have questions but they're afraid to ask. And, or they're afraid to, that they won't understand the

answer. You know, they just don't want to stick out, to be the only one asking a question." She

explained a context that invites everyone to participate and provides an opportunity to ask

questions, if they want to, might help ELL students to not feel "alienated" or "spotlighted." She

reflected that sometimes ELL students "ask the best questions" because "they look at it from a

different viewpoint than all the other kids."

**Self-Identified Professional Learning**

While reflecting on her professional learning, Lola shared her insights on the changes in

her perception regarding her use of text-based discussions in her classroom. Lola has always

used texts as a part a mini lesson or as a "time killer because we've got 15 minutes until we do

something" but she now felt that she was incorporating text-based discussions to better facilitate

student learning. She joked about her new perception by stating, "This sounds just ridiculous but

the more planning you do, the better results you get. Like seriously, seriously. It's like ta da!"

Her increased planning enabled her to support and integrate speaking, reading, and writing

during a read aloud. She explained, "It can all be related and I'm realizing, too, that it just has to

happen sometime during the day like it doesn't have to happen at writing for the kids to be

connected to it and to understand that it has to do with their writing." Lola believed that

integrating multiple literacy practices into a text-based discussion could help reinforce learning

literacy concepts in a positive way. She was grateful for being "given a little bit more leeway this

year" by her new administrator in contrast to feeling "stuck" in a scheduled pacing guide. She

explained, "We used to always have to be, when the administrator walked through at 10, you had

to be doing…your mini (lesson) and everyone had to be on the same page." Instead, her new administrator encouraged the teachers to experiment with their own classroom schedules. She wanted the teachers to provide all of the components of literacy such as mini-lessons, shared writing, and shared reading but she wanted them to decide how to enact them. Lola has found "that with a little bit more flexibility, you can do more meaningful things" such as integrate literacy concepts throughout your day based on student learning needs.

**Recommendations During the Debrief**

During our debriefing interview, I made two recommendations to Lola to support her in refining her ability to facilitate a whole group text-based discussion in alignment with her professional development goal. First, I reminded her of the possible student roles (e.g., Inquisitor, Facilitator of Interaction, Facilitator of Interpretation, Respondent, Evaluator) that we had previously discussed. The purpose of reviewing these student roles was to affirm possible ways to share the responsibility of the process and content of the discussion between Lola and her students. I knew Lola had not shared or modeled these roles with her students. Due to Lola's concerns about stepping back and relinquishing authority, I suggested that she look at the possible student roles that may occur during discussions and pick one role to make explicit as a learning goal for the students. I recommended modeling the role through think alouds and supporting the students with guided practice to help them understand how the role looks and sounds. By introducing the role and making the expectations explicit, Lola could encourage the new behavior norms needed for a text-based discussion and also encourage the students to take ownership of their learning during the discussion. Lola responded, "Yeah, partway through the discussion today, I was like I should have an anchor chart" with responses that support possible student roles "and now I'm realizing I've got to focus it in for them." I agreed that an anchor

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chart would be great with some sentence starters or frames to support the students to participate in the discussion.

Another suggestion that I made to encourage the new norms for a text-based discussion was developing hand signals as a way to non-verbally engage students in the discussion. Some of these hand signals can show support for a student struggling to express their idea by rolling your arms. Students can make an "X" with their arms or fingers to show disagreement with another student's statement or idea or show thumbs up if they agree. This classroom discussion strategy could provide more student participation and insight into student thinking. I knew that Lola used hand signals for some of her classroom routines such as needing to use the restroom so I thought this strategy would support and expand her current teaching practice.

**Serving ELL Students**

As in the previous lesson, Lola appeared to make progress toward four of the six principles for teaching ELL students (McIntyre, 2010). Once again, she implemented rigorous teaching and curriculum that engaged the students in a joint productivity activity by carefully planning the instructional conversation. The lesson supported the principle of curricular connection because students the content was interesting to the students. The principle of content learning goal reinforced the writing unit of realistic fiction and character development. However, as in the previous lesson analysis, she did not create an additional language learning goal or address the principle of family involvement during the lesson. Therefore, Lola continued to make progress toward four of the six principles for teaching ELL students during this lesson.

Lola provided four of the six recommended instructional modifications instructional modifications to support ELL students during this lesson (Goldenberg, 2010). Once again, Lola provided explicit interactive instruction and learning opportunities for her ELL students to

interact with peers. This being said, she improved her explicit instruction by directly stating her learning goal at the beginning of the lesson. As in the previously analyzed lesson, she provided two forms of input: oral (teacher and peer comments) and visual (picture cues in the text). She supported her ELL students to orally and mentally synthesize the text by attempting to share the content of the discussion by following up of points of interest identified by the students. Once again, Lola provided explicit content instruction but did not plan for or implement EOLD instruction or vocabulary experiences in this lesson. Thus, to better support the linguistic needs of her ELL students, Lola could have provided EOLD and vocabulary experiences in this lesson.

## LESSON 5: ANALYSIS

Lola continued to work on her self-selected professional development goal to increase her ability to move towards a dialogic teaching stance represented within the Authority teaching indicator (Reznitskaya, 2012). Therefore, similar to my analysis of the second lesson that took place during our work together, my lesson analysis focused specifically on the authority teaching indicator to explore if and how Lola created space for her students to participate. I specifically explored how the students and Lola shared the responsibility for the process and content of the text-based discussion during this lesson by examining who called on students, asked the majority of the questions, shifted topics, and evaluated student answers to see if there were any differences or similarities between the previous analyzed lesson and this one.

**Process Responsibility**

During this lesson, Lola held the main responsibility for the process of the text-based discussion as evidenced by the fact that, once again, she was the only participant that actively called on students to share during the lesson. She verbally called on them by name to respond or she non-verbally indicated their turn to speak during the discussion by pointing, nodding, or

looking directly at them. Lola specifically called on thirteen students by name during the lesson. This being said, I estimate that Lola actively engaged just over half of the students to participate in the discussion. Two students were called on multiple times. These students were Debbie (three turns) and Ben (four turns). Lola also specifically called on two of the ELL students during the lesson by name, Navi, designated, and Jair, non-designated. The other non-designated ELL student's name, Jose, was not mentioned during the lesson. Due to the fact that the video camera did not capture images of the students in compliance with IRB restrictions, it is unknown if Jose was present for the lesson. In addition, the students who were called upon with non-verbal gestures could not be tallied. In conclusion, although it appeared that even though Lola did not share the responsibility of the process of the text-based discussion with her students, she did attempt to include over half of the students in the text-based discussion.

Since the process of the text-based discussion was not equally shared between Lola and her students as evidence by the fact that students did not call on each other or directly ask each other questions to clarify shared ideas, this continued to be an area that Lola could improve during the collaborative intervention within the DIT Authority Teaching Indicator. It should be mentioned that Lola did not follow up on some of my recommendations to teach her students their possible roles to expand how they participated in the discussion or alternative ways to participate in the discussion instead of raising their hand to be called upon by her. Nevertheless, there were attempts by students who were very motivated to share to self-advocate by attempting to get Lola's attention. Lola acknowledged two of these students' efforts by making comments such as "Colt, now you can talk." and "Ben, you are dying to share something. Go ahead." Lola accompanied these comments with non-verbal actions, for instance a smile and a wave of the

hand to encourage the students. These two examples might demonstrate an opening for negotiation in responsibility of process between Lola and her students.

**Content Responsibility**

Lola also continued to hold the majority of the responsibility for content during the text-based discussion because she asked the majority of the questions, shifted topics, and evaluated student answers.

**Questions.** Lola asked the majority of the questions. Altogether, she asked fifty-five questions before, during and after sharing the text. In contrast, the students asked two questions. One student asked a question to clarify which character Lola was asking her about. Another student, after the discussion ended and my camera was turned off, asked, "What did she find a way to do?" This concept of Willow finding her way was a foundational piece of the book regarding the lessons that the characters learned. Therefore, this question may have indicated that the student did not fully comprehend the text. Lola reflected on the second student's question by saying it inspired, "a good discussion because then the other kids could share their understanding of the book. I'm like, okay, that's fine. And he never participates. So it was like a good thing. It was a good thing for him to just ask." Therefore, it appears that Lola was open to students bringing in their own ideas about the story through their questions because she revisited the concept and continued the discussion after she had closed the lesson in response to a student's lingering question.

During this text-based discussion, Lola asked different types of questions to serve different purposes in facilitating the discussion. The majority of the questions (19) Lola asked during the lesson focused on comprehension. This may be due to the fact that it is important for the teacher to check-in with students to assess their general level of comprehension and

understanding as a foundation before moving on to higher level thinking such as providing reasoning and real world connections. These questions tended to be text explicit (directly answered from the text) or text implicit (inferring might be needed). The second most frequent type of question (13) used was requesting students to explain their reasoning. She used these questions to make the student thinking explicit because the questions encouraged students to cite evidence from the text, personal experience, or inferences. Lola often used these two questioning strategies in combination during the lesson. For example, this occurs in the following exchange.

> Lola: Ivan what is Cristobel doing right now?
>
> Ivan: Um, being rude.
>
> Lola: She is being rude (nods head). I love how you say that. Why is she being rude?
>
> Ivan: Because, she um, like saying, you have to come over here and like play with me if you want to be at my birthday party.
>
> Lola: How is that rude (scrunches face and shakes her head)?
>
> Ivan: Because you don't have to play with the birthday girl or boy.

Lola's first question, "Ivan, what is Cristobel doing right now?" focused on text explicit comprehension regarding the characters actions. By asking, "Why is she being rude?", Lola requested his reasoning for using the description "being rude." Ivan responded by providing specific evidence from the text by summarizing a quote from Cristobel that he felt illustrated her being rude. Lola continued to request reasoning by asking him to explain "how" his example illustrated a character's actions as rude. This time, Ivan was required to think beyond what was explicitly stated in the text and share his perception that children aren't required to play with other children just because it is their birthday.

The third most frequently used questioning strategy used by Lola during this lesson was posing questions to the whole group. This questioning strategy increased student participation and engagement by providing an opportunity for all students to share at the same time. This questioning strategy was used nine times during this lesson. The group questions manifested in non-verbal, choral, and individual students responses. Lola asked for a non-verbal response from students one time during the lesson regarding if they had ever had a similar experience to the characters in the story. In this, instance students were to give a "thumbs up" as the non-verbal response to indicate that "yes" they had a similar experience. Lola asked six questions that required students to respond chorally. In the instance of choral responses, the majority of students shouted out their responses to the question. These shout outs tended to be short one-word responses and were used to demonstrate whole group consensus or discord. The following transcript illustrated this concept and use.

Lola: Do you like being around people who are rude?

Students chorally respond: No

Lola: If you are left by yourself, is that any fun?

Students chorally respond: No

Lola: So in this story, would you think that Willow is the main character or Cristobel is the main character?

There is a mixed choral student response stating both names: Willow Cristobel

Lola: Maybe two people were the main character?

Students chorally respond: Two.

In response to the first two questions that Lola asked, the students demonstrated an overwhelming agreement regarding social expectations and norms based on their personal

experiences. Next, when Lola asked who was the main character in the story, students displayed confusion through a varied choral response of stating both names. This confusion was made explicit through an inconsistent choral response. The inconsistent response drew attention to the learning concept that there could possibly be two main characters.  The final way that Lola provided opportunities for all students to respond at once was through the use of think-pair-shares. Lola used questions posed to the whole group and directed students to share their responses with a partner twice during the lesson. This questioning strategy provided an opening for all students to share their individual insights. Moreover, there was a possible opportunity for students to shift topics with their partner if they desired in a smaller, less intimidating context instead of the whole group context.  These two strategies created space for student participation and held potential for ways for Lola to continue to develop her ability to share the responsibility of the content of the text-based discussion.

**Highlighting and shifting topics.**  As the teacher, Lola made the learning goals explicit when introducing the lesson. In addition, she asked the majority of the questions which focused on the learning goals. Therefore, she identified and facilitated the main topic presented in the lesson. However, she also acknowledged student insights regarding the topic. One way that she accomplished this was by highlighting student comments during the text-based discussion. In order, to highlight student comments, she directed all students' attention to the comment. This is demonstrated in the following transcript.

Lola: Ben, what is happening now?

Ben:  I think that Willow is kind of sad about what she has done. So she is going to the end of the line to be with Cristobel and let her in front.

Lola: Let's think about what Ben said. He said the Willow feels bad for what she did and she is going to the end of the line to let Cristobel be in front of her. Why would Willow

feel bad about what she did? Think about how Cristobel treated the other kids. Why would Willow feel bad, Ben?

Ben:  Because no one is going to her birthday.

Lola: Ok say that again.

Ben:  Because no one is going to her birthday.

After a think-pair-share, Lola asked one student, Ben, to share what happened in the text. Ben responded that Willow feels "sad" about hurting Cristobel's feelings when she stood up for herself and now is attempting to perform a positive action to make Cristobel feel better. First, Lola highlighted his statement by saying, "Let's think about what Ben said." Next, she once again highlighted his comment by summarizing his statement and followed up with a question asking for his reasoning or evidence for his statement. After Ben gave his reasoning, Lola highlighted his reasoning by asking him to repeat his statement. Through this interaction, Lola guided the discussion to meet the learning objective but she also created space for and affirmed students' voice, comments, and reasoning as an important part of the discussion.

In addition, during her closing of the lesson, Lola explicitly acknowledged appreciation for the students' shift in topics in her closing statement of the lesson. She stated, "Along the way, I heard some really good discussions that didn't really have to do with what I had hoped you would get out of the story. I heard some inferring and some predicting about what was going to come next. I also heard some good connections." This acknowledgement was important because it affirmed space for students to share thoughts they deemed important about the text. This acknowledgment perhaps encouraged a student to ask his lingering question, "What did she find a way to do?" after the lesson was completed. The fact that Lola reengaged the class in the discussion after closing the lesson based on a student question demonstrated that she was open to students shifting topics.

**Evaluating student responses.** Lola held the main responsibility for evaluating student responses but there were instances where she encouraged peer evaluation. During this lesson, she evaluated and responded to correct and incorrect student responses differently. She typically evaluated and responded to correct responses in two ways. First, she affirmed the answer neutrally by saying "ok", "yup" or "yeah." Second, she occasionally restated the students' correct responses. As mentioned earlier, this teaching move might have been used to highlight student voice during the discussion. When, she assessed a student's response as incorrect, she used questions to guide the student's thinking. This following exchange from the lesson illustrates this teaching move.

> After reading that Willow crossed her own name off of the birthday invite list, and that Jane was also about to cross of her name, Lola asked, "What just happened? Turn and share with your partner (student talking). Three-Two-One. Navi, share with us what you thought."
>
> Navi: Willow crossed off Cristobel's name so that she would know the same sadness to everyone.
>
> Lola: I love what you said there at the end. But, let's think about the list. Who does the list belong to?
>
> Navi: Cristobel.
>
> Lola: It's Cristobel's. So is Willow crossing off Cristobel's name or..
>
> Navi: Her own name
>
> Lola: Her name. Why would Willow cross off her name? I love what you said. What does Navi mean by Willow wants Cristobel to learn the same sadness that everyone else feels, Jair?
>
> Jair: Navi means if Cristobel does a mean thing like you can't come to my party if you don't this, that's a little bit rude. So Willow is taking the pink paper and crossing off her name and then it is going to other people so if people don't want to go to her party because then Cristobel will have no one at her party because she has to learn a lesson.
>
> Lola: And what's that lesson again? What do you think that lesson is?

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Jair:  If you be rude, then no one will come to you.

In this example, Lola asked the whole group a comprehension question about what just happened in the book. By using a think-pair-share, she provided the students with an opportunity to practice verbally sharing with a peer before responding in the whole group context. Then, she called on her designated ELL student, Navi. When Navi responded, she incorrectly stated that Willow had crossed out Cristobel's name on the birthday invite list. Lola affirmed her reasoning by stating, "I love what you said there at the end." Then, she guided Navi's thinking by asking questions to clarify who the list belonged to and which name Willow crossed off.  Next, she called on Jair, a non-designated ELL student, to expand on Navi's reasoning. Jair responded by linking to another student's earlier comment about Cristobel's behavior as "rude." Then, he gave a specific example from the text as evidence of her rudeness to expand on Navi's idea that Willow was trying to teach Cristobel a lesson. Finally, Lola used a question to focus on the connection between Navi and Jair's statement regarding the lesson Cristobel must learn.

The final step of using a question to focus on the connection between Navi and Jair's rewording and interpretation of the lesson that Cristobel must learn is important because it created space for multiple perspectives and alternative ways of expressing those perspectives. This space created an opening for peer evaluation. Lola encouraged and requested peer evaluation three times during the lesson. The following transcript excerpt captured Lola encouraging peer evaluation.

Lola: Debbie just said that Willow learned part of the same lesson that Cristobel learned. Why? (Points to a student.)

Student:  Because maybe her birthday was coming up soon and she was thinking like maybe like Cristobel. Then, she thought no one would play with me. She learned just like if they are on the birthday list keep 'em on there.

Lola:  Ben, what do you think about that?

Ben:  I agree with her.

Lola:  Ok, Tell me why.

Ben:  Ok, I don't agree.

Lola:  That's ok. Tell me why.

Ben:  I think that she had to step up for herself but she had to learn how to step up for herself.

Lola:  Would you agree with that? That Willow had to learn how to step up for herself?

Students (choral response):  yes

First, Lola specifically asked one student, Ben, what he thought about another student's response. At first, Ben stated he agreed with the other student. When Lola asked Ben to share his reasoning, he changed his stance. This time when Lola asked him to share his reasoning, he was able to share. In response, Lola asked the whole group if they agreed with Ben's statement and the students chorally responded yes. This exchange was interesting because it provided an individual student and the whole class an opportunity to practice assessing each other's responses by agreeing or disagreeing in an appropriate way for a classroom discussion. This being said, the first student's response was not explicitly correct or incorrect as she was responding to Lola's request to hypothesize why another student thought Willow and Cristobel had learned the same lesson. However, Ben's response only focused on Willow's lesson, not on the similarity between the two character's lessons. Thus, it can be considered that Lola's purpose for her questions during this excerpt was to facilitate students assessing each other's responses by agreeing and disagreeing.

**Levels of Thinking**

Lola engaged students in a variety of levels of thinking during this lesson. First, I used the Levels of Inquiry to analyze the lesson's learning goal (Costa, 2001). In general, her learning goal to use a mentor text to exemplify realistic fiction and character development was a mid-level thinking task that required a guided analysis of the author's moves. However, her desired outcome of having the students apply their learning during writing to create realistic fiction and character development was a higher level learning goal. Thus, this lesson's learning goal was supportive of different levels of thinking.

Next, I used Costa's levels of Inquiry (2001) to examine the fifty-five questions Lola asked her students to specifically analyze the enacted opportunities for students to engage in different levels of thinking within the lesson, as shown in Table 6. Lola asked thirteen level one questions. These questions were text explicit and mainly focused on checking to see if students were able to comprehend the text. She asked twenty-four level two questions. These questions were text implicit and the majority of these questions were asked as Lola facilitated the student discussion interpreting the lesson that each character learned during the text. Finally, Lola asked eighteen level three questions. These questions required students to go beyond the text. The majority of these questions required students to engage with the text on a personal level as they evaluated the characters' actions. For example, some of the level three questions asked whether the students agreed or disagreed if the character had learned the agreed upon lesson. In general, Lola asked questions that provided her students to engage in a variety of levels of thinking. Although the majority of her questions focused on level two thinking, the questions were more equally distributed across the three levels in this lesson in comparison to the previously analyzed lesson.

When examining the level of questions that Lola explicitly presented to Navi and Jair, there is not as much variation between the levels. Navi was asked three level one questions that all focused on her comprehension of the text. The first level one question was used to monitor Navi's comprehension and the following two level one questions were to clarify a misunderstanding in Navi's response. However, it should be noted that Navi provided reasoning in her response without being prompted by Lola. Lola highlighted her reasoning by affirming it and asking another student to expand on Navi's comment. In this instance, this student was Jair. Jair was asked to expand on Navi's response regarding what lesson Willow wanted Cristobel to learn. This was a level two question that required text implicit knowledge. By responding to the first level two question with a plausible response, Jair had demonstrated his comprehension of the text. It was interesting to note that Lola returned to him with the same question later in the discussion. It appears that this questioning move highlighted Jair's response to the other students but did not challenge his level of thinking because Jair was asked the same level two question twice but in different ways. Thus, Lola did not individually ask Navi and Jair a variety of questioning levels during this lesson. Navi's questions only focused on level one and Jair's questions only focused on level two. This focused level of questions contrasts with the variety of levels of questions generally asked during the lesson. Hence, Navi and Jair's opportunity to respond to questions that varied in levels of thinking was during group questions through choral response but not individually.

In conclusion, this lesson analysis showed that Lola continued to demonstrate indicators of monologic teaching practices regarding Authority Indicator as shown on the DIT during text-based discussions because she engaged in very limited sharing of the responsibility for the process and content of the text-based discussion with her students. Although Lola once again

created space for just over half of the class to participate, she was the only participant in the discussion who called on students and she asked the majority of the questions. It is important to note that she used her questions for a variety of purposes, which included creating space for student participation such as adding additional perspectives, group questions, highlighting a student comment or question, and peer evaluation. In addition, although she designated the majority of topics that were discussed, she verbally acknowledged the students' interest in different topics. Thus, there was an increase of instances of opportunity for Lola and her students to share space to shift topics and evaluate student answers that were not easily captured within the DIT Authority Teaching Indicators. Similar to the first lesson analyzed (lesson 2), the overall learning goal focused on level two thinking during this lesson and also the majority of the questions that she asked provided opportunities for students to engage in level two thinking. However, her future intentions of having students apply their learning of the genre features during writing increased the students' opportunity to engage with different levels of thinking. In addition, the questions she asked during the lesson were more equally distributed across the levels of thinking. This being said, Navi, her identified ELL student, and Jair, her non-identified ELL students did not appear to have an opportunity to actively engage in such a variety of levels of thinking because Navi was asked three level one questions and Jair was asked two level two questions. However, they were encouraged to engage in different levels of thinking by listening to other students respond to questions and possibly participating in the group questions.

### LESSON 8: *I'M A FROG*

**Lesson Context**

The eighth lesson of our collaborative intervention used the book, *I'm a Frog*, by, Mo Williams (2013). Lola continued to focus on her professional development goal to transform

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from a monologic teaching practice toward a dialogic stance as designated by the DIT Authority

Teaching Indicator. Thus, we continued to explore if and how the students and Lola shared the

responsibility for the process and content of the text-based discussion. Two of the ELL students

were present during the lesson: Jose and Jair, the non-identified ELL students. Navi, the

identified ELL student, moved and was no longer in attendance. In the book two friends, Piggy

and Gerald, learned how to play pretend together. First, Piggy was excited to show Gerald that

he was pretending to be a frog. Then, Gerald became very worried that Piggy was really a frog

and that he might turn into one too. Once Piggy explained that he was only pretending, he

wanted Gerald to pretend he was a frog as well. Gerald refused and Piggy was upset until Gerald

explained he couldn't pretend to be a frog because he wanted to pretend to be a cow. Finally,

they played pretend happily together. Lola chose this book to use as a mentor text to continue

building on the students' sense of how characters change and grow during a story. The students

were fans of Mo Williams and were familiar with the characters, Piggy and Gerald.

**Learning Goals**

The specific learning goal for this lesson regarding how characters change and grow

during a story focused on "how a character gives information through words, but also implied

messages." These implied messages were shared by the author through visual cues in the

illustrations such as characters' facial expressions representing emotions and typesetting or text

font such as bold all capital words to indicate yelling. Lola felt this book was "perfect" for

"inferring and really thinking" because "Mo Williams tends to know how much to give and how

much to let readers think about it on their own."  Lola also felt this book presented an

opportunity for students to synthesize first grade novice literacy skills. She shared that a concern

with a "book that doesn't have very many words is the kids who totally get it, like who know

how to synthesize and use everything that we'd worked on this year, really get the story. (However) The kids who are struggling with that miss out on a lot." Therefore, she wanted students to support each other in a whole group setting to synthesize the explicit and implicit messages shared by the author and illustrator.

**Additional ELL student learning goal.** Lola believed that her ELL students would benefit from focusing on the learning goal of "interpretation of social cues" such as "implied feelings." As mentioned earlier, the book did not have a lot of words. Instead, much of the story is told through the emotionally representative illustrations and the use of typesetting to express meaning. For example, when Gerald found out how long Piggy had been a frog, his speech bubble stating, "five minutes ago" was written in bold all capital letters to emphasize his shock and surprise as well as yelling. In addition, as Gerald became more nervous about possibly becoming a frog himself, each consecutive illustration contained more perspiration on his forehead. To help her ELL students understand implied messages or emotions, Lola planned to allow for extra turn and talk opportunities for students to discuss what they are noticing in the illustrations and typesetting.

To support her ELL students to interpret the implicit messages shown in the illustrations and type setting, Lola used the Elmo to enlarge and project the book. This allowed all of the students to see the visual cues regarding how the characters were feeling and the typesetting. It is unclear if or how Lola had previously introduced or taught the concept of emotional literacy. Emotional literacy is the developed ability to identify and understand emotions in yourself and others. However, she did share that she had talked about typesetting during writer's workshop with her students "and they've seen it before." She explained, "We've talked about different types of print (or font), what they mean and all of that so I would hope that they would have

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picked up on that." While reading the text, to make the meaning of the use of specific typesetting very clear for her students, she explicitly changed her voice in a dramatic way to match the emotion of the font. For example, when she read Gerald's shocked exclamation of "five minutes ago" she yelled quite loudly.

**Shared Reflections**

Lola and I debriefed together right after her lesson. Due to time constraints, we did not have an opportunity to view and discuss the video of her lesson together as we debriefed. In addition, Lola did not view the lesson by herself before we debriefed. When I asked her if the lesson went as planned, she stated, "No, not at all. My gosh, that was a rough one today…Oh, it was a struggle today." Lola did not feel the majority of the students were able to meet the lesson's learning goal. She felt some of her students "were lost" because they were unable to answer her questions and there were "just certain kids answering repeatedly." Lola felt this lesson went "rough" and was a "struggle," so her positive comments were not focused on today's lesson. Instead, she took a more general approach regarding what she noticed as positive changes in student behavior and learning.

During that day's lesson, Lola felt only a "couple" of students had been successful in meeting the learning goal. For example, after much prompting by Lola, one student was able to quickly summarize Piggy's change of emotions for the whole group. However, overall she felt her attempts to facilitate interactive text-based discussions had benefited her students. She felt that since the start of her participation in this study, "as a whole, everyone has kind of grown a little bit more" because they are "thinking about stories a little bit more." For example, one unexpected learning success or area of general growth that she also noticed with her students during their independent reading was an overall positive increase in fluency and expression. In

order for students to improve their fluency and expression, she knew it was important for students to hear fluent readers so she used digital literacy support such as a book flix or a tumble book video during snack time. She shared that she assumed watching the book videos would provide ample exposure to fluent and expressive readers for students to obtain the skill themselves. Due to the student increase in fluency and expression in correlation to her increased enactment of reading a book herself to the whole group, she expressed that she now believed it is "important" for students "to hear an actual live person reading all the time."

**Identified challenges.** Lola felt that the lesson was a struggle due to off-task student behavior. She felt she struggled with behavior management because the students were caught up in "the fun" and found it difficult to focus on the content of the text. When she told the students that she was going to share a Mo Williams book, the students immediately started cheering and she felt she "wasn't able to reel it back in." One reason she may have struggled with the behavior management was her proximity to the students. To illustrate, while reading, she displayed the book on the Elmo. The Elmo was positioned to the side of the carpet where the students sat. In addition, for the students to see where the Elmo projected the book on the screen, they could not face Lola. Thus, students had to turn their heads, bodies, and attention between the screen and their teacher while listening to the text and participating in the discussion.  Lola shared that although she wanted and needed the students to see the illustrations and typesetting, the distance between her and the students was concerning. She explained, "I'm not within the group and because, really, their eyes are facing forward and I'm off to the side. They don't see me." As a seasoned teacher, Lola was accustomed to influencing student behavior with a stern look. She found her positioning to the side "hard" because it removed her from the students' line of vision so the students were not as easily redirected toward positive behavior by her "evil eyes" or

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"teacher eyes." Lola felt a tension between providing the visual support the students needed while managing appropriate behavior expectations. She stated, "Having them see the book clearly is important, too…It's always a struggle. And one day when something works, the next day it doesn't. Today, me not being right there did not help."

**ELL students.**  The first overall positive change that she shared was that she felt both of her non-designated ELL students "have really been stepping up in the read alouds and in the discussion."  She noticed that when she now read with Jair one-on-one, his comments demonstrated a growth in his ability to talk about a book. Specifically, she noticed him commenting on topics and in a similar manner that was modeled during the whole group text-based discussions. She also noticed that Jose appeared more "aware and more cognizant and is sharing more and more." Similar to Jair, Lola noticed that Jose was also incorporating more of the whole group discussion literature concepts into his one-on-one work. Jose's increased awareness, cognizance, and sharing allowed Lola to better assess his learning. She shared, "You know, I always wondered if he knew what a character was, to be honest. But he's able to talk about them and able to talk about how they're changing." She considered her non-designated ELL students' growth in ability to talk about books as one of her "successes."

**Self-Identified Professional Learning**

As a means of moving towards a dialogic stance as indicated by the DIT Authority Teaching Indicator, Lola decided to focus on developing her ability to share one specific possible role, facilitator of interpretation (Almasi, 1996) with her students during the lesson. As facilitator of interpretation in a dialogic context, individuals might restate or question unclear comments, share a connection to their own experience in order to assist understanding, compare and contrast characters, or discuss the author's style and craft. Lola stated that during the lesson she planned

on asking students to clarify their answers. This meant that, "instead of interpreting student responses" herself by restating their ideas, she would "have students interpret each other's responses." Lola stated that she felt "a deficit" of her professional development of moving from a monologic toward a dialogic teaching stance was the "worry" that she was asking the majority of the questions. She thought that if she focused on the role of facilitator of interpretation, then she "would just take the step back and just reiterate what the other kids are saying" instead of asking all of the questions. She hoped that this teaching move would "make them respond to each other a little bit more." Thus, she saw the enactment of the role of facilitator of interpretation as means to share responsibility for the process and content of the discussion.

**Recommendations During the Debrief**

During our debriefing, Lola stated that she still needed to make an anchor chart of "comment starters." She felt this would increase student participation by helping "the kids who have something they want to share but don't know how to start it" by providing a reference or sentence frame to organize their thoughts. She recollected that she had success with this type of anchor chart in the past. For example, during science, Lola used an "I wonder" anchor chart that supported students to talk about their observations. She believed that providing sentence frames "will at least make them feel confident enough to at least attempt it, instead of saying I don't know how to start this so I'm just gonna sit back." She wanted to discover a resource that would provide her with "a couple of different starters that they can use that express many different things that the kids might want to say instead of just saying I noticed or I know." Although, she had an idea of what she wanted and needed for the content of the anchor chart, she was struggling to find time to locate the resource that would give her concrete examples of what to use as sentence starters.

Lola thought this anchor chart would be especially important as the class moved from learning about character development toward synthesizing, which she described as "the hardest for the kids." Therefore, I suggested using a resource provided by Harvey and Daniels (2009) that provided teaching prompts through questioning that allowed students to demonstrate their acquired knowledge: *What did you learn that you think is important to remember? Why does it matter? What do you think are some big ideas here? What do you think the author most wants you to get out of this? Say more about that*. I encouraged her to change the teacher prompts into "I" statements such as, "Something I learned that I think is important is…" or "I learned …This matters because…" so they could be used by the students while encouraging synthesizing. Lola appeared to be appreciative of this suggestion because as I explained my suggestion she thanked me and said, "awesome," "perfect," "good," and "I'll do that."

Lola believed the anchor chart might influence the learning opportunities for her ELL students to practice synthesizing their literacy strategies and skills. The visual support of the anchor chart and "the routine" of practicing how to talk about a text at a higher level could support them and their learning. She explained that her ELL students might think, "I never thought I'd have to find a big idea in the story. Well, now let me think about it. What did I notice? Well, I did notice this." Thus, she thought the prompts could help the ELL students to "think a little bit differently and maybe not so much that lower level but pushing them to think higher." She purposed that having the "I" statements as sentence starters might allow the ELL students to begin to organize their thoughts and "give them a stepping stone to join in the conversation, become part of it more readily than what they currently are." Lola wanted to provide her all of her students an opportunity to participate in higher-level thinking and deeper learning.

Next, I encouraged Lola to make the classroom norms explicit for participating in an interactive text-based discussion. I reminded Lola that the expected norms during an interactive discussion were very different from the traditional norms that her students have experienced so she needed to support them in navigating these new expectations. Therefore, I suggested making another anchor chart that focused just on the expected behavior and norms. For example, she might write, everyone should participate, listen to others talk, and I will call on the next speaker. I specifically gave suggestions for encouraging students to call on each other. I shared an example of another teacher who used an organic approach to her discussion by not asking students to raise their hands but instead just take turns speaking. Lola felt concerned that only the loudest students would get the most opportunity to speak if she used this approach. So instead, I suggested that she empower the students with strategies to initiate conversations with each other by asking each other questions such as do you agree with me or does anyone think differently? Another suggestion I provided to support Lola in sharing the authority regarding the process of the discussion was to initiate students to call on each using a toss toy. The students would pass a toss toy to indicate whose turn it was for speaking.

Lola reflected that recently, at a staff development meeting, some teachers asked for ways to help facilitate discussion among students. It was suggested to give every student three cubes and tell them that the cubes represented how many times they needed to participate in the discussion. Some of the teachers tried it but felt frustrated by the simplistic responses students gave to "discard" their cubes. She explained, the students were saying, "I agree. There's my cube. Oh, I think they were funny. Here's my cube." The teachers saw the approach as a management tool for participation; however, it did not enhance the quality of the discussion.

Therefore, we discussed the importance of facilitating the student talk by always asking for reasoning and evidence to support their thinking. In response, Lola said, "Ugh. There's so many different aspects of it."

Lola stated that before participating in our collaborative intervention, she thought, "Oh, I can lead a good read aloud and discussion. Just get a good book and we'll just talk as we go through." Now, she said she has learned that in order to have a quality interactive text-based discussion, she has to "really plan for it." She said that she has realized that as a teacher, "You can't just talk. You know, you really have to plan for like what might the kids be thinking. What might they say? How will you respond? You know, it's a lot more and it takes more time than I thought. A good quality read aloud takes time."

In response to Lola's comments, I shared some other possible dialogical tools she might integrate into her teaching. For example, I suggested the group structural change of having the students sit in a circle so they faced each other when talking to encourage student-to-student exchanges during the discussion. Lola stated, "I debate about that all the time because one of the things that I love is that they have that partner to bounce an idea off, you know. But then I know that what we've been taught about Accountable Talk. When you have Accountable Talk, you get the kids in the circle so they can see each other" to create a more natural context for a discussion. As mentioned in Chapter Three, Accountable Talk was an instructional practice to facilitate student discussion advocated by the district literacy coach. Lola struggled with the tension of what she heard is best practice to encourage student talk during district training on the concept of Accountable Talk and her current practice of providing peer support through partners while she is reading a text to the whole group.  Therefore, I suggested utilizing two structures during the lesson. During the story, to support comprehension of the text, I suggested having students sit

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next to their partner so they could participate in turn and talks or think-pair-shares. Then, during the whole group discussion after the reading the text, I suggested reorganizing the students so they were sitting in a circle and facing each other so they could see and actively engage with whoever is speaking. Lola commented, "Yes, and I did think about that towards the end (of the lesson). I was like, I should've put these kids in a circle today." One reason Lola thought she should have structured the students into a circle was to help with behavior management by holding the students accountable during the discussion. Lola considered whether having the students sit in a circle could increase student accountability and participation because they would not only be able to see each other but also be aware that the other students could see them as well. She explained, "Maybe that's what is so good about the circle. They are looking at each other and realizing, I'm not raising my hand at all. Everyone can see me not raising my hand." She wondered if this self-awareness might translate into more on-task behavior and increased student talk.

**Serving ELL Students**

In this lesson, Lola continued to make progress toward meeting four of the six principles for teaching ELL students (McIntyre, 2010). In doing so, she implemented rigorous teaching and curriculum that engaged the students in a joint productivity activity by carefully planning the instructional conversation. She supported the principle of curricular connections by selecting a text written by an author focused on previously introduced characters that the students were interested in. She created space in her lesson for literacy development by focusing the literacy learning goal of character development and implied messages through visual cues. However, once again, she did not create an additional language learning goal for the lesson or address the principle of family involvement during the lesson.

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During this lesson, as in the previously analyzed two lessons, Lola implemented four of the six recommended instructional modifications to support ELL students (Goldenberg, 2010). She provided explicit interactive instruction, learning opportunities for her ELL students to interact with peers, and two forms of input: oral (teacher and peer comments) and visual (picture cues in the text). The visual input was highly emphasized in this lesson as the students attempted to decipher the implied messages in the illustrations and type setting. She supported her ELL students to orally synthesize the text by asking questions and using think-pair-shares and mentally synthesize the text by projecting the images with an Elmo. Lola planned and implemented explicit content instruction that focused on requesting students to provide their reasoning. However, once again, she did not plan or implement EOLD instruction or vocabulary experiences in this lesson. Thus, Lola continued to demonstrate a lack of EOLD and vocabulary experiences during this lesson as a means to support the linguistic needs of her ELL students through instructional modifications.

## LESSON 8: ANALYSIS

Lola continued to work on her self-selected professional development goal to increase her ability to move towards a dialogic teaching stance represented by creating space for student participation. Therefore, my lesson analysis once again focused specifically on the DIT (Reznitskaya, 2012) Authority Teaching Indicator to explore if and how the students and Lola shared the responsibility for the process and content of the text-based discussion during this lesson by examining who called on students, asked the majority of the questions, shifted topics, and evaluated student answers.

**Process Responsibility**

During this lesson, Lola maintained the responsibility for the process of the text-based discussion. This was evidenced by the fact that once again she was the only participant that actively called on students to share during the lesson. Lola had not explicitly or implicitly told or asked the students to share this responsibility. She continued the practice of verbally calling on them by name to respond or she non-verbally indicating their turn to speak during the discussion by pointing, nodding, or looking directly at them. Lola specifically called on sixteen different students by name during this lesson. Once again, I did not count the number of students out of the possible twenty-one present during the lesson. However, this represented another increase in the number of students explicitly asked to participate in the discussion. Two students were called on six times. These students were Hank and Lee. Another two students, Brad and Chad, were called on four times. Lola specifically called both of the two non-designated ELL students during the lesson by name, Jose and Jair. She called on Jose to answer questions twice. She also interacted with Jair twice during this lesson. In addition, there were students who were called on non-verbally without their names being mentioned. In compliance with IRB, I did not focus the camera on the students. Therefore, students who were called upon with non-verbal gestures or indicated by name could not be included in the tally for participation. In conclusion, it appeared that Lola attempted to include the majority of students in the text-based discussion. However, once again, the process of the text-based discussion was not equally shared between Lola and her students as indicated within the DIT Authority Teaching Indicator, as illustrated by the fact that students did not call on each other or directly ask each other questions to clarify shared ideas. Therefore, this continued to be an indicated area that Lola could improve upon during the collaborative intervention within the Authority Teaching Indicator.

**Content Responsibility**

Lola also continued to hold the majority of the responsibility for content during the text-based discussion because she asked the majority of the questions, shifted topics, and evaluated student answers.

**Questions.** As with lesson 2 and lesson 5, Lola asked the majority of the questions. Altogether, she asked seventy-six questions before, during and after sharing the text. Lola asked different types of questions to serve different purposes in facilitating the discussion. The majority of the questions (36) Lola asked during the lesson focused on reasoning. This may be due to the fact that her learning goal focused on text implicit meaning regarding how the characters were feeling as indicated by the illustrations and type setting. The second most frequent type of question (20) used was comprehension. As in the previous two lessons, Lola often used these two questioning strategies in combination during the lesson because students struggled to answer the text implicit meanings behind the illustrations. For example, this occurred in the following interaction.

Lola: What do we notice about Elephant, Chad?

Chad: Like Elephant doesn't know what Piggy is doing.

Lola: Why do you say that?

Chad: Because he is…Piggy started hopping and he doesn't know what he is doing.

Lola: OK but how do you know that elephant is confused?

Chad: Because he doesn't know why he is trying to act like a frog.

During this interaction, Lola started by asking a comprehension question, "What do we notice about Elephant?" Chad answered with a general response that Elephant "doesn't know" what the other character is doing. To press for reasoning, Lola asked him, "Why do you say that?" In

response, Chad provided evidence explicitly illustrated and written in the text that Piggy is

hopping. Lola reworded her question to "How do you know that Elephant is confused?" This

question attempted to create a specific focus on providing reasoning regarding Elephant's actions

and feelings. Meanwhile, Chad continued to base his response on Piggy's actions as the reason

for Elephant's confusion.  This interaction between Lola and Chad also demonstrated the

struggle Lola had getting the students to focus on the meaning of the implicit factors of the

illustrations and type setting that indicated the characters' emotions. This struggle frequently

made her re-ask or reword her reasoning questions.

The third most frequent type of question used by Lola was prompting to add another

perspective. This type of question occurred nine times during the lesson. These questions

typically were short comments such as "What else?" and "Anyone else want to add to that?"

However, they served an important role of increasing students' shared perspectives. This is

illustrated in the following exchange.

Lola: What is the lesson Gerald learns throughout the book?

Student: To try something before you don't want to.

Lola: (Shakes head yes.) To try something before you say you don't like it. I would agree with that. Always try something new. What other lesson might he have learned throughout the story, Brad?

Brad:  If you don't want to be what another friend says, just say it. You don't have to be like I don't want to pretend. Just say you don't want to be a frog. I want to be a cow.

Lola: It kind of goes back to what Sarah said was the lesson for piggy, which is everyone can be whoever they want to be. You should just let them be. That is kind of elephant's lesson too.

In this excerpt, Lola asked students to share what lesson they thought Elephant learned during

the text. One student suggested that Elephant learned to try something before he decided he

didn't like it. Lola restated the student's response and affirmed it both nonverbally by shaking her head yes and verbally by stating that she agreed. Then, she asked another student, Brad, to share his idea of what lesson Elephant learned. Brad responded that he thought Elephant learned to speak up for what he wanted to play. Lola linked Brad's comment to an earlier comment made by another student, Sarah, in connection to the lesson that Piggy learned. Hence, Lola demonstrated openness to the students that there could be multiple interpretations of the lessons that the characters learned in the book. In addition, she also showed the similarities between student ideas.

Lola also used questions to add another perspective as a means to guide the discussion and allow students an opportunity to articulate their reasoning to the whole group. As mentioned earlier, during the debriefing interview, Lola mentioned that the students were familiar with type setting to express meaning from previous lessons during their writer's workshop. Thus, the following exchange illustrated how she engaged the students in reviewing this concept.

Lola: How is elephant feeling right now, Ivan?

Ivan: Surprised

Lola: What makes you say surprised?

Ivan: Because he said five minutes ago and that's not long. He probably thought yesterday.

Lola: Ok. Alright, Brad?

Brad: I think he is also surprised because it is like. Well, I don't know.

Lola: Ok. One more, Jeff?

Jeff: I think he is surprised because if you look at his face and he is saying five minutes ago and the words are like he is screaming.

Lola:  Yeah, we can tell he is saying it louder because look at the print. Large letters, all capitals, exclamation point, question mark, exclamation point. So in the print itself, it is showing that he is not saying it (whispers) oh five minutes ago. He is saying it with a lot of excitement, with a lot of confusion, and probably kind of loud and his face supports what we think. He is surprised and scared.

First, Lola asked one student, Ivan, how Elephant was feeling. Ivan responded "surprised" and Lola asked him for his reasoning. Ivan focused on the time frame as reasoning for Elephant's surprise. Lola acknowledged his response by stating, "OK" and called on another student to add to the discussion. This student agreed with Ivan's description but "did not know" how to articulate his reasoning. Once again, Lola acknowledged the student's response by stating, "OK" and called on another student. This student, Jeff, mentioned the visual cues representing surprise on Elephant's face and the "words are like he is screaming." Finally, Lola built off of this student's comment to explicitly point out the type setting features such as size, upper case, and punctuation in regards to its connection to meaning while looking at visual cues within the illustration for confirmation. This interaction may have also demonstrated how Lola provided space for students to share their thoughts while still attempting to achieve the planned learning goal.

**Shifting topics** In general, Lola maintained control over which topics were discussed and when they were shifted.  These topics were typically aligned with the lesson's learning objective. As the teacher of record who was responsible for student learning, Lola appeared very dedicated and focused at providing students with ample opportunities for learning through speaking and listening during the discussion in order to move toward her content goal. One possible way students could shift the topic of discussion was through asking a question. However, only one student, Jair, a non-designated ELL student, asked a question during the lesson. The following excerpt captured this exchange.

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Lola yells Elephant's word bubble, "I don't want to become a frog!" Next, she calmly reads Piggy's word bubble, "It is ok, Gerald."

Jair shouts out (giggling), "Who is Gerald?"

Lola: Real quick question. I am going to stop real quick because Jair said, "Who is Gerald?" If we look at the picture and we look at the talking bubble, "It is ok Gerald." Who is Piggy talking to? Who is Gerald, Erica?

Erica: Elephant.

Lola: Why do you think or how do you know that is Gerald?

Erica: If it is coming out of Piggy's mouth, then he probably wouldn't be him. He is probably talking to his friend so it is probably elephant.

Lola: There are only two characters, friends. If Piggy is saying, "It is ok, Gerald," Erica is right. He is not talking to himself so he is talking to the only other person that is there and elephant's name.

Lola was expressively reading the story and some students were giggling at Lola yelling, "I don't want to be a frog!" When she stated the name, Gerald, Jair giggled and loudly stated, "Who is Gerald?" It was uncertain if Jair was actually confused as to who Gerald was or if he was trying to instigate more peer giggling with his question because he thought Gerald was a funny name. In response, Lola stopped reading and asked the class to answer Jair's question. When another student, Erica, responded that Gerald was Elephant, Lola asked her to provide her reasoning. Erica shared her process of elimination to deduce that Gerald was Elephant. Finally, Lola summarized Erica's response but did not follow up with Jair to confirm his understanding. Thus, Lola paused her lesson to address Jair's question and made the navigation of the implicit message of Elephant's name explicit by encouraging another student to explain how she processed the information. However, Jair was only called on one other time later in the lesson to repeat what another student had said because Lola felt he was not listening and was off task. Therefore, it was unclear if Lola paused and responded to Jair's question because it was an

important learning opportunity or if it was a way she attempted to get his attention and encourage on-task behavior. This being said, Lola did appear responsive to student-initiated questions that inspired a shift in topic in alignment with the determined learning goals.

**Evaluating student responses.** Lola attempted to share the responsibility for evaluating student responses. She appeared neutral in her responses by frequently stating, "ok" after a student supplied a response. Another way she attempted to share the role of evaluator was by asking other students to respond to each other's comments and if they agreed or disagreed. However, Lola appeared to have the final say regarding the evaluation of student responses. This was important because occasionally the students were incorrect in their responses and struggled to use evidence from the text to support their responses. The following excerpt exhibited this.

Lola: There is a lesson that Piggy learned. What is the lesson that she learned, Jose?

Jose: To not play frog and be a person.

Lola: (Gives a confused look.) So Jose said to not be a frog and to be a person. Is that what you said?

Another student: It's a pig.

Lola: (holds out her hand to the interrupting student.) I am repeating what Jose said. What do you think about what Jose said? Is that the lesson that Piggy learned, Hank?

Hank: No because um. I mean yes because she shouldn't be pretending because she did learn that pretending can make your friend nervous.

Lola: So that's the lesson that piggy learned? You shouldn't pretend because someone is going to be nervous? Chad, what do you think?

Chad: No

Lola: No, what? I disagree with Jose's comment? No, I disagree with Hank's comment? No, what?

Chad: I disagree with Jose and Hank because he learns that he doesn't have to make other people pretend. He can just leave Gerald alone and play with himself.

Lola:  But is that what happened in the story? Did he end up playing with himself? Friends, remember that everything that we talk about has to kind of go back to the book because the book is where all of the evidence or support is for what we are talking about.

In this excerpt, Lola was confronted with a series of student responses that did not connect to the text. First, Lola asked Jose, a non-designated ELL student, to share what he thought Piggy's lesson was in the text. Jose responded that Piggy learned "to not play frog and be a person." This conflicted with the conclusion of the text that depicted Piggy pretending to be a frog while playing with Elephant who pretended to be a cow. Lola restated Jose's statement, which instigated clarification from a student regarding that Piggy was a pig not a person. Lola made it clear that she was restating Jose's comment and asked another student to share what they thought was Piggy's lesson. This student agreed with Jose because he thought Piggy learned she shouldn't pretend because it can "make your friends nervous." The evidence presented by Hank occurred in the middle of the story during the height of the conflict depicting Elephant as nervous to see Piggy was a frog. However, it did not include the text's conclusion or resolution of Elephant and Piggy playing pretend together. Next, Lola restated Hank's comment and asked Chad to share his opinion. Chad simply replied, "No." In response, Lola pressed him to be explicit with his comment by stating who he disagreed with. Chad stated that he disagreed with both of the other students because Piggy learned that he "doesn't have to make other people pretend" because he can just play pretend with himself. Chad's response also conflicted with the conclusion or resolution of the story because Piggy did not play by himself. Finally, Lola explicitly reminded the students that the lesson had to connect with what actually occurred in the text.

This interaction captured the students struggling to accurately synthesize the entire text to articulate the character's lesson. It also demonstrated Lola's attempt to take a more passive role

during the discussion. One way she attempted to support the students was by calling on students who typically responded correctly and participated frequently. For example, throughout this lesson, she frequently specifically called on Hank, Lee, Brad, and Chad.  Thus, by calling on Hank and Chad, she might have been anticipating which students were able to comprehend using multiple modes of input and share their process.  However, these students did not provide accurate details of the solution or conclusion of the text while sharing the character's learned lesson. Due to the students' overall struggle with the comprehension of implicit meaning represented by visual cues in the illustration to depict emotion, Lola needed to play an active role while facilitating the discussion to support the students. Instead of prefacing the student talk with a think aloud to model how she negotiated the implicit visual cues in the illustrations, Lola attempted to follow up on student comments. This led to a challenging discussion as students struggled to engage with the text at the multiple levels Lola had envisioned.

**Levels of Thinking**

Once again, Lola engaged students in a variety of levels of thinking during this lesson. First, I analyzed the lesson's learning goal by using Costa's levels of Inquiry (2001). The specific learning goal for this lesson was focused on "how a character gives information through words, but also implied messages." These implied messages were implicit in the text through visual cues in the illustrations such as character facial expressions representing emotions and typesetting or text font such as bold all capital words to indicate yelling. Therefore, similar to the other lessons, her learning goal attempted to engage the students in mid-level of thinking. However, this lesson required the students infer the message presented in the text through multiple modes of input, which the students appeared to struggle with.

To specifically analyze the opportunities for students to engage in different levels of thinking within the lesson, I used Costa's levels of Inquiry (2001) to examine the seventy-six questions Lola asked her students, as demonstrated in Table 7. The majority of her questions were at the first and second level with only a few questions at level three. Thus, this lesson's learning goal was supportive of different levels of thinking but not as supportive of higher-level thinking. Lola asked twenty-five level one questions. These questions were text explicit and mainly focused on checking to see if students were able to comprehend the text. For example, she asked, "What do we notice about elephant?," "What's wrong now?," "Why isn't piggy mad anymore?," and "Were they still able to play together?" The first three examples of level one text explicit questions were open-ended and required students to give a multiple word response. The fourth question was part of a sequence of level one questions that were closed and required only a one word response, which the students gave chorally as a means to check and confirm overall group comprehension.

She asked forty-five level two questions. These questions were text implicit and the majority of these questions were asked as Lola facilitated the student discussion interpreting the character's implied feelings and the lesson that each character learned during the text. Forty-four of the questions were open-ended. For example, "How would you real quickly describe how elephant changed throughout the story?" and "Why GERALD (yelled) instead of Gerald (whisper)?" These questions required students to give responses that were more than one word. If a student attempted to provide a one-word response, Lola typically followed up with a question asking them to provide their reasoning. For example, She asked, "How was Piggy feeling in the beginning of the story?" When a student responded, "Happy," Lola asked, "Why was he happy?" Lola asked one closed level two question: "So would you say that Piggy's lesson

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was everyone can pretend to be whoever they want?" This question was asked in succession of three closed ended questions that encouraged the students to chorally respond. The first two were level one questions regarding what occurred as the solution in the text: "Were they still able to play together?" and "Were they still both pretending?" These questions were asked to the group to clarify comprehension after three students struggled to accurately state the solution as part of the lesson as discussed earlier. The third closed question in this succession was a level two question: "So would you say that Piggy's lesson was everyone can pretend to be whoever they want?" Thus, she used group questioning across levels to scaffold student thinking and guide them towards accurate comprehension. It should be noted that when a student shouted out another way of stating the learned lesson, Lola asked the student to "say it again" as a means to acknowledge and highlight the student's accurate response. Thus, she was willing to share the wording of the interpretation of the lesson with the student as long as it aligned with the evidence presented in the text.

Finally, Lola asked six level three questions. These questions required students to think beyond the text and apply their prior knowledge and experience. These six questions focused on the body's physiological response to the strong emotion of fear and nervousness. For example, Lola asked, "What happens to your body when you feel nervous worried and scared?" Lola asked these questions to guide her students to interpret the implicit meaning of the illustrated "water drops" on the face on Elephant. One student was able to correctly state the water drops were actually "sweat because he is nervous." However, none of the students were able to provide reasoning as to why or how the sweat was related to an emotion. Instead, the students were only able to state other emotions that might make an individual sweat. Therefore, Lola shared her

personal experience of the sensations that her body experiences when she is nervous, scared, or worried.

When examining the level of questions that Lola explicitly presented to Jose and Jair, there is not as much variation between the levels. Jose was asked two open ended level two questions that required implicit comprehension of the text. The first level two question Lola asked Jose was "But how do we know that elephant is confused? Would you agree that elephant is confused, Jose?" Jose responded with a level two answer by providing information that was explicitly in the text stating, " He doesn't know Piggy is a frog and…" As Jose's words became softer, Lola pressed the whole group to provide reasoning by asking, "What evidence from the book let's us know that elephant is confused, Lilly?" Jose was correct that Elephant was struggling with why Piggy was acting like a frog but Lola was looking for implicit meanings interpreted from the illustration and type setting. The second level two question that Lola asked Jose was, "What is the lesson that she (Piggy) learned, Jose?" Jose replied, "To not play frog and be a person." As mentioned earlier, this response did not align with the resolution at the end of the text and may have demonstrated that Jose struggled to comprehend certain aspects of the story such as the solution to the conflict. Lola attempted to clarify his answer and then discovered other students were struggling to comprehend the connection between the solution and the lesson learned as well.

Lola also had two interactions with Jair during the lesson but the interactions were for clarification and behavior management. First, Jair shouted out a question "Who is Gerald?" As mentioned earlier, Lola paused her reading to create space for the other students to respond to his question. Second, Lola asked, "Jair, to make sure the group understood what Lee said, can you repeat back to the group what he said? Can you do that?" Jair responded, "No." Lola then stated

it was because he wasn't paying attention and that active members of the discussion paid

attention when other people spoke. She also gave this warning to two girls that were sitting near

Jair. Thus, although Lola and Jair interacted twice during this lesson, Jair's thinking was not

actively challenged during these interactions.

In conclusion, the main opportunities that Jose and Jair had to share their thinking

individually was during the six think-pair-shares. One of the think-pair-shares was grounded in a

level one question regarding what the students were noticing at a certain point in the text. Thus,

the question focused on general comprehension. The other five think-pair-shares were based on

level two questions regarding the interpretation of the implied meaning of the characters

emotions.  These questions required students to use implicit information shared in the text such

as illustrations and type setting. Due to the fact that most students were able to state the emotions

during the follow up whole group sharing but not provide evidence beyond what was explicitly

stated in the text, might indicate that more scaffolding was needed to make the active student

participation in the think-pair-shares more productive and conducive for student thinking.

**THREE LESSON ANALYSIS SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION**

The following lesson analysis summary provides an overview of how Lola created space

for students to participate in whole group text-based discussions during the collaborative

intervention. It also provides an overview of the levels of thinking that students had an

opportunity to engage in during the lessons based on the lessons' learning goals and the

questions that she asked.

The DIT indicators for monologic teaching in regards to Authority are identified as:

teacher calls on students, asks questions, shifts topics, and evaluates the answers. In contrast, the

DIT indicators for shifting toward dialogic teaching are:  occasional open student discussions or

only a few students participate. Across the three lessons, Lola increased the percentage of student participation as indicated by the number of students that she called on by name. However, she did not share responsibility to ask questions, shift topics, or evaluate students' answers. In fact, there was a an increase in the number of questions she asked across the lessons and a decrease in the number of questions that the students asked as shown below in table 8.

With the increase in the number of questions she asked, the purpose of her questions became an important aspect to consider. For example, across the three analyzed lessons, she increased the times she asked a student to evaluate a peer's response from once during lesson two to four times during lesson eight. She also began using questions directed at students to add another perspective to support students in meeting the learning goal instead of using it to find a student with a response that she deemed correct as she did in lesson number two. Finally, she increased her use of asking questions through think-pair-shares across the lessons. In lesson two, she did not use any think-pair-shares, in lesson five she incorporated three, and during lesson eight she utilized six. Her increased use of think-pair-shares across the lessons not only increased student participation opportunities, but also provided space for more open discussions.

As table 9 illustrates, Lola provided opportunities for students to engage in all three levels of thinking during the analyzed lessons by asking questions. In lesson two, she asked twenty-eight questions that focused mainly on level two thinking. These questions tended to focus on comprehension using text implicit based knowledge. For example, she asked, questions such as, "Is this book fiction or non-fiction?" During lesson five, the number of questions Lola asked increased in comparison to lesson two, but the questions were more equally distributed across the levels of thinking. During lesson five, Lola still seemed to focus on questions that required students to use text implicit knowledge such as, "Why is that rude?" Many of her

questions focused on encouraging students to provide reasoning and evidence. In lesson eight, Lola demonstrated another increase in the number of questions that she asked students. She had previously asked twenty-eight questions in lesson two and fifty-five question in lesson five. In lesson eight, she asked seventy-six questions. The questions she asked during lesson eight focused on level one and level two thinking and only six of the questions encouraged level three thinking. This may have been a result of the students struggling to make text implicit references based on the visual cues regarding the emotions of the characters and the use of type setting.

Since all three of Lola's lessons analyzed mainly focused on level two thinking, there was not a significant change demonstrated across the lessons in regards to the opportunities they provided students to engage in different levels of thinking in general, and in higher level thinking in particular. This pattern was also consistent with results regarding the opportunities for her ELL students to engage with different levels of thinking across the three lessons. In lesson two, both Jose and Jair were called on by name and asked level two questions. In lesson five, Jair was asked level two questions and Navi was asked level one questions. Finally in lesson eight, Jose was asked two level two questions. In addition, five of the six think-pair-share questions that her ELL students participated in also asked level two thinking questions.

In summary, Lola did demonstrate an increase in her efforts to create space for students to participate. She did not make any significant changes in her ability to share the responsibility of the process and content of the discussion according to the DIT Authority Teaching Indicator; however, she did show an increase in her openness to the to the idea of sharing content. This being said, there was not evidence of a consistent influence on her students' opportunities to engage in different levels of thinking throughout the three lessons. In addition, her attempts to share authority did not appear to influence the opportunities of her ELL students to engage in

different levels of thinking. Although Lola did not demonstrate significant growth in her refinement of facilitating text-based discussions as designated in the DIT Authority Teaching Indicator, she did appear to make considerable growth in her understanding of facilitating text-based discussions. To illustrate, she expanded her perception regarding the possible roles of students and the teacher during a discussion. She also became more aware of the extensive planning that was required to facilitate a text-based discussion. I speculate that these additional areas of growth on a conscious level were partially sparked by her of attempt to refine her practice to facilitate text-based discussions in a reflective context. Next, in Chapter Five, I will share my analysis of Sasha's three lessons and her professional development growth and the influence it had on students' opportunities to engage in different levels of thinking. In Chapter Six, I will present Lola and Sasha's perspective on their progress toward their personally selected professional development goals.

# CHAPTER 5

## SASHA'S LESSONS

This chapter will focus on my analysis of three of the ten lessons that Sasha taught while working toward her professional development goal for type of feedback. Sasha focused on her professional development goal of refining her ability to provide feedback to her students. Reznitskaya*'s (2012) Dialogic Instruction Teaching Indicator* (DIT) on feedback allowed me to examine changes in the nature of feedback Sasha gave to her students. The DIT provided specific indicators to guide her attempts as she shifted from a monologic teaching practice toward a dialogic stance. In monologic teaching, the teacher gives generic feedback such as yes, no, good, and not quite. When progressing or shifting toward a more dialogic stance, the teacher actively listens to student comments while giving a mixture of explicit and generic feedback. During dialogic teaching, the teacher pushes students to explore their reasoning without judging the conclusion. For the purpose of this study, I explored if and how Sasha provided feedback to her students during three text-based discussions and if this influenced her students' opportunities to engage in different levels of thinking. These three lessons were chosen based on two factors. First, I selected lessons that occurred around the beginning, middle, and end of the study. Second, I selected lessons based on Sasha's availability to debrief afterwards to ensure the opportunity to capture her voice, purpose, and reasoning within the study. My goal for this chapter was to describe her attempt to progress from monologic to dialogic facilitation based on the DIT feedback indicator.

I will now share Sasha's professional growth as she worked to refine her ability to facilitate text-based discussions as determined by the DIT Feedback Teaching Indicator. During her participation in the study, she went from enacting monologic teaching by providing generic

feedback to a shifting stage of providing a mixture of generic and explicit feedback and her students had opportunities to engage in different levels of thinking.

<div align="center">

**LESSON 4: *YOU WILL BE MY FRIEND***

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**Lesson Context**

The first lesson I analyzed used the book, *You Will Be My Friend*, by, Peter Brown (2011). This was the fourth lesson of our collaborative intervention. All of the three international students from India were present, including Jasmine and the Spanish-English speaking student, Ivan. The book was about a bear named, Lucy, trying to make a new friend. She found making a new friend was challenging and had several mishaps such as climbing a tree to say hello to a giraffe and realizing she had climbed into its breakfast. However, just when Lucy gave up on finding a new friend, a new friend found her and liked her just the way she was. Sasha was in the process of individually assessing each student's reading skills as required by the district. Therefore, she planned a lesson with some independent student work time to allow extra time for her to pull students to assess.

**Learning Goals**

Sasha wanted students to make their thinking explicit by marking spots in a text with post-it notes using symbols and then explain their thinking by writing in their journals. The following symbols were displayed on the projector:

LOL: funny part

?: confusing part

 A heart: favorite part

A cloud: I made a prediction

C: I made a comment

Two Eyes: I visualized

*: Important part

!: exciting part

I:  I inferred

N: I learned new information.

Sasha had introduced the students to the symbols the day before this observation. This was the

second attempt for the students to use the symbols to mark their thinking.  Sasha planned to

model for students how to mark spots with post-its to keep track of thinking while reading aloud.

Then the students read a book independently, marked the pages with coded post-it notes, and

wrote in their journals the reason they selected to mark two to three sections of the text. While

the students were completing their task, Sasha conducted reading assessments with individual

students. Finally, the whole group came back together on the carpeting in front of the board.

Sasha selected two students to project their work using the Elmo and share their thinking with

the group.

As indicated on her pre-observation reflection for this lesson, Sasha did not plan any

additional learning goals or support strategies for her international, non-native English-speaking

students. This reflection specifically asked:  Do you have any additional learning goals for your

ELL students?  How will you support your ELL students during this lesson? When filling out the

pre-observation reflection, she left both of these questions blank.

**Self-Identified Professional Learning**

Sasha wanted to direct her feedback to support her students to write down their thinking

instead of writing down what happened in the book because she had noticed in the previous

day's lesson when she introduced the symbols that the students focused on retelling what

occurred in the story as the reason for marking it with a post it note instead of sharing their thoughts. She wanted to encourage the students to move beyond retelling toward providing their thoughts and reasoning.

**Shared Reflections**

After teaching the lesson, Sasha felt overall the lesson enactment went as planned. She was able to model her learning goal during the read aloud and provide independent practice. She shared that the following items went well during the lesson: the students liked the book, understood the story, and were able to use the post-its to mark a spot using the symbols. However, she felt that the she and her students struggled during the lesson when the whole group came back together on the carpeting to have two students share their thinking.

**Identified challenges.** Sasha found it challenging to provide feedback to guide her students to explain their thinking in the journal using the post-its. She noticed that her students were writing what happened in the book where they put the post-it. She recalled that she explicitly stated to her students, "Make sure you're not retelling what's happening in the story but that you are explaining what you were thinking while you were reading this part." However, she did not feel that she was able to encourage the students to move beyond retelling. For example, one student, Ted, who shared with the group that he marked a spot with "N" to note that he learned new information. In his journal, he wrote, "Giraffes are 14 to 19 feet tall." She reiterated that she "wanted him to explain his thinking and all he did was like write down a fact." She attempted to prompt him toward sharing his thinking with the group. The following excerpt demonstrated this.

Sasha:  Then you marked a place where you learned something new. What did you write?

Ted: Giraffes are 14 to 19 feet tall.

Sasha:  Ok. So what does the N represent?

Ted: Um. New fact.

Sasha: Yeah, something new that you learned. Giraffes are 14 to 19 feet tall. What was your thinking before that about giraffes?

Ted:  I thought they were kind of tall and pretty high.

Sasha:  So you didn't know quite exactly how tall they were. Now you can put that in your filing schema cabinet under giraffes and tall.

To guide Ted to share his thinking, Sasha first highlighted that he learned something new. Then, she asked, "What was your thinking before that about giraffes?" She shared that she was attempting to prompt him to focus on how his thinking had changed and not on recalling a fact. She explained, "I was like, well, this isn't exactly what I want but I don't really know how to fix it so I'm just going to keep moving on." When asked specifically what she wanted for a response from her student, she said, "If he could've just said, 'I never knew giraffes were 14 to 19 feet tall.'" She knew that she didn't want the student to recall the fact, but she also wondered, "I guess I don't know if there is a difference between him saying" I never knew and just restating the fact. She shared, "because when I asked him questions, I thought then, maybe that kind of thinking is too advanced or abstract."

Sasha noticed the second student, Candi, did not provide an explicit enough answer to describe her thinking to meet her expectations. She tried to prompt her into sharing her thinking more explicitly by asking her questions about her thinking. The following excerpt demonstrated this.

Sasha placed Candi's journal page on the Elmo.

Sasha: Oh, it looks like you found a favorite part. Ok, can you find it? And explain your thinking about this part.

Candi: (Candi opened her book to show her marked page.) Well, I liked it because you can see everything that she did into the tree.

Sasha: Gosh, did they write about all of that or did they explain it in the picture more than the writing?

Candi: Well, they did kind of write about it.

Sasha: Oh they did, so that just helped to give you the visualization, right?

Candi: They wrote some on the different page.

Sasha: OK. So, you got to see all of it. Is Molly Lou Melon doing good things or bad things?

Candi: She is doing good things. Wait, well she is doing, I don't really know.

When Candi came up in front of the class she shared, "Well, I liked it because you can see everything that she did into the tree." Sasha prompted Candi to share her thinking on a deeper level by asking about the story and illustrations. She also asked if the illustration helped her comprehension of the story by providing visual support to the text. Sasha explained that she wanted Candi to share her thinking on a deeper level then making a comment like, "I like this part because you could see everything the girl was doing." Sasha reflected, "Which that, I guess that is your thinking. I don't know. I'm having a hard time knowing if I'm teaching it, if I'm not, if I'm making too much out of it, (more) than it needs to be." It appeared Sasha was not only struggling to guide her students to explain their thinking but also to decide what student thinking about literature looks and sounded like at the first grade level.

**ELL students.**  Sasha noticed that her non-designated ELL student, Jasmine, seemed to understand how to put the post-its in her book and write about them.  She also noticed that Jasmine "didn't write about her thinking but many of the other students in the class didn't either." Thus, Sasha noticed that Jasmine, like many other students, was able to literally complete the task but did not engage in the depth of thinking that Sasha had intended as part of the lesson. After reading the story to the class, Sasha reflected on some concerns regarding Jasmine's ability to comprehend the text. She shared, "I was thinking about some of the hidden jokes that the author included in the story and was wondering if Jasmine caught onto them."  For example, there was a part in the text when Lucy, the bear, was trying to make friendly conversation with an ostrich and asked what it was like to fly. Sasha noticed that many of the students giggled at this part of the story but was uncertain if Jasmine got the joke. Therefore, she felt, "It may be beneficial for me to ask others to explain why they are laughing at certain parts because there may be other students that didn't get the joke either because they don't have the schema to understand." Although Sasha did not plan any specific support prior to enacting the lesson for Jasmine, after enacting the lesson, she appeared to be more conscious of Jasmine's experiences during the lesson.

**Self-Identified Professional Learning**

When asked to reflect on her professional learning, Sasha focused on student learning and her learning objective. She felt that the students were progressing toward meeting her learning objective. She stated, "Considering this was the second attempt at this skill, the lesson is moving in the right direction." She shared, "I just need to give it more time and continue to model my expectations."  She believed that her students needed her to continue modeling exactly what the expectations were in regards to the journal entry to explain their thinking. She was also aware of

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the fact that she wanted to create space in the lesson for the students to "challenge each other to expand on their thinking" by agreeing and disagreeing with each other and asking questions. She felt this would influence Jasmine's learning opportunities by allowing peers to express their thoughts and model for her how to expand her thought beyond retelling what was happening in the story. This being said, Sasha concentrated on student learning outcomes. She was also gaining some awareness of aspects of the discussion that might be influenced by her feedback such as prompting students to agree or disagree so they could "challenge" and deepen each other's thinking.

**Recommendations During the Debrief**

During our debriefing, I made a few specific recommendations to Sasha to guide her feedback toward more dialogic teaching based on her personal DIT professional development goal. My first recommendation was to create a rubric describing three levels of student performance. I encouraged her to think of score of one as retelling or summarizing. A score of two might demonstrate the students are attempting to explain their thinking such as in the case of Candi's response. To determine a three, she needed to make her own expectations more concrete. For example, was she wanted students to use specific wording such as: Something new I learned was. If so, then perhaps she needed to model sentence starters or frames to guide and model how to talk about their thinking. In addition, to making her feedback more explicit, I recommended showing or guiding the students the ways to improve their journal entries. To illustrate, project an incomplete entry with the Elmo and prompt students to improve it. My goal was to encourage more deep, detailed modeling with an opportunity for guided practice. I shared that modeling with guided practice would allow her to give explicit feedback in a whole group setting to encourage students to take ownership of the process to share their thoughts and provide peers

with an opportunity to ask clarifying questions. When I made these recommendations, I did not do so with the specific need of ELL students in mind. Instead, I was focusing on more general goals to help Sasha refine her practice of facilitating whole group discussions.

Sasha appeared to be open to these suggestions. She agreed that having a specific teaching point during guided practice through the use of a preselected journal entry would help her provide explicit feedback instead of trying to "think on the spot." In addition, she felt displaying an entry "that didn't have enough to it" could help students see "how could they add to it" by asking clarifying questions. She shared that some students might feel uncomfortable having their work corrected in front of the class so invented examples might be best to use as the preselected journal entries. She felt this implementation strategy was similar with how she conducted math discussions with her class. She shared, "I already can figure out how I can easily implement this because it's exactly what I do in math. They solve an equation on the board, they explain how they solved it and then these kids raise their hand and ask them more clarifying questions. Or if they completely got it wrong, they ask them a question that makes them realize that they got it wrong. So it's the same, it's the same kind of thing." Sasha felt quite successful implementing math discussions and felt encouraged that she could transfer these skills to her literature discussions.

**Serving ELL Students**

I considered Sasha's ability to meet the needs of her ELL students during this lesson. Sasha appeared to have room for growth in relation to the six principles for teaching ELL students (McIntyre, 2010). She implemented rigorous curriculum that encouraged students to explain their thinking but her teaching could have provided more modeling. She attempted to engage students in a joint productivity activity by having two individual students share their

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journals. However, the other students who were watching the students share did not contribute to the conversation. This might have been due to the fact that Sasha had not carefully planned the instructional conversation around making the expectations and purpose explicit. She supported the principle of curricular connection in this lesson by selecting a text that interested the students through its use of humor. She was successful in creating space in her lesson for literacy development by focusing on the literacy learning goal of identifying personalized responses to a text but she did not have a language learning goal. In addition, she did not address the principle of family involvement. Thus, Sasha was able to partially meet half of the six principles for teaching ELL students during this lesson.

Next, I examined Sasha's instructional modifications to support ELL students during this lesson (Goldenberg, 2010). I found that she also demonstrated a potential for growth in her ability to implement instructional modifications to support her ELL students during this lesson. Sasha attempted to provide explicit interactive instruction and learning opportunities for her ELL students to interact with peers while she read the text. In addition, she directly stated her learning goal at the beginning of the lesson and modeled how to use the symbols to mark the text to represent thinking. Although the learning outcome was stated and modeled, she was not successful in scaffolding students to achieve the learning goal to her desired standard. She provided two forms of input: oral (teacher and peer comments) and visual (symbols for thinking). She supported her ELL students to mentally synthesize the text by modeling how to use the symbols as she projected her journal on the Elmo. While reading the text, she provided space for students to orally synthesize the text by asking and responding to questions. This being said, she provided explicit content instruction but did not plan for or implement EOLD

instruction or vocabulary experiences in this lesson as a means to support the linguistic needs of her ELL students.

## LESSON 4: ANALYSIS

Sasha worked toward her self-selected professional development goal to increase her ability to move towards a dialogic teaching stance represented within the DIT Feedback Teaching Indicator (Reznitskaya, 2012). Therefore, my lesson analysis focused specifically on the DIT Feedback Teaching Indicator to explore if and how Sasha provided her students with feedback. First, I analyzed the type of feedback that she provided during the text-based discussion during this lesson by examining her responses to students. Monologic teaching was indicated by generic feedback such as yes, no, maybe while dialogic feedback was represented by teacher responses that pushed students to further explore their reasoning without judging the conclusion. As teachers were in the process of shifting from monologic toward dialogic practice, the teacher engaged in active listening with a mixture of generic and explicit feedback. Next, I analyzed the students' opportunities to engage in different levels of thinking during the lesson (Costa, 2001).

**Professional Goal: Feedback**

Sasha engaged in monologic instruction for providing feedback during this lesson. She engaged in active listening by restating student responses or filling in reasoning possibilities to students. Thus, her feedback went beyond the generic descriptor or yes, no, maybe, and not quite. However, her feedback did not push students to provide or explore reasoning. Therefore, her feedback did not fully demonstrate the qualities of dialogic instruction and was considered generic.

Sasha provided generic feedback to her students thirty-nine times during this lesson. Due to the fact that Sasha only provided generic feedback, I explored the types and quantity of generic feedback she was using and when they occurred to better understand any changes in her practice. Thirty-four of the generic feedback statements typically included active listening strategies and five generic feedback statements were posed as questions. These questions were provided in reaction to a student comment and did not initiate student thinking but instead built off of a previous student's comment. Two of the generic feedback questions were asked during the read aloud in response to a student comment and the other three generic feedback questions were asked to the individual students who were asked to share their thinking after independent practice to share their thinking. Below, I will present examples to illustrate how Sasha provided generic feedback to her students during this lesson.

During the read aloud, Sasha provided generic feedback to affirm or negate student thinking but did not encourage students to explore their reasoning. This affirmation and negation appeared to be an extension of the generic feedback provided by a yes and no response due to active listening. The following exchange demonstrated this.

Sasha:  Ted, what were you wondering?

Ted:  If this is Africa because there are giraffes but there's not like tiny ponds with frogs?

Sasha:  Where did they say the setting was?

Students (shout out): In the jungle. In the forest.

Sasha: In the forest. So it is kind of confusing why there is a giraffe in the forest.

Student: There are trees in Africa.

Sasha: Sure there are.

Student:  It is made up.

Sasha:  It is a made up story.

In this exchange, after a think-pair-share, Sasha asked a student, Ted, an open-ended question regarding what he was wondering about the text. Ted responded that he was wondering if the setting was Africa because he noticed details about the habitat that seemed to conflict. Sasha responded by providing generic feedback through a question by asking the class what the author stated was the setting for the story. This recall question was aligned with the student's wondering but did not push his reasoning. The other students shouted out two possibilities: "the forest" and "the jungle." Sasha clarified that the story took place in a forest and affirmed that it is "confusing" why a giraffe would be in a forest. Another student shouts out, "There are trees in Africa." In response, she affirmed the student's comment by saying, "Sure there are." A different student shouted out, "It is made up." This time, she affirmed the student comment by repeating the comment. When she negated a student comment, she closely repeated the student's comment but filled in correct or important information. To illustrate, a student commented, "Flamingos can't fly though." In response, Sasha stated, "It is a flamingo. Flamingos can fly." The following example demonstrates how she highlighted important information or details in the text to guide student thinking.  Sasha read a page with an illustration of the bear yelling at an egg, "You will be my friend! I can wait!" The children laughed and shouted out comments such as: "That's an egg." and "Eggs can't be friends." Sasha highlighted the text by stating, "But she said, I can wait!" In response, another student shouted out, "For it to hatch!" Sasha linked the comments by stating, "She is going to wait until it hatches and it has to be her friend!" These examples demonstrate Sasha's active listening and use of students' comments during feedback. However, the feedback that she provided did not encourage students to explore or provide reasoning.

Sasha explicitly used the names of eleven students during the lesson. She did not call on or give any feedback to Jasmine, the student she identified as needing additional linguistic support. She did call on another international student by name, Abhi, three times and provide him with generic feedback. Abhi was actively engaged in the lesson and shouted out his questions and/or comments. For example, when Sasha read the title of the story, *You Will Be My Friend*, Abhi shouted out, "It doesn't say, 'Will you be my friend?' It doesn't make sense." In response, Sasha smiled and said, "It doesn't say, 'Will you be my friend?' It says, 'You WILL be my friend.'" She emphasized the word, will, dramatically in a loud voice to portray the author's intention of forcing someone be a friend instead of requesting friendship. It is possible that Sasha felt Abhi was more proficient in his linguistic skills because of his willingness to shout out questions. In contrast, Jasmine tended to participate in the discussion only when explicitly asked to share her thoughts.

**Levels of Thinking**

Sasha engaged students in a variety of levels of thinking during this lesson. In general, her learning goal to have students use coding to explain their thinking while engaging with a text was an open-level thinking task that depended on the coding symbol selected by the student. Sasha wanted students to go beyond recalling or retelling (level one thinking activities) by engaging with the coding system as a means to elicit personal responses (funny, confusing, favorite, exciting) and determining importance. It appeared as though Sasha wanted the students to understand and explain their reaction to the text. However, the students did not seem to understand that if they referred to a detail the purpose would be to explain their reaction, not to merely retell.  Thus, the majority of the coding symbols resulted in level one thinking or in students restating what occurred in the text. For example, the codes to identify a funny,

confusing, favorite, important, and exciting part all resulted in students retelling the part they were describing not how or why they personally reacted to the text. Two of the coding categories (I inferred and I made a prediction) encouraged level two thinking by having students explain text implicit clues they noticed but no students who shared their thinking with the class  used these codes. Thus, this lesson held some possibility to encourage different levels of thinking but the students' interpretation of the task resulted in mostly level one thinking. To specifically analyze the levels of thinking within the lesson, I used Costa's levels of Inquiry to examine the twenty-three questions Sasha asked her students.

As shown in Table 10, Sasha asked nine level one questions. These questions were text explicit and mainly focused on checking to see if students were able to comprehend the text. She asked four of these questions during the read aloud as she modeled how to perform the learning task of using post-it notes to code and five were asked to the two students who shared their use of the coding symbols to share their thinking. She asked eleven level two questions. These questions were text implicit. She asked five of these questions during the read aloud and six questions were asked to the two students who shared their thinking. Finally, Sasha asked three level three questions. These questions required students to go beyond the text. Two of these questions asked students to hypothesize the author's purpose for choosing to include specific details such as "Why do you think that the author did it like that?" The third question asked students to make a text-to-text connection. When the second student was sharing her thinking, Sasha asked the whole class, "Look at the picture. What book could you have maybe made a text-to-text connection with?" Thus, the majority of the questions Sasha asked during this lesson focused on level one and level two thinking.

Sasha did not ask Jasmine, the international student that she identified as needing additional linguistic support, any direct questions during the lesson. In addition, Jasmine did not shout out any comments or questions during the lesson. Jasmine was able to verbally participate in the discussion by engaging with the think-pair-share questions.  Jasmine had the opportunity to engage in two think-pair-share activities: "Talk with your partner about something you are wondering," and "Turn and talk with your partner about why you think that this flamingo wanted to be her friend?" These two think-pair-share activities provided openings for Jasmine to engage in different levels of thinking. Both think-pair-share activities were open-ended questions. The first one provided an opportunity for Jasmine to ask a possible lingering question and the second one asked her to provide reasoning. Unfortunately, the question Jasmine asked her partner was not recorded nor was her response to the second think-pair-share question. In contrast, Abhi, an international student, was explicitly called on by name three times and shouted out two questions. Sasha asked Abhi three higher thinking level questions. First, she asked him to assess the whole group's application of learning goals during the previous lesson. Then, she asked him what he thought the author's purpose was for including a giraffe as a character. Finally, she asked his input regarding what she should write regarding the whole group's prediction. Thus, there was an apparent difference in opportunities to participate and engage in different levels of thinking between Jasmine and Abhi because she was able to probe more deeply into his thinking.

## LESSON 7: *LET'S GO HUGO*

**Lesson Context**

The seventh lesson of our collaborative intervention used the book, *Let's Go Hugo*, by, Angela Domingues (2013). All of the three international students were present, including Jasmine. The book was about a bird named, Hugo, who loved the Eiffel Tower but had never

seen it because he was afraid to fly. Hugo met a new friend, Lulu, who wanted to fly to the top of the Eiffel Tower with him. Hugo didn't want to tell Lulu that he was afraid to fly and attempted to distract and stall her by exploring the park that he lived in on foot. At night, an owl gave Hugo some flying tips and helped him to make his way to the top of a tree before going to bed. In the morning, Lulu found Hugo in the tree and encouraged him to take a chance and fly. Hugo discovered that even though he was scared, he enjoyed flying with his new friend.

**Learning Goals**

During this lesson, Sasha planned to use her feedback to guide the student toward two goals.  First, she wanted to use her feedback to encourage students to make comments that created links or connections with other peers' statements or questions. Second, she wanted to use her feedback to redirect student talk back to the text if it appeared to be off topic. She selected the book because it was a gift from her previous administrator and she thought it had a good message: Don't be afraid to try new things. She displayed an anchor chart with sentence starters for students to use to help organize their thoughts and as discussion prompts. These sentence starters and discussion prompts were:  Why do you think that? Couldn't it also be that? Can you give me an example from the text? Where can I find that in the text? I agree with __ because___. I would like to add____. I disagree with ____ because____. I respect your opinion but_____. The students had been introduced to this chart in a previous lesson. During this previous lesson, the students were given cubes to place in the middle of the discussion circle when they had contributed to the conversation by sharing a thought. Sasha had learned this strategy at a professional development workshop at her school. During the previous lesson, Sasha questioned the quality of the student talk that this strategy produced. She felt the students were just making comments to "get rid of their cubes." In addition, the students seemed to talk more about

themselves instead of the text. Therefore, she planned on having the students link cubes as they made statements that connected to another student's comment. She also planned to redirect student comments back to the text when they appeared to focus only on making "student to student" connections that were unclearly related to the text.

Sasha did not plan any additional learning goals or support strategies for her international students who spoke another language than English in their homes. She did not complete a pre-observation reflection for this lesson. Instead, we verbally discussed her planning and learning goals as part of our debriefing as we reflected on the lesson after she had completed teaching it.

**Self-Identified Professional Learning**

Sasha wanted to refine her practice of providing feedback to her students as a means to scaffold their learning of how to extend and elaborate ideas. Particularly, she wanted her students to build off of previously shared comments and ideas and provide evidence and reasoning from the text.

**Shared Reflections**

After teaching the lesson, Sasha felt the lesson enactment went generally as planned. One aspect of the lesson she considered successful was that she was able to fully implement what she had planned. For example, she read the text to the students, had them sit in a circle to facilitate better student to student talk, encouraged the use of the sentence frames and prompting questions, and had students use cubes as a visual representation for their connecting comments. However, she felt that it was challenging to know when and how to provide feedback to help the students make connections with each other's comments and keep the students' comments focused on the book during the discussion.

**Identified challenges.**  Sasha had a clear expectation in her mind of how the student talk should look and sound during the discussion. She attempted to make this expectation explicit during the lesson by facilitating a reflection with the students about the content and process norms in respect to the previous lesson before reading the text. In doing so, she also helped the students set new process and content goals for this lesson. However, during the student-led discussion, Sasha noticed that the content and process was not happening the way that she had "envisioned." She reflected, "It was exactly how it was last time, where we got off on this tangent, even though I kind of talked about that." This caused an internal conflict for Sasha because she questioned what her role as a facilitator needed to look like to guide her students to have a discussion that connected with the text. She thought, "Oh, it's happening again and then in my head, I'm like, do I interject? Do I not? Do I interject? Do I not?" She felt that this internal conflict to interject into the conversation or not was caused by the fact that facilitating discussions was "something new" to her as a teacher.

Sasha mentioned her limited training to learn how to facilitate discussions with her students. She shared that she had watched a video of a teacher modeling the practice and obtained a recommended anchor chart from the Internet. Therefore, she stated her experience and training was "not enough" and she felt that she did not know what to do to help support her students during the discussion. She explained her rationale for interjecting. She thought, "Well, am I supposed to interject or am I just supposed to let it be? Then, I'm like, well, if I don't interject, how are they ever going to get to the point that I want them to get to." Although Sasha felt obligated to allow the student to talk to each other without her interruptions, she also realized that she needed to "coach them, too." She felt that her feedback held possibility to coach the students through providing explicit examples to help show the students what her expectations

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were for participating in an academic conversation. Therefore, during this lesson, Sasha made the conscious decision to interject into the conversation and redirect the conversation to meet her expectations. She decided she needed to interject because the goal wasn't to have the students "just chatting about swim lessons." Therefore, she stepped in and influenced the direction of the conversation back to the text. Sasha shared this decision to interject was hard because she was uncertain if it was the correct thing to do. She explained, "I just don't know if I'm supposed to. It's not that I'm unwilling to, you know, it's just, am I supposed to?" Her concern stemmed from how she would be perceived if she was "observed and evaluated by the administrator at that exact moment." Thus, Sasha felt a tension between trying a new teaching strategy that she struggled with and continuing her previous successful teaching methods.

**ELL students.** Although Sasha didn't plan any additional learning goals specifically for her international, non-designated ELL students, she acted on teachable moments regarding vocabulary inspired by the students' discussion. Specifically, there were two moments that she focused on vocabulary based on student comments. These vocabulary words were: content and stalling.  She believed it was important to focus on these vocabulary words "because not only would my ELL student (Jasmine) maybe not understand the definition" but she thought that all students might benefit from learning and understanding the definitions. The first vocabulary word was selected because a student asked what the word meant during the read aloud. The following exchange illustrated this interaction.

Sasha read, "Hugo was content living on the ground."

Student: What does content mean?

Sasha:  Great Question.

Another student: Happy?

Sasha:  Happy? Let's see if that makes sense. Let's see if that is a synonym. Hugo was happy living on the ground.

Students:  Yeah, that makes sense!

Sasha:  Yeah, and does it show that he is happy living on the ground? (Points to the picture.)

Students:  Yeah.

Sasha was reading the text when a student shouted out a clarifying question regarding the meaning of the word, content. Sasha did not provide the answer but instead encouraged the question by labeling it as "great." Then, another student suggested happy. In response to this suggestion, Sasha applied a strategy of replacing the confusing word with the suggested word to see if it might be a synonym. The students chorally responded to affirm the word choice.  Next, Sasha modeled another way to check for word meaning by using the picture cues. Once again, the students chorally affirmed the word choice. By applying and modeling strategies to comprehend a confusing word, Sasha provided neutral feedback that required the students to chorally assess the possible meaning of the new word. Although she did not explicitly request students to provide their reasoning why "happy" made sense or how the picture showed Hugo as being happy, she posed her feedback as a question to encourage students to negotiate the reasoning as she applied and modeled the strategies.

The second time that Sasha focused the discussion on a vocabulary word was inspired by a student conversation that she overheard during a student think-pair-share discussion. Sasha read a section of the text that described Hugo distracting Lulu with a tour of the park, eating popcorn, and playing in the fountain before they flew to the Eiffel Tower. She then asked the students to turn and talk with a partner about what Hugo was doing. After the discussion, a

student shared that she noticed Hugo wasn't telling Lulu that he didn't like to fly. Sasha added that he was thinking of other things to do instead of telling Lulu the truth. Since she overheard Abhi say that Hugo was stalling during the partner talk, she thought, "Oh, this is a great time for me to have him explain that more." She was "glad" he used the word "stalling" and felt it provided an opportunity to build understanding through vocabulary with the whole group. The following exchange captured this moment in the lesson.

Sasha: Abhi, I heard you telling someone an interesting word in your group. Can you tell us that word?

Abhi: We thought he was stalling.

Sasha: Can you explain that word, stalling?

Abhi: It's like keeping someone in that area, yeah. It was in the Cam Jansen book.

Sasha: Oh. You made a text-to-text connection with the Cam Jansen book for those of you that read it. I am glad that you made that connection but not all of us have read that story. Can you think of an example when you have stalled?

Abhi: I have stalled never.

Sasha: You've never stalled a day in your life? Tim has!

Tim: I stalled my mom so I wouldn't have to go to bed.

Sasha: Perfect example. I bet that has happened to a lot of us. We don't want to go to bed so we say, "Mom can I have another snack? Mom, I have to go to the bathroom. Mom, I need a drink of water. Mom, do you want to read this book with me? Mom, can you snuggle with me? I missed you today." But, your mom is smart. She knows what you are doing!

In this exchange, Sasha asked Abhi to share the interesting word that she heard used in his group. Abhi shared that he thought Hugo was stalling. Next, she asked him to explain what the word stalling meant. Abhi thought it meant, "keeping someone in that area" because he had seen the word before in another book. Then, she asked Abhi if he could share an example of a time that he had stalled. Abhi clarified that he did not stall. Therefore, she asked another student, Tim, to share an example. Tim provided an example of when he stalled so he didn't have to go to bed. Sasha built off of Tim's example by making excuses to avoid going to bed. These excuses seemed to connect with the students because they giggled as she stated them. In this exchange, Sasha once again used questions as feedback to encourage Abhi to clarify the meaning of the word stall. Since Abhi claimed he did not stall, she asked another student to provide an example. She affirmed his example by providing feedback as explicit statements that might be said in connection with his example. Although these two exchanges were not planned, Sasha shifted the topic of the discussion based on student comments and implemented impromptu feedback to encourage student thinking with a conscious decision to support her international non-native English speaking student, Jasmine. In addition, she was able to highlight another international student, Abhi's, use of an interesting word to benefit vocabulary growth.

**Self-Identified Professional Learning**

Sasha shared that she was gaining confidence in interjecting into the student discussion by providing feedback. As mentioned above, she was also starting to use questions to prompt student thinking instead of repeating the student comment. She struggled with concerns about the process of the discussion and content of her feedback. In regards to the process of the discussion, she was concerned with the time required to read the text and engage students in a discussion and how that influenced the level of student participation. She worried that reading the book with

questions and answers and then forming a circle for the discussion took an excessive amount of time and engaged the students in "a lot of sitting." She explained, "I feel like a read aloud shouldn't take that long sometimes because you just lose them." She wondered if students thought, "Oh, I still have my cubes. I better say some things so I can throw mine in the middle because I'm tired of sitting here." She also acknowledged that there was not time for every student to make or share a statement. Although she valued students who were confident and willing to speak during the discussion, she was concerned about only a few students dominating the conversation. She was hopeful that the students were able to use the cubes to monitor their participation but noticed many of the students still had their original two cubes at the end of the discussion. Another teaching strategy that she used to increase student participation was the use of think-pair-shares. She also found this practice "really hard" because she struggled to hone in on certain conversations. Instead, she found that she was only able to hear students that were the "loudest." She also shared that she tried to read student lips because she did not feel it was time worthy to "get out of my seat and be like, oh, what are you talking about?"

Sasha was also concerned about the content of her feedback. She shared, "I don't know how I'm supposed to sometimes react to things." She questioned how she should respond to student comments because she didn't want to "sound negative" or too positive.  She asked if she was supposed to say, "Oh, great, you're so smart. Somebody else tell me something smart or am I supposed to be like, hmm, I think you're like way off, in my opinion?" She was also aware that her students were attentive and influenced by the feedback they received from her body language. She shared that she was concerned that she might "have a scrunchy, negative face" if she did not understand or agree with a comment a student made.  In addition to her concerns with the quality of her feedback, Sasha also wondered about the quantity of her feedback. She asked,

"Every time they raise their hand and say something, am I supposed to give them feedback? Or is it okay for me to be like, oh, does somebody else have something to share?" Sasha explained that she struggled because she felt bad not commenting on the student remarks and questions. She also worried about students feeling "ostracized" or "stupid" during the discussion if she asked questions about their comments or ignored if she didn't make a comment.

Sasha wanted to engage her students in metacognitive reflection after the text-based discussion to help them self-assess their discussion. Specifically, she would like to provide feedback on the discussion by citing specific student comments or questions that highlighted connections to other students and the text. She shared that she had wanted to end this lesson with a reflection. She stated, "I tried that. Did you see I tried it and they were playing with the cubes and they were all worried about this, that, and the tower." She decided to abort this plan because she could feel herself "just getting frustrated" because she "wanted to stop and then talk about how this time was different than last time and some of the good things that had happened in our discussions this time" but she understood that the students were not able to sit and focus any longer. Therefore, she felt she needed to plan a shorter, more concise lesson so the students could focus on the learning goal and reflect on the discussion goals. She wondered if this would help or hurt her international student, Jasmine, who she felt needed linguistic support to participate in the discussion. She worried that it might be a "bad thing in the sense that we're not sitting and talking as long and her processing, if it is about something that maybe she's not familiar with, might not have enough time to make the connections in her head, with her culture if she needs to." However, she also felt it might be a positive opportunity because it "might maybe challenge her to make the connections faster…because she, in the circle, took a really long time to say

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something." Sasha further acknowledged Jasmine's participation as she commented, "But then again, there were kids who said nothing and she did say something."

**Recommendations During the Debrief**

I made two main recommendations to Sasha based on her concerns. First, I suggested that she did not have to always read the entire text. Instead, she might decide to stop at a high point of conflict within the text. For example, in the story, *Let's Go Hugo*, she could have stopped the story when Hugo finally yelled, "I am afraid to fly" and discussed the theme of having courage to try new things even when you are afraid. I was hopeful that by shortening the read aloud and focusing the discussion on a theme, Sasha would be able to increase student focus on the learning objective and decrease off-task behavior due to lack of student stamina for sitting for such a long period. In addition, it might also provide additional space for student participation by balancing the time for listening to the text and talking about it. During this lesson, the read aloud lasted twenty minutes and the student discussion lasted about thirteen. I suggested stopping at a high point of conflict to motivate and build student interest in the discussion. Also, since the solution was unknown there would be more opportunity to make inferences and use evidence from the text to support possible outcomes. Sasha seemed open to this suggestion of stopping at a section of the book instead of reading the entire text because she thought this might help students focus on the text and characters too. She stated, "Yeah, and then, you're right, and then maybe that would lead to more discussion about Hugo instead of… Which is great that they're making text to self-connections but our connections get off on tangents and we've missed the point of what's happening."

My next suggestion was related directly to her professional goal of providing feedback in relation to her concerns of quantity and quality. My advice was to be strategic when providing

feedback. I encouraged her to not give feedback after every student comment. Instead, I asked her to focus her feedback on requesting students to provide reasoning by asking questions to follow up on their thoughts instead of filling in a possible reason for them (McKeown and Beck, 2006). To illustrate, if I student made a comment such as "I think he is afraid of heights," then Sasha could ask, "Was there something in the book that made you think that or did you have an experience when you felt afraid of heights?" I wanted to encourage her to not provide feedback on every student comment, not only to save time, but also as a means to help facilitate the topics of the discussion. For example, her feedback could be a question that encouraged students to provide evidence from the book to support their reasoning. In addition, presenting feedback as a question instead of a statement supported a neutral stance while requesting reasoning.

**Serving ELL Students**

During this lesson, Sasha demonstrated an improvement in making progress toward meeting some of the six principles of teaching ELL students (McIntyre, 2010). She implemented rigorous teaching and curriculum that engaged the students in a joint productivity activity by carefully planning the instructional conversation. She created space in her lesson for literacy development by focusing the literacy learning goal of extending and elaborating ideas. Although she did not specifically create an additional language learning goal, she did enact on teachable moments to expound on vocabulary from the text. She supported the principle of curricular connections by selecting a text that the students found interesting due to the setting and problem/solution. However, once again, she did not address the principle of family involvement. Therefore, Sasha made progress in meeting five of the six principles for teaching ELL students during this lesson.

Next, I examined Sasha's instructional modifications to support ELL students within this lesson (Goldenberg, 2010). During this lesson, Sasha appeared to provide all of the six recommended instructional modifications. She provided explicit interactive instruction and learning opportunities for her ELL students to interact with peers while she read the text and during the discussion. As in the previously analyzed lesson, she provided two forms of input: oral (teacher and peer comments) and visual (text illustrations and anchor chart with prompts). These sources of input supported her ELL students to have the opportunity to mentally synthesize the text. Her ELL students were also provided an opportunity to orally synthesize the text during the discussion by asking questions and making comments. The learning goal itself supported EOLD development by encouraging students to extend and elaborate ideas stated by peers about the text. In addition, the enacted lesson provided vocabulary experiences. Thus, Sasha demonstrated a significant increase in her ability support the linguistic needs of her ELL students during this lesson through instructional modifications.

## LESSON 7: ANALYSIS

Sasha continued to work toward her self-selected professional development goal to increase her ability to move towards a dialogic teaching stance represented within the DIT Feedback Teaching Indicator (Reznitskaya, 2012). I explored if and how Sasha provided her students with feedback to see if there were any changes in her professional growth. First, I analyzed the type of feedback to determine if the feedback was generic or explicit. Specifically, I was looking to see if there was a decrease in generic feedback and an increase in explicit feedback represented by teacher responses that pushed students to further explore their reasoning without judging the conclusion. Next, I analyzed the students' opportunities to engage in different levels of thinking during the lesson (Costa, 2001).

**Professional Goal**

Sasha gave generic and explicit feedback during this lesson. The majority of feedback was generic. Once again, Sasha engaged in active listening by restating student responses, filling in reasoning possibilities for students, and identifying possible strategies they used to support comprehension during the read aloud. Thus, her generic feedback went beyond the descriptor or yes, no, maybe, and not quite. However, only about a quarter of her statements qualified as explicit feedback that pushed students to provide or explore reasoning. Therefore, Sasha was shifting from a monologic feedback stance toward a dialogic one. Next, I will provide examples of her use of generic and explicit feedback.

Sasha provided feedback to her students forty-two times during this lesson. Twenty-nine of the feedback statements were identified as generic and typically included active listening strategies. The following exchange captured this type of generic feedback. Sasha had initiated a discussion by asking why the students thought Hugo was stalling even though he wanted to see the Eiffel Tower.

Student:  Maybe he doesn't know how to fly.

Sasha:  Oh. So that would be an inference right? You are inferring that maybe he doesn't know how to fly so he is acting that way. Lyla?

Lyla:  He is not like that bird since he lives on the ground and he doesn't fly.

Sasha:   So you think he is just not like her. Jasmine?

Jasmine:  Maybe he is afraid of heights and that is why he's like low.

Sasha:  He could be afraid of heights. That is a good inference.

The first student responded that Hugo might be stalling because he did not know how to fly. Sasha provided generic feedback but used active listening to name a comprehension strategy and

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restate the student's response. Next, another student, Lyla, suggested that Hugo was different from the other bird because he lived on the ground and did not fly. In response, Sasha provided generic feedback with active listening by summarizing the student's comment. Then, Jasmine suggested that Hugo was afraid of heights. Once again, Sasha provided generic feedback by restating Jasmine's comment and naming the possible comprehension strategy that she might have used to draw her conclusion. Although all of these examples of feedback used active listening skills, they did not push students to explore their reasoning so they were considered generic.

Sasha provided students with thirteen explicit feedback statements. These explicit feedback statements appeared neutral and pushed students to explore their reasoning. To illustrate, the following exchange demonstrated Sasha providing explicit feedback that encouraged a student to explore his reasoning.

Tim:  I can see the Eiffel Tower way over there.

Sasha:  You can. Tim, does your schema tell you anything about the Eiffel Tower?

Tim:  Now, I know that they live in Paris.

In this exchange, Tim noticed a historical monument in the illustration. Sasha responded by affirming it was the Eiffel Tower and asked him what seeing that monument meant to him. Tim responded that he seeing the Eiffel Tower was evidence that the setting for the story was Paris. In this exchange Sasha used a neutral question to prompt the student to explore why he felt it was significant to see the Eiffel Tower in the illustration.  It is interesting to note, three of the thirteen explicit feedback statements were directed at Abhi and Jasmine. These explicit feedback statements directed at Abhi and Jasmine asked them to explore their reasoning by making an explicit connection with the text. One example occurred one Abhi shared, "Hugo was afraid but I

learned now that he actually likes to fly now." Sasha provided neutral feedback and attempted to

share the responsibility of asking for reasoning by saying, "So this is a great spot for somebody

to say Abhi…" and pointing to the anchor chart question prompt: Can you tell me more? Another

example involved Jasmine.  During the student led discussion, Jasmine stated, "This reminds me

of the time that my sister wanted to play catch with me and I kept her busy so she would forget

about playing catch." In response, Sasha provided explicit feedback by stating, "Jasmine, can

you now say how that relates to the story? You made a great connection but you have to explain

how that goes with the book so other people can think about that." These explicit feedback

statements appear to have been inspired by Sasha's desire to influence students to make direct

connections with the text as mentioned during her debriefing interview.

**Levels of Thinking**

Sasha engaged students in a variety of levels of thinking during this lesson. In general,

her learning goal was to have students make verbal connections with previous students'

comments. However, as she enacted the lesson, it became clear that she also wanted students to

explain their thinking by providing reasoning while using evidence from the text. Thus, this

lesson held possibility to encourage different levels of thinking. To specifically analyze the

levels of thinking within the lesson, I used Costa's levels of Inquiry to examine the twenty-three

questions Sasha asked her students.

As shown in Table 11, Sasha asked one level one question. This question was text

explicit and was used to make a direct connection with the text. Jasmine was retelling a part of

the text and Sasha used the new vocabulary word, stalled, to summarize her comment. The

following exchange captured this.

> Jasmine:  They kind of like Hugo, well the author didn't say this, but Hugo talked her to
> do things to keep the bird busy.

Sasha: When he stalled, right?

Jasmine:  My sister stalls when I want her to do something like Hugo when Lulu wants to do something.

After Sasha summarized Jasmine's statement by presenting the word stall, Jasmine offered an example of when she has experienced someone stalling in her life in connection with the characters in the text. Thus, this comment demonstrated that Jasmine understood the text and new vocabulary word.

The majority (18) of the questions Sasha asked during this lesson were level two. These questions were text implicit. Some of the level two questions focused on students providing reasoning for the characters actions such as: Why you think Hugo is changing his mind?  Other level two questions brought focus to the connection between student comments that shared personal connections and the text. These questions made the text-to-self connection explicit such as "Abhi, Can you tell us how that relates to the story?" Sasha had mentioned that she wanted to use her feedback to help guide the students to make connections with and use evidence from the text. Thus, many of her feedback comments were posed as questions, which prompted the students to return to the text resulting in level two thinking.

Finally, Lola asked four level three questions. These questions required students to go beyond the text by using background knowledge and experiences to provide answers. Two of these questions asked students to use their prior knowledge about birds to decide if Hugo looked like a bird that could not fly. These questions were inspired by a student comment that hypothesized Hugo might not be able to fly. It is interesting that the students were able to make connections with other birds that cannot fly such as penguins and kiwis to support this student's hypothesis.  The other two questions asked students to make a text-to-self connection by sharing

previous experiences.  These questions were: "Tim, does your schema tell you anything about the Eiffel tower?" and "Can you think of an example when you have stalled?" In conclusion, this large majority of questions made the discussion largely focused on level two thinking.

During this lesson, Sasha directly asked Jasmine and Abhi questions. She asked Jasmine three questions and prompted other students to ask her two additional questions or extend her comments by asking, "Who can comment off of what Jasmine has said?" Sasha asked Jasmine two level two questions and one level one question. Sasha asked Abhi six questions. Five questions were level two and one question was level three. Both Jasmine and Abhi were explicitly asked to explain how their personal connections related to the text as part of the level two questions. Thus both Jasmine and Abhi were encouraged to participate in the lesson and provided an opportunity to engage in different levels of thinking through specific questioning strategies. It is important to note that this lesson provided an increase in Jasmine's participation and thinking opportunities due these questions explicitly directed at her.

## LESSON 9: *CHOWDER*

**Lesson Context**

This lesson used the book, *Chowder*, by, Peter Brown (2006) and was the ninth lesson of our collaborative intervention. All of the three international students were present including Jasmine. The book was about a quirky Bulldog named, Chowder, who didn't have any friends except for his owners. He tried to make friends with the other dogs in his neighborhood but they all thought he was strange because he liked to do human things instead of dog things such as dig for fossils, play on the computer, and read the newspaper. One day, Chowder saw a Billboard advertising a new petting zoo at the local grocery store named, Food Ranch. Since the other animals had mentioned he belonged in a zoo, Chowder decided he wanted to visit the petting zoo

and make some friends. Chowder wanted his owners to go to the grocery store but he soon got tired of waiting so he snuck into the kitchen late at night and ate all of the food. When the owners woke up and found their kitchen cupboards empty, they decided to go visit the Food Ranch and Chowder was happy his plan worked. Sasha read the beginning of the book so the students did not know what happened at the Food Ranch. After she read a section of the text, she had the students form two small discussion circles. She organized the two groups by student personality. She put students who were quieter or less willing to talk in one group and louder or more confident speakers in the other group. After the student led discussion, the students returned to one large circle to reflect on the smaller discussion groups.

**Learning Goals**

Sasha wanted her students to continue practicing their participation in a student centered text-based discussion. She selected the book because she felt it provided a detailed description of the character through text and illustrations. She displayed the anchor chart with the sentence starters described in the previous lesson discussed above but did not directly refer to it before, during, or after this lesson. In the previous lesson (lesson eight), Sasha had set the learning goal of having students predict what the character would do based on evidence from the text. Sasha felt her students struggled with reflecting on and discussing the text to support their prediction. Therefore, she wanted to take a step back and ask the students to focus on what they learned about the character. She also noticed during the previous lesson that her students "all wanted to talk during the discussion which led to lots of students talking over each other because they all had an opinion." Thus, in this lesson, she decided to read one book and split the class into two circles. She thought this might "cut down on the interruptions and allow other students the

opportunity to share." Her anticipated concern was that she felt it would be hard "to listen to both and 'coach'" both groups with feedback as needed.

**Additional ELL student learning goal.** Sasha did not create an additional learning goal for Jasmine. However, she did consider the benefits this lesson might provide for Jasmine by providing space for her participation in the discussion. Although this lesson was designed to encourage all student participation, she thought Jasmine would benefit from the increased opportunity to participate both as a speaker and listener. She wanted Jasmine to "have more of an opportunity to share her thinking and to learn from her classmates that usually don't share but now have a chance to share because the class is split" into smaller groups. Overall, Sasha was hopeful that the smaller groups might positively influence and increase general student participation. Specifically, she was hopeful that students who were less apt to participate in the discussion might be willing to share in the small group setting. She felt the small groups could present an opening for "a close knit discussion" without the pressure of "trying to interject" into the conversation. Thus, Sasha wanted Jasmine to have more opportunities to interject and speak as well as listening to peers during the small group discussion. Sasha noticed that Jasmine was always willing to share, but struggled to interject into the conversation. For example, Jasmine attempted to interject into the student discussion about five times before being able to share her thought. These attempts to interject were drowned out with other students speaking loudly over her voice, which resulted in her becoming quiet and waiting for another opportunity to share. Sasha also noticed that Jasmine applied comprehension strategies such as making inferences about a character without being prompted to do so. Finally, Sasha was aware that Jasmine needed opportunities to organize and articulate her thinking and that feedback supported this process. Sasha stated, "There was a part, though, where her (Jasmine's) thinking didn't make

sense to me and I had to ask her to explain it more." Thus, Sasha was becoming more conscious during her lesson planning and enactment of applying strategies to support Jasmine's participation and linguistic needs.

**Self-Identified Professional Learning**

Sasha wanted to use a new strategy designed to increase student participation during the discussion. Hence, she created two circles to create a more conducive context for students to listen and share. This concern for increasing student participation appeared to overshadow her professional development goal of providing feedback. When I asked her, "And then with your feedback goal, what did you do differently or what did you plan to do differently? Was there a plan?" She responded, "Well, I was hoping that the small group was the plan. Just trying to see what happened with that and then I thought at the end that it would be important to pull it back together to talk about maybe some of the good things and the bad things in case I wanted to do it again." A positive factor of this context was that monitoring the two circles physically removed Sasha from one group and forced the students to talk to each other. Particularly, Sasha was happy to hear students taking on a variety of roles in the discussion by actively listening to their peers as demonstrated by making comments such as "tell me more" and "Can you explain your thinking?" However, a negative factor of her physical removal from the two groups was that she was not able to actively listen as deeply herself and provide students with neutral or explicit feedback on the content of their discussion.

**Shared Reflections**

After teaching the lesson, Sasha felt the lesson enactment went as expected. She read the text to the students, had them sit in two circles to facilitate better student-to-student talk, and closed the lesson with a reflection on the discussion process.  She stated that the lesson "was

exactly what I thought it would be" because she had anticipated that there was "going to be some

goofiness." Sasha anticipated that moving between the two groups was going to create

challenges such as listening to both groups and keeping the students on task because "you can't

be in two places at once even though you try." She shared that the students "actually did better"

then she had anticipated without her focusing on the anchor chart with sentence starters. She was

pleased to see that the students "just interjected and thought of other ways to talk with each

other."  She explained, "I think that sometimes that stepping back and just like letting them have

it is what needs to happen, where I didn't really prompt them on what to say other than talk about

the characters and then some of them just took it upon themselves to talk more." This being said,

Sasha provided little feedback to her students during this lesson. The feedback that she did

provide tended to focus on norms and procedures and not on neutrally encouraging students to

explore their thinking. This created challenges for Sasha during the lesson because she noticed

that students anticipated and expected her feedback.

**Identified challenges.**  Sasha noticed that students anticipated and expected her

feedback. She stated, "They (the students) were sitting in the circle and I was standing and they

were all looking at me wherever I was." She found this challenging because she wanted the

students to increase their sense of ownership and participation during the discussion without her

constant monitoring and presence. This influenced her to not provide feedback. Instead, she

served the role of passive observer and only stepped in when she felt it was necessary. She did

this by physically removing herself from the circle and moving between the two groups of

students. She explained, "So what I did was I came and sat over here, but I was still listening

over there to what they were talking about." She felt this was her best option because the

students needed to understand that the expectation was to talk to each other and not only to her,

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the teacher. She shared, "When I walked away, the girl's eyes went like this and she just kept talking to me as I'm like not even anywhere near her and she kind of got this weird look on her face like, 'Why are you walking away from me? How can you tell me I did well?' Then she started talking to the circle." Sasha appeared very aware of how her proximity and attention influenced the students to direct their conversation toward her instead of each other and she felt this was counterproductive to her goal of engaging students in a discussion. She was also very aware of the importance of creating norms for students to share with each other.

Once she had accomplished getting the students to talk to each other by removing herself from the circle, she noticed another challenge with facilitating peer talk. Sasha noticed that even though she tried to separate the students into two circles based on their confidence with speaking in a group, some of the students took on a leadership role within both circles. In some cases this had a negative influence that required Sasha to step in and in other cases it was a positive influence on the group discussion that allowed Sasha to remain out of the discussion. An example of a negative influence of students taking on a leadership role during the discussion was captured in this interaction between two students.

> Jack: He is not like a dog. He is like a human.
>
> Dee: We know.
>
> Sasha: Dee, that is not a very polite thing to say. It would be better to say, "I understand what you are thinking, Jack, because I was thinking the same thing." Ok? That was the first time Jack shared in the circle and I was just thinking, Yeah, you shared! So Jack, can you explain your thoughts again, please?
>
> Jack: He is not like a normal dog. He is like a human.
>
> Dee: I understand your thinking because that is really what he is doing.

In this exchange, Jack, a student who had not previously participated in a group discussion during this study, made a comment that was similar to previously stated comments by other

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students in the circle so another student, Dee, pointed out that this comment had already been made by others in the group. In response, Sasha intervened. In doing so, she provided the second student with a more polite way of responding to anther student who was sharing a similar thought. Next, she complimented Jack for sharing and encouraged him to share again. This resulted in Jack restating his response and Dee attempting to respond in a more polite way. Sasha shared, "That was really hard for me because I didn't want to be negative towards her (Dee) but then I thought, well, that's probably the first time I've ever heard him (Jack) talk in any of the circles and what she said was kind of snarky." Sasha knew that she wanted to create a space where all students felt comfortable contributing to the discussion. Therefore, she decided to intervene quickly and explicitly by defining the expected norms during discussions and modeling appropriate behavior.

A positive influence Sasha noticed regarding students taking on a leadership role during the discussion was encouraging other students to stay on task. She had anticipated there was "going to be some goofiness" due to her lack of presence in the circles as she moved back and forth between them. However, she had not anticipated that students would take on a leadership role and encourage others to remain on task. She was pleased to hear students say, "Guys, we gotta pull it back together" when other students were "giggling and laughing" about "I don't know what." Thus, students started to attempt to monitor their own behavior. Sasha labeled their attempt to monitor their group's behavior as "positive peer pressure" that demonstrated the students' sense of ownership of the discussion. Besides lack of teacher proximity, Sasha felt that the length of the discussion circles influenced some of the student off-task behavior too. She explained, "It did get to a point where we were in our circles for just a little bit too long. But I also wanted to have everybody have enough time to have the opportunity to participate and then

it was challenging for me to be in two places at once." Sasha and I both noticed that the group that I quietly sat with that included Jasmine did not have any off task discussion. We felt either simply the presence of an adult figure or possibly the presence of the recording device influenced students to stay on task so they did not need to enact the same type of behavior self-monitoring.

 **Self-identified professional learning.** Sasha felt that her work towards her professional learning goal was "going well." She believed it was going well because she was able to envision and enact giving feedback during text-based discussions with her students. She explained, "I'm stepping in more in the way that I need to. Like stepping in sometimes to model things and not stepping in other times just to kind of see what is going to happen and then maybe talking about it more towards the end or after about ways to fix it." Thus, she was gaining confidence in her role in the discussion. She reflected on two specific moments when she felt she needed to take action and facilitate the discussion. First, she mentioned intervening during the "snarky comment" discussed earlier. She felt that was an important moment to step in because Jack "was finally taking that step off the cliff and then she (Dee) kind of backhanded him." The second moment she cited occurred during lesson seven when the student comments were not explicitly connected with the text the characters but were more focused on their own experiences with swim lessons. In response, Sasha reminded the students to make their thoughts about their personal experiences connect explicitly with the experiences of the characters. She felt this was an important time to intervene because she noticed the discussion was "going in the opposite direction" that she wanted it to go. Thus, Sasha was gaining confidence in her ability not only to envision how she wanted the discussion to go but also how to better facilitate it to met her academic and social learning goals socially.

This being said, Sasha still had concerns about other general issues in regards to facilitating a read aloud. For example, she felt she was often "second guessing" herself. In this lesson, she wondered whether she had chosen a good book for the discussion. In an effort to keep the lesson short, she decided to use some of the book because she thought the students could gather enough information about the character. After the discussion, she reflected that it might not have been enough detailed and varied information to discuss in detail. In general, the message about the character was simply that he did not act like a normal dog and preferred to act like a human. She also shared that she wondered, "Should I have prompts or should I just let them go?" She admitted that she thought of prompts on the drive home on Friday and thought, "I should probably write these down because I won't remember them by Tuesday and then I just let it go." She felt that some of these concerns stemmed from her not knowing how much guidance her students needed. She explained that in the beginning of the year she expected to intervene and model more. Therefore, it felt strange to be engaging students in new routines, norms, and practice at the end of the year that required so much teacher guidance.

**Recommendations During the Debrief**

During our debriefing, I made two recommendations. First, I recommended that it might be beneficial if students were able to refer to the text as they discussed it. I knew that Sasha wanted to encourage the students to use evidence from the text to support their responses but I also felt that it could be challenging for students to "recall" details and specific quotes in order to do so. Therefore, providing a copy of the text to students could help them refer to events, illustrations, or quotes that supported the ideas they were presenting to the group. Since there were twenty-two students in Sasha's class, providing each student with a copy of the text was not a possible solution due to lack of resources. Therefore, Sasha and I discussed the possibility of

providing each of the two circles of students with a copy of the text to use as a shared group resource. We brainstormed using a book that she already owned and possibly borrowing an additional copy from a colleague or the school library. In addition, I recommended that Jasmine be given the book within her circle to encourage her participation in the discussion because I believed that the text would be a good visual resource.

My second recommendation was to strategically prepare some open-ended questions to insert into the student discussion. I encouraged her to select a certain event, illustration, or quote, develop an open ended-question, provide the relevant page number from the book, and specifically ask one student to respond. Then, I encouraged her to follow up by asking the student to explore his or her reasoning. This strategy could help her assess and support students during the discussion. Specifically, she could check in on Jasmine's comprehension of the text and peer discussion. I provided this recommendation because I was concerned during this lesson about the lack of content feedback and the focus on a lower level thinking task as the main learning objective (students recalling what they noticed about the main character.) During this lesson, Sasha had focused her feedback on supporting students to participate in the discussion and not on developing the students' comments and reasoning. Although both types of feedback were important, her professional development goal was to increase her use of explicit feedback that encouraged students to explore their reasoning.

**Serving ELL Students**

During this lesson, Sasha did not display as strong of ability to meet the needs of her ELL students as in the previous lesson. She made progress toward meeting four of the six principles for teaching ELL students (McIntyre, 2010). She implemented rigorous teaching and curriculum that engaged the students in a joint productivity activity as they used evidence and reasoning to

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share what they learned about the character. She supported the principle of curricular connections by selecting a text with a main character that the students found interesting. She specifically planned the group structure to allow students an increased opportunity to orally share in their smaller groups. This demonstrated an opportunity for students to engage in language and literacy learning. However, she did not carefully plan content for the instructional conversation as evidenced by her feedback that mainly focused on the process of the discussion, not the content. In addition, she did not include any means of family involvement in the lesson.

Sasha appeared to implement five of the six instructional modifications to support ELL students during this lesson (Goldenberg, 2010). She provided explicit interactive instruction and learning opportunities for her ELL students to interact with peers while reading the text and during the discussion. As in the previously two analyzed lessons, she provided two forms of input: oral (teacher and peer comments) and visual (picture cues in the text and an anchor chart with prompts). She supported her ELL students to orally and mentally synthesize the text by providing opportunities to discuss and listen to peer comments about the character within a smaller group context. The smaller group structure was implemented as a means to increase the opportunity for EOLD development during the lesson while focusing on content. However, there did not appear to be any planned vocabulary experiences in this lesson. There was one enacted vocabulary experience when Jair asked what a billboard was. Sasha responded by sharing the illustration of a billboard. This being said, Sasha could have planned more vocabulary experiences during the lesson to better support the linguistic needs of her ELL students,

## LESSON 9: ANALYSIS

Sasha continued to refine her teaching practices in an attempt to move towards a dialogic teaching stance represented within the DIT Feedback teaching indicator (Reznitskaya, 2012).

The DIT Feedback teaching indicator was used to explore if and how Sasha provided her

students with feedback. I analyzed the type of feedback that she provided during the text-based

discussion during this lesson by examining her responses to students. Specifically, I looked at her

use of generic feedback and dialogic feedback during the lesson. Next, I analyzed the students'

opportunities to engage in different levels of thinking during the lesson (Costa, 2001).

**Professional Goal:  Feedback**

As in the previous two lessons discussed above, Sasha gave generic and explicit feedback

during this lesson. Although the majority of her feedback continued to be defined as generic, the

level of explicit feedback increased in this lesson. Roughly a third of her statements qualified as

explicit feedback that pushed students to provide or explore reasoning. Therefore, Sasha

continued to demonstrate a shift from a monologic feedback stance toward a dialogic one.

Sasha provided feedback to her students fourteen times during this lesson. Nine of the

feedback statements were identified as generic and typically included active listening strategies.

The following exchange captured this type of generic feedback. In this exchange, Sasha and the

students were discussing an illustration of Chowder using a pick ax to dig up dinosaur bones

while the neighborhood dogs watched. A student pointed out that Chowder was acting like a

human.

Sasha:  What is a normal dog supposed to do?

Student:  Dig up their own bone.

Sasha: Find one bone!

Student:  Chew on it!

Sasha:  Chew on it and run away and play with it. Bury it.

Student: Not twelve.

Sasha: Not a whole skeleton.

Students:  Yeah.

In response to the student's comment that Chowder was acting like a human, Sasha asked the students to provide their thoughts of what a "normal" dog would do. A student responded that a normal dog would, "dig up their own bone." Sasha then provided generic feedback by restating the student comment and focusing on one bone. Another student commented that normal dogs "chew" on bones. Sasha again, provided generic feedback by restating the comment and adding additional comments about dogs playing with bones and burying them. A third student built off of the first student's comment by sharing normal dogs dig up one bone "not twelve."  Sasha provided generic feedback by confirming the comment and using the vocabulary word, skeleton, to describe the amount of bones. The generic feedback that Sasha provided during this lesson engaged students in talking about the text and provided space for their comments but did not support students to explore their thinking and reasoning.

Five of the fourteen feedback statements that Sasha provided to her students were explicit. These explicit feedback statements appeared neutral and pushed students to explore their reasoning. To illustrate, the following exchange demonstrated Sasha providing explicit feedback that encouraged a student to explore his reasoning.

Sasha:  What did the author mean when they wrote, "The more he tried to fit in, the more he stood out."

Ted: He is kind of acting like a person.

Sasha:  Yeah, he is. Instead of what is he supposed to be doing?

Ted:  Acting like a dog.

Sasha:  How would a dog act on this page?

Ted:  Taking the bones out of the ground like,  "Argh!"

In this exchange, Sasha prompted Ted to consider the meaning of a quote in the text. The student responded that the quote implied that Chowder was not acting in the way that he was expected to. Sasha pressed Ted to provide explain how the character was supposed to act. Ted reasoned that since Chowder was a dog he should act like a dog. Sasha once again pressed for him to explore his reasoning deeper by providing a context by referring to an illustration of Chowder excavating fossils with tools.  In response, the student enacted how a dog would sound with a bone to demonstrate his thinking. This example demonstrated how Sasha used feedback to encourage a student to explore his reasoning. Most of the discussion and feedback that occurred during the read aloud focused on the excerpt of Chowder digging up the fossils.

Sasha did not provide Jasmine with any generic or explicit feedback regarding the learning content during this lesson. During this lesson, Jasmine spoke three times. She did not speak during the read aloud but spoke twice in the small circle. First, she shared that she noticed Chowder liked doing human things. It took her a few attempts to share that statement because other students spoke over her as they all tried to share at the same time. Later, she asked another student, who rarely participated during discussions, to share his thinking. The student was reluctant to share and the group became quiet so Sasha approached the group to find out why they were not discussing the character. The third time Jasmine spoke occurred when the whole group returned to reflect on the small group discussions.  Jasmine raised her hand and she was called on to share. Jasmine stated, "My group started with copying what other people said." Sasha replied, "So maybe we just ran out of things to say?" This feedback did not focus on the learning content but more on the overall participation and process of the discussion.

In contrast, Abhi received explicit feedback as he shared comments during the read aloud and whole group reflection. I sat with Jasmine's small group and Abhi was in the other small

group. Therefore, I was only able to record and capture his comments during the read aloud and whole group reflection. During these times, Abhi participated four times.  One of those times, he raised his hand and was called on by name. During the read aloud, Abhi disagreed with another student about what Chowder was doing with the bones. Abhi stated, "No I think he is trying get his friends to give their bones." In response, Sasha provided explicit feedback that encouraged Abhi to explore his thinking by stating, "You think he wants his friends to give their bones to make his picture or do you think he is digging up this fossil?" This feedback statement supported Abhi to explore his thinking by summarizing the two opinions and restating it as a question. Abhi also requested clarification of a new vocabulary word during the read aloud by asking, "What is a Billboard?" Sasha provided explicit feedback by stating, "I am going to turn the page and you are going to see what a Billboard is. Then, she pointed to the illustration of the billboard. The third comment shared by Abhi demonstrated his comprehension of Chowder's plan to coerce his owners to visit the Food Ranch so he could go to the petting zoo as he stated, "He ate up all of the food!" Sasha did not respond to this comment. The final comment that Abhi made occurred during the whole group reflection. Abhi shared that some students were off task during his small group discussion. In response, Sasha provided him with feedback on the overall participation and process of the discussion by sharing that she was happy to hear some of the students encouraged others to "pull it back together."

**Levels of Thinking**

Sasha engaged students in a variety of levels of thinking during this lesson. In general, her learning goal was to have students share what they noticed or learned about the main character of the text, Chowder. This learning goal engaged students in level one thinking. However, this lesson encouraged different levels of thinking within the discussion through the

questions presented to the students. To specifically analyze the levels of thinking within the lesson, I used Costa's levels of Inquiry to examine the seven questions Sasha asked her students.

As indicated in Table 12, Sasha asked two level one questions. These questions were text explicit and occurred early on during the read aloud. Sasha asked a student, Lyla, to retell a part of the text and Sasha suggested a specific vocabulary word, paleontologist, to name the occupation the student was describing. The following exchange captured this.

Sasha: What is happening on this page, Lyla?

Lyla: He is doing stuff like either kids or fossil people

Sasha: Paleontologist?

Lyla: Yeah, would be doing.

Sasha's level one questions encouraged Lyla to openly share with the whole group what had occurred in the text. This helped create a group consensus for understanding the text and the appropriate vocabulary words needed to talk about what was happening.

Sasha also asked two level two questions. These two questions were text implicit and focused on guiding students to examine and interpret the text. For example, Sasha asked, "What did the author mean when they wrote, 'The more he tried to fit in, the more he stood out?'" She also used a level two question as feedback to a student, Abhi, to encourage him to examine his thinking by asking, "You think he wants his friends to give their bones to make his picture or do you think he is digging up this fossil?" All of the level one and level two question answers could generally be found in the text.

Finally, Sasha asked three level three questions. These questions required students to go beyond the text by using background knowledge and experiences to provide answers. All three of these questions asked students to use their prior knowledge to decide how normal dogs

behave. This background knowledge was foundational for students to understand the humor presented in the text and the premise of what made Chowder "quirky" which caused him to want to go to a petting zoo to try to make a friend. To illustrate, Sasha asked, "What is a normal dog supposed to do?"

During this lesson, neither Jasmine nor Abhi were explicitly called on by name to answer a question about the content of the book. Abhi actively imposed himself in the lesson by stating comments four times without being called on during the six minute read aloud. He made the following statements and questions: "No I think he is trying his friends to give their bones," "I love computers," "What is a Billboard?" and "He ate up all of the food!" Sasha responded to two of his comments. As mentioned earlier, she summarized the two possibilities of what Chowder could be doing with the bones and showed an illustration of a billboard to help him understand the vocabulary word. Sasha ignored his personal connection comment to Chowder about computers and his comprehension comment that Chowder ate all of the food. Sasha presented the two options of what Chowder might be doing with the bones by stating, "You think he wants his friends to give their bones to make his picture or do you think he is digging up this fossil?" This was considered to be a level two question because it encouraged Abhi to use text implicit cues within the illustration to support his reasoning. However, other students commented on digging up bones so Abhi never shared his reasoning. Both Jasmine and Abhi participated in the small group discussion retelling what they learned about Chowder from the excerpt of the text. Thus, both international students had an opportunity to engage in level one thinking. In addition, both Jasmine and Abhi were explicitly called on to share their thoughts during the whole group reflection. However, this reflection focused on participation and process not learning content.

# THREE LESSON ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The following lesson analysis summary provides an overview of the type and quantity of feedback that Sasha provided her students during the collaborative intervention. It also provides an overview of the levels of thinking that students had an opportunity to engage in during the lessons based on the questions that she asked. In general, Sasha demonstrated that she was shifting from a monologic teaching stance toward a dialogic one and this did influence her students' opportunities to engage in different levels of thinking. However, it did not appear to strongly influence the opportunities of her ELL student, Jasmine, to engage in different levels of thinking.

**Types of Feedback**

The reason Sasha selected the DIT Feedback Teaching Indicator as her professional goal was because she had concerns regarding the frequency and quality of her feedback. The analysis of her three lessons showed evidence that she decreased the amount of her feedback while increasing the quality over the length of the study. As shown below in table 13, Sasha provided feedback 39 times in the fourth lesson, 42 times in the seventh lesson, and 14 times during the ninth lesson. The first two lessons analyzed showed Sasha giving about the same amount of feedback to her students. However, there was an increase in the amount of explicit feedback between lesson four and lesson seven. In lesson four, Sasha did not provide any explicit feedback to her students, but in lesson seven she did thirteen times. This demonstrated Sasha progressing toward her professional development goal as she began shifting from a monologic teaching stance toward a dialogic one. Therefore, there was an increase in the type of feedback that was conducive to dialogic instruction. For example, during lesson four, a student stated, "There are trees in Africa." and Sasha responded, "Sure there are." The example represented the typical

generic feedback that Sasha provided to her students. During lesson seven, although the majority of Sasha's feedback was generic she started to provide more explicit feedback. To illustrate, Tim stated, "I can see the Eiffel Tower way over there." In response, Sasha stated, "You can. Tim, does your schema tell you anything about the Eiffel tower?" These two examples of feedback from lesson four and then seven illustrate how Sasha mostly used her feedback to affirm students' participation with generic responses in the fourth lesson and began to implement explicit feedback to encourage students to explore their thinking.

Another interesting change occurred between lesson seven and lesson nine. In lesson nine, the amount of feedback she provided to students dropped significantly to fourteen occurrences. Nine of these feedback comments were generic and five were explicit. As Sasha became increasingly aware of the time commitments of facilitating whole-group text-based discussions, she used only a section of the text, changed the classroom participation structure, and gave less but more targeted content feedback. In terms of the overall flow of the discussion, the learning goal was focused on fairly consistently. Sasha used a lower thinking task and physically removed herself from the discussion to increase the students' sense of ownership of the lesson and encourage them to speak to each other. This allowed her to step in at critical moments and used targeted feedback to challenge her students. However, Sasha noted that changing the classroom participation structure did create a more challenging context for her to monitor the student discussion and coach the students by providing feedback. This being said, Sasha demonstrated continuous growth in in the amount of explicit feedback she provided across the three analyzed lesson. Thus, Sasha demonstrated that she was in the process of shifting from a monologic teaching stance toward a dialogic one as indicated by the Feedback Teaching Indicator in the DIT.

**Levels of Thinking**

As table 14 illustrates, Sasha provided opportunities for students to engage in all three levels of thinking during the analyzed lessons by asking questions. In lesson four, she asked twenty-three questions that focused mainly on level one and level two thinking. These questions tended to focus on comprehension using text explicit and text implicit based knowledge. For example, she asked, questions such as, "Where did they say the setting was?" During lesson seven, Sasha asked the same number of questions as in lesson four but the majority of the questions that she asked focused on level two. Therefore, there was a change in lesson seven's focus regarding the level of thinking. During lesson seven, Sasha asked such questions as, "Do you have any evidence to support that he really likes Lulu?" In general her questions focused on encouraging students to provide reasoning and evidence. In lesson nine, Sasha demonstrated a sharp decline in the number of questions she asked students. She had previously asked twenty-three questions in both lesson four and seven; however, she only asked seven questions during lesson nine. Although she asked fewer questions during lesson nine, they were more equally spread across the levels of thinking. In fact, there was a slightly higher occurrence of level three questions during lesson nine. Thus, the data might suggest that as she made progress towards shifting from monologic instruction toward dialogic practices as indicated by the feedback teaching indicator in the DIT, she presented more opportunities for students to engage in higher level thinking.

However this professional growth did not appear to as strongly influence Jasmine's opportunities to engage in different levels of thinking. During the three analyzed lessons, Jasmine only provided opportunities to share and speak in response to level one and level two questions. These questions were presented to illicit an individual response from Jasmine or a

group response using think-pair shares. Jasmine was able to respond to the most questions in lesson seven. It is interesting to note that Jasmine did not receive any generic or explicit content feedback during lesson four or nine. She did receive explicit and generic content feedback during lesson seven. Therefore, it does appear that there might be a connection between Jasmine's experience of receiving feedback and engaging in different of thinking. It could also be argued that Jasmine might benefit from listening to other students participate in higher level thinking questions, but it must also be acknowledged that this placed her in the passive role of observer and focused on developing her linguistic skills only though listening not speaking. In the following chapter, I will delve more deeply into both Lola's and Sasha's perspectives on their progress toward their personally selected professional development goals.

# CHAPTER 6

## LOLA AND SASHA'S REFLECTION

In this chapter, I will present Lola and Sasha's insights about their progress towards their professional development goals. I will also share their insights regarding which factors influenced their growth in both facilitating text-based discussions and supporting ELL students' learning opportunities.

### Reflecting on Practice

**The importance of planning**. Lola and Sasha both believed that facilitating a whole group text-based discussion required planning. Sasha noted that she began her participation in this study with the misconception that "You read a book, you sit in a circle and talk. That's it." She argued that her limited training oversimplified the process of facilitating a text-based whole group discussion. Both Lola and Sasha agreed that facilitating a text-based whole group discussion was complicated and required thoughtful planning. Lola and Sasha felt teachers need more explicit training to learn to facilitate a text-based whole group discussion. Instead of presenting the concept as simply reading a text and then saying "What do you want to talk about? What do you think about this?" as a means to "release it to the masses," they felt teachers needed a starting point. The first starting point to planning was selecting an appropriate text. Lola warned, "You can't just pick up a book, you can't" and expect to have a whole group text-based discussion. The first step of planning was deciding which text to use.  Sasha stated, "Finding a book that is just right is key. And finding the book is hard because I go on Pintrest and I look for books and then there's a whole list and then I read them and I'm like, I don't get it." It appeared that both teachers believed it was important for the teacher to connect with the text as well as the students. Lola explained, "the teacher has to connect to the book in some way

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because if you're going to help build understanding but you could care less about the book, it's not going to happen." Lola also advised, "don't think that the longer the book, the better. There's a lot of quality in picture books and short picture books." Lola believed that picture books could be deceptive because they appear "so simple" and "there's nothing to them." She pointed out that it is important to "understand that there's so much within the pictures and the simple words that the kids can relate to." Sasha agreed that focusing on the illustrations and words in picture books help the students practice inferring. Sasha shared that shorter book might help reduce concerns about the amount of time required for engaging students in whole group text-based discussions because she felt shorter texts held the potential to provide less time of the teacher reading and more time to engage students in deeper discussions.

After selecting a text, Lola recommended reading through the text "at least once" and planning four or five questions open-ended questions. Lola believed that the questions should engage students in thinking about the text not just retelling the text (Costa, 2001). She shared, "I think one other like misconception that I had before we did this is was that within your read alouds, you had to make sure that you talked about those 'important parts.' You wanted the character, setting, solution, problem and you really don't. You really don't because in your discussion, if the kids know who the characters are, they can like start connecting with that character. They can start without doing all of that retelling stuff that we tell our kids they have to know." Thus, opportunities for students to engage in different levels of thinking are an important part of planning text-based discussions (Costa, 2001).

Sasha agreed that the purpose of a text-based whole group discussion shouldn't just focus on lower level thinking skills such as retelling. She disliked the packaged curriculum provided by the school district to support facilitating text-based discussion because she felt too many of

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the prompts encouraged retelling. She explained, "You would read three pages and then the prompt would be, 'Okay, let's talk about what we know so far in the story.' And then you'd read three more pages and say, 'Okay, let's revisit everything that we've learned so far.' It just kept doing that so that you were constantly retelling." Instead of asking questions that encouraged retelling, Sasha suggested the specific example of saying, "Let's stop and talk about that word" encountering interesting vocabulary words in a text. She thought this might also help the students to feel comfortable asking for clarification on word meaning they did not know.

Lola and Sasha thought of two ways that could reduce the time commitment of planning whole group text-based discussions. First, an individual teacher could use the same book and read it again with a different learning purpose through the focus of the discussion. One of the struggles Lola and Sasha found was that they felt they could only read a book once. Lola explained, 'There were so many of the books I went through and thought, god, this would be such a good book but we already read this one." In hindsight, Lola and Sasha believed this perspective was limiting because the text could be used differently depending on the focus of the desired learning outcome. Second, a team of teachers could pool their resources and experiences for planning text-based whole group read alouds. Lola shared that she had discussed with Sasha that it would be beneficial if all of the teachers in their grade level team planned one text-based whole group discussion a week. Once they have enacted the lesson, they would write a short note about the questions they asked and highlights of the discussion. The text and notes could be stored on a shelf in the classroom so "if someone's looking for a good book, they come and grab it." Sasha agreed that this approach could help resolve some of the struggles of finding time to locate a good book.

**The role of the teacher**. In addition to the need for planning, Lola and Sasha both shared advice on their new insights regarding the role of the teacher when facilitating text-based whole group discussions. Lola learned that she needed to create space for her students in an effort to share the discussion with them. She stated, "Let go. I think that's truly what I also got out of this is my kids can do more than I think they can. I need to let go and just let them come up with the ideas and help them when they struggle." Lola realized that letting go did not mean being a passive participant in the discussion. She explained, "When the discussion struggles is when you step in. If someone has something to say and it's not quite where you wanted it to go but if the other kids are like picking up on it and adding to it, let it happen. It's okay." Sasha also realized that she needed to take an active role in facilitating the discussion (e.g., Almasi, 1995; Matsumura, Slater & Crosson, 2008; Hansen, 2004; Wiseman, 2010; Lampert, Beasley, Ghousseini, Kazemi, & Franke, 2010; Martin & Hand, 2009). She stated, "I learned I just have to trust my instincts, that if it just didn't feel right, then it was time to stop and time to step in and turn it into the direction that I wanted it to go." She emphasized that having "a direction" or "vision" for the discussion is important. She explained, "But you have to have the vision of what you want. You can't just sit in the circle and chat because that can't be the vision. It doesn't work that way."

**Focusing attention on the text**. At the end of the study, Sasha and Lola shared their new understanding of the importance of focusing students' attention on the text. Research has shown that students benefit from focusing on the author and/or illustrator's purpose by exploring the language use, illustrations, and narrative meaning during text-based discussions (Sipe, 2000). Sasha discovered that providing copies of the book to students to use as a resources helped students focus on text. She stated, "I did find that it would help if everybody had copies the

books that you were reading." Providing students with copies of the books afforded students visual support to explain their thinking and helped them recall important sections of the text they wished to explore with their peers. Sasha wanted to try providing students with copies of the text because she had noticed that when she was "reading a book and they're (the students are) sitting next to their partners, they have all of these thoughts and all of these things to share while you're reading a book but then when you're done reading the book and you say, 'okay, let's sit in a circle and talk about it,' then they're like, um, because they don't remember everything that happened in the story." So believed if she provided the students with a copy of the text and they could "just to flip through" it, "that could like spark their thinking." She was also hopeful that having access to the text would increase their use of text-based evidence to support their reasoning. She thought the text might provide a physical anchor for the discussion to curb the students from turning somebody else's self to text connection into a self-to -self connection, which did not connect to the text. She shared when students were caught up in tangents that weren't "anything to do with the book kind of thing" it drove her "crazy" because she had "to pull them back in" toward the text. She told Lola that during her final lesson in the study she resolved the dilemma of having enough texts for everyone by using the two copies provided in the district resource for text-based discussion but not the provided curriculum. Then, she split her group into two circles based on their willingness to share in a group setting. She put the verbally dominant students in one group and the quieter students who were more reluctant to share in another. Next she provided each circle with a copy of the text. She made the conscious decision to focus her attention on the "quiet" circle of students because she "wanted to hear the quiet kids that never have a chance to say anything." Sasha shared that the students did not appear to know how to actively use the book as a reference as she had hoped. She explained, the students "were

just like sitting there doing nothing" with the book. Sasha had planned to interject discussion prompts into the student conversation when she "whispered something in somebody's ear" as a form of scaffolding the discussion. To encourage the use of the text as visual support and evidence for their reasoning, Sasha whispered to a student who then asked a peer, "Could you find that in the book to explain your thinking?" Sasha noted that this explicit request caused the students to refer to the text. She shared, "So then they opened the book. They were looking in there."

Instead of providing students with copies of the text, Lola used the document camera to project text onto a large screen. She found this "really helpful" because she was ensured everyone saw the texts and illustrations during the read aloud. She felt this supported the students to understand some of the implicit ideas presented in the text such as the characters' emotions in the illustrations. This being said, she was interested in what Sasha experienced by providing students with copies of the text to support the discussion. Lola felt this provided an important opportunity for students because she felt her students have not been taught the skills needed to reference a book to look for evidence. She noticed that when she individually assessed her students the majority did not reference the book when they attempted to answer comprehension questions. She explained, "I'd say maybe, not even a quarter of my kids know to reference the book when they talk about the comprehension questions. They just assume that when they're done reading, that's it. I just got to talk about what I remembered. They don't realize they need to go back into that book." Lola thought that providing copies of the text to the students to use during the discussion might explicitly model and norm how to return to the book find supporting evidence.

As a means of focusing students on the text, Lola and Sasha shared their experiences of implementing two important strategies that have strong potential for supporting ELL students' learning opportunities. First they provided visual support, either through providing copies of the text or using a document camera. This allowed them to provide multiple modes of input (auditory and visual) in combination of the opportunity to engage in output, which has been recommended for support of ELL student learning (Goldenberg, 2010). This strategy allowed the teachers to provide explicit and interactive instruction during the text-based discussion (Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders, & Christian, 2006) while scaffolding the content for ELL students with multiple modes of input (i.e. auditory and visual) to support them to orally and mentally synthesize texts (Goldenberg, 2010). However, both teachers mentioned the challenge of guiding students to reference the text when providing evidence to support their reasoning. This challenge aligned with the concept of "knowing how" represented in the sociocultural perspective discussed in Chapter One regarding the importance of the learning that takes during authentic activity such as a text-based discussion (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989). Lola and Sasha were aware of the need to guide students by providing support and scaffolding for novice literacy development as students are apprenticed into literacy practices such as referencing the text to support their reasoning in combination with a gradual release of responsibility (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Pearson and Gallagher, 1983).

**Common practices.** As Sasha and Lola refined their ability to facilitate whole group text-based discussions, there were common practices that supported their both of their attempt to move toward more dialogic teaching. One teaching practice that helped both teachers facilitate better whole group text-based discussions regardless of the professional development goal was setting the purpose for the lesson before reading the text. They did this by explicitly stating the

learning goal to the students when they introduced the lesson. As mentioned earlier, ELL students benefit when teachers use a mixture of explicit and interactive instruction as a means of instructional modification (Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders, & Christian, 2006). This strategy helped focus the students' thinking and served as a guide for the discussion. It also helped the teachers prioritize what to focus on as teaching points. I encouraged both teachers to state their learning goal in the beginning of the lesson because sometimes I found it difficult to identify the purpose of the lesson as an observer. In fact, sometimes I identified the wrong learning goal and was surprised when the teachers stated their intentions for the lesson. Therefore, I assumed the students might also be struggling to understand the learning goal and purpose, too. Lola explained, "So then I became more explicit. This is what we're going to be looking for today and lo and behold, the conversations got better." Sasha also benefitted from this because stating her learning goal at the beginning of the lesson helped develop a structure to the discussion, which clarified on and off topic student comments.

Another common practice that helped both teachers facilitate better whole group text-based discussions regardless of the professional development goal was using think-pair-shares during the read aloud. This strategy with the visual cues provided in the text provided the ELL students with multiple modes of input (i.e. auditory and visual). It also provided the ELL students with an opportunity to orally engage with the text through interactions with peers as a means to develop their EOLD (Goldenberg, 2010). Sasha and Lola agreed that it was important for students to practice verbalizing their ideas before sharing with the whole group. This practice was not new for either teacher, as they had been previously using this strategy while reading to students. According to Sasha, the change was "just adding that extra piece afterwards." The extra piece that she referred to was the whole group discussion after reading a text. Lola believed that

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providing think-pair-shares during the read aloud supported ELL students because listening and speaking about a feature of the text previously allows them to "build off of just that one comment with a partner so they can feel like they can share when we get to like the large group discussion." Lola felt this created a "safer environment" for sharing because students "can hear what the other kids are doing and if they know that they can build off of someone else's idea instead of having to come up with their own." However, both teachers also noticed that if the students aren't held accountable for participating by having something share, students can get lost in the whole group discussion. Sasha explained that this concern motivated her to increase the accountability by having her students practice participating in smaller groups.

**Promoting student participation**. Lola noticed an increase in student participation during her use of text-based discussions. Lola found that while reading the text, she liked having students sit next to their reading partner because she liked to stop at certain points and ask questions. Some of these questions provided opportunities for think-pair-shares to increase student participation.  Once she finished reading the text, sometimes she kept the students in their spots and other times she had them form a circle.  Although she didn't always do it, she felt the circle formation was "really beneficial because it was more eye contact with the person that was actually talking instead of looking at the back of someone's head." She also shared that during the last week of the study she created anchor charts with the students to help guide the discussion. She found the anchor charts to be "helpful." Specifically, she believed "the norms anchor chart was really good because it set for the kids: These are my expectations." Lola felt this was important because the norms and expectations were different during an interactive read aloud used to engage students in a whole group text-based discussion even though the context appeared similar to other practices student experienced in the classroom. To illustrate, Lola

shared that previously during a text-based discussions when students shared with a partner, she "asked a question, everyone shared and then we moved on to the next thing and we kept reading." In contrast, now she has made it "more explicit that everyone has to participate." She felt this was "eye opening" for her and the students for to realize, "Oh, I have to say something" and "how you have to build on the person's comments like you have to listen and build on." This is significant because the norms of text-based discussions often challenge the norms of typical recitation based classrooms (Reznitskaya, 2012). She appeared proud of her students' success in participating in the read aloud discussions. She stated, "When they really did it, they did a good job."

Lola mentioned that she noticed an increase students' learning opportunities while engaged in text-based discussions. This supports the claim made by Lawrence and Snow (2011) that text-based discussions provide students with opportunities to engage in meaningful learning of important literacy skills and content learning. Lola specifically noticed a change in two students who appeared more engaged in thinking about texts while participating in the discussions. These two students were Jose and Ivan. She noticed that Jose, "who would sit back and not do anything…had a lot to say" and was able to demonstrate that he was "actually thinking about the book" because the text was being presented in a different way. She believed that creating space for Jose "to just kind of talk about it" and to "truly hearing what the other kids are saying" was beneficial for him. In addition, Lola felt that when she normed the participation expectations by making "it really explicit that I'm going to be calling on people whether you raise your hand or not, he started listening and he started having things to say which was really interesting."

Lola noticed that Ivan also liked talking about the texts and asked really good questions to the group. During the whole class discussions, Ivan asked a clarifying question which showed that he didn't comprehend the author's main idea but he wasn't afraid to voice his question and get support from his peers. Specifically, after Lola read the text, *Willow Finds a Way,* Ivan asked, "What is she finding a way to do?" at the end of the discussion. Lola thought other students would be reluctant to ask that question out of fear that it would make them sound as if they were not listening. However, Lola believed it was a "perfect" question because providing the answer "became the other kids' job to really clarify it for him." Thus, his question caused the other students to articulate what they believed the story was about and build Ivan's understanding too. This question provided space for the students to engage in interactive instruction as they negotiated meaning. Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders, and Christian, (2006) have found this to be a beneficial instructional modification for ELL students when mixed with explicit instruction.

**Paying attention to student thinking**. Lola felt that she was able to better assess her students' literacy learning and thinking by facilitating text-based discussions. She reflected, "It's really interesting because I think if I just based my kids' learning on like what they do in the classroom, without the read alouds, I wouldn't get the same understanding of Ivan and Jose that I did in the last month that we were doing this. I really thought those two did not think about their reading at all. You know, but they do." Lola became more aware of her students' thoughts because early elementary student thinking can be best demonstrated orally through verbal interactions (Sipe, 2000; Martinez-Roldan, 2005; Pantaleo, 2007; Lopez-Robertson, 2012). Lola suggested that in her classroom when students read on their own, some of the students appear to "lose the context of I have to still think about the story when I read it on my own. They think of

it more as it's my job. This is my job right now. This is my assignment. I'm going to read it. Now I'm done. I don't have to think about it any further." In contrast, she felt that the whole group text-based discussions created a context of consciously thinking and talking about the text by having the same book and allowing "all the kids to hear the same material to base their conversations off of, which is more meaningful for the kids." Hence, Lola valued her insights into student learning and thinking gained by facilitating whole group discussions.

**The role of texts in discussions**. Both Lola and Sasha preferred to use traditional texts when facilitating whole group text-based discussions. They both shared some concerns about the using a digital text during the lessons. There was a general concern about being able to access the texts due to the Internet not connecting or pausing and buffering.  Lola shared that it can be more challenging to stop and pause a digital text to ask questions during the text in comparison to a traditional text.  She also felt that accessing the digital technology, either the document camera or computer, removed her from the group and negatively influenced student behavior. She explained, "When I was using the document camera, I kind of removed myself from the group because they're on the carpet but I'm standing over here by my computer and then I lost my authoritativeness over the kids." Thus, she believed that the use of traditional texts afforded proximity between the teacher and students gathered on the carpeting together which supported the facilitation of a whole group discussion.

Sasha agreed with Lola's observation that using a digital text presented a more challenging context for facilitating a whole group discussion. However, she felt that it was not due to proximity but because of how she had conditioned the use of digital texts in her classroom. She explained that with traditional texts, the students were "trained at this point in the year to sit and listen to me read a story." In contrast, she believed the students developed more

relaxed habits when they were eating snack and listening to the digital text so "they don't always focus and pay attention" because she used digital texts as an entertaining time filler. Thus, she felt that incorporating the use of digital texts would require "a lot of re-teaching." This insight demonstrated that Lola and Sasha were gaining insight about the importance of norming expected behavior. They appeared to have a better understanding that their students needed support when participating in a new teaching context such as text-based discussions that challenged already established norms.

Another challenge Lola mentioned regarding the use of digital texts during discussion was modeling how to go back and look for evidence to support reasoning. With a digital text, finding the desired evidence to reference support for reasoning required showing the exact timing of the story. Lola shared, "It hard to go back, too…you can't really say okay, let me find that at 1:37." Thus, it was hard to teach students how to reference the text too find supporting evidence with a digital text. It is important to note that both teachers did use technology such as document cameras in their lessons during the study. However, both teachers were conscious of the affordances and limitations of using technology during the whole group discussions.

Lola and Sasha had extensive knowledge of children's literacy texts. They were very thoughtful when selecting a text to use during a discussion. It is interesting to note that Lola and Sasha only selected fiction texts during these lessons although both teachers had access to a large collection of texts.  This finding supports Kraemer, McCabe, and Sinatra's (2012) claim that teachers tend only to focus on the use of fiction during text-based discussions. This is problematic because Duke, Bennett-Armistead, and Roberts (2003) argue that early elementary students benefit from exposure to a variety of genres, especially non-fiction texts. Lola did use

text-based discussions to explore the features of realistic fiction genre, which expanded the use of the fiction genre during the discussions.

        **Time constraints**. Lola and Sasha had a two-hour block of time for literacy scheduled in the morning. Both teachers noticed that engaging the students in a whole group text-based discussion took up almost half of their allotted literacy time. She shared that during the study, she was constantly revamping her literacy lesson plans and ideas because the text-based discussions took much longer than she had expected. She stated, "I had this, this, and that planned but the read aloud would take the place of all of that. Because if you truly do it correctly, it does take, I think, 45 minutes of the two hours that you have." She explained that she struggled because, "it's so valuable and I still want to do it but I need(ed) my read aloud to be shorter so that the discussion can still take as much time as it needs to develop for students to learn from each other." Sasha worried that this was too much time spent her reading the text, so she attempted to implement strategies to shorten the process. In an attempt to shorten the time required to read the text but still provide an ample amount of time for student discussion, Sasha read excerpts from texts to create a foundation for the discussion. She shared that her students were "really comfortable with interrupting during the story whenever they want. Like what's that word mean? I think he's going to do this or I think that's going to happen without me saying… turn and talk or anything." Sasha believed shortening the amount of teacher reading time provided more time for student talk.

        Lola was also keenly aware of how much time during her literacy block was being consumed by the text-based discussions. She stated, "I think one of the big eye openers for me was truly how much time does go into a good read aloud. Not just in planning but also the actual, like process of it, execution of it, just everything." This being said, she also valued the text-

based discussion because she "felt like they (the students) were learning so much." To illustrate, she shared how she was able to "interject" writing into the read aloud discussion to help her students examine the realistic fiction genre that was part of the writing unit in the school curriculum. Lola believed text-based discussions "took so long because you were incorporating other aspects of it (literacy) with it."  Sasha agreed and felt that her text-based discussions provided an instructional approach to integrating many aspects of literacy into one activity. She stated that felt she and Lola were "lucky" to participate in the study because they "just have never been taught or trained on how to do any of that." She said that by participating in the study "we just like took that leap."

**Supporting literacy development**. Sasha and Lola valued participating in the study because they it allowed them the opportunity to explore how to facilitate a text-based whole group discussion. In doing so, they found ways to integrate different aspects of literacy into the text-based discussions while refining their practice. To illustrate, Sasha integrated writing by having the students use post its and writing journals to capture their thinking which she modeled during the reading of the text. While Lola, integrated the concept from her writing units into the text-based discussions by focusing on how the realistic fiction genre. Due to the integration of different aspects of literacy during the text-based discussion, Sasha and Lola felt the practice was valuable because it demonstrated for the students how literacy is "all interconnected."  Lola stated, "Forty-five minutes isn't bad" because she was able to replace other separate literacy lesson by integrating the concepts into her read aloud and discussion. Sasha valued an integrated literacy approach because "you're making their light bulbs turn on at different times."  To illustrate, she shared that she focused on using interesting vocabulary during a writing lesson and then during the text-based discussion she encouraged students to notice interesting vocabulary

words in the text. This created an interesting student discussion as students debated about what makes a vocabulary word interesting. The use of purposeful and explicit teaching moves during text-based discussions to promote vocabulary development has been proven to benefit early elementary native English speaking students and ELL students (Silverman, 2007).

Lola shared that before participating in the study, she "always thought of a read aloud as its own entity." She stated, "I used to read a book out loud just for enjoyment purposes…Like it should be its own little slot 20 minutes, you do it here and that's it." Her view regarding the responsibilities of serving in the role of a facilitator during read aloud also shifted. She explained her previous thoughts about enacting text-based discussions were: "Just read the book and talk. Lord knows what they're going to talk about. I'm going to ask all the questions. They're just going to answer my questions.  And we're done. Seriously, that's what I always thought it was. I get to ask the questions, you answer. We're done. Ta da!"  Thus, Lola's initial understanding of text-based discussions focused on the use of recitation, which reflected the typical practice of whole-group classroom-based instruction (Almasi, 1996; Applebee, Langer, Nystrand, and Gamoran, 2003).  Lola explained that her participation in the study helped expand her view regarding the potential of whole group text-based discussions. She said, "I didn't know how to truly begin it when we were actually doing it." As she started using whole group text-based discussions, she started integrating different aspects of literacy. It began with a thought of "Well, I need to help the kids understand realistic fiction so let me just read this book." Then, she started selecting texts to specifically support literacy learning goals. She expressed, "It just kind of evolved into realizing it supports, should support everything. It can ebb and flow and be flexible with everything that you're teaching. You know, and it can hit on reading, it can hit on writing. It can just be something for fun but you still want to talk about those other aspects that you're

working on." To illustrate, she shared that she used a series of two books during a read aloud and whole group discussion to engage the students thinking and talking about character development. This experience inspired her to wonder about other possibilities of using read alouds and discussions while participating in school wide reading initiatives. For example, one school wide reading initiative required everyone in the school to read the same chapter book by completing each chapter on the same day. Lola felt that she could make this reading initiative a stronger learning experience for her students by "continuing to talk about the characters as they grow and how they change" after listening to the chapter. Thus, Lola was open to finding more ways to engage students in read alouds and whole group discussions.

**Reflecting on Professional Growth**

**Lola's progress toward sharing authority**. As mentioned in the earlier chapters, Lola focused her professional growth on the DIT Authority Indicator. She chose a professional goal that she knew she personally needed help with to achieve. She stated, "I wanted to try and step back which I think is hilarious because you know how I have control issues." Lola described her struggle with control as she began participating in the study. She shared, "I want to say for the first week, that I struggled with it truly. I felt like letting it go and I couldn't because in my mind, I'm thinking the kids aren't going to get what I want them to get out of the book. So I have to interject. I have to be the one asking the questions. I need to lead the discussion." As she progressed toward her professional goal, she found that by stepping back and attempting to share her authority with her students, she provided space for the students to become more involved in the discussion. For example, she commented that her students asked important questions. She shared, "I realize there's a difference between me leading the discussion and me just restating the question or the comment for the other kids to understand. And I think it got better towards the

end." Thus, Lola believed that she had experienced growth towards her professional development goal during her participation in the study as she increased her awareness of the possible roles students may perform within the discussion (Almasi, 1996). One of the reasons she felt her ability to facilitate the whole group discussions improved was by making the norms of participation explicit to her students.

**Sasha's progress towards providing feedback and promoting ownership**. As mentioned in the earlier chapters, Sasha focused her professional growth on the DIT Feedback Indicator. She also chose a professional goal that she personally struggled with. She explained that providing feedback "was something that I really struggled with, when they were sitting and talking, because we were always told in our lack of training that they're just supposed to sit in a circle and just talk." Therefore, she felt uncertain about what to do when the student talk "went in the wrong direction." She thought, "Am I supposed to let them talk? Am I supposed to say something? They're not talking about what I want them to talk about." As she participated in the study, she began to gain confidence regarding her ability to interject into the discussion as a facilitator. She stated, "But I did finally just like said, 'Screw this.' I'm stepping in and here's what I want you to say and this is not what I want you to say. And we need to stop talking about this and pull it back into that." As her feedback became more explicit during the study, she was able to use it to help her to facilitate text-based discussions by confirming students' thoughts and encouraging them to extend their ideas while building meaning (Wiseman, 2010). For example, she used active listening strategies and encouraged students to explore her reasoning as shown in Chapter Five. Sasha believed that an important part of learning to facilitate a whole group text-based discussion was providing students with explicit feedback so they had ownership of their learning and behavior.

Sasha tried two strategies to provide students with ownership of their learning and behavior. As mentioned earlier, the first strategy was an anchor chart with sentence starters and question for students to engage peers in talk about the text. The second strategy was the use of cubes to increase student awareness of their participation. She used the cubes to provide a visual representation for students regarding if they had contributed to the discussion. If a student shared, they were able to discard a cube by either placing it in the middle or linking it to another student's cube. Therefore, the cubes were a way of assessing if a student participated. Sasha struggled with these two strategies because students began to value the quantity and not the quality of their contributions to the discussion. Sasha explained, "It just like made things worse because the kids would just be like, 'Oh, I need to say one of these,' and they'd just read one that didn't like make sense and because they knew they had to, their goal was to say something." Thus, the students began to use the anchor chart statement to simply discard a cube without caring about the authenticity of their comment. However, as Sasha became more frustrated with the quality of the discussion she became more willing to give explicit feedback. She shared, "I have one of those problems where in my head, I envision it's going to go this way and when it goes in this direction, I can't get away from my original vision and I just get mad about things." This frustration eventually helped her feel as though she had to be more explicit with her feedback to help the students focus on the quality of their contributions.

**Providing Scaffolding: Anchor Charts**

The teachers had concerns about how to best use scaffolding through a gradual release of responsibility as a means to apprentice students into participating in text-based discussions (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983). Gradual Release of Responsibility is a sociocultural framework that teachers use to model, guide, and then encourage independent practice during new learning.

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In the last few lessons of the study, Lola started to focus on helping students understand her expectations for their participation in the discussion by creating two anchor charts. One anchor chart focused on the norms of participation during a discussion and the other anchor chart provided statement starters to support the students when talking to each other about the text. She created the norms anchor chart with her students. The title of the anchor chart was "What a Good Listener Looks Like During Read Alouds" and it provided six bullet points. These bullet points were: Not talking when someone else is talking, thinking about the story, not fooling around; stay in personal space, listening to all comments, think about the discussion; have something to share, and be happy. The second anchor chart was titled, "Statement Starters to Show What You Know: and had five statement starters. These statement starters were: One thing that I learned that is important is, This matters because, Some big ideas from the text are, The author wants me to get out of the text, and Something more about the text is. Lola developed these sentence starters by modifying the teacher language questions to support how students acquire knowledge provided in *Comprehension and Collaboration: Inquiry Circles in Action* by authors, Harvey and Daniels (2009). I had provided Lola with this resource because she had commented several times that she wanted to create an anchor chart but needed to find a good resource that helped the students synthesize their learning. My intention was to turn these teacher talk questions into student statements in an effort to increase the sense of authority that students might enact during the discussion. I believed the student sense of authority could be increased by the use of these sentence starters because they provided space for the students to help construct knowledge around the text by highlighting what they felt were important ideas in the text.

Lola found these anchors charts to positively influence her text-based discussions. She stated, "The kids actually did really well with that." She noticed that the students were using the

sentence starters and other students were responding to their peers' comments. She heard the students agreeing and disagreeing with each other. In addition, she heard peers give each other feedback as to why a reader disagreed. She reflected that once this started to occur, facilitating the discussion became easier. She was able to moderate the discussion by focusing on supporting students to build off of each other's insights by making comments such as "She said this, what do you think?" In stead of being "the person in charge," she saw her role as facilitator as someone who was there to "keep it going" by asking questions if the conversation stopped or if the "topic could have gone further" to build "deeper understanding." Thus, Lola experienced a shift in her consciousness regarding both her and her students' roles during a whole group text-based discussion. This shift in her consciousness brought her closer to encouraging individual students' thinking and interpretation by promoting and sharing the responsibility with the class to agree, disagree, or refine proposed thoughts (NGA & CCSSO, 2010).

In contrast, Sasha stated, "Sometimes, an anchor chart is useful and sometimes an anchor chart is the opposite of that." Although at first she felt the anchor chart with sentence starters and prompts were helpful for the students, she noticed that students began to rely on the anchor chart and at times used the sentence starters or prompts inappropriately just to have something to say. For example, one student asked, can you example your thinking instead of can you explain your thinking? Sasha worried the student reliance on the sentence starters and prompts might influence the discussion to become unauthentic and therefore not beneficial for student learning. This concern demonstrated an opportunity to utilize the gradual release of responsibility model (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983). This model affirms the use of a support as students are acquiring the skills and understanding. However, it is the goal of the teacher to gradually release the responsibility to the students so they can practice more independently.

Lola and Sasha were interested in their different experiences using anchor charts with prompts to support text-based whole group discussions. As mentioned, the anchor charts held the potential to scaffold the students' learning as they were apprenticed into participating in text-based discussions (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Pearson & Gallagher, 1983). Lola found that having the anchor charts "really helped" open up space for the students to participate in the discussion. Whereas, Sasha felt that the use of an anchor chart confined and limited her students' participation. They wondered if the timing of introducing the anchor charts influenced their different experiences. Lola explained, "When I finally put an anchor chart up, like three weeks in, the kids didn't turn to me for that anymore. They looked at that, they figured out how they were going to start it and then they could just give their thought to the group." Lola found that the anchor charts gave the students more space to feel "confident" in what they were trying to say. In contrast, Sasha put up her anchor chart with sentence starters right away. She noticed that her students "immediately gravitated to that I agree/I disagree one because of our persuasive writing unit that we had just finished." Sasha believed that it would be beneficial to engage students in a longer process of learning to participate in whole group discussions before introducing the anchor chart with sentence starters. She felt it might be best to start without an anchor chart at the beginning of the year "and as the months go on, then you would add in all of those things to build it and mold it" to help scaffold students to learn different ways to participate in whole group text-based discussions. When Lola heard Sasha's future plan, she was concerned about gradually introducing prompts through an anchor chart because she worried that students would fixate on one statement and overuse it. She explained, "I don't know because this is something that I've been thinking about. If I just did the one statement that would be the one they learned. That'd be the one they constantly use." Hence, it appeared that although both

teachers felt it would be beneficial to introduce prompting statements after exposing students to text-based whole group discussions, there were some lingering thoughts about whether the prompts should be introduced all at once or individually. Thus, the teachers had concerns about how to best use scaffolding through a gradual release of responsibility as a means to apprentice students into participating in text-based discussions. Gradual Release of Responsibility is a sociocultural framework that teachers use to model, guide, and then encourage independent practice during new learning. Although there were still lingering questions, Lola stated, "I, at least now, feel confident moving forward that I have a good stepping stone of what I truly think it should be." Lola described these stepping-stones, "Now we know though, Sasha. Now you know, okay, this is how I'm going to start it. I'm going to let my kids just try it and then I'm going to start talking about norms and then I'm going to start talking about sentence or statement starters. Hold it back and then if they need it, push back in."

**Reflecting on ELL Students' Learning Opportunities**

Both Lola and Sasha noticed an increase in their ELL students' learning opportunities. Lola believed that all three of her ELL students benefited from participating in whole group text-based discussions. Creating opportunities for ELL students to participate in whole group text-based discussions supports McIntyre's (2010) principle of joint productivity activity for teaching ELL students. First, she shared that Jose's participation increased. Lola shared, "Like I said, my Jose talked more about books than he did all year." She described the quality of his talk as "good" referencing "he actually asked really good questions." She felt it was beneficial for Jose "to really hear different conversations from the other kids and truly listen to what they were saying." Lola claimed that Jose's participation increased because the discussions created a sense of accountability. She explained, that during the discussions, "he saw that everyone had to have

something to share, when you're in a circle and everyone's kind of looking around and you see

who's not listening and who's not paying attention." Although the Authority Teaching Indicator

in the DIT did not explicitly state everyone must share, Lola appeared to interpret her

professional development goal as increasing student participation during the text-based

discussions. As seen in Chapter Four, Lola was successful in her efforts of increasing student

participation. Unlike her concerns about Jose, Lola not have concerns about Navi and Jair's

participation. However, she also perceived they were both positively influenced by the

discussions. Lola stated, Navi "was always so quick to have something to say that I don't think

she was really thinking about everything until she really heard what the other kids were saying."

Lola felt that Navi was thinking on a "more surface" level before participating in the discussions,

and "then this forced her to look more deeper." She also believed that Jair was also encouraged

to think on a deeper level because "when he was called to justify his answers, he really started

thinking more." Research has found that learning through text-based discussions encourages

students to provide explanations, reasoning, and evaluations as a means to negotiate with their

peers encourages higher-level thinking (Martinez-Roldan, 2005). Lola deemed the experience as

being a good learning opportunity for all of her students because it is important to learn how to

justify their comments and thoughts. She explained, "Where's your evidence. Why do you think

that? Is really where the true learning comes in. Because anyone can make a comment about a

book, but then to have another student say, 'I don't get it or I don't agree with you,' and giving

that like feedback makes them have to think harder and think about other ways to explain their

learning." Lola believed that participating in whole group text-based discussions provided

opportunities for her students to try to not only talk about a text but to evaluate and justify

responses. Her belief was supported by the evidence provided in Chapter Four regarding the students' opportunities to engage in different levels of thinking (Costa, 2001).

Sasha shared that her participation in the study raised her awareness about her ELL students' experiences and needs. She shared, "I think this whole thing just helped me to think about my ELL students because I think I told you before I don't do any special planning or anything different." Sasha felt that by not doing any thing different to support her ELL students, she was following the parents' wishes. She explained, "That's how mom and dad want it anyways, since they always say no, that they're not ELL." She agreed with Lola that parents did not want their kids to "stick out" because being identified as an ELL student had a "stigma" within the community. Sasha also considered the lack of resources to support students within the classroom if they were identified as ELL. She stated, "Well, it's not like there's anybody extra to come work with them." She did not view Jasmine as "shy," instead she viewed her as "just soft spoken." She explained, when Jasmine had the opportunity to share, for example, "when she was in charge of the book, she was rattling a mile a minute." Sasha thought, "It's just hard for her (Jasmine) in a large group to be heard over the other dominant ones." Sasha identified one positive way that the use of whole group text based discussion influenced Jasmine's learning opportunities. She believed that "it helped her to explain some of her thinking a little bit better because she has good thoughts but they just didn't come across correct sometimes." For example, Sasha read a text about a cat that was secretly living in six different homes so he could eat six different meals until one day the cat became sick. Sasha paused the discussion and asked the class what they thought was going to happen. Jasmine shared that she thought he would eat chicken noodle soup and get better. Sasha asked Jasmine why she thought the cat was going to eat chicken noodle soup. Sasha recanted Jasmine's response as, "I think he's going to get six

bowls of chicken noodle soup because on the cover, there was six bowls and he's sick and when you're sick, you eat soup. Sasha shared when Jasmine explained her thought process, "I'm like, ooh, that makes sense to me. I can understand why you think that." Jasmine was using evidence from the illustration on the book because she saw the multiple supper bowls. Sipe (2000) found that students commonly use illustrations to make sense of text. In addition, she infused her own personal background knowledge of what she would eat if she became ill to make sense of the text by comparing it to her personal lived experiences (Sipe, 2000; Martinez-Roldan, 2005; Lopez-Robertson, 2012). This example demonstrates the importance for teachers to examine opportunities for personal connections during text-based discussions (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992).

**Reflecting on Addressing the Needs of ELL Students**

Lola and Sasha shared that they did not view their ELL students as being "different," therefore, they did not plan specific strategies to support them. Sasha reflected, "I don't think about them as somebody different. And then I wonder, was that a good thing or a bad thing? I guess it depends on what you're working on." In response, Lola stated, "I think it's a good thing because I think the intent of the read aloud is to have everyone be a part of the discussion and to get things out of the story. So there shouldn't be a different expectation." Both Lola and Sasha believed that the supports they built in to support general learning in their classroom also provided support to address the needs of ELL students. They felt that providing a certain level of supports was necessary for every student to learn. Therefore, these support strategies were "built in" to their enacted teaching practices. For example, during lessons, they were observed to use graphic organizers, anchor charts, visuals, shared writing, think-pair-shares, and wait time. In general these support strategies provided explicit and interactive instruction as a means of

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instructional modification (Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders, & Christian, 2006), multiple

modes of input, and focus targeted instruction of content; however, the lessons and modifications

did not provide targeted instruction to develop the ELL students' EOLD or vocabulary

experiences (Goldenberg, 2010). Torres-Guzmán (2011) argued that a teacher's perception of

ELL students can cause variations within the enacted curriculum. It appears that Lola's and

Sasha's perceptions of their ELL students' needs influenced the enacted instruction. This being

said, these practices were not implemented specifically to support the ELL students, but in Lola's

and Sasha's perspectives represented aspect of "good teaching." The following exchange

captured this perspective when I shared the listed examples of support I observed in their

classrooms.

> Lola:  Yeah. All of that, all of that's kind of built in so as teachers, we don't think about it
>
> Sasha:  We don't.
>
> Lola: We just, you know, when someone asks me a question, like I'm like I don't know. I just teach.

Lola and Sasha did not feel that they needed to provide additional support to their ELL students.

Instead, their goal was to consider how to present the content while providing general support to

the majority of students. Lola believed the anchor charts highly influenced student learning

opportunities. She also described them as "the easiest thing" to implement as part of the

dialogical instruction. She believed anchor charts provided "a visual for them (the ELL students)

that supported all the kids in the classroom." She added, "I think maybe the one other thing that

would make it more ELL appropriate was maybe to have some kind of like picture to go with but

that's kind of hard to do with those sentence statements." Sasha shared a specific strategy that

she tried to support her ELL student was "giving her the book and that didn't work." She

reflected, that she needed to explain and model that "it's okay to open the book and find the evidence" during discussions. One way she thought of accomplishing this was through "a mini lesson or if I conferred with her, it would be let's open this book and find our evidence." Thus, Lola and Sasha were able to identify one strategy they attempted and believed supported the needs of their ELL learners and considered ways to improve their implementation. Planning text-based discussions should include instructional modifications specifically focused to meet the needs of ELL students (Goldenberg, 2010).

**Addressing missed opportunities**. Lola and Sasha were both able to identify something they considered a missed opportunity for working with their ELL students during text-based whole group discussions. As she mentioned earlier, Sasha believed that scaffolding the process for the ELL students by conferring individually or pulling strategy groups would have been beneficial. She explained that conferring individually with ELL students would allow the teacher and ELL student to have a conversation about what the teacher noticed and suggested next steps. To illustrate, she explained the teacher could state, "I saw you struggled with this. Here's how you can fix it." She thought if more than one student was struggling with the same issue during the text-based whole group discussion it might be beneficial to "pull a quick strategy group and just say, 'You know, tomorrow when we do our read aloud and discussion, maybe you guys could try this." For example, she explained, it "could be something as easy as let me show you how to use this anchor chart correctly." Sasha believed this strategy could be beneficial to not only ELL students but English-Only students as well. Lola found this idea to be a very exciting way to support ELL students. She stated, "Oh, my gosh. I think for those ELL kids, if you pulled them to the side and gave them one specific task, even if it was like on the anchor chart, 'Today I want you to start with this statement, this is the statement you're going to use, so think about

what the author wanted you to learn through this story." This strategy could help apprentice ELL students into participating in the text-based discussion (Lave and Wenger, 1991). Lola found this exciting because she believed it might empower the ELL students to not only play a key role in the discussion but also provide a focus for their thinking. Lola shared that she was asked to give a presentation in her childhood language, Hmong, on early childhood education. Although she felt comfortable communicating in Hmong and was knowledgeable about the topic, she found navigating the language and topic without a focus daunting. Therefore, due to her own personal experience, she believed that providing a focus would help ease the cognitive challenge of negotiating language and content.

As for Lola's identified missed opportunity, she reconsidered how she selected student partners. Lola mentioned that she liked having the students partnered as a way to enact think-pair-shares during the both reading of the text and sometimes during the follow up discussion. To create the student partners she had ability grouped them. She reflected that she had grouped Navi with one of the lowest readers in the class. In hindsight, she wished she would have done it differently because participating in the text-based discussion had nothing to do with their ability of reading." Instead, Lola would have partnered Navi with someone "who was a deep thinker to like allow her to have a good conversation about the book and hopefully pull out more ideas from her." Lola thought by partnering Navi with a student "who was a deep thinker" would engage her in a conversation reflecting on the text and could have supported Navi's oral language development, listening skills, and literacy comprehension.

Both of the suggestions made by Lola and Sasha hold merit in the possibility of supporting ELL students' learning. However, I noticed missed opportunities of supporting ELL students' learning during whole group text-based discussions focused on implementing and

incorporating language learning in addition to literacy learning goals (McIntyre, 2010). These missed opportunities could have been addressed through teacher modifications implemented during the lesson such as targeted EOLD instruction and vocabulary experiences (Goldenberg, 2010) that does not require additional time conferring with students or regrouping student partners. Instead, both teachers' suggestions for missed opportunities appeared to emphasize supporting the students with literacy learning over language learning.

**Next Steps**

At the end of our work together, Lola and Sasha reviewed the DIT (Reznitskaya, 2012) to identify an area of refinement they wished to improve as a means to address ELL students' needs while also meeting the needs of the whole class during text-based whole group discussions. Lola stated three indicators that she would like to develop as part of her practice. First, she felt she still needed to continue working on the Authority Indicator. She stated, "I know we had talked about potentially having the kids call on each other and I never allowed that to happen because I'm like, I gotta keep that control." Another area that she wanted to work on within the Authority Indicator was providing and sharing space for students to evaluate each other's responses. After listening to Sasha's learning, she also would like to work on the Feedback teaching indicator. She believed that developing her ability to provide neutral feedback that encouraged students to explore their reasoning might benefit her ELL students by providing opportunities for them to share their background knowledge and experiences with the other students in the classroom. In addition, providing neutral feedback might create space and opportunity for her students to take on more responsibility to evaluate each other's comments, which is connected to the authority indicator. The third indicator that she identified as wanting to develop was meta-level reflection. She felt that connecting student ideas and linking student responses could make students more

conscious of listening and thinking about each other's contributions to the discussion. Lola did not mention wanting to work on refining her practice in relation to the Questions indicator. In addition, she did not identify the two indicators that represented the actions of students in dialogic teaching, explanation and collaboration.

In contrast, Sasha identified the two Teaching Indicators from the DIT (Reznitskaya, 2012) that focused on student actions as her next steps in refining her dialogic teaching practices: Explanation and Collaboration. She wanted to develop her ability to facilitate text-based whole group discussions to encourage students to provide reasoning and evidence to support their answers and interact to co-construct knowledge. This being said, she wanted her students "to really respond to each other" by "helping each other." She compared this vision of text-based whole group discussion to her current math whole group discussions. She valued how her students challenged each other if a peer was not able to find a correct solution. She felt her class understood in math that when challenging a peer, the concept that you "don't just tell them it's wrong. Help them, ask them the questions so they see that it's wrong." She found it challenging to facilitate students in transferring over this concept from math to literacy because reading is "not as cut and dry as math. Usually your thought in reading can't be wrong but it's about justifying your thought instead of proving it. I guess it's like proof in a different way." Sasha stated, her new professional goal is "getting them to help each other so that I can step back and I'm still there and I facilitate, I can whisper or whatever but usually the thought comes from them." In conclusion, both Lola and Sasha had a vision for the next step of their journey towards dialogic instruction. Each vision was unique but both supported where they felt they needed to go next.

During the four to six weeks of participating in this study, both Lola and Sasha made gains toward their professional development goals. Although neither teacher was able to fully enact dialogic practices or the principles for teaching ELL students (McIntyre, 2010), they did make gains in moving away from their previous monologic practices and supporting ELL students. In doing so, they demonstrated an increased awareness of the challenges of planning and enacting text-based discussions and identified potential strategies and resources that might help them further refine their practice. In Chapter Seven, I will share the implications of this study.

# CHAPTER 7

# IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe how two first-grade teachers attempted to negotiate instructional goals and serve a variety of students' needs as they refined their practice to facilitate whole group text-based discussions. Specifically, I examined how two early elementary teachers negotiated instructional goals for students who they identified as English Language Learners (ELLs) during whole group text-based discussions. In answering the research questions, I used Cole's (1996) context/practice/activity theory to examine two teachers' everyday practices as they facilitated text-based discussions with their students. Costa's (2001) Levels of Inquiry provided insight into the teacher's questioning moves and the students' opportunities to engage with different levels of thinking during text-based discussions. In this chapter, I will share the theoretical, research, and practical implications of this study. Finally, I will provide a conclusion and share the limitations and possible future directions of this study.

**Theoretical Implications**

There are several implications drawn from the findings of this study. In theory building, Cole's (1996) identifies six factors of influence. My study illustrates the importance of the "subject" in his model for understanding 'practice', particularly when other factors are more or less held constant (as in the case of having two teachers at the same grade level in the same school). In my study, the "unique characteristics" of these two teachers (subject) interacted with other factors of influence identified in the model to produce different examples of "practice" that show different "paths" to working toward dialogic teaching. Therefore, it provides a more nuanced view of what constitutes learning to engage in dialogic practice as it evolves over time. As the teachers became more knowledgeable, their practice shifted, but shifted in different ways,

since they (subject) had unique characteristics. Therefore, I have proposed a possible revision of Cole's (1996) factors of influence that shows how important the subject is in creating "practice"(see Figure 5). To illustrate, I will now describe how "the subject" represented individually within each case by Lola and Sasha influenced their practice through the enactment of text-based discussions (object) even though they taught in the same town, district, school, and grade level (community) with access to the same resources (mediating artifacts).

Lola and Sasha both taught in the same community. As members of the community, they were experiencing a change in student demographics in their classrooms, as more international students from India were moving into the community due to parents' employment opportunities. Both teachers felt the international families did not advocate for ELL services due to a possible concern about a "stigma" for their children as being seen as different within such a homogenous community. In addition, both teachers did not feel that the school district provided support to serve ELL students within the classroom. To further explore their community at the school and administrator level of context, Lola and Sasha also both taught in the same school building with the same administrator. They viewed their administrator as being supportive of the use of dialogic instruction across the content areas especially in math and literacy. In addition, they saw their administrator as an active assessor of their practice and were motivated to refine their dialogic practices such as facilitating whole group text-based discussions. Neither Lola nor Sasha mentioned their administrator's view or role in serving ELL students.

At the classroom and teacher level of community context, Lola and Sasha had organized classrooms that provided a literacy rich environment and a designated whole group space for text-based discussions. They both had access to the same resources when planning their whole group text-based discussions such as the district pacing guide, grade level assessments,

curriculum materials, grade level binder with planning materials such as graphic organizers (mediating artifacts). At the lesson and teacher level of community context, they both found it challenging to find the "right book" to match their learning objectives. One specific learning goal they both held was to encourage students to use the text for evidence and reasoning. At the learner-task-concept of community context, they both tended to focus on implementing scaffolding they felt would best support "all students" not just ELL students because they viewed the ELL students as "regular kids." For example, one scaffolding resource that they mentioned worked well for all students and ELL students was visual support such as illustrations. Thus, Lola and Sasha shared many similarities regarding the context (community) and access to the same resources (mediating artifacts) while facilitating a text-based discussion (object).

Lola and Sasha both started the collaborative intervention with a willingness to identify their strengths and weaknesses in dialogic teaching. However, since they were independent subjects, they identified separate DIT Teaching Indicators as areas of practice they wished to refine for facilitating text-based discussions. As they worked toward their individualized professional development goals, their unique style of practice influenced the enacted classroom norms (rules) during whole group text-based discussions. For example, they both expected all students to participate in the discussion. However, as distinct subjects, they enacted and enforced different norms (rules) in their classrooms during text-based discussions. A difference in their norms was that Lola called on students to share and Sasha allowed her students to share comments at will. This example demonstrates how each teacher's preference of implementing a norm (rule) influenced their practice regarding who identified the next speaker in the discussion, the teacher or the students (division of labor). Lola's practice involved calling on students because she liked to have "control." In contrast, Sasha's practice encouraged students to share

freely while she read the text and during the discussion. In conclusion, although Lola and Sasha had many similar factors of influence such as community and mediating artifacts, they created their own practice. In doing so, they established differences in their division of labor and rules as enacted upon the object (text-based discussion). Therefore, I suggest further research needs to be done to understand the importance of the subject (teacher) in relation to practice. Although it is important to acknowledge that individual teachers are not completely autonomous in their decisions regarding the planning and enactment of learning opportunities through practice in the classroom, the findings of this study suggest that they do appear to have some influence on the intended and enacted curriculum. This being said, the findings in the case studies are not generalizable, but they can offer hypotheses or theories to investigate.

**Collaborative Intervention as a Research and Professional Development Tool**

There are valuable research implications taken from this study. Due to the realization of the unique needs and concerns of each teacher as influenced by their sense of self regarding how to refine their practice while serving their ELL students in a whole group context, I followed the tradition of offering a collaborative intervention (e.g. Morrell, 2004). The concept of collaborative intervention provided space for me, as a researcher, to support my participants while gaining access to their thinking which provided insights into their practice and reasoning that I otherwise would not have had access to as an observer-participant. In order to gain this access into their thinking, I had to gain my participants' trust. Although I already had an established relationship with Lola, I still needed to develop a relationship where I could make a suggestion to influence her practice and she could freely decide if she wished to implement my idea or not and be willing to tell me why. This type of trust and relationship was even more complicated to develop with Sasha because she did not have any previous experience working

with me. Therefore, my approach to presenting possible areas to refine their practice of facilitating text-based whole group discussions was important.

To present possible areas of refinement for facilitating text-based discussions, I used of the Literacy Specific Dialogic Inquiry Tool (DIT) (Reznitskaya, 2012*)*. The DIT was "specifically designed to help elementary school teachers examine and rethink the quality of talk during literature discussions…(by) apply[ing] multiple evaluation criteria, or indicators, to systematically study their discourse patterns (Reznitskaya, 2012, p. 449*)*. This tool allowed me to present the evaluation criteria in a neutral way by asking the teachers to self-assess their current practices and identify an area that they would like support to refine as a means to gain their trust and position them in a position of power. Thus, it provided me with an entry point into an important conversation not as an evaluator, but as a collaborator. I used this entry point to ask questions to gain insights into their personal perceptions of their strengths and weaknesses regarding their current practices of using text-based discussions in their classrooms. I also gained insights on how they defined text-based discussions in the beginning of our study together.

During the study, we revisited the DIT and the Teaching Indicator that they selected as a professional goal as a means to check in and discuss their perceptions of their progress. This opened up conversations around their celebrations and challenges as they enacted each lesson. I asked them what they noticed about their ELL students' experiences or learning during the text-based discussion. Then, we returned to descriptors within their specific DIT Teaching Indicator as a means for the teachers to identify next steps they believed would benefit their practice in relation to their goals. As the topic of next steps developed in our conversation, I explicitly asked them how these next steps might influence their ELL students' learning opportunities during the lesson. After hearing the teachers' successes, challenges, and desired next steps, I suggested

possible resource that the teachers could use for support as they attempted to move toward their own identified professional development goals.

This strategy, as shown in Chapter Six, affirmed a sense of autonomy within the teachers as they identified the professional goals and decided which advice or recommendations I offered to implement or disregard. In conclusion, the DIT allowed me, as a researcher, to create a neutral space for teachers to talk, think, and evaluate their ability to facilitate a text-based discussion. However, within this neutral space provided by the DIT, there were not any affordances to specifically examine how their attempts to refine their practice supported or served their ELL students. Therefore, as the researcher, I had to specifically include and interject questions that addressed the needs and learning opportunities of ELL students in relation to their practice into our conversations and reflections. By creating and sharing this space with the teachers that included their thoughts and perceptions of ELL students, I was able to listen to their self-identified needs, concerns, and desired outcomes to gain insight to their perceptions and reasoning regarding the challenges of refining their practice of facilitating whole group text-based discussion while attempting to meet the needs of their ELL students. Although, this approach provided me with a way to access the participants' thinking, it did potentially limit their growth. It is possible that if I would have been more assertive with my insights to facilitate text-based discussions and more prescriptive with the interventions needed for ELL students, Lola and Sasha might have made more significant gains.

Another plausible reason, Lola and Sasha may have made reduced gains, beyond the length of the study, is that learning to facilitate a whole group text-based discussion is a challenging, time consuming, and career long journey. As mentioned earlier, teachers have unique learning needs and personalized professional development goals as they refine their

dialogic practice. Not only are teachers at different stages within the Dialogic Teaching

Indicators, but they are also at different stages within them as well. Tools like the DIT are not

perfect but they can help teachers by providing a descriptive journey of these stages to guide

teachers in moving forward to refine their practice as well as the vision of a possible outcome.

The DIT provides a way to meet teachers where they are at as well as strategies to scaffold where

they would like to go. This is important because it scaffolds the teachers to decompose this

complicated practice to identify their own professional needs and next steps (Grossman,

Compton, Igra, Ronfeldt, Shahan, & Williamson, 2009). Thus, it is a tool for empowering the

teacher to make decisions about how and why they choose or decline to implement certain

strategies based on their own professional needs.

**Reflecting on My Role**

As described in this dissertation, my role during this research project was intended to be

in collaboration with the teachers to support their self-identified professional needs not directive.

By creating space for the teachers to identify their own professional development goals, I believe

that I was able to increase their commitment to refining their practice of facilitating whole group

discussions while creating an awareness of the needs of their ELL students. This being said, my

research goal was twofold in that it addressed two separate layers of practice. First, the primary

goal was to support the teachers in learning to facilitate whole group text-based discussions.

Second, I wanted to create an awareness of how they were or were not meeting the needs of their

ELL students. Both of these practices are challenging for most teachers within themselves.

Therefore, I made a conscious decision to attempt to meet teachers at their level of practice

within these two areas and the potential it held for refinement instead of focusing on deficits.

In general, Lola and Sasha are good teachers who excel at supporting their students to

successfully meet the learning goals defined by their school district and the Common Core State Standards through the use of their current practices. Their participation in this research project created a context of uncertainty regarding their expertise and challenged their current practices. Thus, it was important for me to affirm positive growth while selectively highlighting possible new modifications in a respectful and supportive manner. For example, I intentionally limited my recommendations and suggestions for modifications of their practice to support their self-selected professional development goals of refining their ability to facilitate text-based discussions. Due to the fact that I knew that Lola and Sasha could not address everything required to refine their practice of facilitating whole group discussions and supporting ELL students, I was selective in what I recommended to better support them on this long journey. I did this with the explicit understanding that facilitating whole group discussions held the potential to possibly fill some of the deficits that I was seeing in regards to the six principles of teaching ELL students (McIntyre, 2010) and instructional modifications for ELL students (Goldenberg, 2010).

When this study began, Lola and Sasha were successfully implementing two of the six principles of teaching ELL students (McIntyre, 2010). They demonstrated an ability to enact the principle of rigorous teaching and curriculum and the principle of curricular connections by selecting texts that interested the students. As they implemented whole group discussions during this study, they made progress in addressing two other principles by focusing on creating space for joint productivity activity with a group learning outcome and increasing their ability to carefully plan instructional conversations grounded in literacy development. Although they did not make explicit EOLD learning goals, it could be argued that the discussions implemented during this project increased the opportunities for their ELL students to orally share. On the other

hand, I did not observe any changes in family involvement but I chose not to press for professional development in this area because I felt this principle would be best addressed over time and not necessarily within each individual lesson. In addition, I would have liked to see more multicultural texts that provided connections to the students' lived experiences and backgrounds. During the study, both Lola and Sasha selected the texts they wanted to use during the discussion based on the literacy learning goal. In hindsight, I wonder if multicultural texts could have opened up more space for language learning goals as well.

A similar pattern was observed with the instructional modifications required for ELL students (Goldenberg, 2010). Lola and Sasha were already providing explicit and interactive instruction with multiple modes of input when they started their participation in this study. They also supported their students to orally and mentally synthesize through such teaching strategies as questioning techniques, anchor charts, and think-pair-shares. During the study as the teachers implemented whole group discussions, they provided the instructional modification for their ELL students by increasing learning opportunities with peers as they taught targeted literacy content. I also felt that the discussions held the potential for instructional modifications that targeted EOLD instruction and vocabulary experiences. However, as I analyzed the data, I found that this potential was often missed by both teachers. To illustrate, vocabulary experiences were not explicitly planned instead it tended to be enacted through a teachable moment due to student prompting. In hindsight, I should have specifically highlighted these two important linguistic modifications to create a stronger level of awareness of the needs of ELL students instead of assuming the potential would create the opportunity.

I found it challenging to work towards my dual goal of supporting the teachers to refine their practice of facilitating whole group text-based discussions while supporting ELL students

because the DIT focused only on supporting discussions. In hindsight, I would have like to have modified the DIT to integrate McIntyre's principles for teaching ELL students into the spectrum of dialogic instruction through each indicator to help scaffold both goals for my teachers. One way to do this would be to emphasize language learning through targeted EOLD instruction and vocabulary experiences. I believe this would have helped build an awareness of the linguistic needs of ELL students within the practice of whole group discussions to help them move beyond "good teaching."

**Capturing Teachers' Perspectives**

There are valuable practical implications taken from this study. It is widely believed that interactive whole-group text-based discussions hold strong potential to increase students' opportunities for meaningful learning of important literacy skills and content learning (Lawrence and Snow, 2011). As mentioned previously, teachers are burdened with negotiating complex contexts while attempting to refine their practice to facilitate whole group text-based discussions. My study in particular provided a story of two first grade teachers as they negotiated this journey while attempting to serve ELL students. This story provided explicit details about their successes and challenges while participating in the study and trying to refine their practice of facilitating text-based discussions. The practical insights were balanced between these successes and challenges as they shared their thoughts (intended curriculum) and their (practice). It is important to note that neither teacher achieved their goal by fully enacting dialogic instruction during the text-based discussion. This evidence demonstrates how challenging and time consuming the commitment to refine facilitating text-based discussions is, even when just attempting to refine one area of the practice. Therefore, this should be considered a career long goal. However, the process of collaboratively reflecting on their practice and thinking helped me

as a researcher and them as teachers gain insights.

As I shared this learning opportunity with Lola and Sasha, I gained a deeper understanding of the complexity of planning and thought of enacting that was required to facilitate a text-based discussion. For example, I realized how challenging it was to "pull everything together." I knew they were both skilled and experienced teachers who were well respected in their community and demonstrated continuous success in supporting their students meet or exceed the grade level learning goals. Yet, I saw them missing opportunity to implement resources that focused on the specific learning needs of their ELL students into their lessons such as integrating their word walls into the lesson or using the SIOP lesson planning template.  In addition, I noticed the teachers made conscious gains within their intended curriculum before they were able to enact the ideas in their practice. For example, Lola mentioned her desire to implement an anchor chart to support students in understanding the norms of participating in a text-based discussion several lessons before she actually did it. It is possible that Lola and Sasha had to gain confidence in their understanding of facilitating a text-based discussion before being able to refine their practice.

Lola and Sasha also found some common insights while navigating the challenges of refining their practice to facilitate text-based discussions. An overwhelming insight that they both shared was the time required to properly plan and enact a text-based discussion. Another insight they both had was the need for them to perform an active role as a facilitator during the discussion. They found that as a facilitator, they needed to set the climate by creating new norms, use a variety of questioning techniques, respond to student statements, and monitor student conversation (Hansen, 2004). Lola decided to create norms through the introduction of an anchor chart while Sasha used small group structures and physically removed herself from the

discussion as a means to encourage student talk and interaction. Chapter Four provided examples of Lola using questioning techniques to encourage student participation in such activities such as providing reasoning, evaluating peers, and adding another perspective. As discussed in Chapter Five, Sasha utilized explicit feedback frequently presented in the form of a question to encourage students to explore their reasoning when responding to students. Chapter Six discusses how Lola and Sasha both shared their insights regarding the need to monitor student conversation to assess student thinking and to know when to step in and redirect the discussion.

**Working with ELL Students**

Another practical implication specifically for teachers obtained from this study is the consideration of the experiences ELL students during whole group text-based discussions. Research has shown that text-based discussions hold potential to influence and enhance children's language and literacy development (McKeown & Beck, 2006). This potential is extremely important to consider when supporting ELL students' language and literacy development because text-based discussions have been shown to provide ELL students with an opportunity to gain and voice deeper understanding when participating in text-based discussions (Saunders and Goldenberg, 2007). As illustrated in Chapter Six, Lola and Sasha both reflected on developing a deeper understanding of their ELL students learning and thinking. For example, Lola mentioned that she saw an increase in her ELL students' participation, which provided her with insights into their thinking. Sasha gave the specific example of gaining a deeper understanding of her ELL student's thinking when Jasmine explained how she used the illustration to develop her reasoning.

Both Lola and Sasha believed their ELL students were meeting grade-level expectations. The fact that this study took place in a first-grade context might have influenced this perception

because ELL students have been found to make comparable progress as their English-Only (EO) speaking peers during the early emergent reading stages such as letter sound correlation and sight word recognition; however, as the cognitive demands increase (i.e. academic content vocabulary and syntax) in later grades a learning gap develops between the ELL students and EO students (NLP; August & Shanahan, 2006). Lola and Sasha's perception that their ELL students were meeting grade-level expectations may have negatively influenced their purposeful planning of supports and differentiation strategies targeted at the linguistic needs of their ELL students.

Goldenberg (2010) argues that teachers need to enact instructional modifications as a means to provide additional support to their ELL students. ELL students benefit from learning in English-Only classrooms when teachers use a mixture of explicit and interactive instruction as a means of instructional modification (Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders, & Christian, 2006). For example, ELL students need multiple modes of input (i.e. auditory and visual), support to orally and mentally synthesize texts, experiences with vocabulary, extended learning opportunities with peers and teachers, targeted instruction of content and EOLD in every lesson (Goldenberg, 2010). Hence, regular classroom teachers who serve ELL students must also carefully and purposely plan their whole-class lessons to include explicit instructional modifications that support their students' EOLD.

Both Lola and Sasha implemented multiple modes of input as part of their "good teaching" techniques such as auditory (reading aloud), visual (document camera), supports such as sentence frames on anchor charts, highlighted vocabulary, and opportunities to listen and speak about the text. However, they also missed opportunities to support their ELL students through available resources. For example, neither Lola nor Sasha used the SIOP lesson planning template provided by the district that provided consideration for targeted instruction of content

and EOLD in the lesson. In addition, they did not actively use their word walls in the classroom during the text-based discussions as they introduced vocabulary. Lola and Sasha shared that they selected supporting resources and differentiation strategies based on what they felt worked for "everyone" in the class as part of "good teaching." This approach might be problematic because it ignores meeting the specific needs of ELL students. This being said, it is important to note that my analysis of Lola and Sasha's development within this short time period, growth from monologic teaching practices towards a shifting stance of dialogic teaching within the DIT Teaching Indicators did show an increase in opportunities for students in general to engage in different levels of thinking as a class. However, there was not necessarily an increase in engagement for their ELL students to actively participation in different levels of thinking through speaking; instead their participation was mainly through listening. In conclusion, teachers must consciously plan and enact intentional moves, supports, and differentiation to include their ELL students in speaking during the whole group text-based discussion if they wish to provide opportunities for them to develop oral language skills while grappling with different levels of thinking through discourse.

**Conclusion**

This study provided insights into the journey of two first grade teachers as they attempted to negotiate learning goals and refine their practice to facilitate whole group text-based discussions while supporting ELL students. It provided the field of education with the voices, perceptions, and experiences of these two teachers as they planned, implemented, and reflected on their lessons, thus, sharing their challenges and successes along their journey. The findings of the study revealed that the teachers identified different professional development goals based on their perception of their own personal strengths and weaknesses and the learning needs of their

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students. It also demonstrated that the teachers were functioning in a complex context with many of the same factors of influence that impacted their practice through the intended and enacted curriculum in different ways. The findings revealed that although both teachers made progress in working towards their professional goals as identified by the DIT Teaching Indicators, neither teacher moved beyond the beginning stages of shifting from monologic toward dialogic teaching within a four- to six-week time period. However, the gains that they were able to accomplish did influence the opportunities for their students to engage in different levels of thinking. Unfortunately, the ELL students in both of the two teachers' classes did not appear to actively benefit from this increase by taking up opportunities to speak and share their thoughts and ideas through different levels of thinking. Previous research on dialogic instruction presented ideal scenarios with teachers who had already mastered the skills needed to facilitate text-based discussions (e.g., Almasi, 1995; Matsumura, Slater & Crosson, 2008). In contrast, my study presented a more nuanced, everyday step-by-step view of beginning the process of gaining these needed skills. This being said, it is important to note that the teachers still continued to identify professional goals to develop their ability to facilitate whole group text-based discussions. Thus, learning to facilitate whole group text-based discussions is challenging and takes a considerable amount of time and commitment on the behalf of the teachers.

**Limitations of the Study**

It is important to be reflective and honest about the limitations of this study's research design and methods. One limitation of the study was the small number of participants. I decided to focus on a smaller number of participants in order to allow me to increase the number of observations per participant. Due to the focus on two teachers, I was able to better document the teacher's learning and changes. I was also able to invest more time in talking with the teachers

to gain insights into the views and perspectives about the challenges and successes of learning to refine their practice of facilitating text-based discussions. However, a stronger study would also document student learning to see how the teacher's progress of achieving his or her professional goals influences student achievement, particularly the achievement of ELL students. Another limitation was the length of time that I was able to collaborate with the two teachers. A longer study would have possibly captured the teachers moving across the spectrum from monologic to dialogic practice. However, this was a very intensive study that required the teachers to dedicate a large amount of time to planning, enacting, and reflecting upon facilitating whole group text-based discussions. Although the length of time was limited to four to six weeks, a longer study would have created an imbalance within the teachers' other responsibilities and duties. This being said, the teachers appeared to find value in their participation and stated they were interested in continuing the research the following year for a similar amount of time.  Finally, another limitation was that the study took place in only one elementary school. Although exploring two teachers who worked in the same context with access to the same resources provided additional insights into the function of the teacher (the "subject") as a factor of influence, it might have been insightful to see how several teachers negotiated different contexts and different resources to see if similar patterns were revealed.

**Next Steps**

As I concluded this study, I had two lingering questions that I wish to address in my future research. First, I am interested in directing this study in a different context. Since this study took place in a context that did not actively seek to identify and serve ELL students, I would like to explore the similarities and differences between this study and a context that places a high importance on identifying and serving ELL students. I wonder if this would influence the

ELL students' opportunities to engage in different levels of thinking during whole group text-based discussions or if the outcome would remain similar. In addition, this study took place in a very resource rich district and classroom but with limited ELL resources. I am interested in learning if a district that identified itself as committed to serving ELL students might provide more resources to support them that could be incorporated into the whole group text-based discussions as the teachers refine their practice of facilitating discussions and to see if/how teachers would take advantage of them.

My second area of interest involves Lola and Sasha. I really want to know where they decide to go from here. They each mentioned three distinct areas of interest from the DIT to develop their future practice. Lola seemed to focus on Teaching indicators that concentrated around the teacher while Sasha mentioned ones that seemed to involve the actions of the students. Based on the teachers' identified areas of future practice focusing on the teachers and students, I wonder if it would be beneficial for the teachers to refine their practice on more than one Teaching Indicator by grouping the indicators as to whether they focused on the teacher or the students. When I planned this study, I felt that focusing only on one indicator would best benefit the professional growth of the teachers. Now, I am wondering if it might also have potential to limit their development. In summary, I feel that I still have a lot to discover about how early elementary teachers negotiate learning goals while attempting to refine their practice of facilitating whole group text-based discussions and serving ELL students.

**APPENDICES**

# APPENDIX A


# TABLES

Table 1

*Data Sources and Subsequent Analyses*

| Data Source | Qualitative Analyses | Procedure |
|---|---|---|
| Semi-Structured Interviews & Pre & Post lesson Interviews | • *Open/axial coding*<br>• *Constant comparative method*<br>• *Grounded theory* | • *Categories and codes for factors of Influence*<br>• *Categories and codes for professional development goals* |
| Classroom Observations & Recorded lessons | • *Open/axial coding*<br>• *Constant comparative method*<br>• *Grounded theory* | • *Code teacher utterances*<br>• *Compare DIT Growth*<br>• *Use Costa to explore ELL student learning opportunities* |
| Artifact Analyses (Pre-Post Interviews and Curriculum Materials) | • *Open/axial coding*<br>• *Constant comparative method*<br>• *Grounded theory* | • *Categories and codes for factors of Influence*<br>• *Categories and codes for professional development goals* |

Table 2

*Reznitskaya's (2012) Dialogic Instruction Teaching Indicator: Authority*

| DIT Indicators | Monologic | Shifting | Dialogic |
|---|---|---|---|
| Authority: Lola *The level of which the teacher provides space for student participation.* | Teacher calls on students, asks questions, shifts topics, and evaluates the answers. | There are occasional open student discussions or only a few students participate. | Students and the teacher share the responsibility for the process and content of the conversation. |

Table 3

*Reznitskaya's (2012) Dialogic Instruction Teaching Indicators:  Feedback*

| DIT Indicators | Monologic | Shifting | Dialogic |
|---|---|---|---|
| Feedback:<br>*The level of which the teacher gives feedback to the students.* | The teacher gives generic feedback (e.g. yes, no, good, not quite). | The teacher actively listens to students' comments giving a mixture of explicit and generic feedback. | The teacher pushes students to further explore their reasoning without judging the conclusion. |

Table 4

*Explicit Feedback Examples*

| Student Comment | Sasha's Feedback |
|---|---|
| Abhi:  Or he might be a bird that can't even fly?<br>Another student: Like a penguin. | Like a penguin. Does he look like the kind of bird that can't fly? |
| We thought he was stalling. | Can you explain the word stalling? |
| We decided that he really likes Lulu. | Do you have any evidence that he really likes Lulu? |

Table 5

*Lola's Lesson Two Levels of Thinking*

| Level One Examples N=1 | Level Two Examples N=21 | Level Three Examples N=6 |
|---|---|---|
| "What did he choose to do with it?" | "Is this book fiction or non-fiction?" | "Why does it rain?" |
| | "Why do you think that was so funny?" | "What happens to the clouds?" |

Table 6

*Lola's Lesson Five Levels of Thinking*

| Level One Examples N=13 | Level Two Examples N=24 | Level Three Examples N=18 |
|---|---|---|
| "What is Cristobel doing right now?" | "Is Mateo doing what she wants him to do?" | "Do you think that Cristobel learned that lesson?" |
| "Who does the list belong to?" | "How did Cristobel feel when Willow stood up for herself?" | "So in this story, would you think that Willow is the main character or Cristobel is the main character?" |

Table 7

*Lola's Lesson Eight Levels of Thinking*

| Level One Examples N=25 | Level Two Examples N=45 | Level Three Examples N=6 |
|---|---|---|
| "What do we notice about elephant?" | "Why GERALD (yelled) instead of Gerald (whisper)?" | "What happens to your body when you feel nervous worried and scared?" |
| "Were they still able to play together?" | "Why was he happy?" | "Can you help her figure out why Mo Williams would add the water drops on his face in the drawings?" |

Table 8

*Lola's Three Lesson Summary: Questions Asked*

| Lesson Number | Lola Questions | Student Questions |
|---|---|---|
| 2 | 28 | 7 |
| 5 | 55 | 2 |
| 8 | 76 | 1 |

Table 9

*Lola's Levels of Thinking Summary*

| Lesson Number | Level One | Level Two | Level Three | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | 1 | 21 | 6 | 28 |
| 5 | 13 | 24 | 18 | 55 |
| 8 | 25 | 45 | 6 | 76 |

Table 10

*Sasha's Lesson Four Levels of Thinking*

| Level One Examples N=9 | Level Two Examples N=11 | Level Three Examples N=3 |
|---|---|---|
| Where did they say the setting was? | Why doesn't Lucy want to be friends with those girls? | Why do you think that the author did it like that? |
| Ok so what does the N represent? | Turn and talk with your partner about why your think that this flamingo wanted to be her friend? | Look at the picture. What book could you have maybe made a text-to-text connection with? |

Table 11

*Sasha's Lesson Seven Levels of Thinking*

| Level One Example  N=1 | Level Two Examples  N=18 | Level Three Examples  N=4 |
|---|---|---|
| When he stalled, right? | Turn and talk to the person next to you about why you think Hugo is changing his mind. | Does he look like the kind of bird that can't fly? |
|  | Do you have any evidence to support that he really likes Lulu? | Can you think of an example when you have stalled? |

Table 12

*Sasha's Lesson Nine Levels of Thinking*

| Level One Examples  N=2 | Level Two Examples  N=2 | Level Three Examples  N=3 |
|---|---|---|
| What is happening on this page, Lyla? | What did the author mean when they wrote, "The more he tried to fit in, the more he stood out?" | How would a dog act on this page? |
| Paleontologist? | You think he wants his friends to give their bones to make his picture or do you think he is digging up this fossil? | What is a normal dog supposed to do? |

Table 13

*Sasha Feedback Summary*

| Lesson Number | Generic | Explicit | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 39 | 0 | 39 |
| 7 | 29 | 13 | 42 |
| 9 | 9 | 5 | 14 |

Table 14

*Sasha Levels of Thinking Summary*

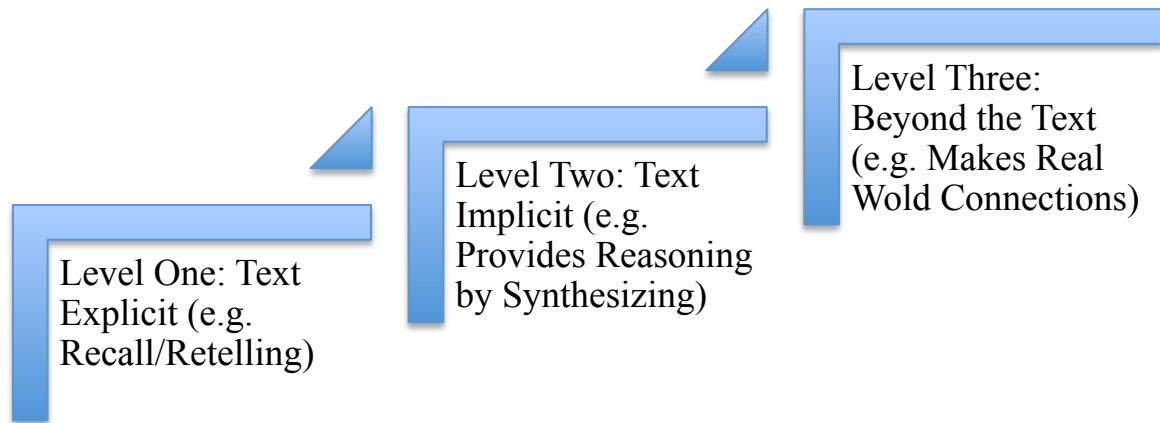| Lesson Number | Level One | Level Two | Level Three | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 9 | 11 | 3 | 23 |
| 7 | 1 | 18 | 4 | 23 |
| 9 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 7 |

# APPENDIX B


# FIGURES
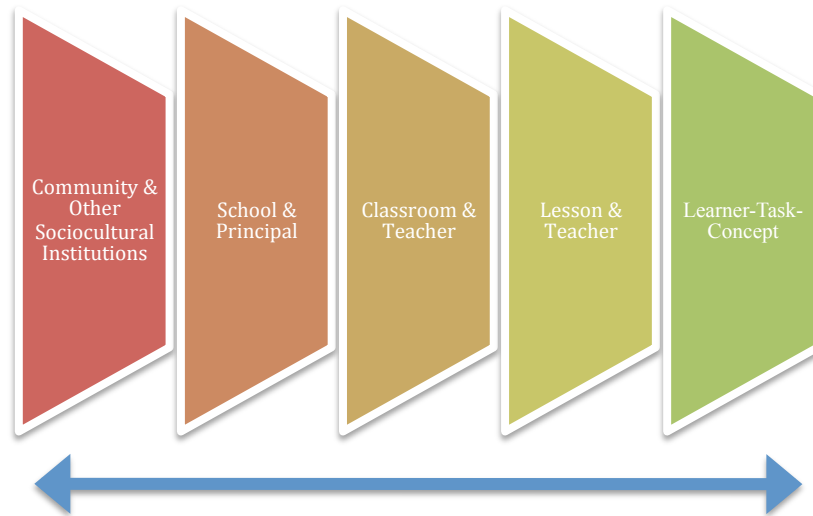
*Figure 1.* <u>Cole's (1996) Modified Contextual Whole.</u> Adapted from *Cultural psychology: A once and future discipline* (p. 133), by M. Cole, 1996, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
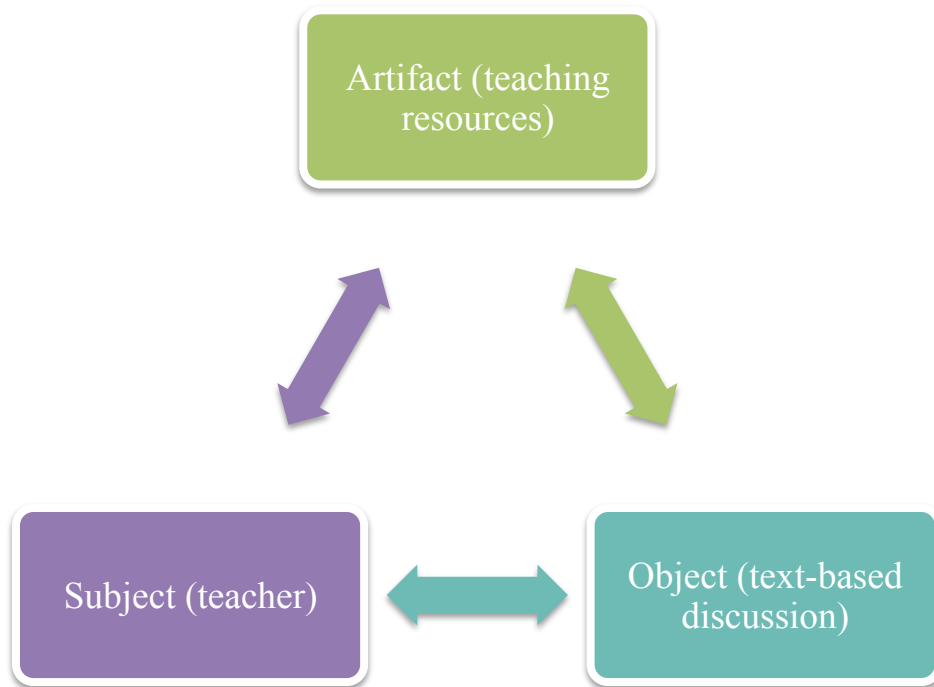
*Figure 2.* Cole's (1996) Modified Basic Mediation Triangle. Adapted from *Cultural psychology: A once and future discipline* (p. 119), by M. Cole, 1996, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
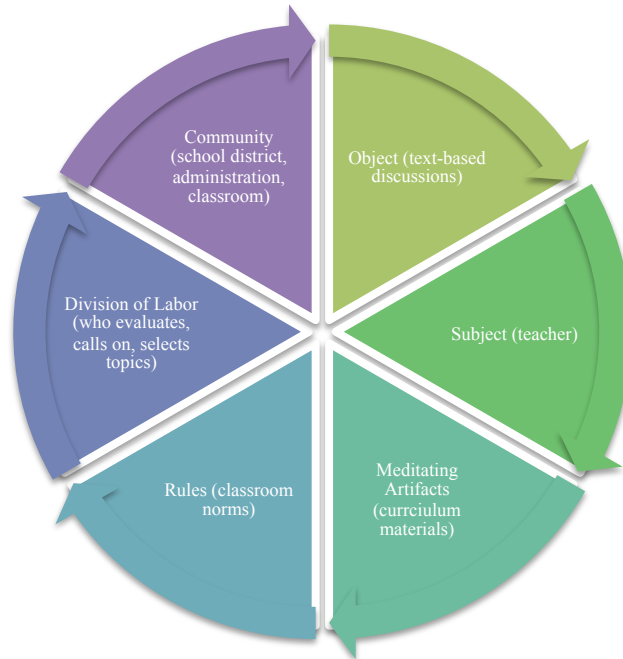
*Figure 3*. Cole's (1996) Modified Mediation Triangle. Adapted from *Cultural psychology: A once and future discipline* (p. 140), by M. Cole, 1996, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Level One: Text Explicit (e.g. Recall/Retelling)

Level Two: Text Implicit (e.g. Provides Reasoning by Synthesizing)

Level Three: Beyond the Text (e.g. Makes Real Wold Connections)

*Figure 4.* Costa's (2001) Levels of Inquiry Model. From *Developing minds: A resource book for teaching thinking* by A.L. Costa, 2001, Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
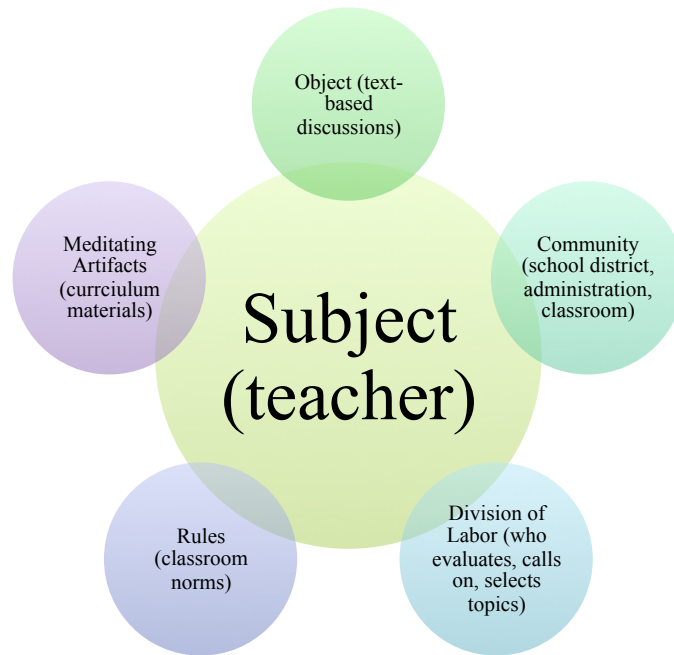
*Figure 5.* <u>Cole's (1996) Revised Mediation Triangle</u>. Adapted from *Cultural psychology: A once and future discipline* (p. 140), by M. Cole, 1996, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

**APPENDIX C**

**INTERVIEW PROTOCOL**

**Interview Protocols**

- **The interviews were audio recorded with teacher consent.**
- **The interviews were transcribed and coded.**

I. **Preliminary Interview**
   a. What made you want to become a teacher?
   b. Have you always taught in this school district?
   c. Tell me about your teaching background (certification, degree, experience).
   d. Can you describe your classroom to me?
   e. What are your students like?
   f. Tell me about your ELL students?
   g. How often do you use read alouds in your classroom?
   h. Why do you use read alouds?
   i. What approaches do you try to use to learn more about what your students are learning during read alouds?
   j. Teachers these days have pretty diverse classrooms with all types of students whose learning needs need to be met. Can you tell me how you try to address the learning needs of struggling students? advanced students? ELL students?
   k. What resources do you use when planning text-based discussions?
   l. How do you facilitate student collaboration during text-based discussions?
   m. What is an area that you feel confident in regarding facilitating text-based discussions?
   n. What is an area that you feel less confident in regarding using whole group read alouds? Do you have any concerns about meeting the learning needs of your ELL students?
   o. Why are you interested in refining your practice of whole group read alouds?
   p. "Let's take a look at this instrument. It might help us talk in more specific terms about areas teachers focus on when they try to have discussions. [look at DIT] We could use part of this framework together as it applies to your goals as I observe your teaching so we have a common focus, and so we can be very specific about the area that you want to work on….Is that something that would work for you?
   q. Is there an area that strikes you as something you would like to work on?"
   r. How could this area help ELL learners?
   s. How do you currently reflect on your practice?
   t. How and where do you find support or resources to guide you in serving your ELL students?

II. **Pre-Observation Interview**
   a. What do you want all students to learn during this text-based discussion lesson?
   b. Do you have any additional learning goals for your ELL students?
   c. How will you support your ELL students during this lesson?
   d. What are you trying to work on specifically for your practice in relation to your professional goal?

**III.  Post-Observation Interview**
   a.  Now, that you have taught your lesson, did everything go as planned?
   b.  What went well?
   c.  What part of the lesson was challenging for you or your students?
   d.  Specifically thinking about your ELL students, what celebrations, surprises, or challenges did you experience as the teacher during your lesson?
   e.  What did you notice about your ELL students' experiences during the lesson?
   f.  How would you evaluate your progress toward reaching your goals? What seemed to go well? What was hard for you?
   g.  What next steps do you feel you should take to increase student learning and talk?
   h.  How will this influence the learning opportunities for your ELL students?

**IV.  Exit Post Interview**
   a.  If you were talking with one of your colleagues, how would you describe what whole group text-based discussions look and sound like in your classroom?
   b.  "Let's take a look at this instrument and reflect on your professional learning goal. [look at DIT] How would you describe your growth in this area?
   c.  How has your practice changed or stayed the same regarding facilitating whole group text-based discussions?
   d.  How would you describe the kinds of 'space' this has created for students to share and explore ideas?
   e.  Describe how the use of whole group text-based discussions has or has not influenced your ELL students' learning opportunities.
   f.  How do you address the needs of ELL students while also meeting the needs of the whole class during a text-based discussion?
   g.  If you were to give advice to a colleague who wanted to refine his or her practice of facilitating whole group text-based discussions to support ELL students while meeting the needs of the whole class, what would you say?
   h.  How is serving English Only and ELL students during text-based discussions the same or different?
   i.  Looking at the entire DIT, please share with me your next steps or area of refinement as a means to address ELL students' needs while also meeting the needs of the whole class. How would refining this area be beneficial to ELL students?

**APPENDIX D**


**DIALOGIC INSTRUCTION TEACHING INDICATORS**

Table 15

*Reznitskaya's (2012) Dialogic Instruction Teaching Indicators*

| DIT Indicators | Monologic | Shifting | Dialogic |
|---|---|---|---|
| Authority:<br>*The level of which the teacher provides space for student participation.* | Teacher calls on students, asks questions, shifts topics, and evaluates the answers. | There are occasional open student discussions or only a few students participate. | Students and the teacher share the responsibility for the process and content of the conversation. |
| Questions:<br>*The level of which the teacher uses questions to prompt student thinking.* | Teacher asks right or wrong questions that require simple responses explicitly stated in the text. | The teacher asks a blend of open and closed questions that require a variety of thinking strategies. | The teacher uses open and cognitively challenging questions. |
| Feedback:<br>*The level of which the teacher gives feedback to the students.* | The teacher gives generic feedback (e.g. yes, no, good, not quite). | The teacher actively listens to students' comments giving a mixture of explicit and generic feedback. | The teacher pushes students to further explore their reasoning without judging the conclusion. |
| Meta-level reflection: Connecting student ideas:<br>*The level at which the teacher facilitates and links students' responses.* | Teacher does not link the students' answers. | Sometimes the teacher helps students connect their thinking and sometimes the teacher does not. | The teacher purposely guides students to build off of each other's ideas by prompting and encouraging them to respond to each other. |
| Explanation:<br>*The level at which students provide reasoning and evidence to support their answers.* | Students do not give explanations. | Sometimes students give their opinion and attempt to justify them. Occasionally, students restate or retell using the text. | Students take personal stands and support them with evidence and examples. |
| Collaboration:<br>*The level at which students interact to co-construct knowledge.* | Students give fact based short answers independent of each other. | The students occasionally build on each other's thoughts mostly by making personal connections. | Students critically react to each other by evaluating and building ideas together. |

Adapted from *Dialogic teaching: Rethinking language use during literature discussions* (p. 450), by A. Reznitskaya*, 2012, The Reading Teacher, 66(7), 446-456.*

**APPENDIX E**


**CHILDREN'S LITERATURE USED DURING ANALYZED LESSONS**

**Children's Literature Used During Lessons**

Brown, P. (2006). *Chowder.* Little, Brown Books for Young Readers: New York.

Brown, P. (2011). *You will be my friend.* Little, Brown Books for Young Readers: New York.

Button, L. (2013). *Willow finds a way.* Kids Can Press, Ltd.: Boston.

Domingues, A. (2013) *Let's go hugo.* Dial Books: New York.

Jeffers, O. (2011). *Stuck.* Philomel Books: New York.

Willems, M. (2013). *I am a frog.* Disney-Hyperion: New York.

**APPENDIX F**


**CONSENT FORM**

You are being asked to participate in a research project. Researchers are required to provide a consent form to inform you about the study, to convey that participation is voluntary, to explain risks and benefits of participation, and to empower you to make an informed decision. You should feel free to ask the researcher any questions you may have.

Study Title: Let's Talk about Text: A Case Study of Early Elementary Teachers Refining Their Practice to Facilitate Whole Group Text-Based Discussions While Supporting ELL Students

Researcher and Title: Amber Meyer, Doctoral Candidate, Department of Teacher Education, & Cheryl L. Rosaen, Professor, Department of Teacher Education

Department and Institution: Department of Teacher Education, Michigan State University

Address and Contact Information: Amber Meyer, Erickson Hall, 620 Farm Lane, East Lansing, MI 48824;( (414) 333-2794; meyeramb@msu.edu & Cheryl L. Rosaen, Erickson Hall 116D, 620 Farm Lane, East Lansing, MI 48824; (517) 353-0632; crosaen@msu.edu

Dear Teacher,

You are being asked to participate in a research study examining how mainstream teachers implement whole group read alouds in classrooms with English Language Learners (ELLs). The purpose of this study is to explore how early elementary teachers in kindergarten through second grade plan and enact whole group read alouds. Specifically, this will examine how early elementary teachers refine their practice to support the learning needs of ELL students as they identify and work toward self-identified goals. Results from this study will contribute to our understanding of how early elementary teachers refine their practice of facilitating whole group read alouds while providing learning opportunities to ELL students.

Your participation in the study will mainly take place from March 2014 through May 2015 and will take approximately 15-30 hours of your time over a three to four month period. (Additional follow up questions for clarification may be asked June through October.)
The approximate break down of these hours over this period are as follows:
- 60 minute pre-interview
- Nine to twelve pre-observation lesson debriefings
- Nine to twelve lesson observations
- Nine to twelve post-observation lesson debriefings
- 60 minute post-interview

Your consent gives the university researcher permission to collect the following data and use the data collected for research purposes. These data include the following:
- Interviews about your professional background, classroom, and teaching practices.
- Observations of your teaching activities in the classroom during nine to twelve read aloud lessons.
- Documentation of classroom and lesson materials (e.g., planning documents, relevant curriculum materials, district pacing guide, etc.).

The classroom observations will be videotaped and transcribed if consent is provided. The interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed if consent is provided.

This research may benefit your understanding of facilitating read alouds in early elementary classrooms.  It may also lead you to better understand how to support ELL students during read alouds. In addition, the findings from this research may be used to provide potential examples for teachers and teacher educators to enact more inclusive learning strategies and practices.

This research involves minimal risks. You will be asked questions that require you to report your understanding of your student learning needs and teaching practices. This may lead to some feelings of discomfort or to be reflective about your teaching practices in new ways.  This research is not an evaluation of your practice. It will be focused on working with you on your own self-identified goals for how you implement read alouds, and you may modify those goals throughout the study. You may gain some insights about your own practice as a result of this process. Information regarding your participation in this research may appear in reports or articles, but your identity or teaching context will not be revealed.

Information about you will be kept confidential to the maximum extent allowable by law.  All data collected will be securely stored. Only the researcher and supervising faculty member working with the study, both of whom are bound to maintain confidentiality, will review the data collected. Every effort will be made to protect information about you, for example, by keeping data in secure locations and by using pseudonyms and disguising identifies in any written reports, publications, and presentations.  Results of the study will be reported so that neither individuals nor their schools can be identified. IRB has the right to review the data.

Participation in this research project is completely voluntary.  You are under no obligation to participate and, if you choose not to participate, no penalties will occur.  You may refuse to release certain data, if you wish.  You may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

If you have any questions regarding your role and rights as a research participant, or would like to register a complaint about this study, you may contact, anonymously if you wish, the Michigan State University's Human Research Protection Program at 517-355-2180, FAX 517-432-4503, or e-mail irb@msu.edu, or regular mail at 202 Olds Hall, MSU, East Lansing, MI 48824.

If you have any questions about this study, such as scientific issues, how to do any part of it, or to report an injury, please contact the study's principal investigators: Amber Meyer, Erickson Hall, 620 Farm Lane, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824, meyeramb@msu.edu, (414) 333-2794 & Cheryl L. Rosaen, Erickson Hall 116D, 620 Farm Lane, East Lansing, MI 48824;(517) 353-0632; crosaen@msu.edu.

Your signature below means that you voluntarily agree to the following:

_____ to participate in Let's Talk about Text: A Case Study of Early Elementary Teachers
            Refining Their Practice to Facilitate Whole Group Text-Based Discussions While
            Supporting ELL Students.

_____ to allow your interviews to be audio recorded.

_____ to allow your classroom observations to be videotaped.


Name _____
              (please print)


Signature _____        Date _____

**APPENDIX G**


**HUMAN SUBJECTS APPROVAL LETTER**

March 4, 2015

To:     Cheryl L. Rosaen
        116 D Erickson Hall

Re:     **IRB# x15-242e** Category:  Exempt 2
        **Approval Date:** March 4, 2015

Title:     LET'S TALK ABOUT TEXT: A CASE STUDY OF EARLY ELEMENTARY
TEACHERS REFINING THEIR PRACTICE TO FACILITATE WHOLE GROUP TEXT-BASED
DISCUSSION WHILE SUPPORTING ELL STUDENTS

The Institutional Review Board has completed their review of your project.  I am pleased to advise
you that **your project has been deemed as exempt** in accordance with federal regulations.

The IRB has found that your research project meets the criteria for exempt status and the criteria for
the protection of human subjects in exempt research.  **Under our exempt policy the Principal
Investigator assumes the responsibilities for the protection of human subjects** in this project as
outlined in the assurance letter and exempt educational material.  The IRB office has received your
signed assurance for exempt research.  A copy of this signed agreement is appended for your
information and records.

**Renewals**:  Exempt protocols do <u>not</u> need to be renewed.  If the project is completed, please submit an
*Application for Permanent Closure*.

**Revisions**:  Exempt protocols do <u>not</u> require revisions.  However, if changes are made to a protocol
that may no longer meet the exempt criteria, a new initial application will be required.

**Problems**:  If issues should arise during the conduct of the research, such as unanticipated problems,
adverse events, or any problem that may increase the risk to the human subjects and change the
category of review, notify the IRB office promptly.  Any complaints from participants regarding the
risk and benefits of the project must be reported to the IRB.

**Follow-up**:  If your exempt project is not completed and closed after <u>three years</u>, the IRB office will
contact you regarding the status of the project and to verify that no changes have occurred that may
affect exempt status.

Please use the IRB number listed above on any forms submitted which relate to this project, or on any
correspondence with the IRB office.

Good luck in your research.  If we can be of further assistance, please contact us at 517-355-2180 or
via email at IRB@msu.edu.  Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

*A. McGee*

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**REFERENCES**

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