A CASE STUDY OF TEACHING PHONEMIC AWARENESS TO PARENTS AND CHILDREN: SCAFFOLDED PRESCHOOL TUTORING WITH KINESTHETIC MOTIONS FOR PHONEMES

A dissertation submitted to the Kent State University College of Education, Health, and Human Services in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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A CASE STUDY OF TEACHING PHONEMIC AWARENESS TO PARENTS AND CHILDREN: SCAFFOLDED PRESCHOOL TUTORING WITH KINESTHETIC MOTIONS FOR PHONEMES (275 pp.)

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The purpose of this case study was to examine the interactions between parents and children as they participated in weekly tutoring sessions to develop phonemic awareness (PA) with the use of kinesthetic motions for the phoneme (KMP). The study examined how the parents extended the learning and explored the changes in their literacy understandings. In addition, it documented the children’s growth in PA. The four major sources of data of the study were: field notes constructed from recordings of the tutoring sessions and dyads reading a poem at the beginning and end of the study; parental logs; interviews; and literacy measures of the children.

The study chronicled the change in the parents as they developed the ability to teach PA. The parent-child interactions demonstrated the parents acted as effective tutors. They scaffolded attending to sound with KMPs and developed the following understandings through the use of poetry: to direct their children to attend to print non-verbally by pointing and verbally with the use of specific language for directionality, letters and punctuation. The children developed PA, as evidenced in their use of KMPs outside of the sessions, in their identification of letter sounds and ability to encode phonemes. The parents’ guidance of the children to text resulted in growth in concepts about print.
The implications of the study include the need to incorporate concrete markers, such as the KMP, with preschoolers in PA activities, the need to teach parents to scaffold interaction with text through pointing, and the need to seriously consider engaging parents in academic tutoring.
For My Mother,

Elizabeth Hamilton Ryan-

The orphan’s voice that shaped a story of family and learning
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CHAPTER I
DEFINING THE STUDY

Introduction

Kara, a reserved preschool child, interrupted the conversation between her mother and me during an interview. As we discussed the connection her daughter had made with another adult through their joint participation in a shared weekly practice, Kara burst into the kitchen with excitement. Her mother, Mel, turned and extended the discussion to include her daughter. I faded into the background as I observed their interactions.

Mel addressed Kara, saying, “Like if you saw Mrs. Sallis, you could give her a little . . . spell a little word for her with your sign language. Or, she’d say to you, ‘Hello, Kara, how are you today?’” Mel sang the question to her daughter and used kinesthetic motions to accompany some of the beginning sounds in the words.

Immediately, Kara joined in the singing adding, “And, I’d say, /d/ /d/ /d/,” as she did the motion for /d/ playfully and laughed out loud. Mel smiled and involved Kara further with her response, “You’d say, ‘Hello, Mrs. Sallis, right?’” She accompanied some sounds with kinesthetic motions again—a practice they both understood. Enthusiastically, Kara chimed in, exclaiming, “Yes, I can do that!” She repeated, “Hello, Mrs. Sallis,” and did the specific motions for /s/ /l/ and /s/, after stretching their friend’s name out on her arm.

At that point, Mel asked her daughter, “What would you write?” Kara answered confidently, “S-L-S.” Creating an air of a performance, she declared, “I think I’m a reader!” With that pronouncement, she walked into the living room, selected a book
from a little basket on the floor, climbed up on the couch, and proceeded to read (Field notes, July 21, 2010).

The spontaneous exchange between Mel and Kara in their kitchen highlights their sharing a practice of attending to particular sounds in oral language with the use of kinesthetic motions for the phoneme (KMP). Their participation in tutoring sessions provided the experience in which Mel and Kara learned to use KMPs to accompany sounds in their interactions. Mel developed an ability to support Kara and extend the learning into their daily lives in a specific way.

As a teacher of young children and the creator of the KMPs, I have been extremely curious about engaging parents in the use of the scaffold for two reasons. First, I have been asked by parents and grandparents each year about having an opportunity to learn the KMPs to either assist their struggler, or more generally, to participate in the fun of sharing with their children at home. Second, in response to their requests, I realized that I disseminated information regarding the use of the KMPs at Open Houses and in weekly newsletters, but did not provide access to the school practice in any other way. How could they learn to use this scaffold by simply hearing me tell them about it?

Upon reflection, I realized that a model for allowing parents to participate over time to learn to assist their children in specific skills was not a practice in schools. Yet, an expectation for parent participation as partners in the children’s academic success was. In an effort to respond to this reality, I wanted to study how parents and children interacted in the development of phonemic awareness (PA) with the use of the KMPs, if
given a chance to participate in tutoring sessions. Within the framework of tutoring sessions, I wanted to examine how they constructed an understanding of PA over time and how they extended the learning into their daily exchanges with their children.

Thus, my dissertation study examined how seven parents interacted with their children as they participated in tutoring sessions with me and learned to use KMPs with their children. The half-hour weekly sessions spanned a 15-week period. Each week, I introduced a new KMP to be used as we recited a new poem or sang a song. The KMP corresponded to a sound in a poem or song, such as the /t/ in “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star.” As the weeks progressed, I demonstrated the integration of the KMPs from previous poems and songs to review the more familiar experience of their use. The parents and children participated in the shared experience as we embedded the exploration of sounds within the context of poetry and song to develop PA.

Phonemic awareness (PA) is the ability to hear, express, and manipulate the sounds of the spoken language. Approximately 41 phonemes comprise the English language (Adams, 1990; National Institute of Child Health and Human Development [NCHD], 2000). Phonemes are the smallest unit of sound in syllables and words. Research has pointed to the significance of the ability to analyze sound at the deep structure level of the phoneme in reading acquisition (Shankweiler & Liberman, 1972). The International Reading Association (IRA, 1998) substantiated the link between PA and reading success. Letter knowledge and PA were identified as the two best predictors of early reading success (Share, Jorm, Maclean, & Matthews, 1984). The NRP (2000)
supported this finding and recommended the teaching of the skill early on, especially from preschool through first grade.

Children develop PA in their unending interactions and exploration with the sounds of oral language (Ferguson, 1986; Lindblom, 1992). Children who engage in literacy activities in their homes develop higher abilities in PA than children lacking those experiences (Burgess, 1999). The significance of this is twofold. First, the development occurs early on for most children. Secondly, the development occurs in natural and meaningful ways. The vignette of Mel and Kara in the kitchen demonstrates a meaningful exploration of the sounds of oral language in a spontaneous way with a preschool child. Although Kara had the opportunity to play with sounds at home, all children do not have such experiences for the development of PA.

**Statement of the Problem**

PA develops for most children during the preschool years, primarily due to the interactions in the home between children and their parents in oral language exchanges. However, approximately 20% do not develop the ability to hear, express, and manipulate phonemes (IRA, 1998). The children who do not develop PA prior to school entry need explicit instruction in the skill.

The current practice of assessing young children in schools identifies those youngsters who have not yet mastered PA skills. The identification of the deficiency often leads to grouping for targeted, isolated instruction for its development. Although 20% of the children demonstrate a need for explicit instruction, the problem is that the
type of instruction is contrary to the meaningful context in which it develops naturally for most children.

An example of a meaningful context is present in the interaction between Kara and her mother in the excerpt at the beginning of the chapter. Two factors were present in the interaction that supported the development of PA. First, the use of a scaffold in the PA activity provided support for Kara’s performance. Second, a more knowledgeable other was present in the socially interactive and meaningful context. Most importantly, the more knowledgeable other in Kara’s experience was her mother.

Mel’s specific direction of Kara to attend to sound illustrates a mother acting as a teacher. Her knowledge permitted her to engage and support Kara in the development of PA. She modeled the use of KMPs to attend to sounds in their conversation and guided Kara to engage with her in their use. In the end, she prompted Kara to associate the KMPs with letters, by asking, “What would you write?” In the following, I provide the background to the importance of the use of a kinesthetic scaffold in the development of PA and the importance of involving parents as teachers of specific skills.

**Background**

**Scaffolding PA**

Research substantiates the use of a concrete marker, such as the KMP, in the development of PA with young children or with children who struggle in the acquisition of the skill (Blachman, Ball, Black, & Tangel, 1994; Castiglioni-Spalten & Ehri, 2003; Clay, 1979; Lindamood & Lindamood, 1998). Visual and auditory methods are effective
in the teaching of sounds, and thus are effective at increasing PA. However, the focus upon the struggler in reading has approached scaffolding in a multi-modal manner.

Compelling research notes the sensitive nature of the body to the transmission of information (Berman, 1939; Fernald, 1936, 1988; Montessori, 1967). Fernald (1936) incorporated tactile tracing into her method of VAKT (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile). She integrated movement to strengthen the auditory and visual modalities used as children interact with text. The movement linked the sound of the word and its printed form (p. xiii).

*Phonics in Motion* (Kindervater, 2002) is a method to engage young children in the exploration of sounds in a multi-modal way to assist in the development of PA. I created and self-published *Phonics in Motion*. It was designed to help children develop an awareness of the sounds in spoken language through the use of concrete markers.

The kinesthetic motions for the phonemes (KMPs) are one part of *Phonics in Motion*. The KMP is a multi-sensory kinesthetic marker incorporating auditory, visual, kinesthetic, and tactile modalities in its execution. The KMP develops PA for young children in authentic oral language experiences. Each sound has a corresponding kinesthetic motion and is used like a gesture for a word in a song, poem, or everyday conversation. Each consonant, vowel, digraph (/th/, /ch/), and diphthong (/ou/, /oi/) have individual KMPs. Some word endings (-tion and -ing) have kinesthetic motions, also.

Every KMP corresponds with the articulation of the sound and demonstrates the tension of the sound as the KMP is executed. For example, the articulation of /t/ involves flicking the tongue against the front of the mouth with a fair amount of tension in the
tongue. The motion for the /t/ is made in the following way: (a) form the ‘ok’ gesture with your pointer finger against the thumb, (b) push the index finger against the thumb with tension, and (c) end by flicking the pointer finger against the thumb until it is extended and free of the thumb. This quick movement is performed while saying the sound of /t/ (Kindervater, 2002).

In this study, I modeled the incorporation of the KMP, such as the previously described kinesthetic motion for /t/, in PA activities from *Phonics in Motion*. Seven sets of parents, parent and grandparent, or two parents and their children interacted with each other as they recited poems and songs and learned to call attention to the sounds in oral language with the use of the KMPs.

Each week, I demonstrated the use of the KMP for a particular sound. The adults incorporated the KMP immediately as they chanted or sang and they engaged their children in the use of the KMPs at the same time. They modeled the placement of the KMP at the appropriate time to match the emission of the particular sound. For example, they did the KMP for the sound of /h/ at the beginning of the words, *Hello* and *How* as they sang, “Hello, [child’s name], how are you today?” in the “Hello” song.

Yopp and Yopp (2000) recommended that PA experiences needed to be engaging, playful, and socially interactive. Therefore, the integration of the KMPs in my study was in the context of singing, chanting, and reciting poetry or songs in the group. As the parents interacted with their children with the use of the KMPs within this context, they engaged them in the tutoring sessions. In so doing, they developed an understanding of PA and taught the skill to their children.
Parents as Teachers

Parents want to help their children develop skills related to reading acquisition. They are curious and want to ensure success for their children, yet often lack a way to put a plan into action (Edwards, 2005). The NRP (2000) noted the same finding in reporting the desire of parents to participate in activities to support the acquisition of reading. The NRP pointed to the lack of studies of involving parents as trainers and suggested the need for research to fill this void. Specifically, the NRP recommended activities to train parents to teach their preschool children about letters.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act allocated billions of dollars to Head Start (U.S. General Printing Office, 2009). The preschool program requires evidence of involving parents. The guidelines, however, are general in nature. Specific to literacy, the program recommended that parents read to their children and take them to the library. However, training parents to focus upon a particular skill to enhance the literacy development of their children in these preschool years was not part of any recommendation.

Senechal’s (2006) meta-analysis called for direct involvement of parents in literacy development. The meta-analysis noted that training parents to teach their children a literacy skill was six times more effective than having parents read to their children. My study focused upon the interactions between parents and children as they learned to use a kinesthetic marker to teach PA.
Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate how seven parents interacted with their children as they participated in 12 to 15 weekly tutoring sessions and learned to use KMPs to engage their children in PA development. In addition, the study examined how the parents constructed an understanding of PA and extended the learning outside of the guided sessions we shared. An additional purpose of the study was to examine the change in the parents’ literacy understandings and the subsequent growth in their children’s PA.

The tutoring sessions provided a picture of how these parents interacted as they taught their children PA with the use of KMPs over a period of time. This study was a response to the lack of research in the area of involving parents as teachers of a literacy skill (NRP, 2000). In addition, the study honored the desire of parents, in general, to ensure success for their children by guiding them with a concrete plan, as Edwards (2005) suggested.

The involvement of parents incorporated the importance and necessity of a more knowledgeable other guiding the child. The format of the study encompassed the recommendations for PA development for social interaction and the use of a concrete marker with the young child. To accomplish the purpose of the study, I posed four research questions as a guide.

Research Questions

1. How do parents and children interact with the use of KMPs?
2. How do parents extend the learning in the tutoring session to experiences outside of the directed session?

3. How do parents’ literacy understandings change over time?

4. How does the PA of the children change over the course of the study?

Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this study, I employed the following definitions:

_Dyad:_ a pairing of a parent and a child, forming a social unit. Two groups included two adults with one child, forming a triad. However, the term, dyad, was used generally to identify the adult and child involved in the interaction.

_Interaction:_ activities, conversations, subtle factors, such as non-verbal exchanges between any of the following participants in the study: parent and child, research and the parent, researcher and child, or exchange between participants (Merriam, 1998).

_KMP:_ a kinesthetic motion for a phoneme. It is a scaffold using the hand from _Phonics in Motion_ (Kindervater, 2002) to accompany the 41 phonemes of the English language, and some word endings (_-er, -ing, -tion, -ed_).

_Phoneme:_ the smallest units constituting spoken language (NRP, 2000).

_PA:_ the ability to focus on and manipulate phonemes in spoken words (NRP, 2000); the ability to hear, express, and manipulate phonemes (IRA, 1998).

_PA Tasks_ (NRP, 2000):

- _Phoneme isolation:_ identifying individual sounds in words (/p/ is the first sound in paste).
• **Phoneme identity**: recognizing the common sound in different words (/b/ in bike, boy and bell).

• **Phoneme categorization**: recognizing the word with the odd sound in a sequence of three to four words (bus, bun, rug).

• **Phoneme blending**: listening to a sequence of separately spoken sounds and combining them to form a recognizable word (/s/ /k/ /u/ /l/ combine to form school).

• **Phoneme segmentation**: breaking a word into its sounds by tapping out or counting the sounds or by pronouncing and positioning a marker for each sound (three: /s/ /i/ /p/).

• **Phoneme deletion**: recognizing what word remains when a specified phoneme is removed (smile without the /s/ is mile).

*Poem:* Mother Goose nursery rhymes taken from the research-based literacy program for preschoolers and kindergarten children, *Fast Start: Getting Ready to Read* (Rasinski & Padak 2008), and other traditional poems.

*Tutoring Session:* a 30-minute lesson built around the focus of a song, poem, or nursery rhyme. I guided the session for the attending parent-child dyads.

**Significance of the Study**

The study explored the interactions between parents and children in a tutoring program designed to train parents to use KMPs in the development of PA. The use of the KMP was not in isolation, but accompanied sounds in poems and songs. The in-depth description of the parents and children in their interactions offered significant information
pertinent to the parents’ support of their children during learning, the use of the concrete marker of the KMP, and its integration into authentic oral language activities.

Observing parental interactions provided two specific kinds of information. One type of information was the opportunity to learn how parents chose to scaffold their children first-hand and how their support changed over time. Second, the parents reported ways in which they integrated the use of the KMPs into their everyday experiences with their children outside of the formal tutoring session. Tharp and Gallimore (1988) noted the value of observing the social interactions in teaching outside of the school to establish theories that might be implemented within the school settings. Hopefully, this line of inquiry regarding the parents teaching children might inform school practice.

The study explored the significance of the use of a transportable concrete marker, the KMP. Research substantiates the importance of marking the elusive phoneme in a concrete way, especially for the young child or struggler. Beyond such scaffolding, the incorporation of the multi-modal experience in learning is of value. The KMP is both a concrete marker and multi-modal and this study observed the ease of its incorporation into the lives of parents and preschoolers and noted the change in the children’s PA development.

Another significant area this study examined was the use of the KMP in authentic explorations of oral language. Incorporation of the KMP illuminated a protocol for the development of PA with authentic text. Yopp and Yopp (2000) warned against approaching the development of PA in a scripted, ‘lock step’ process (p. 142). The
guidance highlighted the importance of honoring the child’s nature by embedding instruction in meaningful contexts and using activities that were literacy rich. Contextualized settings afford the child an opportunity to actively engage in the process of the discovery of literacy understandings (Richgels, 2001). The parents in this study integrated the use of the KMPs into poetry, song, and everyday conversations. The activities engaged the parents and children in meaningful interactions as they developed the understanding of PA.

**Summary**

Most preschool children develop the significant skill of PA during interactions in literacy experiences at home. However, some children do not. In this chapter, I reviewed the following purpose of the study: to examine how parents and children interacted with the use of a KMP as a concrete marker in tutoring sessions and extended the learning beyond the directed setting. In addition, I wanted to study how the parents’ literacy understandings changed over time, as well as the change in the preschoolers’ PA and emergent literacy over the course of the study. I presented the research questions that guided the study. The resulting rich description of the findings can illuminate the significance of involving parents in the teaching of specific literacy skills and the importance of using a concrete marker with young children. In the next chapter, I review pertinent literature related to the study.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

In this review of related literature, I discuss studies supporting the significance of PA. I address the levels of complexity of PA and an instructional sequence for presentation of the skill. Then, I review the use of concrete markers and the integration of the kinesthetic modality to scaffold PA development. Next, I review the significance of parents engaging children in home literacy experiences and the importance of learning to teach specific literacy skills. Lastly, I address the support for a playful context in the development of PA for young children.

After the literature related to PA development, I discuss aspects of a socio-cultural theory of learning relevant to this study. I describe cognitive development from this perspective with a review of Vygotsky’s (1978) zone of proximal development and Tharp and Gallimore’s (1988) description of progression through the zone. I address scaffolding with a description of the critical elements of tutoring and the six functions of a tutor. Within the framework of the discussions, I focus upon the construction of meaning through social interactions.

Phonemic Awareness

Phonemic awareness (PA) has become front and center in the discussions regarding reading acquisition. The NRP (2000) noted that PA is one of the five areas of needed instruction if there is to be a hope of increasing reading achievement for American school children. PA is the ability to hear, express, and manipulate the basic
sounds in oral language. Approximately 41 phonemes compose the English language (Adams, 1990; NRP, 2000) and these sounds make up all syllables and words.

PA develops naturally for most children. The development occurs as children explore and interact with oral language (Ferguson, 1986; Lindblom, 1992). Those children who engage in literacy activities at home have higher PA than those who lack such opportunity (Burgess, 1999). The significance of this is twofold. First, the development occurs for most children when they are young. Secondly, it occurs in natural and meaningful ways. However, approximately 20% of the children do not develop the skill naturally (IRA, 1998). These children need to be taught the skill explicitly.

The Importance of PA

As early as the 1970s and the 1980s, studies established the significance of understanding the phoneme in the development of early reading. Shankweiler and Liberman (1972) noted that the sub-skill of PA was necessary for children to achieve in reading. The larger unit of sound focus delineated in phonological attention to syllable and rhyme identification was not analytic enough. They noted the importance of the ability to manipulate sound at the basic, sub-level element of the phoneme. The manipulation of the phoneme, especially for the struggler, is critical to the development of reading success (Adams, 1990). Likewise, the significance of segmenting syllables into their component parts was linked to successful reading (Calfee, Lindamood, & Lindamood, 1973; Liberman, Shankweiler, Fischer, & Carter, 1974).
During the 1980s, studies broadened the understanding of the significance of the skill of PA as a predictor of future reading success. Share et al. (1984) studied kindergarten children upon school entry and followed them for two years. They identified letter knowledge and PA as the two best predictors of early reading success, after IQ, social background, and literacy experiences were factored out. Juel (1988) found that children entering first grade with underdeveloped PA remained underachieving readers in the fourth grade. These studies coupled with many others substantiated not only PA as significant, but also a prerequisite for future reading and spelling success (Ball & Blachman, 1991; Bradley & Bryant, 1983; Foorman, Francis, Shaywitz, Shaywitz, & Fletcher, 1997; Tunmer, Herriman, & Nesdale, 1988).

Researchers’ observations of children’s writing behaviors (Bissex, 1980; Chomsky, 1972, 1979; Clay, 1979; Read, 1971) enlightened the field with the realization that the young child could hear and manipulate the phoneme. Their insights strengthened the understanding that young children can manipulate the phoneme and that authentic writing activities support the development of PA. The findings linked with the early Durkin (1967) studies that established that children who write early, read early and the achievement is maintained over time.

This section reviewed influential studies illuminating the significance of PA development to future success in reading and spelling. The best predictors of early reading success are letter knowledge and PA (Share et al., 1984). The IRA (1998) substantiated the connection between PA and successful reading. And, the NRP (2000) supported this finding and recommended the teaching of the skill early on, most
especially from preschool through first grade. Consequently, this review turns to issues of instruction with this critical skill of PA for the young child.

**PA Instruction**

The success of the kindergarten children with reading in the study of Lundberg, Frost, and Peterson (1988) offered a format for instruction for PA development. Experiences began with larger units of sound as children listened to nursery rhymes. The progression of experiences moved to identifying initial phonemes and finally to segmenting and blending. Similarly, Clay (1979) emphasized the importance of children listening for sounds in sequence, previous to the recording of sounds.

In accordance with the findings of Lundberg et al. (1988), Stahl and Murray (1994) and Yopp and Yopp (2000) suggested the instructional sequence of beginning with the larger, phonological units of rhyme and syllable focus before manipulating the smaller unit of the phoneme. Control of the larger unit of sound precedes control of the smaller unit in phonological exploration. When the child is ready for the focus on the phoneme, the following progression is recommended, starting with the simplest task.

**Sequence of Development**

Within the development of PA activities are six levels of complexity. An understanding of the levels informs planning instruction for PA development. They are as follows, from the easiest to the most difficult (NRP, 2000) level.

1. Phoneme isolation: identify the beginning sound in the word *ball* as /b/
2. Phoneme identification: identify the sound that is the same in the series: *boy, ball, bat* as /b/
3. Phoneme categorization: identify the sound or word that does not belong: cat, car, hat, cash as hat or /h/

4. Phoneme blending: combine the sounds to form the resulting word: /b/ /a/ /t/ as bat

5. Phoneme segmentation: Divide the word into its component sounds: *jump* as /j/ /u/ /m/ /p/

6. Phoneme manipulation: Add, delete, or change a phoneme in a word to make a new word: drop the /t/ in *cart* and identify *art*

In addition to the levels of presentation, the NRP (2000) noted that PA instruction was enhanced by additional factors. The three factors were: explicit instruction with a focus of only one or two skills at a time; the use of letters during PA instruction; and small group instruction. The value of focusing upon socially interactive, engaging, and playful activities during PA instruction was also highly recommended (IRA, 1988; Yopp & Yopp, 2000).

This section reviewed studies informing instruction in relationship to the sequence of presentation and the levels of complexity in PA development. The format of presentation guided the weekly tutoring sessions in my study. The complexity of manipulating the phoneme often requires specific support to aid development for the young child. In the next section, I examine types of scaffolding used in PA development.

**Scaffolding for PA Development**

Early tests devised to examine the correlation between phoneme segmentation and later reading achievement incorporated the use of concrete markers as scaffolds to
represent the phoneme. Adams (1990) pointed out that children need to be aware that phonemes are present and can be manipulated. Similarly, Juel (2006) noted that phonemes can remain “elusive for the young child” (p. 420). The scaffold of a concrete marker assists in this area.

The use of scaffolds for phoneme identification has taken various forms. Examples are colored blocks (Calfee et al., 1973), wooden dowels (Liberman et al., 1974), Elkonin (1973) boxes (Clay, 1979, 1993), tiles (Blachman et al., 1994), mouth pictures (Castiglioni-Spalten & Ehri, 1983; Lindamood & Lindamood, 1998), and the use of letters (Bradley & Bryant, 1983; Calfee, 1998; Hohn & Ehri, 1983; Morris, 1993; NRP, 2000). The addition of such concrete markers materializes the sound for the young child and scaffolds the capturing of the fleeting phoneme. Furthermore, the incorporation of multi-modal experiences supports the learner in PA development.

Scaffolding With the Kinesthetic

Although visual and auditory methods are effective in the teaching of sounds, and thus effective for increasing PA, the focus upon the struggler in reading has approached scaffolding in a multimodal manner. Compelling research noted the sensitive nature of the body to the transmission of information. As previously noted, Fernald (1936) incorporated tactile tracing into her method of VAKT (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile). Later, Fernald (1988) described the method as a “modified kinesthetic approach in which the motor imagery of the movements involved in writing the word reinforces the auditory-visual association between the sound of the word and its printed form” (p. xiii). Her stages of presentation guided the child from the incorporation of the kinesthetic in
the first experiences with words to the final stage of focusing on fluent reading without
the scaffold of the kinesthetic. Additional instances of using the finger for tracing had a
significant effect on increasing retention of items, such as letters and words in struggling
learners (Berman, 1939; Fernald, 1936, 1988; Montessori, 1967).

Studies and instruction incorporated the use of scaffolds to capture the fleeting
phoneme for the young child in order to enhance the child’s ability to manipulate the
phoneme. The integration of the kinesthetic modality with the auditory and visual
presentation in the form of a scaffold intensifies the learning experience for some
children. In this study, the KMP was the scaffold used to assist in the development of PA
for the young child.

However, children do not use scaffolds independently. They must learn how to
use them with the help of expert others. In my study, the parents modeled the use of the
particular scaffold of the KMPs to assist the child.

Parents Scaffolding Children

Compelling research documents the significance of home literacy experiences to
positive gains in reading over time (Cooter, Marrin, & Mills-House 1999; Durkin, 1966).
Specific to PA, Burgess (1999) indicated that students with higher PA and decoding skills
are encouraged to participate in literacy activities in the home.

Padak and Kindervater’s (2008) review of Durkin’s (1966) longitudinal studies
noted the significant role of parents as teachers in the success of early readers. Durkin
stressed the parents’ ability to respond to the children’s queries and act as teachers.
Parents are familiar with the children’s interests and abilities. Knowing the child is a

Wood et al. (1976) pointed out two elements in the theory of tutoring that are necessary for the adult assisting performance. One, the tutor must understand the task; and second, the tutor must understand the tutee, or participating child in this study. As parents interact with their child, they bring a deep background and understanding to the experience. Consequently, the parents’ knowledge of their children satisfies the element of the ‘understanding of the tutee.’ However, parents are not necessarily equipped with the element of the understanding of the task of teaching a specific literacy skill. Parents need to learn the skill in order to assist their children as tutors.

Senechal’s (2006) meta-analysis reviewed studies which involved parental involvement and reading achievement. She found that training parents to teach their children a specific reading skill had significant results, as opposed to general suggestions of reading to the child, or listening to the child read. This study provided a format for the parents to learn to teach the specific skill of PA to their children. In addition, as they developed an understanding of PA, they were able to act as successful tutors. They understood the ‘task’ at hand.

In this section, I addressed the importance of home literacy experiences and the significance of teaching parents to teach a specific literacy skill to assist their children’s reading development. This study taught parents how to teach the specific skill of PA with the use of the scaffold of the KMP in weekly tutoring sessions. Next, I review the
importance of meaningful, playful experiences to define the context that was used in the study for the development of PA.

**Context for Scaffolding PA Development**

Lundberg et al. (1988) conducted a study of the effects of training preschool children in phonemic manipulation tasks that supported the importance of playful interactions. Directing the inquiry toward a context for young children, the study involved engaging and playful activities with a result of significant gains in PA abilities. The PA experiences had lasting effects on the acquisition of reading and spelling through the second grade.

Engaging children in songs, rhymes, and poetry scaffold children in a fun and natural way within a context of authentic literacy experiences. One particular tool that supports the value of playful, interactive experiences is the fun rhyme presented in nursery rhymes (Day, Dommer, Mraz, & Padak, 2002). Such popular poems support the development of PA abilities with preschoolers (Maclean, Bryant, & Bradley, 1987). Rhyme and rhythm are the structures that build success for the child. For example, if a teacher sings, *Bippity, Boppity Boo, an elephant sat on You*, or *LOU*, or *BOO*, the child is invited to engage in the structure of rhyme and to play with the sounds to develop PA. Repeated singing of the same routines allows the child to sharpen the choices and gain confidence with the skill. In this manner, the child hears, expresses, and learns to manipulate the phoneme.

The significance of scaffolding young preschoolers playfully was stressed in this section for the development of PA. This study provided a socially interactive and playful
context in which the children engaged in the use of songs, poems, and nursery rhymes. In this way, the supports of rhyme and rhythm were built into the authentic literacy experiences for the participating parents and children.

In summary, I presented studies supporting the significance of PA, levels of complexity, and the instructional sequence for the presentation of the skill. Then, I explored the place of scaffolding within PA development, with emphasis on the importance of the concrete marker and the kinesthetic modality. Next, I addressed involving parents in teaching a literacy skill and the recommendations for a context supporting playful interactions in order for young children to play with sound in authentic experiences.

In the following, I review a socio-cultural theory of learning and the importance of a more capable other guiding the younger member to acquire knowledge through social interaction. The focus of assisted performance relates to Vygotsky’s (1978) and Tharp and Gallimore’s (1988) assertions regarding the development of the child’s performance in a socially interactive process. I address the concept of scaffolding and review the critical elements of tutoring. Lastly, I incorporate the six functions of a tutor manifested by the more capable other while leading performance toward self-regulation.

**Socio-Cultural Theory of Learning**

From the socio-cultural perspective, learning occurs within social and cultural contexts. Vygotsky (1978) set the stage for the importance of the social and cultural domains as foundational in cognitive development. He did not consider thinking as “bounded by the individual brain or mind” (Berk & Winsler, 1995, p. 12). He believed
that the higher forms of human cognition necessitated interplay of social and cultural contexts. Hence, the approach was socio-cultural (Berk & Winsler, 1985; Wertsch, 1995).

Vygotsky (1978) defined the need for a child to be active within a social context before any cognitive process was internalized as his own. He noted that “every function in the child’s cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 57). Vygotsky differentiated between the two planes of functioning, labeling the social “between people” as “interpsychological” or “interpersonal,” and the more independent plane occurring “within the child” as “intrapsychological” (p. 57, italics in original).

Vygotsky (1978) distinguished between lower mental functions and higher ones as he explored the use of signs in socio-cultural settings. Lower processes, such as memory, attention, and learning, exist at an animal level in functioning. Higher functioning in the same processes of memory, attention, and learning are mediated, or supported, by signs used within socio-cultural settings (Berk & Winsler, 1985). All higher functioning finds its foundation in the “relations between human individuals” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 57). These human individuals use signs, such as tools, to support memory; the most important of these is language.

Language is central to Vygotsky’s theory of socio-cultural learning because as a sign, it connects people with each other in communication. Ultimately, language is internalized and operates on the intrapersonal plane of the individual mind. At that point, it becomes the person’s own symbolic tool to be used to help oneself. This division of
language, or speech, is divided into two categories: (a) speech that is social; and (b) speech that is for the self, or “egocentric” (Vygotsky, 1978).

Vygotsky (1978) asserted that development occurs first on the social, and then on the intrapersonal level. The assertion directed attention to the awareness that significant others are present in the process. He noted that “children grow into the intellectual life of those around them” (p. 88). Inherent in Vygotsky’s use of the word grow is the developmental potential of the child, as opposed to a static measure. The involvement of the child via social interaction implies future development of the child’s higher functioning. The growth or learning occurs in Vygotsky’s explanation of the zone of proximal development (ZPD).

The Zone of Proximal Development

The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) exemplifies the transition from the interpsychological to the intrapsychological level of functioning with the assistance of other people. The ZPD explains the transition from the actual level of performance to the potential level of performance with assistance from an expert other. Vygotsky’s ZPD noted that the road to independence in learning was accomplished in cooperation with others. When knowledgeable others support the child adequately in the completion of a task, the foundation for independence for that task is set. Initially, the completion of the task is cooperative; lastly, it is independent.

Tharp and Gallimore (1990) described a series of four stages of progression through Vygotsky’s ZPD. The stages defined a progression toward understanding via an
interactive process that highlighted support. In the following, I describe each stage for the learner in the process toward independence and self-regulation.

**Stage I: A more capable other assists performance.** In this stage, the adult is responsible for the understanding of the situation, the task, and the goal (Tharp & Gallimore, 1990, p. 184). Little by little, the child understands pieces of the whole and senses the meaning of the activity. Assistance is geared by the adult’s understanding of what the child knows. Once the child understands the task, responsibility is turned over to the child.

**Stage II: The performance is assisted by the self.** The child is in charge of the task performance in this stage, without help from others. However, the regulating behavior is observable, as the child verbalizes the directions aloud. This purposeful talking is “self-directed speech” (Tharp & Gallimore, 1990, p. 185). The identifiable behavior of self-guidance by one’s own speech signals that the learner is moving through the ZPD.

**Stage III: Performance is developed, automatized, and fossilized.** This stage marks the point of development of a task. The self-regulating behavior observable in Stage II disappears and the child integrates the task smoothly. The “child has emerged from the zone of proximal development” at this stage (Tharp & Gallimore, 1990, p. 186). Assistance from the expert is annoying or bothersome to the learner at this stage.

**Stage IV: Performance is deautomatized and the need arises to move back through the ZPD.** In this stage, instability of the control of a task calls for assistance either from self or supportive others. The security of an earlier stage offering greater
assistance is necessary at points of difficulty in learning or with new learning. Tharp and Gallimore (1990) noted that learning in any stage or at any point can call for various types of support. Even in the face of fossilized or fixed knowledge, movement to a previous stage of support can cement understandings.

In summary, Tharp and Gallimore (1988) depicted the movement through the ZPD beginning with the assistance of significant others. The sensitive regulation of the adult during Stage I adjusts to the child’s ability and understanding of the task at hand. The needed assistance of others is diminished as the child gains control and is able to self-regulate. Therefore, Tharp and Gallimore emphasized the necessity of social interaction in cognitive development and aligned with Vygotsky’s (1978) belief that “relations between human individuals” is foundational to higher mental functioning (p. 57).

The assertions of Vygotsky (1978) and Tharp and Gallimore (1988) were relevant to this study. Guided by Tharp and Gallimore’s model, I was directed by the following questions. Did the parents use specific language as they interacted with their children in literacy experiences? What actions or artifacts of the children reflected the social interaction of the parents and children? What verbal and non-verbal actions of the parents did the children observe, use, or possibly internalize?

Particular to the query regarding non-verbal actions was the use of the scaffold of the KMPs in the interactions between the parents and children. As Tharp and Gallimore (1988) described the progression through the ZPD, this study examined the use of the KMPs by the parents to assist the child. Likewise, I observed the child’s use of the
KMPs to assist oneself and the potential end of dropping the KMP, indicating internalization. Figure 1 demonstrates an application of Tharp and Gallimore’s progression as it was applied to the use of KMPs as a scaffold in the interactions between parents and children in this study.

![Recursive Loop](image)

**Figure 1.** Application of Tharp and Gallimore’s (1988) representation of the ZPD

The progression through the stages demonstrated the movement toward self-regulation. A parallel assumption regarding the role of the expert shepherding the young child’s path toward independence is the concept of scaffolding. This theory of scaffolding (Wood et al., 1976; Wood & Middleton, 1975) is addressed in the next section, as another means of assisting the performance of the child in learning.

**Scaffolding**

The picture of scaffolding next to a building illuminates its function. Scaffolding is a temporary support put in place while construction is underway. Berk and Winsler
(1995) identified two aspects of scaffolding: that which is under construction and the
element of support. In their description, the child is self-constructing, while the scaffold
is the social network of aid. This interactive process, or social network, is the particular
scaffold which “allows the child to move forward and continue to build new
competencies” (p. 26). This assistance parallels the ZPD due to the interactive nature of
the process of scaffolding.

The observations of interactions between tutors and children during problem
solving defined the meaning of scaffolding (Wood et al., 1976; Wood & Middleton,
1975). The process of scaffolding during instruction highlights the ability of the expert to
pitch help for the child at a level that will move the tutee forward in the performance of a
task. The nature of the scaffold changes, depending on the success or failure the child
has completing a task. Being in tune with the child’s ability to perform a task and his or
her interests are requirements in successful scaffolding.

**Region of sensitivity.** Children succeed when tutors are sensitive to how the
child responds to their interventions. Tutors who scaffold the children successfully
operate within the “region of sensitivity” (Wood & Middleton, 1975, p. 190). This region
defines the child’s functioning at a level just above the place where he or she would find
continual success, yet not at a level of difficulty that would subject the child to failure.
Operating within the region of sensitivity requires the tutor to make decisions about how
to assist the child to succeed at the next step of development of a skill.

This region of sensitivity brings to mind the image of a child walking on the top
of a stone wall with a parent close by. The adult extends the hand at a point of a stumble,
yet otherwise drops it and walks alongside. However, the adult’s eye surveys continually, just in case more support is needed. The adult makes on-going decisions regarding involvement in the activity by making crucial and continuous choices.

**Critical elements of tutoring.** Tutors advance development and make beneficial decisions regarding interventions based on two critical elements: the understanding of the task, and the understanding of the tutee (Wood et al., 1976; Wood & Middleton, 1975). The interaction of these two elements provides the tutor with the basis to operate within the region of sensitivity. The tutor’s understanding of the child allows the tutor to choose the part of the task that will stretch the child toward a higher level of functioning, yet at the same time continue to provide a level of comfort and support within the present range.

In terms of the complexity of task, operating in the region of sensitivity calls for a simplification of the task by the tutor. The tutor must not ask the child to do too much, or commit to a sequence of operations in task performance that overwhelms the child. This calls for constant monitoring of the child’s responses in order to match intervention to the point of need in the child’s performance (Wood et al., 1976; Wood & Middleton, 1975). Recalling the picture of the child walking on the wall, the adult does not want to ask the child to move more quickly, or run on the wall, when the child is stepping cautiously, with eyes fixed on his or her feet.

Tutors break tasks down into smaller steps in order to operate within the region of sensitivity. Wood et al. (1976) noted that to arrive at a particular goal in the performance of a task requires “combining (usually in an appropriate serial order) the set of
component acts” (p. 90). This description indicates the path to attainment of a skill.

Guiding the child toward acquiring skills requires the tutor to perform a multi-faceted function. Wood et al. described six functions of a tutor engaged in the scaffolding process (see Table 1).

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment</td>
<td>Recruit the attention and interest of the tutee. The tutor must get the child involved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction in degrees of freedom</td>
<td>Break the task down into smaller steps. The tutor must take over parts that are too difficult and let the learner master the smaller component tasks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction maintenance</td>
<td>Maintain the child’s awareness of the goal. The tutor must keep the tutee motivated. The tutor needs to motivate the child to risk engaging at the next level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marking critical features</td>
<td>Identify important features critical to the task. The tutor points out the “discrepancy between what the child has produced and what he [tutor] would recognize as a correct production” (p. 98).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frustration control</td>
<td>Create an interaction that is free of stress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstration</td>
<td>Show the child what the task looks like in its “idealized” form (p. 98), hoping the child will “imitate.” The tutor sets an expectation for the child via the demonstration.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Adapted from Wood et al., 1976

Beyond the description of the functions of a tutor, Berk and Winsler (1995) pointed out the critical goals and components of productive scaffolding: joint problem solving; intersubjectivity, which denotes a shared vision; warmth and responsiveness;
keeping the child in the ZPD; and promoting self-regulation. This last component necessitates the adult’s ability to transfer control to the child (pp. 27-30). Transferring control correlates with Stage III in Tharp and Gallimore’s theory of the progression through the ZPD.

The scaffolding process mirrors the interactive and dynamic process of moving through the ZPD from joint activity to that of independent control. According to Wood and Middleton (1975), independent control is the point at which the child can “initiate and control his own behaviour in the absence of an instructor” (p. 190). It is the point at which the child can walk the wall alone. This implies a level of confidence on the part of the child and a level of trust on the part of the adult about the child’s functioning and understanding.

My study analyzed examples of scaffolding used by the parents in their interactions with their children in the tutoring sessions. Wood et al.’s (1976) descriptions of critical elements of tutoring and the functions of a tutor informed my understanding of the types of assistance provided for the children during the sessions. In addition, the study examined parental scaffolding in the development of the particular literacy skill of PA and demonstrated assistance across a continuum of support.

**Summary**

In this chapter, I examined the importance of PA with particular attention to levels of complexity, sequence of presentation in instruction, and the importance of the use of a concrete marker with young children. Within the focus of scaffolding with a concrete marker, I extended the review to include the integration of the kinesthetic. In addition, I
discussed the support of an interactive and playful context to promote authentic literacy engagements in the development of PA.

Next, I reviewed the literature related to a socio-cultural theory of learning to highlight the significance of a more capable other guiding the young child to acquire knowledge through social interaction. I extended the discussion of assisting the learner toward independence from the standpoint of scaffolding. Specific to this study, I discussed critical elements in successful tutoring and the six functions of a tutor.

In the next chapter, I describe the research methodology through an overview of the study, the theoretical framework, and the research design. I explain the setting, the participants and their selection, and the tutoring session. I provide the procedures for entry into the site, data collection, and data analysis. Then, I outline trustworthiness through a discussion of credibility, dependability, and confirmability.
CHAPTER III
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I describe the research methodology through an overview of the study, the theoretical framework, and the research design. Next, I explain the setting, the participants and their selection, and the tutoring session. I provide the procedures for entry into the site, data collection, and data analysis. Then, I outline trustworthiness through a discussion of credibility, dependability, and confirmability. Finally, I address limitations of the study.

Introduction

The purpose of my case study was to examine how parents and children interacted to develop PA with their preschoolers with the use of KMPs within the context of a socially interactive, weekly tutoring session. As defined earlier, PA is significant to future success in reading acquisition (IRA, 1998; NRP, 2000) and is developed naturally in the assistance of expert others. In addition, the use of a concrete marker aids in its development for young children (Blachman et al., 1994; Castiglioni-Spalten & Ehri, 2003; Clay, 1979; Lindamood & Lindamood 1998).

In my study, I observed the interactions between parents and children each week. In addition, I examined the following: the deepening understandings of parents’ literacy understandings related to PA development; the use of KMPs by the parents and children as a scaffold to aid the development; and the growth in PA of the preschoolers over the course of the study. The following questions guided the study.

1. How do parents and children interact with the use of KMPs?
2. How do parents extend the learning in the tutoring session to experiences outside of the directed session?

3. How do parents’ literacy understandings change over time?

4. How does the PA of the children change over the course of the study?

**Theoretical Framework**

Merriam (1998) noted that qualitative research seeks to discover “the meaning of social phenomena with as little disruption of the natural setting as possible” (p. 5). Hatch (2002) added eight other characteristics, present in my study. The characteristics were: participant participation, researcher as gathering tool, emerging design, prolonged firsthand engagement, complexity, centrality of meaning, recursive data analysis, and reflexivity. My study incorporated these characteristics and was positioned within the paradigm of constructivism.

In describing the theoretical basis of constructivism, Hatch (2002) asserted that “constructivist science argues that multiple realities exist that are inherently unique because they are constructed by individuals who experience the world from their own vantage points” (p. 15). In this study, I sought to understand the meanings the parents and children constructed during the weekly tutoring sessions as they interacted with each other in the development of PA. Unique understandings emerged over time as the parents and children participated in the experience of the weekly tutoring sessions. Lincoln and Guba (2000) categorized these “transactional and subjective” creations under the paradigm of constructivism (p. 3).

Lincoln and Guba (2000) noted the importance of arriving at understandings acceptable to those sharing the experiences. Likewise, they highlighted the significance
of the exchanges between the group members. The research questions guiding my study
aligned with the goal of finding understandings within the shared experiences and
interactions of the participating members of parents and children.

My guiding questions created a fit between what was being studied and the
method of the study. The questions directed the collection of data to render
understandings of the multiple realities of the participants. Likewise, the \textit{How} questions
guiding my study directed the selection of qualitative case study (Yin, 2003).

\textbf{Research Design}

The purpose of a qualitative case study is “to see what some phenomenon means
as it is socially enacted within a particular case” (Dyson & Genishi, 2005, p. 10).
Merriam (1998) listed the following characteristics of case studies: (a) Particularistic—
the focus is on a particular situation, program, or phenomenon; (b) Descriptive—the end
product of a case study is a rich, “thick” description of the phenomenon under study; and
(c) Heuristic—the case studies illuminate the reader’s understanding of the phenomenon
under study (pp. 29-30).

My study embraced Merriam’s (1998) characteristics of the case study in the
following manner. The study focused upon the particular phenomenon of the interactions
between parents and their children as they used KMPs in the development of PA. The
resulting product was a rich description of the interactions. The rendering shed light on
the meanings for the reader and contributed new meaning and understanding. The case
study characteristics guided the necessary focus on the information needed to answer my
research questions.
In order to understand the meanings constructed by the participants during the tutoring sessions, I conducted a case study guided by the research questions. In the following section, I explain the plan of the study by describing the setting, participants and their selection, and the tutoring session within the context of the study.

**Context of the Study**

**Setting**

The site for my study was Strong Beginnings, a facility which provided day care and preschool for children between the ages of two and one-half through to the pre-kindergarten age child. The center is owned by the Truro School District which is an urban, inner-ring school district in Northeast Ohio. Strong Beginnings is located in the Truro School District and is housed in a previously used elementary school building. It is a facility in which families pay tuition to the school district for daycare or preschool. The creation of the early learning center was a response to the community’s desire to serve families and their young children.

The population of the center was reflective of the Truro district. The district served a population which was 83% minority, and 60% of the children qualified for free lunch. The special education population was 20% of the approximate number of 2,489 children served in the elementary schools.

**Participants and Selection**

The particular participants of parents and children in my study were selected from the four year old preschool and pre-kindergarten programs offered at the center. Many of the children who participated in the study remained at the center until the end of their
parents’ work day. Consequently, asking the families to attend an evening session shortly after the parents’ arrival to pick up their children did not cause additional scheduling demands.

Each week, I supplied pizza, salad, cookies, and bottled water at the center for 30 minutes before the tutoring session. Therefore, families could pick up their children and eat before the session began at 6:30 pm. The study was conducted over a 15 week period with a half-hour lesson each week in the evening.

All of the children in the four year old and pre-kindergarten classes were invited to participate in the study. I sent a letter to each of the families with general information regarding the study. The letter included an invitation to attend an orientation meeting to explain the details of the study. The goal was to have approximately 8 to 15 dyads consisting of a parent and a child. A copy of the letter distributed to each family is included in Appendix A.

After the initial orientation meeting, two children from another preschool class joined the study. Their teacher suggested the tutoring sessions to three parents in her class, and subsequently the two families participated. Eleven families were present at the first tutoring session on March 31, 2010. Of the original 11 families present at the first tutoring session, three moved in the first few weeks of the study and one child, who remained in the daycare, did not continue in the study. Therefore, the study consisted of seven families. Five of the seven children attended with their mothers, or stepmothers. One child attended each week with his father and grandmother, and another child attended with both his father and mother.
The families were predominantly a mixture of working class and lower income families. Two of the mothers were stay-at-home moms with college degrees in elementary education. The other four mothers were not college educated and worked to support their families. Three were single parents; two shared that they lived in Section 8 Housing. Both of them faced moving during the study. One secured new housing during the study, and the other was still attempting to remain within the district and keep her Section 8 Housing voucher at the end of the study. A father in the study was a single parent. He acquired full custody of his children weeks before the study began. Therefore, four of the adults were single heads of households.

**Focal Dyads**

Within the original proposal of the study, I planned to develop a deepening of understandings and meanings through a more intense observation of a smaller number of parent-child dyads, possibly 2-4. I committed to a whole group focus until the on-going analysis of data indicated that I might expand meanings with a more intense lens on a few dyads or triads. In this way, selecting focal dyads would render richer understandings. According to Patton (2002) and Bogdan and Biklen (2003), purposeful sampling selects specific cases for the purpose of adding richness and expanding the developing theory in the study. However, as time progressed, I made the decision to remain focused on each of the dyads in the group as a whole throughout the course of the study. I altered the original plan because the richness of the interactions between each of the parents, or grandparent, was unique. On-going data analysis from the beginning of the study
indicated that each dyad provided a distinct opportunity to broaden the depth of meanings. Therefore, I focused on all participants ($N = 16$) in the case.

**The Tutoring Session**

The purpose of the tutoring session was to teach parents to teach PA to their children using a KMP as the concrete marker. Yopp and Yopp (2000) emphasized guidelines for the focus on the development of PA and recommended playful, engaging activities that were socially interactive. Therefore, the KMPs were not presented in isolation; they were embedded within the use of children’s songs, nursery rhymes, and poems.

Some poems were selected from *Fast Start for Early Readers* (Padak & Rasinski, 2005) or *Fast Start: Getting Ready to Read* (Rasinski & Padak, 2008). *Fast Start* is a collection of poems, many of which are traditional nursery rhymes. The publication includes parent activities for the development of emergent literacy and PA. Examples are the focus on letter names, letter sounds, and rhyme.

The tutoring sessions were conducted over a 15 week period and each session lasted for 30 minutes each week. The lesson was modeled after Reading Recovery (Clay, 1993) and used a similar lesson format. The order of activities differed and incorporated the use of songs, nursery rhymes, and poems, as opposed to Clay’s use of leveled texts. In addition, the writing emphasis in my study with the preschoolers provided direction with letter writing in contrast to the sentence or story writing present in the one-on-one Reading Recovery lesson. Table 2 depicts the similarities and differences.
Table 2

*Comparison of Formats of Reading Recovery Lesson and Tutoring Session*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading Recovery Lesson Format</th>
<th>Tutoring Session Format</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reread of a familiar book or books</td>
<td>Recitation of a familiar poem, or song with KMPs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running Record of new book</td>
<td>Observation of children and parents reading new poem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word work</td>
<td>Literacy focus during introduction of new poem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing of a sentence</td>
<td>Writing of a letter on a dry erase slate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction of new book</td>
<td>Introduction of a new poem</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Word Work part of the lesson format lasted 5 to 10 minutes and integrated Yopp and Yopp’s (2002) recommended presentation of skills. During the tutoring sessions, the parents and children interacted with each other to practice the presented skill or focus. In addition, they participated with me during the modeling and practiced independently. The following outline of activities illuminates the course of the lesson in the study.

- Familiar rereading of poem, nursery rhyme or song
- Word Work
  - Rhyme
  - Syllable clapping
  - Initial and final sounds with KMPs (Identify the beginning sound in the word, ‘cat’: /c/; or, identify the final sound in the word, ‘cat’: /t/. Use the KMP to identify the sound)
- Blending of phonemes with KMPs (Using the KMP for each sound, combine the following phonemes /c/ /a/ /t/ to arrive at the word, cat)
- Segmenting with KMPs (Using the KMP for each sound, demonstrate each component phoneme in the word, “cat”: /c/ /a/ /t/)
  - Writing of a letter
  - Introduction of new poem
  - Repeated reading of new poem or song by parents and children

**KMP as a Kinesthetic Scaffold**

The particular concrete marker modeled in my study to scaffold the development of PA was a KMP. The KMPs are pictured and defined in the book, *Phonics in Motion* (Kindervater, 2002). *Phonics in Motion* is a multi-modal method which I created and self-published. The KMPs were developed to assist children in PA development.

The components of *Phonics in Motion* used in classrooms are: the KMPs, the Reading and Writing Monster for directionality and guidance in the stroking of letters; the Language Calendar; and the Vowel House. In this study, the preschoolers used the components of the KMPs and the Reading and Writing Monster. I made this choice because the Language Calendar demanded time beyond what the tutoring sessions allowed. And, the Vowel House was too analytical for young children as it links directly to the development of the orthographic system of encoding sounds, as opposed to the phonemic development of hearing and manipulating sounds.

A corresponding KMP exists for each phoneme and many word endings in the English language. The KMPs correlate with the articulation of the sound, in terms of
tension and duration. Speech sounds have specific tension and duration necessary for correct articulation and the KMPs correlate with these properties. The fingers and hands execute the KMP as a gross motor representation of the actual articulation of the speech sound. The KMPs engage the child to sense how the sound feels and therefore adds the kinesthetic modality to scaffold the identification of the phoneme.

The Reading and Writing Monster

The Reading and Writing Monster (Kindervater, 2002) is a playful free-form character that is drawn to anchor the starting point of the left for directionality with young children. The slates which the children wrote letters upon had the Reading and Writing Monster drawn on them with permanent marker. A copy of the Reading and Writing Monster drawn on the slate is included in Appendix B.

In this section, I described the setting of Strong Beginnings, the participants of the study, and their selection. I discussed the tutoring session and the format of the weekly lesson. In the next section, I explain how I gained entry into the site and the procedures I used to collect the necessary data to answer the guiding research questions.

Entry Into the Site

I have worked in the Truro School District for over 20 years. Many children I taught attended the center where I conducted my study. In late October, I contacted the director, Mrs. Liksem, by phone to discuss the possibility of researching at the site of the early learning center. She welcomed the opportunity to discuss my inquiry.

In mid-November of 2009, we met for an hour and a half. As we toured the building, Mrs. Liksem indicated that she felt confident that many parents would be
interested and offered to be of assistance in any way possible. Most importantly, she committed to the use of the building in the evenings for the duration of the study. The director and the site provided the opportunity for the experiences with parents and children to develop the necessary understandings I sought to examine through my study.

**Procedures**

**Data Collection**

Multiple sources of data were collected. The data sources informing the study were: (a) participant observation; (b) field notes of recordings of each parent-child dyad at the beginning and end of the study; (c) field notes of recordings of each tutoring session; (d) transcripts of interviews with each participating adult; (e) weekly logs of parents, and (f) pre-testing and post-testing of the children. The multiple sources of data strengthened the case with “converging lines of inquiry” (Yin, 2003, p. 100).

I chose to collect the data mentioned above because I believed they would illuminate the understandings that I sought to investigate. I was anxious to explore the meanings of the participants in this process. The on-going, face-to-face engagement and interactions provided this opportunity.

**Participant Observation**

Observations of the participants provide a deeper understanding of the case (Stake, 1995). Merriam (1998) suggested focusing on the following elements during observations: the physical setting, the participants, the activities and interactions, conversations, subtle factors, such as non-verbal exchanges, and my own behavior. These elements guided my observations and resulting field notes. The observation
experiences allowed me to collect data as a firsthand encounter with the phenomenon of the parent-child interactions (Merriam, 1998).

My role varied according to the type of data source. As Merriam (1998) noted, the continuum of participant observation spans a range from complete observer to full participant. I acted as a full participant during the tutoring sessions, and as a complete observer after the sessions. The combination of roles assisted in the “understanding [of] the program as an insider while describing the program for outsiders” (Patton, 1990, p. 207).

I assumed the role of full participant as I led the tutoring sessions in the development of PA for the parent-child dyads. After each tutoring session, I made jottings to note my behavior, impressions, and questions to direct a focused viewing of the recordings in preparation for the construction of full field notes. In addition, I joined the families in the half-hour of dinner preceding the tutoring sessions. I engaged in shared conversation with the families and children at that time. I assumed the role of a complete observer as I constructed full field notes from the recordings.

**Recordings**

Two separate experiences were videotaped: each weekly tutoring session, and each parent-child dyad reading a poem at the beginning and end of the study. The recordings of the weekly tutoring sessions incorporated the use of two Flip video recorders, each positioned to record half of the participants. I used recordings of the tutoring sessions to document the interactions of the parents and children. The use of two ensured the recording of all interactions. The recordings of each session and the parents
and children reading a poem allowed me to revisit and observe the experiences and interactions in depth to view the obvious and subtle.

As the parents and children interacted while reading a poem, I focused on particular dimensions at different viewings. The first area of concentration was parent literacy behaviors. Table 3 shows the format of the guide. These categories did not limit my observations, but directed my focus.

Table 3

*Literacy Behaviors Modeled by Parents*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent Behaviors</th>
<th>Modeled Verbally</th>
<th>Modeled Non-Verbally</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pictures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text has meaning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sounds</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directionality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return Sweep</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where to begin reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The interactions between the child and parent were a second area of focus as I documented my observations of the recordings. An interaction was defined as the behavior that occurred between the time the exact reading of the text stopped until the reading resumed. The interaction could be initiated by the parent or child and could be
verbal or non-verbal. Appendices C and D display completed observation forms noting literacy behaviors and interactions from Rose reading with her daughter, Lucy, in March and again in May.

**Interviews**

The process of interviewing is an interactive one and provides the format for hearing what is meaningful to the participants. Hatch (2002) recommended the procedure of having guiding questions ready, yet suggested allowing the participants’ meanings and answers to direct the flow and direction of the exchange. Hatch’s approach converged with Rubin and Rubin’s (2005) recommendation to use probes and follow-ups in the interview, yet allow the conversation to direct the flow. In this way, the participants’ feelings are honored through “responsive interviewing” (Rubin & Rubin, 2000, p. 15). This type of interviewing exemplified the constructivist nature of the development of knowledge pertinent to the study. Hence, I followed these recommendations.

The parents were interviewed at the end of the study. Each adult in the two triads participated in the interview regarding their child. I audio-taped each interview and transcribed within 24 hours. The interviews took place in various locations, depending on where was convenient for each family. I visited three homes to interview the mothers who had young children and arranged to interview one family at the local library. The other three interviews took place at Strong Beginnings, the site of the study, immediately after the parents picked up their children from daycare. Table 4 shows the questions that guided the direction of the interviews.
Table 4

Interview Questions and Probes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Examples of Interview Questions and Probes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How do parents and children interact with the use of KMPs?</td>
<td>Did you think that the poetry experience was like fun or work?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tell me about that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Did you enjoy the sessions? Please explain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do you think you and your child experienced success?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Struggles? Please tell me about that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I saw in the recordings that you and your child were laughing while reading that poem. Please tell me about that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do parents extend the learning in the tutoring session to experiences outside of the directed session?</td>
<td>In your log you talked about using KMPs with your child. Can you tell about that? How did it get started?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Have you recited or read the poems anywhere?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Has anyone else in your family seen you use the KMPs and poetry? Have they joined in?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do parents’ literacy understandings change over time?</td>
<td>I noticed in your log and in the recording that you showed your child [literacy behavior, such as a word]. Tell me about that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If you were going to tell another family how to read poetry with their child, what might you say?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How does the PA of the children change over the course of the study?</td>
<td>What do you think your child has learned about reading with these experiences?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does your child show any new interests with the poems?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Logs

The parent logs were collected during dinner before the tutoring sessions each week. The parents wrote their names on the log and the session number or the date of the session. The information on the log was divided into four columns. The design organized prompts for the parents to respond to in writing about experiences related to the session, or to record any questions they might have. In addition, it was a vehicle for recording the extensions of the learning from the directed sessions into their daily lives.
over the course of the week. Specifically, the log probed for questions or comments the parents might have, and allowed for them to record when the child used KMPs cooperatively with them or another person, or whether the children initiated the use of KMPs independently. The log had a column for comments asking whether the parents had additional thoughts, ideas, or feelings. A copy of the parental log is included in Appendix E.

For example, a response of Cory noting when Will did the KMPs was: “He did the motions with his brother 3x this week.” On the same log, she recorded a comment, “He likes reading the poem with his brother” (Cory, parental log, April 14, 2010). An example of a question was Rose’s: “We are having trouble writing S can u give me some advice on other ways that I might can teach her?” (Rose, parental log, April 21, 2010).

A number of times, parents filled the logs out during the pizza dinner. At the second session on April 7, only two parents returned written logs. However, four of the adults shared experiences over the week with me and the group orally. I asked for permission to record their responses and the four parents agreed and confirmed what I recorded. For example, Paul noted that he taught his seven year old the KMPs with the poem of the previous week’s tutoring session (Paul, personal conversation, April 7, 2010).

Over the course of the study, two specific parents appeared reluctant to write responses on the log. However, we developed the practice of sharing through conversation responses to the prompts on the log and I recorded them for them. In this
way, I was able to collect the information from all of the parents participating in the study.

**Testing**

As the creator of the KMPs, I chose to include objective measures of the children’s growth. I tested each child to acquire a baseline measure for PA and emergent literacy at the beginning and end of the study. The first three assessments were measures of the Observation Survey (Clay, 2002): Letter Identification (LI), Concepts About Print, and the Ohio Word Test. The fourth measure was Sound Assessment. The fifth assessment was the Developmental Spelling Assessment (*Word Journeys*; Ganske, 2000). The final assessments were three subtests of *Get it! Got it! Go!* (Office of Early Learning and School Readiness, 2008): Rhyming, Alliteration and Picture Naming. In the following, I describe the measures used in the study.

**Literacy Measures of the Observation Survey (Clay, 2002)**

The Letter Identification (LI) involved identifying 56 letters: all 26 capital and lowercase letters, and the book ‘a’ and ‘g’. The second measure was Concepts About Print to assess the preschooler’s knowledge about printed language. The last literacy measure was the Ohio Word Test. The task involved the presentation of a list of 20 sight words. I stopped at five words if the child experienced either frustration or lack of ability to read the isolated word.

I used the capital letter form from the Observation Survey to assess the knowledge of isolated sounds, asking, “What sound does this make [pointing to the letter]? If the child did not answer, I asked, “Do you know what this says [pointing to the letter]?”
Developmental Spelling Assessment (Word Journeys; Ganske, 2000)

The Developmental Spelling Assessment targeted the child’s approach to a writing task. I presented the first five words from Form A: Letter Name (LN) Feature List (Ganske, 2000). The presentation of each word was accompanied by the question, “Can you write the word, ____?” I presented more than five words if the child indicated that he or she wanted to continue to write, in response to the question, “Do you want to stop [or quit] or write more?”

Get it! Got it! Go! (Office of Early Learning and School Readiness, 2008)

I included three measures of Get it! Got it! Go! (GGG). The first subtest was Rhyming. The task involved choosing one of three pictures that rhymed with the picture displayed at the top of the card presented. The child pointed to the correct choice. The score reflected the number of correct answers the child gave in two minutes.

The second measure was the subtest of Alliteration. The cards used for the subtest displayed a picture at the top with three pictures in a line at the bottom of each card. The child pointed to the picture that began with the same initial sound as the picture at the top of the card. The score reflected the number of correct responses the child gave in two minutes.

The third measure was the subtest of Picture Naming. The cards displayed a picture and the child responded by naming the picture on each card. The score reflected the number of correct pictures named in one minute. Table 5 displays each of the assessments.
Table 5

*Measures Administered to Assess Early Literacy Behaviors and PA*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Purpose of Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concepts of Print</td>
<td>To assess early literacy behaviors, such as directionality, return sweep, text has meaning, identification of letter or a word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter ID</td>
<td>To assess the identification of letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound Assessment</td>
<td>To assess the knowledge of corresponding sounds for letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental Spelling Assessment</td>
<td>To assess the ability to encode phonemes in words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio Word Test</td>
<td>To assess the knowledge of sight words or high frequency words and approach to reading words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get it! Got it! Go!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picture Naming</td>
<td>To assess vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhyme</td>
<td>To assess rhyme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliteration</td>
<td>To assess alliteration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As noted, the testing involved 3 measures of Clay’s (2002) Observation Survey. Clay’s norms were based on children entering the first grade which implied more formal experience in school than the preschool child represented in this study. Although the children did not meet the age criteria for measurement with Clay’s stanines for the tasks, I administered them to establish a measure of growth over the time.

All children were between 4 years, 5 months and 5 years, 1 month at the onset of the study in March with the exception of three boys. The three boys, two participants and one non-participant, were 5 years, 8 months and 5 years, 9 months, respectively, when the study began. Therefore, I used the normed stanines for children from 5 years, 0
months to 5 years, 5 months for all of the children with the exception of the three older boys. I used the stanine measures appropriate for their age.

In this section, I provided an explanation of my entry into the site of Strong Beginnings and the procedures for data collection. I addressed the following: recordings, interviews, the parents’ weekly logs, and the pre- and post-testing. Table 6 displays the research questions and the multiple sources of data used to answer the guiding questions of the study. In addition, I provide the timeline of collection.

Table 6

*Research Questions, Sources of Data and Collection Timeline*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Timeline of Collection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How do parents and children interact with the use of KMPs?</td>
<td>Recordings of individual dyads</td>
<td>Beginning and end of study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recordings of sessions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Logs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do parents extend what they learn in the tutoring session to experiences outside the sessions?</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>End of study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Logs</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recordings of dyads</td>
<td>End of study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do parents literacy understandings change over time?</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>End of study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Logs</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recordings of dyads</td>
<td>Beginning and end of study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How does the PA of the children improve over the course of the study?</td>
<td>Pre- and post testing</td>
<td>Before and after the 15 weeks of tutoring sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>End of the study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Logs</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data Management

Merriam (1998) noted the importance of organizing data for easy retrieval at the beginning of the study. I typed my field notes and made multiple copies, saving them as Word documents and on computer discs. The files were labeled with the participants’ names, the date of the collection, the title of the poem, and the phonemic focus of the lesson. The recordings were stored in a plastic bin and labeled in the same manner.

From the beginning of the study, I kept a researcher’s journal. I labeled each entry to correspond to the date, poem and participants’ names, and phonemic focus. The journal aided in my construction of analytic memos.

In addition, I completed a contact summary sheet immediately after each tutoring to assist with the management of data. Miles and Huberman’s (1984) recommendations regarding data management directed me to note the following on the summary sheet after each session: the research questions fundamental to the session; main focus of the session; impressions or new thoughts and questions; and possible direction for next session. Appendix F displays a completed contact summary sheet.

Data Analysis

Siedel’s (1998) emphasis on noticing, collecting, and thinking in data analysis guided the process I followed over the course of the study. My analysis of the data was recursive and on-going throughout the study and began at the onset of data collection. Charmaz (2000) recommended three reasons for the recursive process: to fill gaps in the data, to direct the future collection of data, and to guide the development of analytic memos.
In my study, I began the process of initial coding with the commencement of data collection. I followed the procedure of open-coding with a line-by-line analysis of my field notes constructed from the study of the recordings, parent logs, and transcriptions of the interviews. I made marginal notes as I analyzed each line of data.

The detailed coding kept me in touch with the actions and interactions of the participants. The line by line coding supported the process of integrating my own background experiences and professional knowledge as I interacted with the data and began to construct the analysis. Charmaz (2000) pointed out that the use of such “sensitizing concepts” assists in organizing and understanding the data (p. 515).

Charmaz (2000) recommended “defining actions and events” present in the lines of data. I focused upon the actions of the participants and the happenings represented in the lines and described these in the margins of my field notes and transcriptions. For example, I recorded the following marginal notes in my field notes constructed after a tutoring session: “Rose leaning over Lucy;” Rose performing KMPs in Lucy’s space; Kelly forming KMP with Mickey’s hand; and “John sitting on Mom’s lap.”

As I constructed the analysis, I began to compare the emerging codes notated in the margins. For example, I compared the interactions of a parent and child at two different points during the study. Or, the emerging codes allowed me to compare the interactions of two different dyads as they interacted using the same poem at the same tutoring session.

As I constantly compared the emerging codes, the codes that appeared with more frequency became a more focused unit of analysis. I sorted the more frequent codes into
categories for further organization and for the development of a deeper understanding of the data. At this point of analysis, focused codes guided a more conceptual interpretation of the data. The categories prompted describing the relationships of the focused codes and allowed for the structure that I needed to answer the research questions guiding the study.

For example, the notations of the use of the KMPs by the parents during the tutoring sessions emerged with frequency in my marginal notations and became a focused unit of analysis. Originally, I categorized the notations under the heading of “using KMPs.” However, as I analyzed the data further across sources, I began to understand the use of the KMPs more fully and refined the category.

The parents were using the KMPs in different ways, but all of them assisted the children to perform the KMPs. The levels of performance varied with the use of the KMPs in the interactions between the parents and children. Further analysis pointed to continuous interaction with the use of the KMPs, but with three changing levels of support. In the end, the category of “Varying Levels of Performance” emerged to organize the data. The three levels of performance in the interactions between the parents and children were: (a) in sync (unison); (b) cueing (short time delay between parent’s use of the KMP and the child’s); and (c) guiding (arms melded). The category informed one aspect of the answer to my research question, “How did the parents and children interact with the use of the KMPs?” In addition, the category prompted the integration of compelling research on assisting performance and the functioning of a tutor.
Throughout the analysis, I used emerging codes to write memos to more fully explore their meanings. The memos included the insights, impressions, and images from my jottings and field notes to support the exploration of developing assumptions. The memos guided more focus in data collection with a spotlight on the potential processes the codes might represent. The detailed analysis of data encompassed the creation of a “chain of evidence” (Yin, 2003, p. 105) and strengthened the integrity of the case study. The integrity of this case study was specifically addressed by trustworthiness. In the following section, I define the techniques used to ensure that the study was of quality.

**Trustworthiness**

Qualitative research design demands indicators of quality and rigor. Lincoln and Guba (1984) suggested three criteria guiding naturalistic studies to ensure that the investigation was rigorous. These are: credibility, dependability, and confirmability. First, I address credibility.

**Credibility**

The issue of credibility speaks to the question of believable findings and interpretations in qualitative research. To assure credibility, I used the following techniques delineated by Lincoln and Guba (1984). These techniques were: prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation of data, peer debriefing, negative case analysis, and member checking.

Prolonged engagement honors the ever-changing dimension of the construction of meanings within a context. LeCompte and Preissle (1993) reasoned that long periods of time among the participants allows for the continuous analysis and comparison needed to
modify the constructs. My study began with the parent orientation meeting in February and lasted until the final interviews the last week of July. The tutoring sessions took place over a 15 week period.

The length of time allowed for prolonged engagement and interactions with the participants. Beyond the formal sessions, I spent the half-hour before each session eating with the families. This provided an on-going opportunity to share conversation in an informal manner and supported continual modification of the meanings I constructed during data analysis.

This openness to the construction of meanings was particularly important in one specific area. I created the KMPs and brought my own meaning of the scaffold to the study. Sufficient time was necessary to understand the variance in the meanings constructed by the parents and their children within and beyond the tutoring context.

Lincoln and Guba (1984) noted that persistent, focused observation also provided necessary depth in a study. The recordings allowed me the opportunity to focus upon the detail necessary to understand the issues in depth. I reviewed and revisited the taping segments multiple times to refine my interpretations and clarify understandings.

The sources of data beyond the recordings informed deeper understandings for me. Triangulation is the use of multiple sources of data to enhance the findings and interpretation. Lincoln and Guba (1984) noted that triangulation of multiple data sources increases the “probability that findings and interpretations will be found credible” (p. 305). As noted previously, the following multiple sources of data informed the study: (a) participant observation; (b) field notes of recordings of each parent-child dyad at the
beginning and end of the study; (c) field notes of recordings of each tutoring sessions; (d) transcripts of interviews with parents of focal dyads; (e) weekly logs of parents, and (e) pre-testing and post-testing of the children.

As I engaged in the analysis of the multiple sources of data, I interacted regularly with an early literacy professor who is experienced in qualitative research. She was knowledgeable, yet not attached to the children or parents participating in this study. In addition, she was familiar with the KMPs used in the study, but had experience in scaffolding early learners in various ways. This technique of peer debriefing kept me aware of my potential biases and assisted in clarification and direction for the study. Our regular conversations served to broaden my emerging questions and thoughts, and assisted in the recursive process.

My experiences debriefing with my professional peer and my interaction with the data in an on-going manner allowed for the technique of negative case analysis. The recursive process of revising, compressing, or expanding categories accounted for variances and exceptions to unfold. The technique supported my clarity of definition of the emerging categories.

Most importantly, I supported the truth in the findings via the technique of member-checking on a regular basis. Lincoln and Guba (1984) highlighted member checking as the “most crucial technique for establishing credibility” (p. 314). The process is foundational to assuring that the meanings of the participants are clearly understood and communicated. I checked on meanings immediately during the interviews and in the recording sessions with the dyads. During the shared pizza time
before each weekly sessions, I checked for clarification of the meanings of the entries in the logs and asked for confirmation of emerging thoughts regarding the previous tutoring session. These responses became part of my research journal and my weekly jottings.

I reviewed the techniques that I used to support credibility in the study. I discussed the importance of persistent observation and the integration of multiple sources of data. I shared my involvement of an outside person to support continual debriefing and to assist in uncovering variances in the data. Lastly, I pointed to the significance of member checking on a regular basis to authenticate the meanings of my constructs from the data. Next, I address the technique of dependability.

**Dependability**

Dependability is a technique that calls for a convergence of theory and method. Lincoln and Guba (1984) referred to overlapping methods as a means of assuring dependability. As the methods of data collection focused on the interactions of the parents and children in the development of PA with the use of the KMPs, the meanings were constructed within the experiences during the sessions and beyond. This focus upon the construction of meaning in all forms of data collection mirrored the constructivist paradigm that guided this qualitative study. I turn now to the technique of confirmability as the third means of assuring rigor in this study.

**Confirmability**

Confirmability requires that the actual findings and interpretations of the study were grounded in the data. Lincoln and Guba (1984) referred to the audit process as a means of establishing confirmability. I maintained a researcher’s journal to create a
record of my own personal responses and thoughts regarding my observations. The record of the researcher’s journal allowed me to maintain a reflexive stance throughout the study. As I was immersed as a participant, I was a part of the world I was studying (Hatch, 2002). In order to separate my own affective responses from the actual descriptions, the research journal allowed me to bracket my thoughts and feelings in a concrete manner. Hatch noted the researcher must “work to become aware of our own assumptions, feelings and preconceptions” (p. 87). As I recorded regularly, I worked to stay cognizant of my own thoughts, impressions, and feelings. In this way, I strove to identify questionable assumptions and to clarify meanings.

In summary, I discussed the techniques of credibility, dependability, and confirmability as criteria for this study’s quality and rigor. The use of the techniques supported trustworthiness. In the following section, I address a limitation specific to my study and the use of the KMPs.

**Limitations of the Study**

Limitations are present in every study and the findings of the study were situated within its limitations. The first limitation is that I am the author of *Phonics in Motion* (Kindervater, 2002). The parents were aware that I created the method and KMPs and may have wanted to respond in a manner that was pleasing to me in our conversations. The issue of social desirability in reference to their responses during the interviews must be considered.

Another limitation of the study was the question of fidelity to the program. Again, since I am the author of *Phonics in Motion* and the KMPs, I was faced with the
following questions as I observed the use of the scaffold by the parents: Are the KMPs being implemented in the manner I intended? Is there a discrepancy between what I modeled and what the parents learned? Although I strove to be as objective as possible about the use of the KMPs I created, my desire to observe the implementation as I envision it may be a limitation. However, I crosschecked my observations and perceptions regularly with a literacy colleague, trained in *Phonics in Motion*. At times, she offered alternative views and assisted me to be aware of any subjectivity. In addition, I noted my responses in my researcher’s journal weekly to be aware of any bias on my part.

**Summary**

The purpose of the study was to investigate the interactions between parents and children with the use of KMPs to develop PA in socially interactive tutoring sessions. The study examined the extensions of the learning, the parents’ developing literacy understandings, and the children’s PA development. The result was a thick description of the interactions between the parents and the children over the course of the study. The research questions directed the collection of data that rendered understandings of the multiple realities of the participants. Specifically, the desire to explore questions asking “How” directed the selection of a qualitative case study (Yin, 2003).

In this chapter, I described the setting, participants, and multiple sources of data collection. The sources were observations, interviews, parent logs, and pre- and post-testing of the children’s PA and emergent literacy. Next, I addressed the procedures for the on-going, recursive analysis of the data and how I managed it throughout the study.
Last, I explained trustworthiness through the discussion of credibility, dependability, and confirmability, as well as the limitations of the study.
CHAPTER IV
FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of my study was to provide an in-depth description of the interactions between parents and their children as the parents learned to teach PA to their preschool children during weekly tutoring sessions. The demonstrations for the parents and children incorporated the use of kinesthetic motions for phonemes (KMP) in activities to develop PA. As such, the following questions guided my research.

1. How do parents and children interact with the use of KMPs?
2. How do parents extend the learning in the tutoring session to experiences outside of the directed session?
3. How do parents’ literacy understandings change over time?
4. How does the PA of the children change over the course of the study?

Research question one involved analyzing engagement with and without written text in order to describe the interactions with the use of the KMPs. The analysis identified a pattern of changing interactions over time and common characteristics of the parents in the interactions. Additionally, the analysis examined how the interactions shifted responsibility to the children for the KMPs by the end of the study.

In order to respond to research question two, I examined the types of extensions that emerged at different points during the study. Through this analysis, I noted a changing pattern in extensions and described those common to all. Lastly, I looked at the
change over time from formal to informal integration of the learning into the lives of the families.

For research question three, I analyzed the change in the parents’ literacy understandings over time. I conducted an analysis of how they learned to scaffold PA with KMPs and their developing appreciation for the use of poetry. In the end, I analyzed the development of verbal and non-verbal scaffolds as they engaged their children with text.

Lastly, research question four examined the change in the children’s PA over the course of the study. I assessed the children with eight measures before and after the study. I included three children in the analysis who attended the same daycare class as four of the participants, but did not take part in the study.

My research questions framed the case study of the seven parents and children. My goal was to describe the dynamic environment of the tutoring sessions and the meanings constructed as the parents and children engaged in social interaction. Each question involved a particular analysis of the phenomenon I studied. I present the findings for research question one next.

**Research Question One**

Research question one was: How do the parents and children interact with the use of KMPs?

In order to describe the use of KMPs, an identification of when the parents and children chose to use them was necessary. Referring back to the design of the study, I defined an interaction as the behavior during the time the exact reading of the text
stopped until it resumed again. Therefore, I began with an examination of the interactions during the entrance and exit recordings of the parents and children reading the poem, “Hickory, Dickory Dock” to establish an initial lens of observation. In so doing, a number of findings emerged regarding interactions and overall engagement with the poem.

The parents and the children did more than interact, as defined, while reading the poem. Each recording indicated that they extended the experience with the poem with a pattern of activities by the end of the study. As I analyzed the activities, two salient categories emerged: activities that did not involve written text, and activities that involved the written text. Within each of the categories, the data pointed to changes in the patterns of the parents’ interactions and engagement. Figure 2 represents the two categories of engagement.

**Figure 2.** Two categories of engagement

The separation of the dyad’s engagement into the categories pointed to a pattern of interaction with the use of KMPs. Again, the findings related to the presence or absence of written text. When the text was not involved, the parents used KMPs more frequently in their interactions; when the text was present, the parents did not interact as frequently with the use of the KMPs.
In the following discussion of how the parents and children interacted with KMPs, I address three findings that emerged in the data: (a) the pattern of using KMPs in experiences free of text; (b) the pattern of interacting with KMPs in a manner which released responsibility to the children over the course of the study; and (c) the pattern of characteristics in parental interactions.

Although I set out to examine the interactions of the parents and children with the use of KMPs, additional findings emerged in the analysis of the exit recordings. Those findings related to the interactions and engagement of the parents and children with text. Therefore, in the last part of this section I address patterns of change over the course of the study in this area. Figure 3 represents the organization of the findings in the subsequent discussions.

Figure 3. Pattern of engagement and interactions of parents and children

The data pointed to a pattern of using KMPs as parents and children interacted in experiences which did not involve text. The importance of this to the study is that it placed the scaffold of the KMPs in the realm of PA development. As noted previously, PA is the ability to hear, express, and manipulate the sounds in oral language. The use of the KMPs by the parents as they engaged in oral language as opposed to when they interacted with text highlighted a choice on their part to scaffold sound with the KMPs in
a specific manner. In the following, I address the parents’ placement of the KMPs within activities free of text.

**Engagement With KMPs Without Text**

**Use of KMPs in entrance and exit recordings.** The analysis of the entrance and exit recordings of the parents and children reading the poem “Hickory, Dickory, Dock” in March and July illustrated a change in the interactions and overall engagement with the poem. With the exception of one dyad in the initial recording, no adult interacted or engaged at any length with the poem in the March recording session. Two mothers, Kelly and Cory, pointed to the poem as they read; the other five parents engaged with the poem as a brief oral experience, a recitation.

Within the change in the parents’ engagement from March to July was an increase in the type of activity with the poem. In March, Kelly was the only mother who reread the poem or revisited it to discuss a concept of print. However, by the end of the study, all seven parents extended the engagement with the poem beyond the initial reading. Table 7 illustrates the activities which extended overall engagement with the poem. Please note again that an interaction represented an engagement with the child which interrupted the flow of the reading.

Table 7 displays how the parents and children extended engagement through various types of activities with the poem. However, a close analysis of the activities pointed to the placement of the KMPs in activities separate from the actual reading of the text. An example of the differentiation was Mel’s use of KMPs during the initial reading of the poem in July. Her use of the KMPs accompanied the reading, but did not stop it.
Table 7

*Increase in Activities Beyond Initial Reading of the Poem*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th># of dyads March</th>
<th># of dyads July</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interactions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revisit poem</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reread poem</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recitation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model literacy behavior</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Exit Recordings, VID00055, VID00058, VID00059, VID00060, VID00061, VID00062, VID00064, VID00065, VID00067, VID00068)

They were used to accompany sounds in the poem and occurred alongside the reading. In this way, they did not represent an interaction (Exit recording, Mel and Kara, July 19, 2010).

Likewise, Mary did KMPs to accompany initial sounds during the activity of a reread. As she began the reread, she asked LJ if he wanted to do the KMPs. He said, “No, you read with my pointer.” She guided his pointer finger to the words as she stated, “Well, I’m going to do my motions.” Mary, Leon, and LJ reread the poem together as Mary did KMPs, pointed, and read at the same time (Exit recording, Mary, Leon, and LJ, July 13, 2010). Once again, the KMPs did not interfere or stop the reading.

In another activity of incorporation of KMPs, Mel and Carol revisited the poem as a recitation. After the initial read of “Hickory, Dickory, Dock,” they chanted the poem with their children, doing the KMPs for the initial sounds of words. Table 8 shows the
Table 8

*Number of KMPs During Engagement With Poem in July*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>KMPs with first read</th>
<th>Parent</th>
<th>Child</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dyad (A)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KMPs with reread</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyad (B)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyad (D)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KMPs with recitation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyad (A)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyad (C)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(EXIT Recordings, VID00055, VID00058, VID00059, VID00060, VID00061, VID00062, VID00064, VID00065, VID00067, and VID00068)

number of KMPs incorporated into the activities by four of the seven dyads (Dyads A, B, C, and D) during the exit recordings in July.

Table 8 illustrated the use of the KMPs during activities with oral language. It might seem that the incorporation of the KMPs into the initial read and reread point to their use with text; however, they were used by Mel, Kelly, and Mary to accompany their oral language. The parents did not interfere with the reading to do the KMPs. During the activity of recitation, the text was revisited, but the experience involved a performance with KMPs by the two dyads in an oral language experience as an additional activity of engagement with the poem.

In addition to the information regarding the use of the KMPs by the four dyads, the other three dyads did not incorporate KMPs during the exit recordings at all. Their
engagement focused on the text only. Once again, the analysis of the exit recordings placed the KMPs within oral language experiences.

Next, I extend the discussion of the interactions between parents and children with the use of KMPs. The data from the interviews and weekly logs supported the use of KMPs in oral language experiences between the dyads. The recordings of the weekly tutoring sessions informed the same pattern. However, I did not include those observations as the setting was one of learning for the parents. The exit recordings, interviews, and weekly logs represented times in which the parents and children made choices to use the scaffold of the KMPs.

**Use of KMPs in daily experiences.** Further findings pointed to the parents or children’s choice to use the KMPs while engaging in experiences with oral language, free of text. Two of the children, Jimmy and John, resisted the use of KMPs while reading (Paul, personal interview, July 26, 2010; Julie, personal interview, July 21, 2010). Julie identified the use of KMPs as a separate type of activity of fun, “other than just opening a book and reading to them” (Julie, personal interview, July 21, 2010). Cory shared the same sentiment, as she described the use of the KMPs, “’cause it was more like playing . . . instead of sitting down to read a book.” The parents’ reports pointed to interacting with KMPs separate from reading as a scaffold for marking sounds in oral language.

Each of the seven parents shared examples of embedding KMPs in exchanges with oral language on a regular basis by the end of the study. The most common report found in the interviews and weekly logs was the interaction of the parents and children with KMPs in the following ways: (a) in general conversation; (b) in singing and the
recitation of the weekly poems; and (c) in sharing, or in performance with other family members. Noting the common occurrence of embedding KMPs, Rose laughed and shared, “[KMPs] . . . is done in general conversation between her and I . . . a lot of people think we’re doing sign language” (Rose, personal interview, July 20, 2010).

Two extended examples follow illustrating how the parents and children interacted with KMPs. In each of them, the synergy between them was apparent. They represent activities embedding the KMP as a marker for the sounds in oral language exchanges between the parent and child.

First, Mary shared the family experience of ordering at a restaurant. She asked LJ, “Do you want macaroni?” using the /m/ and /n/ motion to accompany the sounds in macaroni. He answered, “No! I want nuggets!” using the KMPs for /w/ and /t/ as he matched the KMPs to the beginning and ending sounds of the word, want. She concluded by saying, “and then he’ll say the whole conversation . . . that’s what I mean when I say I try to do the whole conversation with him” (Mary, personal interview, July 13, 2010). She and LJ focused on sound with the KMPs in their general conversation.

The second example took place during the interview as Kara’s mom, Mel, and I discussed learning as a group and the connection which developed with another member, Mrs. Sallis. The arrival of Kara interrupted our conversation. Mel turned to ask Kara what she might do if she ran into Mrs. Sallis, John’s mother. The interaction illustrated in Table 9 occurred, as though I were not present.
Table 9

*Mel and Kara Interacting With the Use of KMPs*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M: . . . like if you saw Mrs. Sallis, you could give her a little . . . spell a little word for her with your sign language. Or, she’d say [singing and doing KMPs], “Hello, Kara, how are you today?”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K: [joins in the singing] And, I’d say, /d/ /d/ /d/ [doing KMP for /d/ in the word, <em>today</em>, playfully].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M: You’d say, “Hello, Mrs. Sallis, right?” [Mom does KMPs to accompany some sounds].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K: Yes. I can do that. [Kara did the KMPs /s/ /l/ /s/ for Sallis, after stretching the word out on her arm].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M: What would you write?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K: s . . . l . . . s. I think I’m a reader! <em>Performance atmosphere, looking at Mom</em>. I think I’m going to read now. <em>Chose a book from a basket and sat up on the couch to read</em>] (Mel, personal interview, July 21, 2010).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9 exemplified the interactions with the shared knowledge of the KMPs. In addition, it separated the activity from playing with sound from Kara’s subsequent engagement with a text. Kara did not proceed to do KMPs with the text, nor did her mother suggest such use of the KMPs. The interactions with the KMPs accompanied the oral language interaction.
A further analysis of the use of KMPs occurs in a later discussion of how the parents extended the learning from the tutoring sessions to experiences outside of the sessions. However, the examples of Mary and Kara interacting with their children and the previous reports of the parents’ interactions with KMPs addressed the experience of using the scaffold of KMPs to accompany sounds in their verbal exchanges. The children were experiencing a focus on hearing, expressing, and manipulating sounds in oral language. In other words, PA experiences occurred in the interplay of the parents and children with KMPs as they interacted with oral language, free of text.

Beyond the discussion of the placement of the KMPs, I turn to a deeper review of how the parents and children interacted with them. I examined the pattern of interacting with KMPs during the tutoring sessions. The data pointed to the release of the responsibility to the children gradually over the course of the study.

**Use of KMPs in tutoring sessions.** The data pointed to a pattern of change over time in the interactions between the dyads with the use of KMPs. The change related to the responsibility for the KMPs during the sessions. Throughout the sessions the parents and children shared with each other as they used the KMPs, yet their roles in the use of them changed over time. Figure 4 illustrates the shift.

![Figure 4. Process of interacting with KMPs over course of the study](image)
In the following, I describe the process of change in the interactions from the beginning, middle, and end of the 15-week tutoring sessions. The recordings and field notes of the sessions provided the data which informed an understanding of the pattern of change. In the first session, the parents established themselves as models for their children in the interactions with the KMPs. By the middle of the study, the interactions shifted to the parents and children interacting in a shared experience, with assistance given to the children every so often. In the end, the children were independent of the parents as they used the KMPs. The interaction in the recording of the last session appeared to be one of a choreographed dance, with hands moving in sync with one another to the poem or song.

**Interactions at the beginning of the study: Session 1.** The parents established themselves as guides for the children in the use of KMPs immediately, as they took charge of their children in the interactions. As the first session began, I directed the parents to “do what I do” and they engaged immediately in using the KMPs. The parents needed to learn the KMPs, so their eyes were on me; yet, they monitored their children at the same time. Each of them modeled for the child at the first session, with the exception of one parent. She directed her son to use the KMPs once, as she said, “Show her” (Recording VID000008, March 31, 2010).

The observation of four of the parents sitting side by side pointed to the guidance and establishment of themselves as directors of the interactions with KMPs from the first session. The following illustrates their assumption of the responsibility for modeling and engagement.
Paul put his notebook down and leaned over with his arms extended doing the KMPs so that his son could see. Julie, sitting to his left, did the same, but touched John’s chest in a ticklish way as she did the KMP. The next mother, Mel, did the KMPs and tapped her daughter gently on the head from behind. Kara glanced sideways and began immediately to do the KMPs. Likewise, Rose extended her arms forward over Lucy’s shoulders and did the KMPs for her to see. Then, she tapped her daughter’s shoulders with her hands as she continued to do the KMPs. Lucy looked up at her and smiled. As Rose continued to participate, Lucy began to do the KMPs. (Data management Sheet, March 31, 2010)

Another mother, Mary, was across the room in the first session. However, her interactions were the same. She extended herself into LJ’s visual space with her extended arms, uncrossed his hands and modeled for him (Recording VID000007, March 31, 2010). In this way, five of the six parents interacted non-verbally and consistently as they modeled the KMPs.

In summary, the parents and children interacted in a manner in which the parents engaged with the KMPs and modeled for the children at the beginning of the study. They took charge of the interactions with KMPs through their monitoring, demonstrating and nudging the children to take the KMPs on. They guided the children and took charge of them. As the study progressed, the children participated more independently with the KMPs. Therefore, the interactions of the parents and children changed as the children learned the KMPs by the middle of the study.
Interactions in the middle of the study: Session 8. By the middle of the study, the interactions between the parents and children changed. The children were more independent in their use of the KMPs and the parents released responsibility to them. The data pointed to a shift in the parents’ role from the position of guides in charge of engagement and the KMPs, to a position of support by the eighth session.

The children assumed responsibility for engagement, so the parents’ role of assistance was in the use of the KMPs. The following describes the two types of interactions prominent in the data at this point in the study: (a) interactions demonstrating the independence of the children; and (b) interactions demonstrating the supportive role of the parents.

For example, as the parents and children sang the “Goodnight Song” at the close of the eighth session, a pattern of support in the interactions was observable. At times, the parents and children were independent in the shared experience with the responsibility for the KMPs released to the children. However, at other times the parents assisted with the use of the KMPs. The jottings noted variations in the assistance of the parents for the use of the KMPs by the middle of the study. The following notes from the data management form (May 19, 2010) illustrates the three levels of interactions with the KMPs between the parents and the children.

“Varying Levels of Performance of the dyads (KMPs)”

- “In sync (unison)”
- “Cueing (short time delay between parent’s KMP and child’s)”
- “Guiding (arms melded)”
The previous levels were descriptive of the support the parents gave the children. In sync meant that no support was given; the children and parents performed together. As the parents and children interacted, the support varied across the group, according to the three types of performance. For example, while Mary took LJ’s elbow in her hand to push his arm forward for the /f/, she guided him. Yet, Kelly, Mel, and Julie, who sat in the next chairs, performed the motion for /f/ in sync with Mickey, Kara, and John, respectively. In addition, the interactions between each parent and child during the song varied between the levels, shifting from independence to complete dependence in a matter of seconds (VID00037, Field notes, May 20, 2010).

For example, Will did not engage, yet watched in a trance-like pose as the group performed. Finally, his mom tapped his wrist and did the KMP for the /d/. He immediately engaged and proceeded to do the KMP of /d/, milliseconds behind his mom’s cueing. At other moments, they were in unison. However, at one juncture, Cory melded her arm with his and they performed the /f/ KMP together as she guided him (VID 00038, Field notes, May 20, 2010). Their interactions demonstrated each level of performance in a short period of time.

In a similar way, Kelly varied her level of support for Mickey’s use of the KMPs in their interactions during the closing song. Most of their interactions were in sync, as they performed 13 KMPs together. However, at two other times, she offered more support; she guided him once, and cued him once in their interactions.

For example, Kelly guided Mickey at the beginning of the song, as he was silly and not performing the KMP correctly for /j/. She took his arm in hers, slowed him
down, and guided the accurate performance with her arm over his. At another point, she cued him with the KMP for /a/. He imitated her cue and then inserted the KMP in unison with her a few seconds later. They continued the song in sync with each other. She had assisted in three different types of interactions (VID 00037, Field notes, May 20, 2010).

All of the parents interacted in the same way during the session, moving from complete independence from their children to various types of assistance. As they performed the KMPs in unison with their children, they released responsibility to them. However, interactions changed instantly, if the child needed more assistance.

It was important to note that during all levels of performance, the eyes of the parents and children remained primarily on me. If either person in the dyad interacted visually with each other, it was momentary. The children were transitioning toward more responsible and independent members in the interactions (VID 00037, VID 00038).

In summary, by the middle of the study, the interactions provided examples of the parents and children performing the KMPs independently of each other, and examples of the parents assisting the children as they interacted with the use of the KMPs. The interactions of assistance demonstrated varying levels of performance from the parents doing the KMPs in unison with their children, to cueing, or guiding them physically through the use of the KMP. As the study progressed, the children became more independent and demonstrated less need for assistance in their performance. The children developed interdependence in the shared experience of using KMPs with their parents in interactions, as more learning occurred by the end of the study.
Interactions at the end of the study: Session 15. The parents and children “worked very independently of each other” by the last tutoring session (Data Management Form, July 7, 2010). The parents released responsibility to their children and did not monitor them in the same manner as they did when they acted as guides in the beginning. As they interacted with the KMPs, they kept their eyes on me. When they checked on their children, it was with a quick glance. In the following, I focus on the release of responsibility to the children as they interacted with the KMPs. By the last session, the children became independent and participated in joint performance, as equal contributors to the experience. The interdependence was exhibited in a number of ways.

As the parents released responsibility to their children, they moved from monitoring to checking. For example, checking was exemplified as Rose and Mary leaned in to take a quick look for their children’s use of the KMPs. Neither parent caught the child’s attention; the checking was a momentary glance (VID00057, July 14, 2010; Field notes, July 15, 2010).

During the checking, neither parent nor child ceased to engage. The mothers and children alike had their baby fingers extended as they emitted the /i/ sound and did the KMP. The result of the checking was an acknowledgment for the parent that the child was engaged; it confirmed the independence of the child in the interaction (Field notes, July 15, 2010).

Likewise, an observation of Mel notching up Kara’s performance of the KMPs via a quick demonstration illustrated an example of a parent checking at the end of the study. The exchange stood in contrast to the modeling and monitoring at the beginning
of the study. The checking entailed an offer, of such, for Kara to engage at another level. Mel did not monitor the engagement. They continued as equal partners as they interacted with the song.

The session began with the opening of the “Hello” song. The song repeated the line, “Hello, [name], how are you today?” until everyone was greeted. As Mel and Kara sat side-by-side singing, Mel did two KMPs (/t/ /d/) as she sang, today, while Kara inserted the initial /t/ only. After singing a line, they exchanged glances. Quickly, Mel demonstrated the additional KMP of /d/ in the word, today. Immediately, Mel and Kara turned toward the front and rejoined the singing. Kara inserted the /t/ and /d/ as she sang the word, today, throughout the rest of the song. (VID00057, July 14, 2010; Field notes, July 15, 2010)

Mel had released the responsibility to Kara for the performance. Although she notched up her performance through the spontaneous interaction, the choice of engagement with the learning was Kara’s. Kara was independent of her mother and responsible for her interactions, as was evident as they performed the rest of the song in sync with each other.

Another example of the release of responsibility to the children rested in the choice of engagement. In the beginning of the study, the parents monitored the children’s engagement by modeling and getting their attention. During the last session, three of the boys did not readily engage with the song. Yet, the mothers were engaged with eyes fixed on me; they were independent of the actions of their children (VID00058, July 14, 2010).
The specific examples of John and Will illuminated the shift in monitoring. As the song began, neither engaged; however, they watched me.

John was leaning back on mom, sitting on her lap watching, but not doing the KMPs during the first singing. Yet, he began to do them after, on his own. Likewise, Will was sitting watching. By the end of the first song, he got up on mom’s lap and did the KMPs with her. (Field notes, July 15, 2010)

Once again, the parents and children engaged in the interactions together; yet, each monitored his or her own involvement. This was evident by the fact that all eyes were fixed on me, even the parents’. When glances between the dyads occurred, they were only momentary. In the end, the children were responsible for their engagement, and the parents “did KMPs in unison with their children” (Field notes, July 15, 2010).

In summary, the children had developed independence in their use of the KMPs and the parents and children developed interdependence in the shared experience of interacting with their use. Two examples illuminated the mutuality. At the beginning of the last session, “LJ began the KMPs in an exaggerated way grabbing his mom’s arms and smiling, as they proceeded in motion together.” Moments later, “Lucy grabbed mom’s hands to put them on her leg for the /m/ KMP.” In turn, “Lucy’s, Kara’s, and LJ’s moms did the /m/ KMP on their children’s thighs” (Field notes, July 15, 2010). In the end, the children demonstrated responsibility for the KMPs. They emerged with a pattern of independence as they performed the KMPs and interacted in the shared experience with joint engagement.
In the last discussion of how the parents and children interacted with KMPs, I address characteristics present in the interactions. The characteristics were common among all of the parents. In addition, they were present at the onset of the sessions and continued throughout all of the tutoring sessions.

**Characteristics in interactions with KMPs.** The data pointed to the emergence of two characteristics present which were common to all of the parents over the course of the study. The two characteristics defined qualities of the interactions between the parents and the children. The characteristics were close physical proximity and privacy.

The first characteristic of close physical proximity meant that the parents kept the children close to them. They positioned them or the children positioned themselves consistently in the following ways: sitting on the floor very near the parent; standing between the parent’s legs; or sitting in the lap of the adult. The close physical proximity fostered physical connection between the parents and children. The children leaned back into the parents from their position on the floor, or while on the parents’ laps. Often they connected by one or the other extending a hand to touch each other. Even as the study advanced and the children were more familiar with each other, they did not leave the close physical proximity of the parent. Any movement of the children during the sessions resulted in them moving onto or off of the parent’s lap, or switching from sitting to standing, and back. In the position changes, they maintained close physical proximity. In addition, the movement did not interfere with the flow of the session (VID 000007-00011, 00022-31, 00036-43, 00046-54, 00056-57; March 31-July 15, 2010).
An example of the shift in position and the continuity in the engagement with the session occurred as a part of Paul’s visual monitoring of Jimmy. Both father and son were singing and doing the KMPs; however Paul inserted one more KMP [/w/] than his son did in the poem. He lifted him up immediately to his lap and modeled the next KMP by extending his arm within Jimmy’s visual space (VID00043, June 9, 2010, Field notes).

Another instance of maintaining proximity with a shift in position was when Lucy jumped up on her mom’s lap. As soon as she did, mom redirected her attention to engage by pointing toward me. The close physical proximity allowed Lucy’s glance to pick-up the gesture while they both continued to engage (VID00043, June 9, 2010, Field notes).

Close physical proximity was a characteristic that supported the interactions of the parents and children. As the examples noted, the close physical proximity was maintained even if the children moved. And, the engagement and monitoring of the children throughout the lesson continued, in spite of movement.

The second characteristic was privacy in the interactions. Privacy meant quiet exchanges in interacting and this feature was consistent among the parents throughout the tutoring sessions from the beginning to the end of the sessions. A review of the recordings of all 15 sessions pointed to the calm, private interactions between the parents and children in the interactions. “The parents and children stay engaged and often seem to be isolated dyads—separate from the other sets of dyads” (Data Management Form, Session 9, June 2, 2010). Only two fleeting instances in the entire study stood out as exceptions to the pattern of privacy.
The first exception was an evening when Jimmy was active and stood up, turned around, and moved away from his grandmother at the very end of the session. She called him audibly back to her. Others heard the exchange; therefore it was public, as opposed to private.

The other instance of public notice was the only open disruption in all of the 15-week tutoring sessions. Will became upset early on in the session and ran out. Cory followed and they returned soon after. She tried to pull him in closer to her, as he had distanced himself just beyond her reach; yet, he was agitated and loud. As he squirmed, she said, “Stop,” and he cried and left again. Once he returned and started the cycle again, she escorted him out. They returned and he assumed a position close to her and they engaged together for the rest of the session (VID00053, June 8, 2010).

Although this was a public disruption, everyone continued amid the distraction to engage with the KMPs and the activity of the session. The interactions of the others were not interrupted. As noted later in the analysis of the pattern, “No negative attention was given to any interruption. Parents redirected their children and appeared to be masters at ignoring any sidebars” (Data Management Form, Session 13, June 30, 2010). They maintained their own space and privacy during the sessions, as evidenced by their focus in the midst of the disruption of Will.

In closing, the characteristics of close physical proximity and privacy were features of the interactions of the parents and children. These qualities of the interactions were common among the parents. In addition, they were present in the interactions at the onset of the sessions and continued throughout all of the tutoring sessions.
To summarize the previous discussion of how the parents and children interacted with KMPs, I addressed three findings which emerged in the data. First, the parents used KMPs with the children in activities and experiences free of text. Secondly, the parents interacted in a manner which released responsibility for engagement and the use of the KMPs to the children by the end of the study. Lastly, close physical proximity and privacy were characteristics that were ever-present in the interactions between the parents and children over the course of the study.

The findings pointed to the parents scaffolding sound with the use of the KMPs. In this way, the addition of the KMPs provided the children with PA experiences. In addition, the learning of the KMPs occurred in shared interactions between the parents and children. In the next discussion, I turn to the engagement of the parents and children as they participated in activities with text. When text was involved, the parents and children did not use KMPs. However, the data pointed to the emergence of additional findings as they interacted with text to develop concepts about print.

**Engagement Without KMPs With Text**

A change in the overall engagement with the poem when the text was involved emerged as a pattern from the analysis of the entrance and exit recordings of the parents and children reading the poem “Hickory, Dickory, Dock.” Within the change in the engagement was the inclusion of more activities with the poem. The activities beyond the initial reading of the poem included rereading or revisiting the poem to model a literacy behavior. In March, only one parent extended the engagement with the text beyond an initial reading. In this instance, Kelly and her son, Mickey, read the poem,
reread it, and revisited it to find the word, “Hickory” (Entrance recording, Kelly and Mickey, March 2010). Table 10 displays the change in the number of dyads who extended engagement with the poem by including additional activities by the end of the study.

Table 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th># of dyads - March</th>
<th># of dyads - July</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reread</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revisit text</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modeled Literacy Behaviors</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Entrance recordings, VID00006, VID00011, VID00014, VID00016, VID00017, VID00019, VID00020, and VID00021; Exit recordings, VID00055, VID00058, VID00059, VID00060, VID00061, VID00062, VID00064, VID00065, VID00067, and VID00068)

The increased engagement with the poem in the activities displayed in Table 10 resulted in the emergence of three additional findings. First, the parents and children increased the amount of time they spent in the initial reading of the poem from March to July. Next, they increased the number of interactions with each other as they engaged with text. Lastly, they increased the modeling of literacy behaviors within the interactions. In the following, I demonstrate the three increases reflective of extended engagement while the parents and children were involved with text.

**Increase in time of initial reading of the poem.** Each of the seven parents and children read or recited the poem, “Hickory, Dickory, Dock,” in March and July. The
exit recordings indicated an extended engagement time in the initial reading from the beginning to the end of the study and noted that each dyad engaged in reading, as opposed to a recitation in the first activity. Figure 5 demonstrates the change in the amount of time the parents and children spent in the initial reading from March to July (Exit recordings, VID00055, VID00058, VID00059, VID00060, VID00061, VID00062, VID00064, VID00065, VID00067, and VID00068).

**Figure 5.** Increase in amount of time spent on initial reading of the poem

In terms of engagement with the text, Cory and Julie (Dyads B and C) participated only in the initial reading and did not return to the text to extend with other activities. Yet, their children’s engagement changed from March to July. Will (Dyad B) pointed to the text, matching his mother’s reading accurately in July. In March, his
mother did the pointing. John (Dyad C) demonstrated engagement as he read the poem
aloud accurately with his mom in July. In March, he did not look at the text.

**Increase in number of interactions.** The data pointed to an increase in
interactions over the course of the study. As noted earlier, an interaction was defined as
the behavior that occurred between the time the exact reading of the text stopped until the
reading resumed. Three of the parents and children did not stop to interact while reading
the poem; yet four of the parents and children did. Table 11 displays the increase in the
interactions with the presence of text.

Table 11

*Increase in Number of Interactions While Engaged With Text*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dyads</th>
<th>Interactions – March</th>
<th>Interactions – July</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carol and Jimmy</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cory and Will</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelly and Mickey</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julie and John</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary and LJ</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mel and Kara</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rose and Lucy</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Exit Recordings, VID00055, VID00058, VID00059, VID00060, VID00061, VID00062, VID00064,
VID00065, VID00067, and VID00068)

**Increase in modeling of literacy behaviors.** As the parents extended
engagement and interacted with the children with text, they increased the modeling of
literacy behaviors. Table 11 indicated an increase in interactions with four of the dyads. Each of the interactions demonstrated guidance toward concepts about print in the poem. For example, in one interaction Rose stopped Lucy when she lost voice to text match in her reading to say, “Now, we got to do one . . . each word at a time.”

Another interaction took place as Lucy hesitated at the end of a line of text. Rose gestured toward the left to direct return sweep, and said, “Go back to the monster,” which was a reference to the Reading and Writing Monster anchoring the left in *Phonics in Motion* (Kindervater, 2002; Exit recording, Rose and Destiny, July 20, 2010).

In another example of an interaction, LJ read along with his dad and mom, Leon and Mary. LJ misread the word, *ran*. Mom stopped the reading and held his pointer finger in place on the word. She said, “Ran” and waited for him to repeat it. He did so, and the reading continued (Exit recording, Mary, Leon, and LJ, July 13, 2010). The break in the reading constituted an interaction between Mary and LJ.

All dyads paralleled the guidance of Rose and Mary in their interactions. Each stop in the reading was an interaction which directed the children to the text. The observation form, displayed in Table 12, guided my observations of the parents’ modeling concepts about print and the interactions directing the children to attend to print in each entrance and exit recording. Completed observation forms, noting the engagement and interactions, can be found in Appendices C and D.
Table 12

*Literacy Behaviors Modeled by Parents*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent Behaviors Modeled</th>
<th>Verbally Nonverbally</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pictures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text has meaning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sounds</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directionality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return Sweep</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where to begin reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the increase in interactions previously discussed, a change in guiding the children non-verbally to attend to print emerged by the end of the study. As noted earlier, only two parents pointed to the text as they engaged with the poem. The experience for most was a recitation with no call to print at the beginning of the study.

In March, Cory and Kelly pointed to text, and therefore called attention non-verbally to the following concepts about print by pointing to the words: text has meaning, words, directionality, return sweep, and where to begin reading. By the end of the study, six of the seven parents pointed to the text; the seventh parent read aloud while the child pointed accurately to the text. The nonverbal modeling of the literacy behaviors listed in Table 12 developed over the study. A more in-depth discussion of the parents’ pointing
is addressed later in the findings related to how the literacy understandings of the parents changed over the course of the study.

However, it must be noted that the change from not pointing to pointing to text was immediate. The recordings documented the parents’ “inattention to print, as evidenced in the videos” prior to the first session (Field notes, March 16, 2010). Yet, “almost every parent pointed to the text during their shared reading with their children after the demonstration by me in this session” (Data Management Form, Session 1, March 31, 2010). Quite simply, showing the parents what to do allowed them to do it immediately.

In closing, the interactions of the parents and children pointed to a direct increase in experiences with literacy behaviors as they engaged with the text. The overall engagement with the text was extended by the following activities: increased time in their initial read of the poem; rereading the text; and interacting as the parents modeled literacy behaviors as they revisited the text. The activities supported the parents’ directing attention to specific concepts about print.

**Engagement With and Without Text**

Thinking back to the opening discussion, the use of the KMPs by the parents and children in activities free of text was another way the dyads extended the engagement with the poem. The entrance and exit recordings pointed to an increase in overall engagement with the poem via the activities with the KMPs in interactions free of text. In addition, the overall engagement with the poem was extended in activities when the text was involved. Therefore, the increase in actual time the parents and children spent
with activities surrounding the poem by the end of the study included both of the following: overall engagement when the text was not involved; and overall engagement when text was involved. Figure 6 displays the change in the time of overall engagement when both types of interactions were combined (Exit Recordings, VID00055, VID00058, VID00059, VID00060, VID00061, VID00062, VID00064, VID00065, VID00067, and VID00068).

Figure 6. Increase in overall engagement time with the poem

![Bar chart showing increase in overall engagement time with the poem](chart.png)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dyad</th>
<th>Total Time March</th>
<th>Total Time July</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each of the parents extended the time they engaged with the poem by extending the initial read, rereading, revisiting the text to use KMPs, or to call attention to a concept about print. Cory and Julie and their boys (Dyads B and C) showed the least amount of increase in the time of engagement. However, as mentioned before, Will and John
engaged with independence as they read side by side with their parents by the end of July.

To review, research question one examined how the parents and children interacted with the use of KMPs. The discussion addressed the placement of the KMPs in experiences without text. It summarized the manner in which the parents released responsibility to the children for the use of the KMPs in the weekly tutoring session by keeping them in close physical proximity and maintaining privacy.

In the end, additional findings emerged relative to the parents’ and children’s interactions when text was present. The engagement increased in terms of the length of the initial read of the poem, the number of interactions, and the modeling of literacy behaviors over the course of the study. The data informing the findings represented recordings of the engagement and interactions during the reading of the poem and during the weekly sessions. In the next section, I address the extensions of the learning to engagement outside of the tutoring sessions. The manner in which the parents extended the learning with their children outside of the directed sessions was the second question guiding my research.

**Research Question Two**

Research question two was: How do parents extend the learning in the tutoring session to experiences outside of the directed session?

Edwards (2005) stressed that parents want to help their children in literacy development, yet often lack a plan to do so. As noted previously, children who engage in literacy activities at home have higher PA than those who lack such opportunity
(Burgess, 1999). Therefore, examining the extensions of the directed sessions over time provided an understanding of how the parents developed a plan and whether they increased their literacy experiences with their children over the course of the study.

The parents extended the learning beyond the directed tutoring sessions in a variety of ways. The approach to extending the learning changed over the course of the study. The transition crossed a continuum in the type of experiences from a more formal, directed approach at the beginning of the study to an informal integration of the learning into the everyday experiences with the preschool children after the 15 weeks of directed sessions. Figure 7 illustrates the shift in the types of extensions of the learning over the course of the study.

![Figure 7. Change in types of extensions](image)

In the discussion of the findings, I address the stages of change that occurred as the parents transitioned from formal to informal extensions after the first week, first month, and second month of the study. I note the use of the KMPs as the extension the parents integrated into their daily interactions with their children most frequently outside of the directed sessions. Within the discussion of the KMPs, I report the two common patterns of use of the KMPs in interactions at home. Figure 8 displays the organization
of the following discussions of the extensions and the manner in which the analysis of the informal use of the KMPs emerged in the data.

In the next section, I begin with the formal extensions. I address the parents’ directed approach to extending the learning in the first week of the study. I address the beginning week specifically for the purpose of noting the parents’ initial interpretation of how to extend the learning. In essence, the first week illustrated where they began in learning to teach PA to their children.

Stages of Extensions

Stage 1: Extending the learning with formal experiences and the emergence of the informal. Although parents directed formal extensions during the first month, the children began to extend informally.

Extensions: The first week. The logs and field notes for the week after the first session pointed to a formal, homework-like beginning to extending the learning to experiences with the children. Six of the seven parents reported practicing the poem at home, and five of the six parents reported a direct, formal approach. The initial reports

Figure 8. Extensions of the Directed Tutoring Sessions
ranged from a sense of enjoyment to resistance on the part of some children. The following describes examples of the parents’ initial, directed practice.

In the first illustration, LJ’s parents, Leon and Mary, approached extending in a formal way. They shared they had established “a quiet place, just for this [practice].” Conversing after the session, they described their table with a lamp “for studying” at home and how they sat LJ between them to practice. They emphasized, “We like it,” referring to themselves as parents and their direction of the experience (Mary and Leon, personal communication, April 7, 2010). The description of their approach exemplified the formal, adult-directed nature of five of the seven parents in the early extensions to home practice.

In addition to Leon and Mary, two additional parents reported positive, formal extensions in the first week of practice. Julie reported that the “poem was a hit” and shared, “We are really trying our hand at rhyming words in the poem.” Julie’s example illustrated directing the extension of the rhyming activity from the first session to home practice.

Likewise, Mel described the formal follow-up of practice at home, recounting specifically what they did: “practicing the \( p \) formation on paper; going away from the monster; and using the *Pease Porridge Hot* poem” (Mel, weekly log, April 7, 2010). In addition, she inquired about defining the parameters of the extension as she wrote, “How often should we be practicing with our child at home?” She expressed uncertainty as she noted, “Kara can get it with the poem, but otherwise doesn’t get it” (Mel, weekly log, April 7, 2010). In this instance, it seemed that Mel felt comfortable with the directed
work done with the poem, but was concerned with Kara’s inability to use the learning outside of their directed experience.

Both Julie and Mel reported success in extending the learning in a formal way in activities they directed over the course of the week. Each of the women was a college graduate in education, yet expressed uncertainty at the beginning of the second session regarding extending beyond a formal experience. They discussed their children “not getting it” outside of the formal, poem activity (Julie and Mel, personal communication, April 21, 2010). Still, the pattern for Julie and Mel of extending had been directed and positive, like Mary and Leon’s. However, their reports of positive experiences contrasted with the feelings of two others from the beginning of the study.

Lucy’s and Jimmy’s parents shared extending with a formal approach also, but reported resistance on the part of their children. In the first example, Rose tried to sit down with Lucy to practice, but shared her frustration, as she emphasized, “but if I want to work together she act as though [she] not interested.” However, Rose noted that Lucy “seemed interested if the motion is done randomly” (Rose, weekly log, April 7, 2010). The formal approach for Rose caused uneasiness. She asked during pizza, “Is random ok?” (Rose, personal conversation, April 7, 2010). Did she not feel the informal extensions were worthwhile, or were they unfamiliar?

In the second example, Paul and Carol shared similar uncertainty about Jimmy’s engagement and a note of frustration with him (Paul and Carol, personal communication, April 7, 2010). They reported his resistance to practicing beyond the session, as they noted his exclamation that he “didn’t need to look at it [poem]” as they tried to practice
with him. Similar to Rose, they had tried to extend the learning formally in a homework-like fashion, yet Lucy and Jimmy were resistant to the adult-directed approach. It also caused frustration.

Another parent’s experience manifested a similar extension, yet something different. Kelly emphasized the directed nature of the approach, as she noted she and Mickey used the KMPs “at home at study time” (Log, April 7, 2010). However, she shared extending the learning with an approach which contrasted to the formal pattern established by the others.

Kelly observed Mickey using KMPs independently “at the dinner table” (Kelly, personal log, April 7, 2010). She noted Mickey doing the /p/ motion with the word, president. She emphasized, “He likes it!” (Kelly, personal communication, April 7, 2010). It appeared that Kelly’s exclamation pointed to pleasure with the extension. During the gathering for pizza before the session, she explained she had prompted Mickey to show her the KMP, as they looked at a picture in the hallway of a president. The group had learned the KMP for the /p/ as we read Pease Porridge Hot in the first session, so the interaction was an informal extension of the focus on that particular sound and KMP. The example of Kelly’s extending the learning was the first one in the study that pointed to an engagement with the child in an informal and spontaneous experience. This stood in contrast to the more formal approach the rest of the parents reported in their initial logs, as they began to extend the learning in the first week.

The extensions of the first week demonstrated the parents’ efforts to practice beyond the session. Please recall in Chapter 2 the reference to Edwards’ (2005) work,
noting the desire of parents to ensure success for their children, yet lacking a way of putting a plan into action. It was apparent the parents wanted to help, as each of them followed through with activities at home. The reports of them participating in formal, adult-directed experiences embodied the desire to help. Yet, it can be inferred that they lacked the experience at this point in how to extend in less formal experiences with their children. It seemed they relied on the homework approach, comfortable to all of us who have been schooled.

Therefore, in the beginning of the study, the extensions were based on what they knew. A change in their plan of action was reliant on more experience in feeling comfortable about extending in a different way. As the study continued, they learned to extend informally by virtue of my spontaneous demonstrations during the directed sessions.

So, the extensions remained formal in the first week of the study, yet the informal began to emerge quickly over the first month. As the parents participated weekly in the tutoring sessions, they learned by doing and belonging to the group. Also, the children communicated where they found their comfort level beyond the directed sessions. Consequently, the extending of the learning became less formal.

In conclusion, as the study began, six of the seven parents reported examples of extending the learning beyond the tutoring session. The pattern of extending in the first week was a formal, homework-like approach, with the exception of Kelly who reported spontaneous extensions. However, the pattern of extending transitioned quickly to an emergence of the informal approach by the end of the first month.
Therefore, I turn to the description of the continuing practice of a directed approach in the extensions, with reports from each of the parents of a shift in focus to more spontaneous and informal experiences. Please note that in the first month, the data linked to the parents experiencing up to four directed tutoring sessions. In this way, the continued group experiences provided demonstrations with informal and playful extensions.

**Extensions: The first month.** The parents continued to adhere to the formal approach to extending the learning through the fourth week of the study; however, their reports indicated the emergence of informal extensions. The data pointed to illustrations of the parents and children integrating the learning informally in addition to the more formal approach. In the following, I illustrate how parents extended the learning while at the same time, they developed a heightened awareness of informal extensions of the learning.

In the first example, Julie’s question illustrated adherence to the formal, “How much outside time (from sessions) should we read the poems?” (Personal log, April 21, 2010). Yet, she noted a contrasting response from John between the formal and informal in the same log, as she recorded, “When I did motions while we read books, he doesn’t like it, but words in conversations he does.” The statement pointed to John’s resistance to her directing the experience and interrupting the flow of the reading, yet distinguished an enjoyment on his part when the KMPs were integrated informally into their talk.

As Julie continued, she accentuated informal experiences, “at bedtime [he] asked his dad ‘out of the blue’ what motion he thinks ‘g’ will be.” Her log continued with John
initiating the sharing with his dad, as she wrote, “And then [John] said and showed him that he already knows (p)” (Julie, personal log, April 14, 2010). Once again, Julie’s notations acknowledged the integration of the learning into informal, authentic experiences of everyday language.

John’s request for the KMP for /g/ was the initial sound of the name of a family member. By the end of the third session, Kelly and Mel requested the KMPs for the initial sounds of the names of their other children also, highlighting a desire to integrate the learning informally outside of the session. Likewise, Carol shared that Jimmy extended the learning informally, using family names. She wrote, “He did the name motions only!” This stood in contrast to the maintenance of the formal approach reflected in the reporting of what was done, as homework, “He read the poem” (Carol, personal log, April 14, 2010). The use of the KMPs for family names by four families represented an informal extension into the family talk and stood in contrast to the formal approach, which John and Jimmy resisted openly. It was apparent the value of the informal extensions was developing.

A similar contrast emerged for Mary as she attempted to extend the learning formally. Please recall she and her husband sat down with LJ to extend and “study” during the first week. She noted resistance to the formal, as she shared, “At times he gets frustrated when I try to implement the motions as if ‘ok, I got it.’ I want him to enjoy doing this how can I get him to catch on” (Mary, personal log, April 21, 2010). Yet, in the same log, she wrote, “without prompting, he’ll use the motions in general conversation. At times I may start reciting the poem and he’ll start the hand motions”
(Mary, personal log, April 21, 2010). Similar to Julie’s and Carol’s observations, Mary took note of the enjoyment of her child’s engagement in less formal extensions of the learning.

Paralleling Mary’s observations, the conversation after our fourth session highlighted her reflection on her own formal approach to extending the learning. She said to me, “I need to make it fun.” She continued that she “needed to do it different; I’m really learning how” (Data Management Sheet, April 21, 2010). Mary continued to direct the formal experiences, yet reflected on the emerging informal ones which LJ appeared to enjoy, as she assessed her directive approach.

In like manner, Kelly shared a parallel insight of extending the learning with an integration of the informal versus solely a formal approach. She exclaimed at the end of the third session, “I get it! I was doing, ‘t’, Mickey.” As she spoke, she enacted pointing to an isolated letter with emphasis. “I was like ‘t’-tiger; ‘l’-lion! I gotta make it meaningful!” (Kelly, personal communication, April 21, 2010). It appeared that my demonstrations and their participation triggered Kelly’s and Mary’s noting the value of the integration of informal extensions of the learning, and impacted their understanding of how to integrate learning less formally.

In another illustration of an increased awareness of the integration of learning in an informal way, Rose reported a similar experience in the extension of the learning by the end of the first month. Her log indicated a formal approach in their practice, as she wrote, “Generally we’re at home when we are working on our sounds/motions.” However, she contrasted the directed, working time, with informal experiences as she
noted, “She [Lucy] will do it on her own if something has the sound that we’re working on just in general conversation then she will do the motions if we happen to say words with p, m, and s” (Rose, personal log, April 21, 2010). The first three sessions had focused upon the /p/, /m/ and /s/ with the introduction of particular poems, and Rose observed Lucy extending the learning outside of the poem, as she integrated the focus of the directed sessions into her daily talk. She became aware of Lucy’s pointed initiations.

As the first month of the directed sessions ended, the data pointed to the inclusion or observance of the emergence of informal extensions to the learning outside of the directed tutoring sessions. Six of the seven parents noted experiences with their children attending to sound with the use of KMPs beyond the formal, adult-directed extension. One parent, Mel, noted integration of the learning informally, with a nuance of regret.

In an apologetic way, Mel noted that they practiced “whenever we remembered!” As she handed me the log, she said, “Sorry” as though she had not completed her homework (Mel, personal conversation, April 21, 2010). However, her log indicated that she and Kara had extended the learning informally. She documented that they used KMPs “mostly in the car or during dinner, when showing other family members what we learned!” (Mel, personal log, April 21, 2010). The change to informal extensions stood in contrast to her formal work reported in the first week. However, it seemed that Mel’s remorse of not attending to extensions formally was evidence that the more formal extension of learning at home was a more comfortable practice, or possibly one that qualified as homework.
In summary, the parents began to extend the learning after the first week in a formal, adult-directed manner. They maintained the formal approach to extending the learning until the end of the first month. However, they developed an awareness of the children extending the learning less formally and the children’s enjoyment with informal experiences during this time.

Referring back again to Edwards (2005), the examples of the transition pointed to the parents beginning to put a different plan of action into place in the extending of the learning beyond the weekly sessions, by virtue of noting the value of the informal in the children’s initiations. However, as can be inferred from Mel’s communication, a level of comfort with a more integrated manner of extending learning into everyday practice was not present. Once again, please note that Mel was a certified teacher. The communication of the parents at this point of the study, such as Mel’s, provided further evidence supporting Edwards’s claim that further experience was needed to ensure comfort on the part of the parents in valuing the informal interactions supporting the learning. They were not sure of how to put the plan in action.

As the study progressed, the parents shifted in the extensions of the learning from formal to informal. During the second month, the parents transitioned from directing the extensions in a formal manner to participating in informal extensions and reporting on the children’s initiation of the learning into their everyday experiences. By and large, the formal approach to extending the learning was dropped during this time of the study. The reports of the parents focused on the informal use of the KMPs in their interactions.
Extensions: Consistent use of the KMPs. As the parents shifted toward informal extensions of the learning, I must note the specific concentration on the use of the KMPs as opposed to other extensions in the remaining discussion. Two reasons for the focus on the KMPs exist. First, the most consistent pattern of extending the learning beyond the sessions was the spontaneous use of KMPs. The parents noted other extensions of the learning beyond the KMPs in their logs and interviews. Some examples of extensions were the reading of the poems, rhyming activities, and clapping syllables. Any aspect of the weekly lesson was found in various journals as extensions, at random times. However, the use of KMPs was common and consistent. Secondly, the use of the KMPs was the focus in the study.

Referring back, the purpose of the study was to describe the interactions between parents and children with the use of the KMPs in the development of PA. PA involves exploration with the sounds in oral language. Children develop the skill in their unending interactions and exploration with the sounds of oral language (Ferguson, 1986; Lindblom, 1992). Therefore, extending the learning informally with the use of the KMPs to accompany sounds in oral language experiences supported the children’s exploration of sound as early as the first month of the study.

The nature of the exploration and playful interaction with sound in PA development demands spontaneity with young children. The “unending interactions” (Ferguson, 1986; Lindblom, 1992) with sound to develop PA implies informal integration into the child’s experience, as opposed to directed, adult-like lessons. The natural
approach appears to support the fact that 80% of children develop the skill naturally (IRA, 1998).

As I address the theme of parents shifting toward exploring sound in authentic and informal experiences, I focus on their reporting of the fun and playful use of the KMPs. The KMPs, by their very nature, are transportable. The use of them does not demand a formal, sitting approach; the use demands oral language for them to accompany. Therefore, the focus on the KMPs flowed to spontaneous, informal extensions, as opposed to the formal, homework-like experiences the parents directed at the beginning of the study.

By the end of the first month, the parents described their extensions with the KMPs with their preschoolers with the theme of fun and spontaneity. They spoke of using the KMPs ‘on the go’ or in ‘general conversation’ as they explored sound in oral language exchanges. They contrasted the fun of integrating the informal extension of the KMP to the more formal experiences that demanded ‘sitting down’ with their children in other activities.

In summary, the use of the KMPs as an informal extension emerged among all of the families consistently. In addition, the label of fun or play in conjunction with the description of their extension of the use of the KMPs was common. Julie emphasized the fun element of interacting with John at home was “putting motion to it” (Julie, personal communication, July 21, 2010). Likewise, Cory summed it up as, “it was more like playing” (Cory, personal communication, July 26, 2010). In the next section, I address the description of Stage 2 of the extensions between the seventh and eighth week of the
study until the study ended. During this time, the parents reported authentic and spontaneous extensions of the learning with the use of the KMPs into the daily experiences of the families with no attention to formal exchanges.

**Stage 2: Extending the learning with informal experiences.** The data pointed to the pattern of informal extensions of the learning into everyday experiences by the end of the seventh or eighth session for all of the seven parents. In addition, the data illuminated examples of the parents either participating with their children or assuming the role of the observer. Each extension related to the use of the KMPs in a context separate from a formal, homework-like experience. An example of such an extension was Kelly’s entry that Mickey used the KMPs “at the dinner table” and “in his bedroom” when talking (Kelly, weekly log, May 19, 2010).

Kelly’s notation of extensions paralleled the entries of Mel and Rose. Mel wrote that Kara used the KMPs, “randomly—throughout the week! Mostly in conversation at mealtime!” (Rose, personal log, 5/5/5010). Likewise, Rose shared how Lucy used the KMPs informally, as she noted, “All the time in general conversation” (Rose, personal log, May, 5, 2010). During pizza time, Rose shared that as Lucy was dropping KMPs into conversation “all of the time,” her grandma asked if “they [Mom and Lucy] were doing sign language” (Data management sheet, May 12, 2010). The KMPs allowed informal integration in their verbal exchanges.

The examples the parents shared illustrated the shift to the informal integration of the learning into the children’s experiences outside of the directed tutoring session. The use of the KMPs to accompany everyday talk accentuated attention to sound in an
informal manner, as opposed to sitting down to practice a particular sound formally.

Table 13 illustrates notations of the parents of the informal integration of the learning outside of the session by the seventh and eighth week of sessions.

**Table 13**

*Parents’ Notations of Informal Extensions of the Learning*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Informal Extension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jimmy</td>
<td>Jimmy did motions ... snack time before bed in the kitchen (Carol, personal log, May 7, 2010).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>He likes to do it [motions] when it relates to words/things around him. Drops the motions in, especially when we sing “Willoughby, Wallaby, Woo” (Contact Summary Sheet, May 19, 2010).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kara</td>
<td>She does them [motions] all the time; in the car (Contact summary sheet, May 19, 2010).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LJ</td>
<td>LJ’s starting to ask, “What motion goes with” various letters of the alphabet without prompting (Mary, personal log, May 14, 2010).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mickey</td>
<td>He uses them everywhere. When we are in the car, we would talk about the poems then I would see him doing the motions (Kelly, personal log, May 14, 2010).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will</td>
<td>He was showing his cousin (Cory, personal log, May 7, 2010).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13 pointed to examples the parents shared representing the informal extensions of the learning beyond the tutoring sessions. The entries demonstrated the use of KMPs in spontaneous interactions. It can be inferred that the parents gained comfort in extending the learning less formally than they had at the beginning of the study.
In addition, the examples of the use of KMPs highlighted sounds accompanying the talk in the everyday experiences between the children and parents. Please recall in the introduction in Chapter 1, children develop PA in their unending interactions and exploration with the sounds in oral language (Ferguson, 1986; Lindblom, 1992). Table 13 provided examples of interactions and explorations reported by the parents as the learning was extended informally beyond the directed sessions in the practice of PA. The parents’ role in the extensions was one of participating, or, in some instances, the role was one of observing the extension. The role shifted from the original one of formal direction.

An example of a parent noting the child’s extending during this time was Kelly’s sharing Mickey’s use of KMPs as they shopped one evening. She shared, “In the grocery store my son sounded out Save-a Lot, using the motions . . . then he said, “hey I thought it was Save-a-Lock” (Kelly, personal log, May 19, 2010). This example highlighted the extension into everyday interactions and Kelly’s role of observing. It seemed that Kelly’s role of active observer demonstrated an awareness of Mickey’s literacy exploration. Table 13 noted examples of the other parents engaging in similar observations of authentic literacy development. The examples suggested further evidence of the parents extending their learning outside of the sessions.

In summary, the parents shifted from the use of formal extensions to informal experiences as they extended the learning outside of the directed sessions during the second month of the study. The data pointed to the replacement of the formal by informal experiences. In addition, the parents participated with their children and noted
the children’s initiation of extensions in everyday life. In this manner, the parents became active observers of the literacy extensions of their children. Referring, once again, to Edwards’ (2005) reminder that parents do not know how to put a plan into action, it appeared the parents began to execute a way to engage with sound informally during this part of the study.

In the next section, I describe the continuation of the informal extensions beyond the directed tutoring sessions. A distinct pattern of extending the learning informally emerged from the end of the second month until the end of the 15 week tutoring sessions. The data pointed to the emergence of two common patterns of informal extensions of the learning into the everyday lives of the parents and the children. The two common patterns consistent among all of the families were: (a) extending the learning to interactions in the car; and (b) extending the learning through the sharing with others present in their lives. For the children, the sharing of the learning involved performing for family and friends. For the parents, the sharing of the learning involved discussing what they learned with other adults outside of the tutoring sessions.

Stage 3: Extending the learning with common patterns of informal extensions. Common patterns of extending involved parents and children sharing with each other, with family members, or individuals outside of the group.

Extensions: In the car. The parents and children extended the learning with interactions in the car as they used KMPs to play with sound as they drove along. The data pointed to an extension of the learning in this manner in the interviews of all seven parents. Once again, these interactions and explorations of sound offered experiences to
develop PA. Table 14 notes examples from the data of the use of the KMPs in this informal, yet authentic manner.

Table 14

*Parents’ Informal Extensions of the Learning in the Car*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Use of KMPs in the car</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jimmy</td>
<td>They [brothers] both read and did motions in the car (Carol, personal log, May 7, 2010).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>Absolutely, absolutely! And, anytime . . . a lot of times, they’ll I bring it up in the car . . . so just on their own [use of KMPs] (Julie, personal interview, July 21, 2010).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kara</td>
<td>No, I never did [sit down]. Never did! Most of the times that we did the motions were in the car, too; all the time in the car . . . or we’d be in the car and she’d hear a song . . . Oh, this word . . . [from the song], and then she would do [motions] whatever (Mel, personal interview, July 21, 2010).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LJ</td>
<td>Well usually when we in the car sometimes [with laughter] (Mary, personal interview, July 13, 2010).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mickey</td>
<td>in the car . . . and we do spend a lot of time in the car because of our transportation . . . she [baby] picks up all these motions [of Mickey] (Kelly, personal interview, July 10, 2010).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rose</td>
<td>And speaking and doing sounds or if we see something . . . I don’t care where we are; we can be out in the car . . . stoplight, stop sign . . . passing McDonald’s, you know the /m/ [doing the KMP for the sound /m/] so we get that a lot (Rose, personal interview, July 20, 2010).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will</td>
<td>Yea. He does a lot [with emphasis] in the car! Or, sometimes, he’ll say a word and I’ll say, “What motion does that start with?” And, then he starts and then he’ll start doing ‘em all [in the car] (Cory, personal interview, July 26, 2010).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 14 featured examples from the data of the use of the KMPs in the car to extend the learning informally. The parents and children participated in the playful exploration of sound as they talked or sang with the use of KMPs. The parents noted the extension of the experiences and reported them in their journals and the interviews.

The parents’ role had changed in the extending of the learning. At the beginning of the study, they guided formal, homework-like experiences. By contrast, Table 14 accentuated spontaneous, cooperative interactions in everyday experiences. The parents did not offer examples of directed experiences at this point in the study. It appeared that they had found a level of comfort with the informal interactions with their children, based on their on-going experience and practice of the informal approach demonstrated during the weekly sessions. Indeed, the integration of the KMPs was central to each tutoring session.

Sometimes the parents participated in the experiences with their children. Yet, at other times they observed and noted the children’s own extensions of the learning. I discuss examples in which the parents observed the children’s sharing the learning as an extension of the directed tutoring sessions with their families next.

**Extensions: Children sharing.** The children performed or shared their learning often with others. Primarily, performing included extended family with a consistent report of shared experiences with siblings. In this manner, the children acted independently in the extending of the practice from the sessions to their own experiences. The data from the interviews and logs indicated instances of sharing from six of the seven
parents. During these experiences, the parents’ role changed to one of an observer of the literacy interactions as their children initiated.

For example, Cory noted, “or he’ll show them to his grandma or to his uncle. ‘Cause you know, he did one and his uncle goes, ‘What are you doing?’ And, I go, ‘that’s from our class, Uncle Don’” (Cory, personal interview, July 26, 2010). Likewise, Mel volunteered Kara’s excitement with the learning, as she expressed, “Honestly . . . she showed everyone! Well . . . my mom, my dad, my husband . . . just some of her friends . . . outside of the group. Kara showed everyone!” (Mel, personal interview, July 13, 2010). The parents noting the children’s sharing with the extended family was a common extension communicated regarding how the learning was extended informally. The sharing became a family affair.

A particular type of family extension was the sharing between siblings. Five of the seven parents reported the use of KMPs between the children, with the preschooler sharing his or her learning. The other two children did not have a sibling close enough in age for such interactions to occur; however Lucy’s mom reported her daughter showing them to her friend during play (Rose, personal interview, July 20, 2010). Parents reported the children reciting the poems from the sessions with the KMPs and integrating their use into their talk, especially with names or while singing. The parents noted the children initiated and enjoyed the informal extensions.

One example of a sibling interchange was relayed during the pizza time. Kelly said,
The baby was looking at a book and Mickey was doing a couple of motions. Then, he said the beginning sound [of a word] and . . . [he was] saying the ending sound and doing the motion. The baby started saying sounds and moving her hands. (Kelly, personal communication, June 16, 2010)

On a different occasion, she telephoned me to share, “The baby took Mickey’s folder of poems, dragged it to the couch and opened it up. She pulled one out, looked at it and started babbling. Then, she started doing motions with her fist. It’s because she saw Mickey!” (Kelly, personal phone conversation, July 10, 2010). Kelly’s communication exemplified the numerous notations of the parents of occasions of their children sharing the KMPs with their siblings beyond the directed sessions.

In summary, six of the seven parents reported similar examples of the children sharing or performing the KMPs willingly for others on a regular basis. The additional child’s grandmother included a couple of instances, yet seemed to imply his lack of willingness or comfort with performing. However, the common pattern was for the children to initiate the use of KMPs freely and frequently outside of the sessions.

In regard to the parents’ extension of the learning during the children’s sharing, the parents observed their children’s independent initiation of the extensions. They became conscious of the integration of sound with the use of the KMPs. They noted the informal extensions and spontaneous use of the learning, as it was integrated into authentic experiences with their families. This awareness and ease of noting the extensions stood in contrast to their initial response of discomfort with informal
experiences beyond the tutoring sessions. Evidence pointed to their becoming comfortable with the plan of informal integration with their children.

I turn to the last extension of the learning from the standpoint of the parents’ sharing. In this section, I describe the shift from the parents’ dependence on me in the tutoring sessions to assuming a position of independence. They provided examples of their own sharing of their learning with significant adults in their own lives. It can be inferred that they became teachers of what they learned in the sessions.

**Extensions: Parents sharing.** The parents extended the learning by sharing it themselves with other adults. Each of the seven parents noted instances of sharing the KMPs and what they learned with other adults in their lives. The sharing with other adults involved an intention on each of their parts of extending the learning to others.

For example, Julie wanted her mother-in-law to learn the KMPs when they went on an upcoming trip together because she spends so much time with her children. In addition, she shared her learning on the phone with her out-of-town sister, and was anxious to show what she learned because her sister had a number of young children (Julie, personal interview, July 21, 2010). Likewise, Cory informed her sister-in-law who has a 3-year old. She reported, “but I’ve told her a little bit about it ’cause she’ll ask me . . . ’cause she’ll see the change in Will” (Cory, personal interview, July 26, 2010).

Some of the other examples indicated a plan of use as a means of sharing. As a case in point, Rose shared how she had talked with her friend about it, “so I was just basically telling her what we do [emphasis] . . . in the class we learned this.” She ended with a plan for future extending when she said, “But, um . . . it will be something I will
share with her son because he’s at my house all the time anyway” (Rose, personal interview, July 20, 2010). She planned to extend by sharing in a specific setting.

Extending the learning to others indicated an ownership of their learning as they shared the plan. Kelly, a childcare teacher, communicated how she had begun to use the KMPs with the group of preschoolers in her charge in a daycare (Kelly, personal communication, December 23, 2010). In addition, she shared how she responded to questions from a students’ grandmother about the child’s use of the KMPs at home and why she, as a teacher, used the scaffold of KMPs for sounds. She had confidence in her learning and sharing of her plan of action.

In summary, the parents extended the learning beyond the engagement of activities with their own children. They manifested an ability and confidence to articulate the learning to others. Mel, a previous fifth grade teacher, noted the extension of her learning to struggling learners and her confidence in the use of the KMPs. She emphasized, “I really feel as a teacher that I could take it into a group right now and do, probably the way you did it” (Interview, July 21, 2010). Like the other parents, she shared a confidence in the ability to extend the learning to others.

All of the seven parents noted this type of extension of the learning to significant adults in their lives. The examples manifested their developing identity as teachers of PA as they extended their learning with the use of language. This ability to articulate what they had learned was an example of how they extended their learning beyond the 15 directed tutoring sessions.
It appeared that the parents possessed a desire to share their learning with others and felt confident in what they had learned in the directed sessions. It must be noted the parents began the sessions dependent on me as the expert. By the end, they set forth independently, extending their learning in conversation with other adults. The evidence points to their proceeding from a point of lacking an understanding of PA to a place where they transmitted their knowledge of it to others, with the tool of language.

The evidence of their extension calls for reflection upon Vygotsky’s (1978) assertions regarding the development of children, noted in Chapter 2. It can be inferred that the parents’ growth mirrored the same process. Their use of language as a tool to connect and share their learning with others was evidence that they had become independent as a result of the social experience of the sessions. In other words, they had grown, as children do, “into the intellectual life of those around them” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 88). They identified themselves as teachers, extending the learning to their own life experiences.

In addition, thinking back again to Edwards’ (2005) assertion that parents have a desire to help their children, but lack a way to put a plan into action, it seemed by their ease of sharing with others that they developed a plan of action. Likewise, as Senechal (2006) recommended, they had been trained to teach a literacy skill. Evidence showed they were acting on their acquired knowledge of PA development.

**Summary of Research Question Two**

In conclusion, to answer the question of how the parents extended the learning beyond the directed tutoring sessions, I examined a shift in the types of experiences over
the course of the study from formal to informal extensions. I looked at the initial adult-directed experiences at the beginning of the study and noted the emergence of the informal experiences by the children over the first month. Then, I described the transition to informal experiences through the use of KMPs by the end of the second month of the study. In the end, I identified two common patterns of the use of the KMPs from the second month to the end of the 15 week study. The patterns were the use of the KMPs in the car and in the sharing of the KMPs with others.

In this manner, I addressed a shift in the parents as they extended the learning. In the beginning, they were dependent on me as the expert. Their extensions were formal, as though I had assigned homework. However, they shifted their extensions the longer they participated in the sessions. They began to explore sound with their children in their everyday lives informally with the use of the KMPs. They emerged as observers of their children’s self-initiated experiences of exploring sound. In addition, they shared their learning with others, having developed an understanding and confidence in their developing practice. The parents’ transition to more independence resulted from a change in their literacy understandings. I address this growth in the next question.

Research Question Three

Research question three was: How does the literacy understandings of the parents change over time?

In response to research question three, which asks how the literacy understandings of the parents change over time, I address three specific changes in the parents. First, the parents changed in their ability to assist performance in PA. Secondly, they changed in
their understanding of directing their children’s attention to print. Thirdly, the parents changed in their understanding of the value of poetry and its use with their young children. Further analysis of the data pointed to a pattern of how the parents developed non-verbal and verbal scaffolds to assist their children in literacy interactions. I address each of the changes in this section.

First, I review scaffolding as it relates to the study and define non-verbal and verbal scaffolds. After that, I explain the particular scaffolds the parents used during the study in two areas of literacy: PA and directing their children’s attention to text. The use of non-verbal scaffolds by the parents emerged in the area of PA interactions. The use of non-verbal and verbal scaffolds emerged in the area of directing children’s attention to print.

**Scaffolding**

As described in Chapter 2, scaffolding the child highlights the ability of an expert to pitch help at an appropriate level to support the learning of a task. The image presented was that of assisting a child to walk the top of a wall alone. The parents’ watchful eye and readiness to extend a hand if the child stumbled illuminated assisting performance. The extended hand is the scaffold, or the particular type of assistance offered.

The parent’s response of choosing to use the scaffold represents the understanding of the task. For example, the parent knew that losing one’s footing or running might result in a fall. The extended hand was the scaffold; yet, it was also a representation of the parent’s understanding of the intricacies of the task.
Scaffolding literacy tasks. Similar to scaffolding in general, the parents’ use of a particular scaffold to assist the children in literacy represented two aspects of assisting performance. First, it demonstrated the actual assistance the parents offered. Secondly, it represented the understanding of the literacy task by the parent. Consequently, the scaffolds emerged as the unit of analysis representing the changing literacy understandings of the parents over the course of the study.

In the following sections, I describe the types of actions or scaffolds the parents used to assist their children in literacy. As I analyzed the entrance and exit recordings of the parents and children reading a poem, the weekly logs collected after each of the 15 sessions, and the interviews, I noted the development of two types of scaffolding: non-verbal and verbal.

Types of scaffolds. The non-verbal actions entailed the parents’ guidance or cooperative engagement with the child in a non-linguistic manner. An example of a non-verbal scaffold was the parent’s use of the kinesthetic motion for the phoneme (KMP) to call the child’s attention to the component of sound in language. For example, the use of the KMP for the sound of /t/ with the word, twinkle, demonstrated a non-verbal scaffold in the literacy area of PA.

The verbal actions entailed the use of specific language to direct literacy activities with the child. An example of specific language was the use of the sentence, “Ok, show me the title,” to direct the child to the written text (Exit recording, Rose and Lucy, July 20, 2010). The use of the specific language demonstrated a verbal scaffold in the literacy area of attention to the printed text.
In the following section, I describe non-verbal scaffolds of the parents in the area of PA. The discussion explores the parents’ use and the understanding of the scaffold. The scaffolding demonstrated changes in the parents’ understanding of PA.

**Changing Understandings of Parents**

**Scaffolding PA non-verbally.** As noted previously, 20% of children have difficulty hearing, expressing, and manipulating phonemes (IRA, 1998). Therefore, they do not develop PA naturally. In addition, research supports the use of a concrete marker to assist the child’s development of PA.

With the definition of PA and the significance of the concrete marker in mind, the parents exhibited a development of the understanding of PA over the study. The analysis of the data yielded a pattern of actions and descriptions by the parents which indicated they had developed an understanding of PA and used scaffolds to develop it with their children. In addition, three of the parents extended their understandings and discussed examples of how they used scaffolds specifically to assist their children to hear and express speech sounds clearly with non-verbal scaffolds.

In the following, I explain the use of the KMPs by the parents or grandparent during the exit recordings at the end of the study. Next, I describe the parents’ learning to focus upon sound, and share examples of their practice. Lastly, I describe the specific use of scaffolds to remediate speech as an example of PA development.

**Scaffolding with the use of KMPS.** The analysis of the exit recordings of the dyads reading the poem, “Hickory, Dickory, Dock,” pointed to the use of KMPs representing sounds by four of the seven parents or grandparent. Choosing to assist the
children with the KMPs to focus upon sound was a non-verbal scaffold, which was not present during the entrance recordings. Table 15 represents the number of times a parent or grandparent used a KMP to accompany sound in the exit recordings.

Table 15

*Number of KMPs Used in Exit Recordings*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent or Grandparent</th>
<th># of KMPs used in exit recordings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kelly</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mel</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carol</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Exit Recordings, VID00055, VID00058, VID00059, VID00060, VID00061, VID00062, VID00064, VID00065, VID00067, and VID00068)

As illustrated in Table 15, the parents or grandparent chose to use the non-verbal scaffold to highlight the sound in words as they read the poem, demonstrating a new understanding of the importance of sound. The action represented a change in the understanding of PA development which was not present at the beginning of the study. They scaffolded the hearing of the sound with the KMP.

*Parents learning about the importance of sound.* Please recall that PA develops the ability to hear, express, and manipulate phonemes, the smallest units of sound in speech. Beyond the recordings, the interviews demonstrated that the use of the KMPs highlighted a new understanding about sound for the parents of the preschoolers. The
parents learned to attend to phonemes with their use of KMPs, communicated they felt it was a good tool to use with the children, and expressed that the focus on sound was new to them. Therefore, the parents exhibited a change in their understanding of PA during the study.

When I asked each parent what they had learned about teaching reading during the study, a common pattern of response from the interviews emerged. The response was the link between using KMPs and the attention to sounds. For example, Julie noted in a discussion of the use of the KMPs, “I think . . . it [KMPs] just makes them understand sound better” (Julie, personal communication, July 21, 2010).

As the parents learned about sound and developed the scaffold of the KMPs to assist their children with sound, they communicated the importance of the scaffold, as Julie had. They shared that the scaffold of the KMPs was something they would suggest to other parents as important for children. For example, as I ascertained what LJ’s parents, Mary and Leon, had learned, I asked what they might tell another family about reading poetry to their little one. Mary emphasized she would suggest using poetry and added, with a chuckle, “But, I’d . . . probably give away the secret about the motions” (Mary, Interview, July 13, 2010). In response to the same question about reading poetry to a young child, Julie noted her learning of “all the motions” was “a great way to get . . . do it” (Julie, personal communication, July 21, 2010). The parents noted the value of the scaffold for their children.

In addition, the parents’ communication, consistent across all seven interviews, indicated that focusing upon sound was a new understanding. For example, Carol,
Jimmy’s grandmother, noted her change in learning to focus on sound; “I’d say learning any [emphasis] words with sound” was a new understanding (Carol, personal communication, July 26, 2010). Likewise, Cory’s response aligned with Carol’s. When asked what she had learned about teaching reading, she highlighted sound, saying, “‘Cause when I went to school it was all about, you know, letters; it wasn’t about sounds” (Cory, Interview, July 26, 2010). Similarly, Kelly noted how learning the KMPs and focusing on sounds was a change from her earlier understanding of just focusing on letters to guide her child, as she related, “but we didn’t go so much into the letter sounds, and make the letter sounds become words—and, the words are reading” (Kelly, July 10, 2010).

In summary, the parents noted they learned to attend to phonemes through the use of the non-verbal scaffold of KMPs. In addition, they emphasized that focusing on sound was a new understanding they developed in the study. In the following, I describe examples the parents shared of attending to sound with the use of KMPs with their children.

**Parents practicing with KMPs.** The data pointed to numerous examples in each interview of the parents using the KMPs to focus upon sound as illustrations of how the learning became a practice for them. Kelly gave an example of how her son, Mickey, had begun to collect catalogs and pictures, saying, “I’ve gotta bring these to class, so Mrs. Kindervater can teach these sounds.” Kelly shared that she responded, “You know that sound for this. Tell me” (Kelly, Interview, July 10, 2010). They used the KMPs for
sounds together as they explored the pamphlets. Referring back to Kelly’s earlier comments, she did not focus on sounds with Mickey previous to the study.

With a similar response, Paul elaborated about learning to focus on sound specifically, as he explained “you learned the sound of the letter . . . and you draw it out to what they connect to it.” He shared how he learned to connect sound, using KMPs, to words in everyday language as he demonstrated doing the KMP for the sound of /m/ as he said, “McDonalds.” He confirmed the connection to everyday language by saying, “Every kid knows McDonalds” (Interview, July 26, 2010). Paul learned to attend to sound with Jimmy with the use of KMPs.

Another parent, Rose, summarized her learning and demonstration of practicing, as she shared the following.

As we’re talking . . . like if she asks me for a spoon, she . . . “Mommy can I have a spoon?” [Does the /s/ motion and accentuates the /s/ sound], you know, she does the motion and she “/ssssssss/”; you know, she sound out the letter and everything. And, I found myself doing it back to [emphasis] her, you know . . . and, now it’s just like um everything we’ve learned is done in general conversations between her and I . . . um . . . a lot of people think we’re doing sign language . . . you know, but we [emphasis] know what’s going on. (Rose, personal communication, July 20, 2010)

In summary, the parents changed in their understanding that sound is important. They expressed this understanding and noted that it was a new awareness for them in working with their young children. The examples of parents using the KMPs to scaffold
attention to sound indicated non-verbal actions which were not present before the study and indicated a developing understanding of PA over the course of the study.

Some of the parents demonstrated non-verbal scaffolding of sound to remediate speech with their preschool child. I address assisting performance in speech in the following section. Focusing on individual speech sounds was another example of how the parents’ literacy understandings changed in the area of PA.

**Parents scaffolding speech.** The findings in the study pointed to the development of PA in the context of the remediation of speech for the preschool child. Specifically, three of the parents discussed examples of how they used scaffolds to assist their children to hear and express speech sounds clearly. The example of targeting clear speech pointed to an application of the use of the scaffolds the parents learned in the study beyond the development of the targeted sound I modeled in the weekly sessions. This type of assisted performance was indicative of the parents’ understanding that attention to hearing and expressing sounds clearly was important in their interactions with their children.

The parents understood the need to focus on the specific phoneme and scaffolded the learning with the concrete markers in their interactions. The specific use of the KMP to remediate the pronunciation of speech in the preschool child was a common response among the parents. In addition, the parents incorporated the non-verbal scaffold of stretching the words out on their arms in an effort to assist the child’s hearing of the phonemes, or component sounds in words, as they developed PA.
The first example is a mother assisting her son, LJ, in the remediation of speech by isolating the initial phoneme. LJ was a preschooler with an Individualized Educational Plan for speech development. His mother, Mary, shared,

Because he has a little speech . . . little pronunciation [difficulty], and, I’m like,

“Listen /t/ /t/ [doing KMP for /t/, as she says the sound]! You know, and then we stretch it out a little [demonstrates stretching out the word slowly on her arm].

You know, I have to tell him to stop and listen, ‘cuz you know. Then, he’ll try and pronounce it—do it with me, “/t/ /t/ /t/” [LJ doing motion] . . . and, yea, he’ll try to pronounce it. (Interview, July 13, 2010)

She learned to help LJ hear and express the phoneme via her concrete demonstrations.

In a similar example, Julie expressed her understanding of the significance of attention to sound to assist John’s speech. She segmented a word and blended the sounds in her guidance of her son. She noted, “Yea, and the sounds, just . . . maybe it’s going to help his confidence in speaking to others because he knows [emphasis] . . . he’s saying things correctly.” She continued with an example.

One night in the bathtub, you know . . . the way he said, “Girl [gril]. You know, he just couldn’t get [emphasis] it! [with emotion]. And then, we did, you know the motions [emphasis]; we did the arm, the stretch it out . . . And, the next day I asked him to say it and he said it perfectly! (Interview, July 21, 2010)

She had learned to assist John’s performance in hearing the phonemic structure of the word correctly.
Likewise, Kelly described how she assisted Mickey’s understanding of the sounds in words. She said,

When he says, *mail truck* or the *mailman* he says, “Mom, there’s the mailsman” *[emphasizing the insertion of the /s/ in the middle]*. I said, “Oh, that’s the mail” *[stretching the word out and doing the KMP for /l/, emphasizing the final sound of the first syllable]*. He then says, “Oh, that’s mail” *[stretching the word out and doing the KMP for the final /l/ and emphasizing the sound]*. And, he does the motions.

In this way, Kelly isolated the sound of /l/ and demonstrated that /s/ was not present in the word by using the non-verbal scaffolds of KMPs and stretching out the word on her arm. She concluded this part of the interview and summed it up with, “So now it’s like that understanding that each letter represents a sound and it’s a correct way to say a word” (Interview, July 10, 2010). The example pointed to Kelly’s learning to direct Mickey’s phonemic development.

In summary, the parents integrated the non-verbal scaffolds of KMPs and stretching words out on their arms to aid their children’s development of PA. In this way, they assisted their children to develop an ability to hear, express, and manipulate sounds in words. They developed an understanding of PA and learned how to scaffold its development in their children. The remediation of speech was a specific example of the parents’ developing ability to call attention to the phoneme with the use of concrete markers.
In the following sections, I describe the changes in the parents’ literacy understandings in concepts of print through the use of poetry with their children. The specific scaffolds the parents developed were indications of the change in literacy understandings in the parents. First, I address the non-verbal scaffold of pointing, accompanied by the verbal scaffold of language. Then, I extend the description to the parents’ acquisition of additional verbal scaffolds to direct the following concepts of print: directionality, attention to letters, and punctuation.

**Scaffolding concepts of print non-verbally: Scaffolding through pointing.**

The parents’ literacy understandings changed as they learned to call attention to print as they read poetry with their children. As the parents learned to point to the text, they directed the children to become aware that text has meaning. In addition, they demonstrated directionality and return sweep, and exposed the children to the unit of a word.

The data pointed to changes in the parents’ use of non-verbal scaffolds to engage the children’s attention to print. They learned to direct the children to text by the action of pointing to the text. The presence of the scaffold indicated an acquired literacy understandings on the part of the parents.

An analysis of the entrance recordings of each of the seven dyads reading “Hickory, Dickory, Dock” at the beginning and end of the study illustrated common patterns of action among the parents. Five of the seven parents *recited* the poem with expression to the child at the beginning of the study. The parents held the page with the written text up so that they could read it. The child was a listener, not an observer of the
text. By virtue of the recitation style, none of the five parents pointed to the text or guided interaction with the printed word during the entrance recordings.

However, the analysis of the exit recordings indicated that the parents’ actions had changed. They had taken-on the non-verbal scaffold of pointing to text as they read. None of the parents recited the poem to the child, as they had in the entrance recordings in March. The analysis indicated that the reading was a joint activity with the parents guiding engagement with the text. Five of the parents pointed to the text, matching their voice to each word as they read.

The recordings of the two of the seven remaining dyads, Cory’s and Kelly’s, demonstrated pointing during the exit recordings, also. However, Cory’s son, Will, had taken on the pointing to the text in the exit recording. The dyad’s joint engagement demonstrated Will’s accurate pointing to each word, as Cory read aloud. The analysis demonstrated a change from the mother pointing to the text in the entrance video to the child assuming the non-verbal behavior in July. Cory confirmed in the interview the development of Will taking on the responsibility of pointing, as she said, “’Cause he’s getting to where he [emphasis] moves it on his own [voice rising]; I don’t even move his hand anymore” (Cory, personal communication, July 26, 2010).

Likewise, the recordings demonstrated that Kelly’s son, Mickey, took on the behavior from his mother’s control of the pointing in March. However, he and his mother volleyed back and forth with the pointing behavior in July. She emphasized before the recording began that they were “going to have a problem” because he thought
he could read it himself (Personal communication, July 16, 2011). The recording noted the struggle as he tried to take over the pointing, but not accurately.

In summary, the parents developed the non-verbal scaffold of pointing to the text as they read poetry to their children over the course of the study. Inherent in this non-verbal action was the demonstration for the child that text has meaning, directionality, return sweep and attention to the unit of a word.

During the interviews, five of the seven parents identified the non-verbal scaffold of pointing as a literacy understanding developed during the study. The exchanges highlighted the learning for the parents and its effect on the children. For example, when I asked Cory what she might tell a family about reading poetry to their young child, she explained the importance of teaching the child to point. Interestingly, she had pointed during the entrance recording, but was unclear as to why she did. Yet, at the end of the study, she stressed its importance and her understanding of the scaffold in her suggestion for others reading to a young child, as she said,

Um [hesitation] . . . probably have him follow with his finger . . . the words. ‘Cause I would have never thought to do that before. I would have just, you know, read [emphasis] it . . . and, really, I mean, you would think it’s common sense, that . . . so they would know which word was which [emphasis]. (Cory, personal interview, July 26, 2010)

Cory had developed the understanding of the value of pointing.

Two other parents emphasized their new understanding about the significance of pointing. Carol reported the excitement regarding how pointing helped Jimmy, as she
noted, “and then when we started doing the pointing thing—to the words, and going across . . . OK!” (Carol, personal communication, July 26, 2010). In a similar response, Mary noted how her learning to point influenced LJ. She discussed how she had learned not to slide her finger across a page,

But you said [to] just put one pointer on the first letter [with emphasis] so they could see what you’re . . . what it begins with; what it sounds like . . . and I think that made a difference . . . he picked up better, when I did it [pointed] one [word] at a time. (Personal Interview, July 13, 2010)

The examples highlight the parents’ understanding that pointing assisted their children’s attention to the printed form.

In summary, the parents acquired the use of the non-verbal scaffold of pointing and an awareness of its importance. Noting the learning of parents, I shared with Julie during an interview that in the beginning weekly sessions, I noticed her taking notes. She shared that she recorded things she wanted to remember, such as “point to the first letter. Don’t do the whole word” (Julie, personal interview, July 21, 2010). The communication with the parents reported in this section exemplified the development of the understanding of the non-verbal scaffold of pointing to direct the child to the printed text over the course of the study. In the following, I describe the finding of the parents assisting their children’s attention to print as they used language to accompany the non-verbal action of pointing.

**Scaffolding verbally: Using language to accompany pointing.** The parents changed over the course of the study in their acquisition of the verbal scaffold of
language to direct their children’s attention to the printed text. The use of language to accompany pointing emerged in the data as a common pattern among the parents during the exit recordings. I address the use of such language in recordings of the dyads reading a poem.

The analysis of the exit recordings of the dyads reading the poem, “Hickory, Dickory, Dock,” pointed to the addition of the verbal scaffolding of language as the parents pointed. Choosing to direct the children to the text with language was a verbal scaffold which was not present during the entrance recordings for most of the parents. Specifically, five of the parents did not use language to direct their children to print in the entrance recordings, while the remaining two parents did. The lack of the use of language in the entrance recordings paralleled the lack of the non-verbal action of pointing at the beginning of the study. Table 16 illustrates the only language parents used in the entrance recordings to accompany pointing.

Table 16

*Table 16*

*Language Used to Direct Pointing in Entrance Recordings*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent</th>
<th>Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cory</td>
<td>It says . . . [before reading title]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelly</td>
<td>Look. We’re reading [pointing]. Point to it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Entrance recordings, VID00006, VID00011, VID00014, VID00016, VID00017, VID00019, VID00020, and VID00021)
Table 16 illustrated the use of language by the two parents at the beginning of the study. Cory used the language “It says . . .” as she pointed. Although she pointed, she indicated in the interview that she did not know why she pointed. Her understanding of the purpose of pointing to the text developed during the study (Cory, personal interview, July 26, 2010).

Looking at the change in the whole group, six of the parents or grandmother used language to focus the children’s attention to print during the exit recording. For example, Jimmy’s grandma provided an example of the use of the verbal scaffold to direct pointing. As she began reading the poem, she tapped the copy of the poem on the table and said, “Pay attention to this. Come on, read with grandma” (Exit recording, Carol and Jimmy, July 22, 2010). Table 17 illustrates examples of the parents’ use of language to direct pointing in the exit recordings.

Table 17 illustrated the growth in the verbal scaffolding of the parents, demonstrating a deepening of understandings in literacy for six of the seven parents. Each of them demonstrated a change in the use of language to direct the children to text. As noted previously, Cory and Kelly used language initially. Over the course of the study, Cory’s growth was in the understanding of the purpose of pointing. Kelly’s growth was in the expansion of her use of language from the entrance to the exit recordings in the area of directing Mickey to print.
Table 17

Verbal Scaffolding to Accompany Pointing in Exit Recordings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent</th>
<th>Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carol</td>
<td>Pay attention to this. Come on, read with Grandma [tapping text]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cory</td>
<td>Can you do your finger?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelly</td>
<td>I’m going to read the title. I have to read the words. But you have to point to it when you read. I need you to look. Well, maybe we can try it together. Follow Mommy’s. Where’s your finger?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>We can read it now, ready? [Taking his pointer in her hand to guide to text] You don’t have to look [at the camera]. You can read with me, LJ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mel</td>
<td>Here’s the title.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rose</td>
<td>Okay. Show me the title. Okay. Let’s read. Point. This time you point to the words. We got to do each word at a time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Exit Recordings, VID00055, VID00058, VID00059, VID00060, VID00061, VID00062, VID00064, VID00065, VID00067, and VID00068)

In summary, the parents changed in their use of verbal scaffolds. They used language to accompany pointing as they directed the children to print. The use of the scaffold represented an understanding the parents developed over the course of the study.
In addition to the verbal language the parents learned to use over the course of the study to accompany pointing, the data from the interviews and weekly logs illustrated another pattern of change in their use of verbal scaffolds for some parents to assist performance with concepts about print. The use of language to scaffold concepts about print, such as directionality, as the parents read poetry with their children was indicative of a change in the parents’ understandings over the course of the study. In the following, I describe specific examples of verbal scaffolds the parents developed to direct attention to concepts about print.

The changes in scaffolding the children with concepts about print occurred in two different ways. The parents either described a change in their own awareness of concepts about print and the ability to discuss it with the use of specific language, or the parents developed specific language to use to direct the child’s engagement with concepts of print.

Specifically, four of the parents shared illustrations of the change in their understanding of directionality; whereas four others described a change in drawing the children’s attention to letters through language. Lastly, two parents noted learning to call attention to punctuation, using the specific name of the punctuation mark. I describe the changes in assisting performance with directionality first.

Using language to scaffold understanding of directionality. Four of the parents noted learning how to guide directionality with language during the study. As noted in Chapter 2, the Reading and Writing Monster (see Appendix B) from *Phonics in Motion* (Kindervater, 2002) is a directionality marker placed on the left side of the poem or
writing surface to indicate the starting point of the left. Playful interactions of getting away from the Monster and being pulled back demonstrate moving accurately from left to right with the return sweep as the child reads or writes. Four of the parents referred to using the language of the Reading and Writing Monster with their children for the purpose of directionality.

First, Paul shared that his brother had difficulty with directionality as a child and expressed concern about directionality for his son. He noted the study taught him to talk about starting “at the left to the right, then you go back again.” He laughed and said, “You always got to go away from the Reading Monster!” (Paul, personal interview, July 26, 2010).

Likewise, Mary emphasized that learning the use of the language for directionality was a new learning for her and her husband. She emphasized that the language helped her assist her son. She described her learning as she said, “And how to ex... [explain]... to show them how [emphasis] to read from left to right... how to start that” (Mary, personal interview, July 13, 2010).

Similarly, Rose shared the same feeling, as she expressed, “It helps a lot to be able to... with the Reading Monster... read away and come back... so that was a good thing” (Rose, personal interview, July 20, 2010). Rose’s emphasis on “helps a lot” and “that [Reading and Writing Monster] was a good thing,” or Mary’s reference to learning “how to show them” exemplified the change in their ability to assist their children with directionality with the use of the specific language they acquired in the study.
In the area of directionality, Mel pointed out that the language supported a common understanding and means of communication for her and Kara. She reported, “she’ll come and ask me, ‘Mom, does this letter go to the Monster? I can’t remember.’” She finished by saying that Kara asks for assistance using the language of the Monster (Mel, personal interview, July 21, 2010).

In summary, the examples of guiding directionality through the use of the language with the Reading and Writing Monster were indicative of the change in the parents’ ability to assist performance in this area of literacy as they read poetry. The next section describes the use of acquired language by the parents to focus upon the concept of a letter.

**Using language to scaffold understanding of letters.** The parents developed an awareness of what it means to know letters and how to scaffold attention to letters through the use of specific language with their children. First of all, two of the parents noted changes in their awareness of what it means to know letters. Julie and Mel communicated that they had learned to focus on lowercase letters. They grew in the awareness that knowing letters encompassed different forms. Julie emphasized and summed up her own growth as she said, “I think recognition of all the letters now: uppercase, lowercase. That was huge!” Likewise, Mel noted Kara “was pretty good with the uppercase,” yet indicated she, as a mother, became aware of a specific need for practicing lowercase letters with Kara. She added how her awareness had widened, “but now with the lowercase,” indicating the focus for practice. In Julie’s log, she confirmed
her goal in the area, noting “We hope to start practicing writing words, especially with the ‘lower case’” (Julie, Weekly Log, July 14, 2010).

The communication of the two parents aligned with the results of the Letter Identification assessments at the beginning and end of the study. The two preschool children identified the 26 capital letters correctly in the beginning and exhibited a solid grasp of lowercase letters. By the end of the study, John’s performance improved from 27 to 28 correct in July; and Kara’s correct lowercase identification improved from 23 to 25. It appeared that as the mothers’ awareness of the importance of lowercase letters heightened, so did the children’s understanding. The broadened understanding of letters was a change for the mothers.

A change in the use of specific language guiding attention to letters was evident in the communication of two other parents in the study. First, Mary relayed that they [Mary, Leon, and LJ] enjoyed learning to say, “Ok. How many ‘h’(s) do you see?,” as she reread a poem with LJ (Mary, personal interview, July 13, 2010). As noted in Chapter 1, Fast Start (Rasinski & Padak, 2008) poetry was a source of poems and practices. I modeled the suggested practice of counting the letters within a poem to guide the parents’ learning in the early weekly sessions. Mary confirmed that they had taken the practice and language on, in her actions with LJ, as they focused on letters.

Secondly, Kelly shared how she and Mickey find letters in poems since the sessions. She reflected that she “had no idea to just sit down, besides just reading the poem . . . to pick up letters . . . Point out the letter ‘s’ for star. Teach ’em the letter ‘s’” (Kelly, personal interview, July 10, 2010).
During the interviews, three other parents shared an identical example of learning to use specific language to talk about letters. The examples entailed the use of language, or stories, to describe how letters looked or are written, which is part of *Phonics in Motion* (Kindervater, 2002). Rose, Mel, and Julie cited the example of “l is a long, long line” as an illustration. Mel noted that “we took it [voice rising], and we still do it” (Mel, personal interview, July 21, 2010).

Likewise, Rose’s description of the same example, pointed out how language helped her guide her daughter, Lucy, with letters. She explained that she did not know how to help her daughter in this area and emphasized the she would use what she learned [in the study] “because it helped me.” In her humble manner, she said, “if I could think of the things that you thought of like, you know, ‘l is a long, long line’ and stuff like that’ . . . [but] . . . Yea, I’ll stick with that” (Rose, personal interview, July 20, 2010). Rose’s reference to ‘that’ was to the learning of specific language to direct Lucy’s focus on a letter. Rose’s communication supported the change in her acquisition of language to assist her in guiding the learning of letters.

The third parent to share the use of the language with the same story for the letter *l* was Julie. She noted the understanding of common language for her and her son, John. Leaving on a day trip in the car, she warned the children, “It’s a long time to drive.” John responded, “It’s a long, long, time—just like *l* is a long, long line” (Julie, Weekly log, June 23, 2010). The use of common language to discuss letters had developed and paralleled the earlier example of Kara’s communication with her mother, as she asked,
“Mom, does this letter go to the Monster? I can’t remember” (Mel, personal interview, July 21, 2010).

The previous descriptions illustrated how the parents developed awareness and verbal scaffolds to assist their children’s understanding of letters. The following two examples point to the heightened awareness in another concept of print. The parents in the examples learned to use language to direct their children to punctuation, as they engaged with the poems.

**Using language to scaffold understanding of punctuation.** During the interview with Mary and Leon, Leon pointed out that he had learned to point out “periods and question marks” while reading poetry. Mary confirmed the new focus on punctuation as she added, “Yea. I started like doing that [too].” She added, “that was new to me” (Leon and Mary, personal communication, July 13, 2010).

The other parent to note a change in focusing on punctuation was Rose. She said that she “didn’t know how to explain to her [Lucy] . . . the comma” and laughed as she said that Lucy always called the comma “a kickstand.” She explained that before the study she did not have the words for the punctuation. She described how she had pondered, “You know, and what does that [with emphasis] mean? And, you know, at the time I really couldn’t think fast enough . . . about just saying it.” Then, she noted the development of her understanding in not having to think about it now, emphasizing that now she says, “Ok, you know . . . pause.” She paralleled this example with learning to help Lucy with the meaning of a period in text. She shared that now she simply says, “This means stop. Period” (Rose, personal communication, July 20, 2010).
The examples pointed out how Leon, Mary, and Rose learned to scaffold the children verbally. As they read poetry, they guided them to attend to punctuation with specific language. The examples indicated the awareness of the importance of punctuation as a literacy understanding developed over the course of the study for the three parents.

In this section, I described the changes in the parents’ use of language to scaffold the children’s learning about the following concepts about print: directionality, the concept of a letter, and punctuation. The use of specific language in each of the three areas of concepts about print was indicative of new understandings the parents developed over the course of the study.

**Awareness of use of poetry.** Over the course of the study, the parents developed an understanding of the place of poetry for the young child. The data pointed to examples of parents valuing poetry for their children’s learning and developing an appreciation of its manageable nature. Lastly, they became aware of how poetry engaged the child in rhyme.

As noted in Chapter 2, Lundberg et al. (1988), Stahl and Murray (1994) and Yopp and Yopp (2000) suggested the instructional sequence of beginning with the larger, phonological units of rhyme and syllable focus before manipulating the smaller unit of the phoneme. In addition, Burgess (1999) emphasized that children who engage in literacy activities at home have higher PA abilities. The use of poetry over the course of the study deepened the understanding for the parents of ways to engage the children in literacy activities. An encompassing example follows with Kelly’s description, as she
shared what she might tell another parent about the use of poetry with his or her young child.

Oh, you should really try putting Joshua in your lap and really try reading to him. And, I’d say, don’t go into those long, hard stories. I’d say, “Try something that’s [like] “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star.” But people say, stories and story books, but what about those simple poems? And, point to the words as you read. Point out the letter ‘s’ for star. Teach ’em that letter ‘s’. Well, just let’s try it. Um, then I’d probably give them a little sample, like ‘twinkle’. Hear twinkle? And, play with that word with the baby and you’ll probably see a response. And, then I’ll say, “Look how meaningful that was.” (Kelly, personal interview, July 10, 2010)

Kelly continued by adding, “and, ok, if I’m teaching the letter ‘s’, let’s do the ‘s’ sound; let’s get silly with it” (Kelly, personal communication, July 10, 2010). Kelly’s communication indicated a deepening understanding of the use of poetry to play with the larger segments of sound, such as listening to the word, twinkle, as well as the smaller phoneme of /s/. In addition, it highlighted a parent’s understanding of the significance of engagement in literacy activities which leads to PA.

In the following, I describe how parents in the study, like Kelly, deepened their understanding of the value of poetry for young children with the emergence of three common patterns of response from the data: poetry is a fun way to learn; poetry is a manageable way to learn; and poetry offers opportunity to engage with rhyme.
**Poetry is fun.** An understanding the parents developed over the course of the study was how appropriate poetry was to use with young children as a literacy experience. Six of the seven parents expressed during the interviews that they thought the poetry helped their children learn, with sentiments, such as, “the poetry was unbelievable. [It] was the way to go” (Mel, personal communication, July 21, 2010). Some of the common descriptors the six parents emphasized were: fun, loved, and enjoyed. Kelly noted the enjoyment and the benefit,

I definitely knew it was fun because it was an enjoyable moment [pause] to learn, and to know those [poems]. And I also say it’s work because it was something when you work at something, you learn . . . but it was something I enjoyed doing. (Kelly, personal communication, July 10, 2010)

Mel summed up the common feeling the parents expressed as she said, “We didn’t even know we were doing work” (Mel, personal communication, July 21, 2010).

The common emphasis of six of the parents was that poetry was a fun experience in which their children learned.

**Poetry is manageable.** Next, the parents emphasized the manageable nature of poetry. As an example of contrast, Kelly shared that she had “even thought of using Romeo and Juliet” in an effort to get her children involved in reading. “You know, just pages by pages,” she said slowly. Yet with poetry, she learned to “just start off with something small” (Kelly, personal communication, July 10, 2010). Likewise, Rose noted that with poetry, “the words aren’t big and long and drawn out.” She noted that poetry brought familiarity as she added, “and, I think it’s easier, you know because they have
been stories that . . . you know, even me [emphasis], as a child growing up . . . had heard” (Rose, personal communication, July 20, 2010). The data in the interviews pointed to the common response, as illustrated by Kelly and Rose, that poetry was an easy way to focus the child on learning.

**Poetry engages the child with rhyme.** Another learning the parents expressed was that poetry led to spontaneous rhyming activities. Four of the seven parents’ interviews or logs noted that playing with rhyme was an outgrowth of the weekly sessions. For example, Cory communicated the spontaneous rhyming was what she liked about the poetry. She said, “‘cause the rhyming words . . . I mean, will just anytime, I mean we’d just be talking and he’ll go, ‘That rhymes with . . .’ and, he’ll say another word [voice rising, with emphasis]” (Cory, personal communication, July 26, 2010). Similarly, Julie noted her children initiated the rhyming on their own due to the sessions, as she said, “so just on their own . . . they love the rhyming, and the Willoughby, Wallaby, Woo . . . Yea! I mean, yea, yea [tickled]” (Julie, personal communication, July 21, 2010). These examples highlighted the common response of the four parents that the poetry experience provided an opportunity to explore rhyme.

In summary, the parents deepened their understanding of the value of poetry in literacy learning for the young child over the course of the study. They developed an understanding that poetry is a fun and manageable way to learn. In addition, they reported examples of learning how poetry engaged the child in playing with rhyme.
Summary of Research Question Three

To answer how the literacy understandings of the parents changed over time, I addressed three areas of change that emerged in the data. First, I addressed the changes in their learning to scaffold PA with the use of KMPs. Secondly, I described the changes in the non-verbal action of pointing and the expanding use of verbal scaffolds to assist the children. The parents used language by the end of the study to direct the children to the text, and to assist in the understanding of directionality, letters and punctuation. Lastly, I noted the changes in the parents in their appreciation and use of poetry. As the parents developed literacy understandings over the course of the study, they guided their children in literacy interactions. The next research question explores the change in the children’s PA over the course of the study.

Research Question Four

Research question four was: How does the PA of the children change over the course of the study?

PA is the ability to hear, express, and manipulate sounds in oral language. In order to measure the growth of the preschool children in PA over the course of the study, I administered eight assessments before the first tutoring session and after the study ended. The findings were organized into two groups.

The first group of assessments (Group 1) was Letter ID, Assessments of Sounds, DSA, and the sub-tests of Rhyming and Alliteration of Get it! Got it! Go! (GGG). The measures provided a lens into the development of PA over the course of the study. The
results highlighted the preschooler’s ability to hear and identify sounds in oral language and express the awareness of sounds with the use of letters.

The second group of assessments (Group 2) provided additional information regarding literacy. The assessments within the latter group were the Ohio Word Test, Concepts About Print, and the sub-test of *Picture Naming* of GGG. The measures provided additional findings pertinent to the growth of the preschool children over the course of the 15-week study.

In addition to the seven children who participated, three children’s parents signed onto the study and took part in baseline and exit testing. However, two of the children, Asia and Tyrone, did not participate in the study. Jasmine attended 4 sessions, compared to the minimum of 12 for the participants. And, three different adults accompanied her, as opposed to the pattern of one consistent adult for the participants. The results of the performance for this control group follow the presentation of the participants’ results on each of the measures for Group 1 assessments and Group 2.

**Assessments: Group 1**

**Letter Identification (LI).** Each of the participants increased in LI knowledge over the course of the study. The children with the highest incoming scores demonstrated the least gain. For example, John identified 53 of 54 letters in the pre-test and 54 correct at the end of the study. However, Clay’s (2002) stanine scores for LI noted John’s addition of one correct item indicated a gain of one stanine for his age over the course of the study. The three children who scored from 36 to 39 correct in the pretesting increased LI scores the most. The final scores indicated an average range of the fifth
stanine for two of those children and the sixth stanine for the other (Clay, 2002). Table 18 displays the pre- and post-assessment data for Letter Identification.

Table 19 displays the LI data for the non-participants. Asia’s increase of six letters demonstrated a growth of one stanine (Clay, 2002) during the time of the study. Table 19 displays the pre- and post-assessment data.

Table 18

Pre- and Post-Observation Survey Scores for Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jimmy</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucy</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mickey</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kara</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LJ</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Letter identification (LI); Range: 0-54

Asia increased the most with a gain of six letters and Jasmine gained 2. Tyrone’s score remained the same over the time period. Please note that the entrance scores for LI of Asia and Tyrone were significantly below the entrance scores of the children whose families participated in the study.
Table 19

*Control: Pre- and Post-Observation Survey Scores for Non-Participants*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jasmine</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyrone</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Letter identification (LI); Range: 0-54

Assessment of sounds. The post-testing of sounds indicated an average gain of the identification of 9.8 sounds per child for the participants over the course of the study. The greatest gain for an individual child was an increase of 13 sounds; the smallest gain was 8 sounds, which was achieved by three of the preschool children. Table 20 displays the pre- and post-assessment data for the assessment of sounds, followed in graph form in Figure 9.

In contrast, the greatest gain in the control group was 4 sounds. Asia increased from 0 to 4 correct. Jasmine regressed by 1, and Tyrone remained at 0 correct for sound identification from March to July. The pre- and post-data for assessment of sounds for the non-participants is displayed in Table 21, followed in graph form in Figure 10.
Table 20

*Pre- and Post-Assessment of Sounds for Participants*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jimmy</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucy</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mickey</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kara</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LJ</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment of Sounds; Range: 0-26

*Figure 9.* Increase in sounds correct for participants
Table 21

Pre- and Post-Assessment of Sounds for Non-Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jasmine</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyrone</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment of Sounds; Range: 0-26

Figure 10. Increase in sounds correct for non-participants

Beyond the increase in accuracy for the identification of sounds, two additional findings emerged from the data for the assessment of sound for the participants. First, the responses changed from words for the letters to an increased number of responses of sounds for the letters. Second, a pattern of incorporating the kinesthetic motion for the phoneme (KMP) with the sound emerged over the course of the study for the participants.

Six of the seven children in the study changed from March to July in the type of response they gave regarding the sound a letter made. The answers changed from responding with a word for the sound of a letter in March to responding with a sound in July. For example, John responded to the letter F with “fire” in March and /f/ in July. In
addition, the children who responded with sounds in March increased in the number of responses with sounds by July. Figure 11 displays the change in the type of responses for the participants from the beginning to the end of the study.

![Graph showing change in responses for participants](image)

**Figure 11.** Decrease in responses of words/increase in responses of sounds for participants

Two of the three non-participants shifted in the type of response in a similar manner. Asia moved from the response of words in March to sounds in July. Jasmine combined 2 words and 2 sounds for 4 correct responses in March to three correct sounds at the end of the study and no word responses. Tyrone did not change as he responded with the names of letters in March and July with no correct answers. Figure 12 displays the change in responses for the non-participants over the course of the study.

The last change occurred in the incorporation of KMP as the participants identified the sound of a letter. Six of the seven children in the study incorporated the use of the KMPs in their responses. The number of KMPs used varied from 2 to 14, as displayed in Figure 13.
Developmental spelling assessment. During the pre-assessment, two children attempted to write words by representing phonemes with letters. Kara wrote 5 correct phonemes of 15 in her attempt to write the five words. LJ wrote 10 correct phonemes of 34 in his attempt to write 24 words. The other five participants did not encode with letters in their responses. Two of the children drew squiggles; one drew pictures; and one wrote numbers, copying my writing of the number for each item. One child made no
attempts for the five prompts. The number of words attempted by the group ranged from 0 to 24 words.

During the post-assessment, every child in the study attempted to represent the phonemes of the word prompts with letters. The greatest gain for an individual child was an increase of 52 correct phonemes written; the smallest gain was 5 correct phonemes recorded. The number of words attempted by the group ranged from 5 to 25 words per child. Every child increased the number of attempts, except Lucy. Table 22 displays the pre- and post-assessment data for the number of correct phonemes the children wrote and the increase in the number of attempts to write a word over the course of the study for the participants.

None of the children who participated in the study hesitated in the attempt to encode phonemes with letters for each prompt in July. As noted earlier, I inquired whether a child wanted to proceed after every five words, or if I observed a lack of interest. The choice for the child accounted for the variance in the number of recorded attempts.

Encoding phonemes with letters was the practice of all of the participants by July. An example of a transition from the beginning to the end of the study from non-alphabetic writing to encoding with letters is displayed in Figures 14 and 15. Figure 14 represents Mickey’s non-alphabetic writing at the beginning of the study in response to the word prompts.
Table 22

Pre- and Post-Assessment of Writing for Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Developmental Spelling Assessment (DSA)</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Variant Range</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correct # of phonemes written</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of phonemes in words attempted</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Child</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jimmy</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5*</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>53</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucy</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5*</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25*</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>83</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mickey</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>3*</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>83</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kara</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>83</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leon</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>34</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_Note: * indicates non-alphabetic writing_
Moving left to right, the drawings were in response to the prompts: *got*, *jet*, and *ship* [combined in one extended drawing], and *cap*. Figure 15 demonstrates the responses, encoded with letters, to the same prompts in July. At this point, Mickey encoded all responses with letters, as did all of the participants at the end of the study.
As noted previously, five children in the study did not record with letters initially; however, each participant did so in July. Figure 16 displays the increase in the number of accurate phonemes recorded with letters by the participants from March to July. The increase demonstrated the change in response from the pre- to the post-assessment on the DSA.

![Bar Chart]

*Figure 16. Increase in accurate number of recorded phonemes for participants*

Similar to five of the seven participants, the children in the control group did not encode with letters in responses to DSA items in March. Two of the children used non-alphabetic writing, such as Jasmine’s cursive squiggles (Figure 17), and the third child combined random, approximated letter formations with a mixture of squiggles and numbers. Asia shook her head [no] and did not write in March.
In contrast to the participants, the children in the control group did not increase their ability to encode phonemes using letters by July. The children in the control group responded similarly to their initial pattern of response in March. Table 23 displays the pre- and post-assessment data for the number of correct phonemes the children wrote and the number of attempts they made over the same time period as the study.

Table 23

*Pre- and Post-Assessment of Writing for Control Group*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Pre Variant Range</th>
<th>Post Variant Range</th>
<th>Pre Correct # of phonemes written</th>
<th>Post Correct # of phonemes written</th>
<th>Pre # of phonemes in words attempted</th>
<th>Post # of phonemes in words attempted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10*</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jasmine</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyrone</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: * indicates non-alphabetic writing*
During the post-assessment, Asia did not respond; she shook her head and said, “Un-uh” for each prompt. Jasmine drew two pictures and responded to one item with, “I don’t know how to write.” Tyrone performed as he had in March with a combination of random letters, squiggles, and numbers. Figures 18 and 19 are examples of Jasmine’s and Tyrone’s writing at the end of the study in response to the first five prompts of the DSA. Figure 20 demonstrates the lack of increase in writing accurate phonemes for the children in the control group over the same time period.

*Figure 18. Jasmine’s writing in July*

*Figure 19. Tyrone’s writing in July*
Figure 20. Increase in accurate number of recorded phonemes for non-participants

Get it! Got it! Go! (GGG): Rhyming. Each of the seven participants increased in the Rhyming sub-test of GGG between March to July. In contrast, two of the non-participants did not increase in the same measure. The results of the pre- and post-assessment data are displayed for the participants and non-participants below in Figures 21 and 22 respectively.

Figure 21. Rhyming for participants
Get it! Got it! Go! (GGG): Alliteration. Each of the seven participants increased their performance on the Alliteration sub-test of GGG between March and July. In contrast, the non-participants did not increase on the same measure. The results of the pre- and post-assessment data are displayed for the participants and non-participants below in Figures 23 and 24, respectively.
To conclude, the assessments in Group 1 consisted of the findings for the following measures: Letter ID, Assessments of Sounds, DSA, and the sub-tests of Rhyming and Alliteration of Get it! Got it! Go! (GGG). Each of the measures related to the growth of the children in PA. The results of the measures in Group 2 follow, providing additional findings pertinent to literacy growth of the children over the course of the study.

**Assessments: Group 2**

**Ohio Word Test.** Three children in the study showed no increase in word recognition; yet, four of the children in the study demonstrated growth. Two of the four children increased reading vocabulary by a score of one word; and two increased by a score of two words on the list of 20 words. Clay’s (2002) normalized stanine results placed an entering first grader with one word in stanine 2; two words represented a stanine of 3 for incoming first graders. Therefore, the increase of one or two words indicated growth in this measure for the four preschool children who participated in the study. Table 24 displays the pre- and post-assessment data for the Ohio Word Test.
Table 24

Pre- and Post-Observation Results for Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jimmy</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucy</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mickey</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kara</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LJ</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ohio Word Test; Range: 0-20

Beyond an increase in reading vocabulary for the four participants, two observable patterns emerged in the children’s approach to the task of reading words. They were: (a) the development of the understanding that the prompts were words; and (b) an increase in the number of attempts to read a word. I address these changes in the findings, as follows.

First, the children’s responses to the list of words changed. During the pretest, two children, Kara and John, used words in their responses. Jimmy, Mickey, and Sylvester responded with random letters. Will spelled one word aloud accurately and attempted to spell another word unsuccessfully. He named one letter in each of the other two words attempted as his response. Lucy did not respond.
During the post-assessment, six of the seven children in the study responded with words, as they looked at the items. Although most answers were incorrect, the six children established the strategy of seeing the word prompt as a word, as opposed to a letter. For example, Lucy prefaced each response with, “It’s a ____.” The exception was Jimmy. He spelled three of his four attempts accurately and chunked two letters, /an/, as he read the word ‘and,’ followed by saying the last letter, “d.” Please note that in the pre-assessment, he responded with random letters.

Second, a pattern of increased attempts emerged for four of the seven children in the study. Four children attempted 5 words in the pre-assessment and 20 in the post-assessment. The other three children remained the same in their number of attempts to read the list.

The children in the control were similar to three children who participated in the study in their lack of increase in the number of words read correctly over the same time period. However, none of the children in the control demonstrated a change in their approach to reading the words on the list, or in their number of attempts to read the items. The pre- and post assessment data for the Ohio Word Test for the non-participants is displayed in Table 25.

During the pre-assessment, Asia responded with a sound for one word, and “I don’t know” for the other words. Jasmine answered with words, as she pointed to objects around the room, such as “locker.” Tyrone named random letters in his first response and one letter for two other words. He responded with a word for the last two items.
Table 25

*Pre- and Post-Observation Results for Non-Participants*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jasmine</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyrone</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ohio Word Test; Range: 0-20

The children in the control responded similarly in the post-assessment. Asia said, “un-uh” [I don’t know] for all words. Jasmine responded with random words for each prompt, similar to the participants. However, she did not look at the word list before she responded. Tyrone responded with two letter names, unrelated to the words and three numbers. Each of the children in the control attempted 5 words in the pre- and post-assessment of words.

**Concepts About Print (CAP).** The findings in Tables 26 and 27 display the change in stanines for the participants and non-participants respectively in CAP (Clay, 2002), standardized for children five years and above. Although the children, with the exception of John and Tyrone, were younger than this, the stanine scores were used to note growth over time in this particular measure.
Clay (2002) noted that CAP indicated what “learners have been noticing about the written language around them in their environments” (p. 37). Each participant demonstrated growth in this measure. The change in the stanine scores for CAP pointed to a heightened awareness for each child of noticing more about print than was present at the beginning of the study.

In contrast, Table 27 displays the lack of change in stanine growth for the control group. Please reflect on Clay’s (2002) assertion that stanine growth correlates with increased awareness of print. The non-participants demonstrated a lack of change in what they noticed about written language from the beginning to the end of the 15 week time period. As Clay noted further, the measure reports “what children are attending to” (p. 37). The non-participants appeared to be attending to print in the same manner they had at the beginning of the study, compared to the children who participated in the study.
Table 27

Pre- and Post-Observation Survey Results for Non-Participants: Concepts of Print Stanine Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jasmine</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyrone</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Get it! Got it! Go! (GGG): Picture naming. Six of the seven participants increased in the Picture Naming sub-test of GGG. John’s performance remained unchanged from March to July on Picture Naming. The results of the pre- and post-assessment data are displayed in Figure 25.

![Figure 25. Picture naming for participants](image)

Likewise, the three non-participants increased in the Picture Naming task of GGG. Each child increased in the number of pictures they identified accurately from March and July. The results of the pre- and post-assessment data are displayed in Figure 26.
To conclude, I presented the findings on eight measures from the beginning and end of the study. Group 1 assessments provided information regarding the development of PA, which was the focus of the study. Group 2 provided additional findings regarding the literacy growth of the children in the 15 week period.

**Summary**

The overall findings in this chapter were organized around the four research questions for the study. The first dealt with the interactions of the parents and children as they used KMPs in the development of PA. The second addressed how the parents extended the learning in the tutoring sessions to experiences outside of the directed sessions. The next question focused upon the change in the parents’ literacy understandings over the course of the study. And, the last question highlighted the change in the children in PA development. A detailed summary of the findings presented is included in the discussion of each question in Chapter 5.
CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Introduction

My case study is situated in a socio-cultural perspective that recognizes the importance of an expert other in the learning process. The more knowledgeable other assists the child from dependent to independent performance during learning by scaffolding along the way. In my study, the parents scaffolded the learning by functioning as tutors.

The goal of my study was to relate the child’s development of phonemic awareness (PA) to the interactions between parents and children in a weekly tutoring session. In this setting, I taught the parents to assist the children’s performance with the scaffold of a specific concrete marker, a kinesthetic motion for the phoneme (KMP) in oral language. In so doing, the growth of the parents as teachers of their children within the socio-cultural setting was an additional focus.

I used a case study approach (Dyson & Genishi, 2005; Merriam, 1998) to render a rich description of the interactions between the parents and the children as they worked together in weekly tutoring sessions and extended the learning into their daily lives. In this chapter, I discuss my findings and relate them to a broader theoretical framework. The following four research questions guided my study.

Research Questions

1. How do parents and children interact with the use of KMPs?
2. How do parents extend the learning in the tutoring session to experiences outside of the directed session?

3. How do parents’ literacy understandings change over time?

4. How does the PA of the children change over the course of the study?

In the following, I summarize and discuss the findings of the study. I link the discussion to a larger theoretical framework and explore the implications of the study. Finally, I make recommendations for further research.

**Discussion of the Findings**

**Research Question One: Interactions of Parents and Children With the Use of KMPs**

In order to describe how the parents and children interacted with the use of the KMPs, I identified when the parents and children chose to use the non-verbal scaffold. The exit recordings indicated that the use of KMPs occurred in experiences free of text. For example, after Jimmy and his grandmother read the poem, “Hickory, Dickory, Dock,” they revisited the poem to recite it orally, as an additional activity. During the recitation, they performed 16 KMPs to accompany 16 initial sounds of words in the poem (VID0006, July 22, 2010). An example of the first KMP they used was the /h/ to accompany the initial sound in the word, *Hickory*.

Four of the seven parents directed the children’s attention to sound via the use of the KMPs during the exit recordings. In so doing, they extended the time of engagement with the poem with their use. Beyond the use of the KMPs, the exit recordings demonstrated that engage
ment time with the poem was extended by additional interactions between the parents and children. Those interactions occurred with the use of text. I address interactions involving text after I discuss the findings related to the interactions with the use of the KMPs, which was my research question.

**Use of KMPs in interactions between parents and children.** In addition to the analysis of the exit recordings, I examined how the parents and children used the KMPs in three tutoring sessions: week 1, week 8, and, week 15 (VID000007, VID000008, VID00037, VID 00038, VID00057, VID00058). The weekly sessions provided evidence that the parents acted as more knowledgeable others and supported their children in their performance of the KMPs. Furthermore, each parent acted as a tutor for the child in the use of the KMPs. They interacted with their children in a manner that moved them toward independent performance with the use of the KMPs in this responsive role of tutoring. In the following discussions, I address the characterization of their roles in the interactions.

**Parents scaffolding through the zone of proximal development.** The interactions between the parents and children in the development of PA with the use of the kinesthetic motion for the phoneme (KMP) represented a process of transition toward independence of the preschooler in PA development. The process was depicted by Tharp and Gallimore’s (1988) model of the zone of proximal development (ZPD). The model consists of a series of stages the learner passes through with the assistance of others in the process of becoming independent in the performance of a task.
Tharp and Gallimore’s work (1988) involved the tool of language to scaffold the child through the stages. My work expanded the model of the transition through the ZPD to include a non-verbal scaffold as the tool in the development of PA. The scaffold was the use of the KMP in the interactions between the parent and the children to accompany sounds in oral language.

In addition, my study adds to Tharp and Gallimore’s work (1988) by identifying three types of assistance provided by the parents as the children learned to use the non-verbal scaffold. Specifically, they offered three varying levels of support to assist performance in stages one and two in the ZPD. Figure 27 demonstrates the presence of the types of assistance offered within these stages and the movement through the stages of the ZPD observable in my study with the use of the non-verbal scaffold in interactions between the parents and children.

![Guiding and Cueing](image)

**Figure 27.** Types of assistance offered in stages of the ZPD with the non-verbal scaffold

In stage one, Tharp and Gallimore (1988) articulated the significance of the more knowledgeable other providing assistance to the learner. My study extended the work by demonstrating two types of assistance the parents provided the children with the use of the non-verbal scaffold of the KMP in stage one. The two types of support were *guiding* and *cueing*. Each varied in intensity or level of support for the child within the stage.
Guiding provided more support, as the parents directed the performance of the KMP literally with hand upon the child’s hand. Cueing provided less support as it took the form of the parent modeling the KMP for the child. Immediate imitation of the KMP by the child followed the assistance of cueing. For example, Cory moved Will’s arm forward with her hand guiding his production of the KMP for /f/. Moments later, she cued Will as she leaned forward and performed the KMP for /f/ within Will’s visual space. He imitated the KMP immediately (VID00057, July 14, 2010; Field notes, July 15, 2010). Both guiding and cueing were types of assistance provided by the parent when the preschooler was dependent on the parent for the use of the scaffold of the KMP.

The two types of assistance characterized the interactions present in stage one of the ZPD. As parents moved from supporting their children’s performance with cueing, instead of guiding, the children assumed more responsibility for the task. This aligned with Tharp and Gallimore’s (1988) explanation that within stage one “we see a steadily declining plane of adult responsibility for task performance and a reciprocal increase in the learner’s proportion of responsibility” (p. 35).

Tharp and Gallimore (1988) marked stage two with the description “assistance is provided by self” (p. 36). Within their model, children use language to direct or scaffold performance within stage two. As Tharp and Gallimore referred to “self-talk” to note the use of the tool of language in the direction of the task, my study noted the children’s independent use of the non-verbal scaffold of the KMP to identify sounds in oral language. For example, Kara performed the KMP for /t/ in the word, today, from the line of the song, “How are you today?” separately from her mother’s assistance (VID00057,
July 14, 2010; Field notes, July 15, 2010). Her ability to self-assist with the non-verbal KMP, independent of the parent, was the indicator of performance within stage two of the ZPD.

My data reflected each of the children beginning to perform KMPs independent of their parents by the eighth week of the study. By the 15th session, the children were independent in their use of the KMPs which they had learned in previous sessions. Referring to earlier descriptions within stage two, the parents and children used the KMPs as though they had rehearsed a choreographed dance.

Tharp and Gallimore (1988) characterized stage three with the performance of the learning being developed. At this point of internalization, the scaffold or tool is no longer observable. In my study, this would necessitate the dropping of the scaffold or use of the KMP. My findings did not indicate the children performing within stage three during the 15 tutoring sessions. During the exit testing, some children used the scaffold of the KMP and others did not. However, my data analyses were not designed to examine this phenomenon during the testing. Indicators of the children functioning within stage three were present, yet a common pattern in the data did not substantiate this.

In stage four of Tharp and Gallimore’s (1988) model, performance is deautomatized. The result is a recursive loop through the previous stages to shore up performance until the child is able to perform the task independently again. Once again, my analyses were not designed to examine experiences in which the preschool child reverted to the use of the KMP in stage two to self-assist. An example of this would be
the child’s independent use of a KMP to scaffold a sound in a writing experience using invented spelling. These data were not available to me during the tutoring sessions.

However, my study marked recursive movement with the use of the non-verbal scaffold of the KMP from stage two to stage one and back again in the interactions between the parents and children. For example, Mickey did not perform the KMP for /j/ accurately and his mother leaned in and guided his performance. Although he had previously performed KMPs successfully in stage two moments before, his present performance needed assistance. This recursive loop from self-assistance to other-assistance marked the recursive nature of movement from stage two to stage one.

At another point during the closing song, Kelly responded to Mickey’s inaccurate performance of the KMP for /a/ by cueing him with the accurate model. Although her assistance was less intense than the previous example of guiding him, her support was another example of recursion to stage one from self-assisting in stage two. Immediately after, they continued the performance of the song in sync with each other, indicating a rapid movement for Mickey back to self-assisting in stage two (VID 00037, Field notes, May 20, 2010). Figure 28 illustrates the recursive movement between stages one and two in my study.

The interactions with the use of the non-verbal scaffold in the development of PA were characterized by the recursive movement between the two stages. In this manner, the recursive movement described by Tharp and Gallimore (1988) beginning in stage four occurred in stage two of my study. When the children were self-assisting with the use of the KMP to accompany oral language and encountered instability, the parents guided or
As the children became more independent by the middle of the study, the pattern of recursion to stage one was followed by the children moving back into stage two, independent of the parents. The use of the non-verbal scaffold allowed for rapid changes from stage two to one, and back again.

The recursion between stages one and two remained cyclical throughout the 15 weeks. The child’s momentary performance determined the level of dependence contributing to the on-going recursion. The release of responsibility existed, yet dependence on the parent was an ever-present option. The one-on-one relationship supported the continual parental response to the individual child. In this way, the release of responsibility from the parent to the child differed from the instructional model set forth by Pearson and Gallagher (1983). Next, I turn to how the parents tutored in their interactions with their children.

**Parents scaffolding as tutors.** The previous discussion highlighted the interactions between the parents and children as the children moved through stages one
and two of the zone of proximal development using the non-verbal scaffold of the KMPs in the development of PA. My study suggests that the interactions between the parents and children in the use of the non-verbal scaffold of the KMP were an effective instructional approach for the preschool children to develop PA in the weekly tutoring sessions. Beyond the movement through the ZPD, the manner in which the parents interacted with their children was an additional focus.

Within my study, the parents acted as tutors. My findings extended the application of the six functions of a tutor (Wood et al., 1976) to include parents tutoring their children in the development of a literacy skill, specifically PA. I elaborate on Wood et al.’s work by explaining how the functions related specifically to my study. Table 28 reviews the six functions of a tutor and provides examples of the parents manifesting each function within my study.

Thus, the parents scaffolded their children in their interactions with the use of the KMPs by functioning as tutors as they moved their own children through the ZPD. The data indicated that they displayed the six functions as they modeled for the children in stage one of the ZPD and continued to display the functions as the children became more independent and self-assisted in stage two. Figure 29 displays how the parents functioned as tutors within stage one and stage two of the ZPD. They manifested the same functions in the recursive loop back through stage one when the children needed more assistance, also. The findings noted the parents began as tutors and maintained the role throughout the tutoring sessions. In addition, their tutoring was characterized by privacy between the dyads and the maintenance of close physical proximity at all times during the interactions.
Table 28

*Relationship of Wood, Bruner and Ross’s (1976) Functions of a Tutor to Parents Tutoring Children in PA*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functions of a tutor</th>
<th>Wood, Bruner and Ross’s definition of function</th>
<th>Relationship to my study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment</td>
<td>The tutor gets the tutee involved through recruiting attention and interest.</td>
<td>The parents got their children’s attention at each session. For example, five of the six parents present modeled for their children and touched them physically by tapping or tickling to engage them in the opening demonstration. (Data management Sheet, March 31, 2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction in degrees of freedom</td>
<td>The tutor reduces the steps in a task to adjust to the tutee’s ability to perform it. The tutor lets the tutee function at his or her level of performance.</td>
<td>The parents simplified the task continuously. For example, the parents modeled the KMP of /p/ for the children during the first session as they sang, “Picking up Paw Paws.” They encouraged the children to imitate, but were not concerned with the proper placement of the KMP with words beginning with /p/ at that point. They allowed the children to master doing the KMP before using it properly. (VID00008, April 4, 2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction maintenance</td>
<td>The tutor keeps the tutee motivated and able to engage to take on the next level of challenge. The tutor must keep tutee aware of the goal.</td>
<td>The parents engaged the children’s attention if their attention wandered throughout the sessions. They maintained their children’s interest by keeping them within close physical proximity. For example, Jimmy’s dad lifted him up and placed him on his lap to model within Jimmy’s visual space. (VID00043, Field notes)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The parents placed no demands on the children to participate. They modeled and nudged them to engage, yet accepted times in which they leaned back and observed. The data pointed to continued observance on the part of the parents of the children’s engagement, but no confrontation indicating a demand for it. In this way, the modeling kept the children aware of the task, yet allowed for the children to take a break from active participation to observe.

*(table continues)*
Table 28 (continued)

*Relationship of Wood, Bruner and Ross’s (1976) Functions of a Tutor to Parents Tutoring Children in PA*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functions of a tutor</th>
<th>Wood, Bruner and Ross’s definition of function</th>
<th>Relationship to my study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marking critical features</td>
<td>The tutor marks critical parts of the task and points out the discrepancy between the actual performance and the correct performance. The tutor must understand the discrepancy.</td>
<td>The parents understood the task and inserted KMPs appropriately. They notched up performance consistently by modeling the correct execution of the KMPs. For example, Mary took LJ’s elbow in her hand to push his arm forward for the KMP of /f/, guiding the correct formation. In this way, she pointed out the importance of the tension of the arm for the /f/ for him. (VID00037) Likewise, Mickey circled his arm around forcibly in a circle to perform the KMP for /j/ inaccurately. His mom took his arm, slowed him down and directed him in the correct performance of the KMP. (VID00037) Both parents understood the correct performance and noted the discrepancy. Likewise, they marked the critical parts necessary for accurate performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frustration control</td>
<td>The tutor creates an interaction free of stress.</td>
<td>The parents maintained interactions that were free of stress. Only one disruption occurred in all of the 15 sessions, which did not interrupt the flow of the session. (VID00053, June 8, 2010) The parents kept the children within close physical proximity to them at all times throughout the sessions. Close physical proximity fostered physical connection between the parents and children. The parents whispered directions keeping communication private. “The parents and children stay engaged and often seem to be isolated dyads-separate from the other sets of dyads.” (Data Management Form, Session 9, June 2, 2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstration</td>
<td>The tutor models with the goal of the tutee giving back the correct form. In this way, modeling manifests an “idealization” of the task to be imitated.</td>
<td>The parents modeled the insertion of the KMPs to accompany sounds in poems and songs. Often, they performed more KMPs than the children. For example, Kara performed the initial KMP for /t/ as she sang the word, <em>today</em>. At the same time, her mother modeled the KMPs for the initial /t/ and the medial /d/. In this way, she presented a more “idealized form” of attending to and marking sounds in words for Kara. Within this experience, Kara notched up the more complete execution by inserting both the /t/ and /d/ KMPs throughout the rest of the song. (VID00057, July 14)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The parents manifested all functions of a tutor throughout the study, characterizing the way in which they interacted with the use of the KMPs. Four of the functions of a tutor were observable at the onset of the study (VID 00008). The first three of these functions manifested were recruiting the attention of their children, maintaining their direction or attention, and controlling frustration. For example, when John was not attending and wanted to run back to the babysitting room where his sister was playing during the first session, Julie allowed this. Upon his quick return, she recruited his attention to engage him in the session. She controlled frustration and kept him engaged.

The fourth function displayed at the beginning of the study was the reduction in degrees of freedom. For instance, five of six parents present modeled the KMP for /p/ immediately in the first session and understood that its use represented the phoneme. However they did not expect the children to place them appropriately within the song. For example, Lucy imitated her mother’s use of the KMP for /p/, but it was seconds
behind the emission of the word, *put*. Her mother expected her to simply imitate, but did not expect proper placement of the KMP. Rose reduced the steps she asked Lucy to take over.

The tutor’s function of reduction of degrees of freedom, however, became more sophisticated as the study progressed. The parents needed to learn the KMPs and the way to use them within poems and songs. Then, they could make conscious decisions about how much to ask the children to take on in the completion of the task.

The additional functions of marking critical features, and demonstration were similar in their development over the study. As the parents developed an understanding of PA, they became more skilled at marking critical features. They were able to identify the discrepancy between what the child performed and what was the correct performance with the use of the KMPs. In addition, the more competent they became with the task, the more they could present the “idealized” form, encompassing the tutor’s function of demonstration.

For example, at the beginning of the study, Mel modeled the initial sounds for Kara. However, in the final session, her modeling included the initial and medial KMPs of */t/ and */d/ in the word *today*, plus the appropriate placement of each within the word. She modeled the more complete form for Kara and many other KMPs within the same experience of singing the “Hello” song with her. In so doing, she notched up Kara’s performance (VID00057, July 14, 2010; Field notes, July 15, 2010). Her deeper understanding of the task supported her ability to function as a tutor.
Thus, the parents’ interactions with their children with the scaffold of the KMPs were characterized by the six functions of tutoring. Wood et al. (1976) noted that effective tutoring was “task and tutee dependent” (p. 97), emphasizing the importance of both elements being present in the interactions. The parents tutored with an understanding of their children and the task. The functions related to understanding the task became more sophisticated over the course of the study, as parents spent more time in the tutoring sessions learning to develop PA. The functions related to understanding the child reflected interactions marked by privacy and close physical proximity at all times over the course of the study.

**Interactions when text was involved.** The exit recordings documented a change in interactions between parents and children when text was involved. The findings yielded a pattern of extended engagement with the poem compared to the entrance recordings beyond the previously discussed use of the KMPs. The parents and children increased the number of activities beyond the initial reading of the poem, including rereading and revisiting the text to model a literacy behavior by the end of the study. In March, only one parent engaged with the text beyond the initial reading of the poem. Table 29 displays the change in the number of activities when text was involved.

Three additional findings emerged regarding extending engagement with the poem by the end of the study. The amount of time spent in the initial reading of the poem increased for all dyads. In addition, there was an increase in the number of interactions and the modeling of literacy behaviors within the interactions after the 15 week study.
Table 29

*Number of Dyads Increasing Number of Activities With Text*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th># of dyads - March</th>
<th># of dyads - July</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reread</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revisit text</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modeled Literacy Behaviors</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Increase in time of initial reading of the poem.* Each of the parents engaged in a reading of the poem with the child in July, as opposed to the common pattern of reciting the poem to the child in March by five of the parents. The engagement time with the initial reading increased by July, as displayed in Figure 30.

![Figure 30. Increase in amount of time spent on initial reading of the poem](image)
Cory and Julie (Dyads B and C) did not return to the text or extend the engagement with the poem. However, their sons participated actively in the final reading in July. Will pointed accurately as Cory read; and John read aloud accurately with Julie in July.

Furthermore, the findings indicated that interactions increased in number, also. As noted previously, an interaction meant the time the exact reading stopped until it resumed. During that time, the interactions guided the children to engage with concepts about print. For example, Mary, Leon, and their son read together until LJ misread the word *ran*. Mary stopped, held his pointer finger on the word until he repeated it accurately. Mary stopped to interact for the purpose of calling LJ’s attention to the word. Then, the accurate reading continued.

The interactions guided the children to focus on concepts of print, such as the following: text has meaning, letters, sounds, words, directionality, return sweep, and where to begin reading. An example of a completed observation forms documenting the interactions is included in Appendices C and D. Table 30 illustrates the increase in the number of interactions with the presence of text by the exit recordings.
Table 30
*Increase in Number of Interactions While Engaged With Text*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dyads</th>
<th>Interactions – March</th>
<th>Interactions - July</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carol and Jimmy</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cory and Will</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelly and Mickey</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julie and John</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary and LJ</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mel and Kara</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rose and Lucy</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The parents extended engagement with the poem through additional activities by the end of the study. They increased time spent during the initial reading and increased the number of interactions as they engaged with the text. The interactions guided the children to attend to concepts of print. As noted earlier, only one mother extended the engagement with the poem in March by rereading and revisiting the text to point out a letter and sound. The pattern of extending the engagement with the poem developed over the course of the study. I conclude that the parents learned to guide activities as they watched me model them weekly in the tutoring sessions.

**Engagement with and without text.** The previous discussion emphasized extending engagement with the poem when text was involved. Likewise, some parents and children used KMPs as they recited the poem to explore sound when text was not involved. Therefore, the combination of each type of activity increased the overall
engagement time the parents and children spent with the poem by the end of the study.

Figure 31 displays the increase in overall engagement time when both types of activities were combined in the exit recordings.

![Bar Chart]

**Figure 31.** Increase in overall engagement time with the poem

All of the parents extended the engagement with the poem by extending their initial reading time, rereading, revisiting the poem to perform it with KMPs, or interact to call attention to concepts about print. Cory and Julie and their boys (Dyads B and C) showed the least amount of increase in the time of engagement. However, as mentioned before, Will and John engaged with independence as they read side by side with their parents by the end of July. The boys self-assisted and the parents supported the gradual release of responsibility to them (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983).

The study encompassed guiding parents to teach PA as they interacted with their children. The parents demonstrated learning to engage the children with the use of the
KMPs in PA activities and involve them in additional literacy activities beyond the sessions by the end of the study. Burgess (1999) stressed the development of higher PA for children who engaged in literacy activities at home. In the next research question, I revisit the findings and discuss how the parents extended the learning and engaged their children beyond the directed tutoring sessions.

**Research Question Two: Extending the Learning Beyond the Weekly Sessions**

The discussion of the extensions beyond the formal tutoring sessions focuses upon the use of the kinesthetic motion for the phoneme (KMP) to accompany sounds in oral language for the following reasons. The findings demonstrated that the use of the KMP was the most common extension reported by the parents. In addition, the use of the concrete marker of the KMPs in the development of PA with poetry and songs was the focus of the study.

My response to research question two embraced Edwards’ (2005) understanding of parents and their involvement as teachers of their children. She noted that parents have a desire to assist their children in literacy, but often lack a plan. First of all, the parents in my study exemplified her observation regarding a desire to assist. Six of the seven parents reported extending the learning after the first tutoring session at home; each of the parents extended the learning throughout the study after the first session. In addition, they manifested their desire to support their children by committing their time to the 15-week study to learn about PA.

The findings from my study indicated, as Edwards (2005) articulated, that when the parents attempted to extend the learning to experiences outside of the formal tutoring
sessions at the beginning of the study, they lacked a plan to do so. The data demonstrated they were uncomfortable with how to extend the learning at first. However, as the parents participated in the weekly sessions, they began to extend the learning with confidence.

Thus, this study got to the heart of Edwards’ (2005) suggestions and supplied a protocol for engaging the parents in weekly tutoring sessions to develop PA. The extensions of the learning beyond the directed tutoring sessions characterized them as having a plan to teach PA to their preschool children by the end of the study. And, as the study progressed, the parents extended the learning in a common manner.

One of the chief aims of the study was to train the parents to teach PA to their children with the use of the KMPs. Yopp and Yopp (2000), Ferguson (1986), and Lindblom (1992) provided a lens from which to view the extensions of the KMPs in the interactions between the parents and the children in PA over the course of the study. Referring back, Yopp and Yopp recommended that PA activities needed to be engaging, playful, and socially interactive; and Ferguson and Lindblom emphasized the necessity of unending interactions with the exploration of the sounds of oral language in the development of PA. I looked closely at how the parents’ extensions of the weekly sessions aligned with these recommendations and found that the change in their extensions over time incorporated the development of PA through the integration of the KMPs into their oral language interactions.

The approach of the parents to extending the learning changed the longer they participated in the weekly tutoring sessions. The extensions transitioned from formal
activities at the beginning to an informal integration of the learning into everyday experiences with the children. Figure 32 illustrates the changes in approach and the time of the study in which the changes were noted in the data.

![Image](image1.png)

**Figure 32. Change in types of extensions**

**Extending the learning beyond the directed session.** The findings demonstrated that the more tutoring sessions in which the parents participated, the more they began to develop comfort extending the learning informally. The informal extensions were spontaneous experiences with the use of the KMPs to accompany oral language. In addition, the data noted that the children initiated extensions of the weekly tutoring sessions with the spontaneous use of the KMPs in interactions with their families.

In the end, the findings showed that the parents developed a plan to engage in PA activities in their extensions beyond the tutoring sessions. The informal extensions in their plans were interactions which explored sound spontaneously and were playful and socially interactive, complimenting the recommendations of Yopp and Yopp (2000), Ferguson (1986), and Lindblom (1992). In the following discussion, I address the transition in approach from formal to informal extensions and the common patterns of extension that emerged in the findings among the parents.
Lastly, the discussion refers to Tharp and Gallimore’s (1988) model of the preschooler’s transition through stages toward independence in PA development. My study expands the model to include the transition of the parents through stages toward independence in the teaching of PA as they participated in joint interactions with me and their children in the weekly tutoring sessions. Their extensions of the learning into interactions with their children and into conversations with other adults evidenced their transition to independence as empowered teachers of their children of the literacy skill of PA. They developed a way to enact a plan to assist their children in literacy development.

**Stages of extension: The first week.** The findings showed that the first extensions, with the exception of one parent, were formal, adult-directed experiences which were fraught with questions and uncertainty. Some of the children displayed resistance to the initial, homework-like extensions. For example, Mel, who was a trained teacher, noted that “Kara could get it with the poem, but otherwise doesn’t get it” (Mel, weekly log, April 7, 2010). Her uncertainty was emphasized in her communication at the beginning of the second session, “She’s not getting it” (Field notes, April 7, 2010). She needed specific parameters, exemplified in a question in her log, “How often should we be practicing with our child at home?” Likewise, Rose reported her extending with formal practice, but noted Lucy’s lack of interest in the formal experience. She contrasted the extension to an occurrence when the KMP was done informally, when Lucy “seemed interested.” She asked, uncertain if it were an appropriate extension, “Is random ok?” (Rose, personal conversation, April 7, 2010). The previous examples
characterized the extensions after the first week. The parents extended formally, but outside of the formal extension they were uncertain. Relating back to Edwards (2005), they demonstrated the desire to help, but lacked a plan. They were not in charge; I was.

**Stages of extension: The first month.** Until the end of the first month of the study, the parents continued to extend the learning from the directed tutoring sessions in a formal way. They attempted to use the KMPs formally, such as in the reading of a poem. However, informal extensions began to occur during the first month along with the directed approach. For example, Julie illustrated her sticking to the homework plan, by her question, “How much outside time (from sessions) should we read the poems?” (Personal log, April 21, 2010). Yet, she contrasted the formal with the informal extensions, as she recorded, “When I did motions [KMPs] while we read books, he doesn’t like it, but words in conversations he does.”

The parents’ awareness of the emergence of informal extensions was common during the first month. Four families started to use the KMPs to accompany the sounds of the names of family members in their conversation (Field notes, April 14, 2010). Other examples of the informal were Rose’s report of Lucy’s dropping the KMPs into general conversation and Mel’s noting that she and Kara had performed the KMPs in the car and with the family (Mel & Rose, weekly logs, April 21, 2010).

During this time, two mothers articulated the emergence and appreciation for the informal extensions in addition to their continuance of the formal. For example, Mary and Leon designated a place at their table with the lamp “for studying” and sat LJ between them to extend the learning the first week of the study. In contrast, at the end of
the fourth session, Mary reflected, “I need to make it fun.” She continued with [she] “needed to do it different; I’m really learning how” (Data management form, April 21, 2010). She shared LJ was getting frustrated when she tried “to implement the motions as if ‘ok, I got it.’” Yet, in the same log, she wrote, “without prompting, he’ll use the motions [KMPs] in general conversation” (Mary, personal log, April 21, 2010).

Similarly, Kelly exclaimed, “I get it! I was doing, ‘t’, Mickey.” As she spoke, she enacted pointing to an isolated letter with emphasis. “I was like ‘t’-tiger; ‘l’-lion! I gotta make it meaningful!” (Kelly, personal communication, April 21, 2010). Both mothers were becoming cognizant of the value of informal interactions. Their reflections pointed to the need for more playful experiences.

By the fourth week of the study, six of the seven parents noticed their children initiating spontaneous use of KMPs to accompany sounds in oral language—in conversation and sharing with others. The children were exploring sounds with KMPs in socially interactive ways. The parents noted the informal use of the KMPs as extensions in their data in conjunction with their continuing formal extensions.

Please note that the parents had participated in four half-hour directed tutoring sessions by the end of the first month. I had demonstrated playful interactions with the use of the KMPs with the singing or recitation of the poems. In addition, I had used the KMPs with the children’s names.

Referring to Edwards (2005) again, the parents were reporting different types of extensions than they had in the first week of the study. They were developing a different plan of extending the learning less formally, but uncertainty still remained. For example,
Mel said, "Sorry," indicating the lack of time for a formal, homework extension (Personal communication, April 21, 2010). Yet, her log documented engagement with the KMPs “mostly in the car or during dinner, when showing other family members what we learned!” (Mel, personal log, April 21, 2010). The less formal extensions did not represent completion of the “homework” for her. I was still in charge.

By the end of the first month, the parents were transitioning to a plan for extending the learning informally, but were not completely comfortable. They needed more experience before they could put a different plan into effect. The data demonstrated that they still adhered to formal extensions; yet the emergence of the informal would give way to their dropping the formal extensions in the second month of the study.

**Stages of extension: Second month and beyond.** By the seventh and eighth session of the study, all seven of the parents reported a pattern of informal extensions in their logs. The entries illustrated the use of KMPs in everyday interactions with their children to accompany oral language. A sampling of the entries were: Mickey used the KMPs “at the dinner table” and “in his bedroom;” Lucy used KMPs in conversation “all of the time;” her grandmother thought “they were doing sign language;” John “liked to do it [KMPs] when it relates to words/things around him” (Kelly, Rose, Julie, weekly logs, May 19, 2010). The sharing of informal extensions continued until the end of the study. At this point, the findings showed a dropping of formal, homework-like extensions in the communication of the parents. Formal extensions were not reported in the data, nor were questions asked about whether the random use of the informal extensions was appropriate. The parents were taking charge of the extensions.
By the end of the second month of the study, the parents shifted from directing the extensions. The findings showed that their role changed to observing the use of the KMPs by their children, in addition to actively participating. For example, Kelly reported observing Mickey reading a sign. She recorded, “In the grocery store my son sounded out Save-a Lot, using the motions [KMPs] . . . Then he said, ‘Hey I thought it was Save-a-Lock’” (Kelly, personal log, May 19, 2010). She took note of Mickey’s exploration of sound in the development of PA and reported the extension.

Keeping Edwards (2005) in mind, the parents had developed a plan for extending the learning outside of the directed tutoring session by the end of the second month of the study. The findings demonstrated that the parents shifted from directed, homework-like extensions to informal experiences. Their reports indicated a participation in, or observance of, the children’s use of the KMPs into their daily experiences. Their logs indicated they had developed a comfort level with the informal extensions and shared their occurrences.

A distinct pattern of informal extensions into the daily lives of the parents and children emerged by the end of the second month and extended until the end of the 15th week of the study. Beyond the use of KMPs to accompany general conversation between the parents and children, two other common patterns among all families emerged. They were: (a) extending learning to interactions in the car; and (b) extending the learning through sharing with others. Sharing for the children involved performance for family and friends; sharing for the adults involved discussion with other adults outside of the
Extensions: In a car. The findings showed that each of the seven families reported using KMPs in the playful exploration of sound as they talked or sang in the car. For example, Rose shared their car experience, “I don’t care where we are; we can be out in the car . . . stoplight, stop sign . . . passing McDonald’s, you know the /m/ [doing the KMP for the sound of /m/] so we get a lot of that” (Rose, personal interview, July 20, 2010). Likewise, Will’s mom shared that she would ask, “What motion [KMP] does that start with?” And, then Will “would start doing ‘em all [in the car]” (Cory, personal interview, July 20, 2010). The parents either participated in the extensions or observed their children using the KMPs informally on a regular basis in the car. The car experience was a context for exploring sound with the use of the KMPs as they interacted socially with the use of oral language.

Children sharing. Six of the seven children in the study initiated the use of the KMPs as extensions frequently. They performed for siblings primarily and for extended family. For example, Kelly noted how her son did the KMPs for the baby (Kelly, personal communication, June 16, 2010). Five of the seven families reported the children adding the KMPs as they recited poems, sang, or talked spontaneously with their siblings. Performing for the family was another common extension. Mel shared, “Honestly . . . she showed everyone! Well . . . my mom, my dad, my husband . . . Kara showed everyone! (Mel, personal interview, July 13, 2010). The examples of accompanying the oral language exchanges with the use of the KMPs highlighted the integration of the
exploration of sound into the daily lives of the children in PA activities with their families.

During these extensions, the parents observed the children’s engagement with sound. As the parents took note of the extensions of the children in PA activities, they began to share with other adults. In this way, they extended their learning beyond the formal tutoring sessions through discussion with others.

**Extension: Parents sharing.** I found that the parents extended their learning beyond participating or observing their own children’s uses of the KMPs. The data demonstrated that each of the seven parents extended what they learned with other adults in their lives purposefully. For example, Julie and Cory shared with a sister and sister-in-law respectively because each of them had young children. Julie wanted to inform her mother-in-law because her children spent so much time with her; Carol talked with her daughter who was an elementary teacher. They informed others of what they had learned in the directed sessions.

Four of the parents indicated they planned to teach others, such as the child of a family friend (Rose, personal interview, July 20, 2010), or children in their charge. For example, Kelly incorporated her learning by extending the use of the KMPs to the preschool children in her class at a daycare. She elaborated on a conversation she had with the grandmother of one of the children. Kelly articulated the importance of sound to the grandmother and how the KMP scaffolded sound for the preschool child (Personal communication, December 23, 2010).
The role of sharing with others was indicative of the parents’ growth over the course of the study in developing a plan to teach PA. Please refer to Tharp and Gallimore’s (1988) model of the transition through Vygotsky’s zone of proximal development as a series of stages from dependence on the more expert other to reliance on oneself in the development of a skill. The context for such learning occurs in cooperation with others. I previously noted how the children moved through the zone via the stages of Tharp and Gallimore with the assistance of their parents in their development of PA with the use of KMPs. The parents in this study progressed through the zone of proximal development, also.

The parents mirrored the same process in their development of a plan to teach PA. They began the study dependent on me as the expert other and participated in cooperation with me for up to 15 weeks of tutoring sessions. The data indicated that they expressed uncertainty in the beginning, yet continued to engage in the sessions and developed independence with the use of the KMPs. In the end, they manifested a confidence in their knowledge and extended their learning with the tool of language to share with other adults.

An example of such confidence was Mel, previously a fifth grade teacher. She emphasized that she felt capable of extending her learning to struggling learners, as she stressed, “I really feel as a teacher that I could take it into a group right now and do, probably the way you did it” (Interview, July 21, 2010). This assurance contrasted with her uncertainty in the first month with Kara “not getting it” and her apology for not extending formally when she had engaged in many informal interactions using the KMPs.
All of the seven parents demonstrated confidence by extending the learning through language to other adults in their lives. The parents had grown, as the children did, “into the intellectual life of those around them” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 88) over the course of the study. They developed a plan, which they could articulate, for the use of the KMPs to teach PA.

As noted previously, the extensions of the learning shifted to informal experiences by the end of the study. The findings demonstrated that the experiences involved the exploration of sound in playful and socially interactive ways. By the end of the second month, the experiences aligned with the recommendations for PA development (Ferguson, 1986; Lindblom, 1992; Yopp & Yopp, 2000). The informal extensions avoided the “lock-step” approach Yopp and Yopp warned against, which was present in the extensions at the beginning of the study.

The change in the parents’ extensions over the course of the study represented a change in their understanding of PA. This directs the discussion to the findings guided by the third research question. It asked how the literacy understandings of the parents changed over time.

**Research Question Three: Changing Literacy Understandings of Parents**

The concept of scaffolding (Wood & Middleton, 1975; Wood et al., 1976) was central to the examination of how the parents changed over time in their literacy understandings. The scaffolds the parents chose represented how they assisted their children with literacy tasks. The change in their assistance reflected changing understandings.
Reflecting back to the initial discussion of scaffolding and the picture of a child attempting to walk a wall alone with a parent at his side was the representation of the learning task. The action of the parent extending a hand to impede a stumble was the observable scaffold. Beyond the action, the scaffold represented the understanding of the task. For instance, the parent understood that moving too fast might result in a tumble. Offering the hand represented the parent’s assistance and the understanding of the task of maneuvering the wall.

My study examined the parents’ changing scaffolds over the course of the study. Non-verbal and verbal scaffolds developed over time. Non-verbal scaffolds emerged in the area of PA; the combination of non-verbal and verbal emerged in the area of directing children’s attention to print. The findings indicated that the scaffolding of literacy tasks was not present at the beginning of the study. Therefore, the scaffolds represented the change in the parents’ understandings of PA and concepts about print.

In addition to the changes in non-verbal and verbal scaffolds of the parents over the course of the study, another finding emerged in the data. The parents developed a change in their appreciation and use of poetry with their children. The tutoring sessions provided experience with poetry, incorporating one of the following texts weekly: a poem from *Fast Start for Early Readers* (Padak & Rasinski, 2005) or *Fast Start: Getting Ready to Read* (Rasinski & Padak, 2008); other nursery rhymes; and, songs.

**Scaffolding.** The findings demonstrated the parents’ use of non-verbal and verbal scaffolds. A non-verbal action entailed parental guidance or cooperative engagement with the child in a non-linguistic manner. An example of the non-verbal action was the
use of the kinesthetic motion for the phoneme (KMP) to call attention to the component of sound in language. For example, the use of the KMP for the sound of /t/ in *twinkle* demonstrated a non-verbal scaffold in the literacy area of PA.

The *verbal action* entailed the use of specific language to direct literacy activities for the child. “Ok, show me the title” (Rose, exit recording, July 20, 2010) exemplified the use of specific language directing the child to interact with text. Rose’s sentence demonstrated verbal scaffolding for concepts about print.

The parents developed both types of scaffolds over the course of the study. First, I discuss the parents’ incorporation of non-verbal scaffolds in PA, as this was the focus of the study. Two non-verbal scaffolds were used by the parents in the development of PA. Each served as a concrete marker for phonemes. The scaffold reported most often in the data was the use of the KMP to accompany sounds in oral language experiences. The other scaffold was the stretching out of syllables or words physically on the arm starting at the shoulder, as a concrete demonstration of their beginning, middle, and ending sounds.

PA is the ability to hear, express, and manipulate the sounds in oral language. With this in mind, it is important to recall the significance of a concrete marker in the development of PA in young children (Blachman et al., 1994; Castiglioni-Spalten & Ehri, 2003; Clay, 1979; Lindamood & Lindamood, 1998). The reason is that phonemes vanish, once spoken, as Juel (2006) emphasized with her description of the “elusive” nature of the phoneme and its challenge for the young child.
Yet, PA ability requires working with the smallest component of spoken language. In light of the fleeting nature of phonemes, Adams (1990) emphasized the need for a child to be aware of its presence, if they were to be manipulated. Therefore, marking the phoneme in a concrete way assists a child’s ability to manipulate it and supports awareness of its existence within oral language.

**Changing understandings of parents.** The findings of this study indicated that the parents’ use of the KMPs to note the presence of sound marked a literacy understanding that developed over the course of the study. The analysis of the exit recordings of the dyads reading the poem, “Hickory, Dickory, Dock,” pointed to the non-verbal use of KMPs by four of the seven parents or grandparent to mark the presence of phonemes. The findings demonstrated that none of the parents called attention to sound in the entrance recordings. Table 31 displays the occurrence of KMPs in the exit recordings.

The parents or grandparent did not know the KMPs at the beginning of the study. However, four of the seven adults chose to attend to sound with the non-verbal scaffold of the KMP in the exit recordings. As they did, the concrete marker demonstrated the presence of a particular sound and scaffolded the child’s ability to hear it. They anchored it concretely. The parents’ use of the KMP to assist the children in hearing sound indicated they had developed an understanding of calling attention to sound.

**Parents learning about the importance of sound.** Beyond the exit recordings, the findings indicated that the parents developed a new understanding of the importance of sound over the course of the study. They documented in their logs and interviews
Table 31

*Number of KMPs Used in Exit Recordings*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent or Grandparent</th>
<th># of motions used in exit recordings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kelly</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mel</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carol</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

using KMPs as a way to attend to sound. For example, Julie noted in a discussion of the use of the motions, “I think . . . it [KMPs] just makes them understand sound better” (Julie, personal communication, July 21, 2010). The change in the understanding of the importance of sound for their preschool children was a new understanding for all seven parents or grandparent present in the data.

Two examples of the change in understanding in this area of PA development were Carol and Cory. Carol noted her change in learning to focus on sound, “I’d say learning any words with sound” was a new understanding (Carol, personal communication, July 26, 2010). Likewise, Cory highlighted sound, saying, “’Cause when I went to school it was all about, you know, letters; it wasn’t about sounds” (Cory, Interview, July 26, 2010). The parents developed an awareness of sound in PA development and transferred the understanding to practice through the use of the concrete marker of the KMPs.
Parents practicing with KMPs. The findings pointed to examples with each dyad of their use of the KMPs to focus upon sound in their interactions. The practice of attending to sound developed over the time of the study. An example was Kelly’s verbal exchange with her son as he collected catalogs and pictures. He initiated, “I’ve gotta bring these to class, so Mrs. Kindervater can teach these sounds.” His mother responded, “You know that sound for this. Tell me.” And, they used the KMPs for sounds together as they explored the pamphlets. The interaction exemplified a change in Kelly’s understanding of the importance of sounds. She noted that before the study, “we didn’t go so much into the letter sounds” (Kelly, July 10, 2010).

The attention to sound with the use of the concrete marker of the KMPs became an integrated practice for all of the parents and children. Paul shared their focus on sound saying, “you learned the sound of the letter . . . and you draw it out to what they connect to it.” He demonstrated doing the KMP for the sound of /m/ as he said, “McDonalds.” He confirmed the connection to everyday language by saying, “Every kid knows McDonalds” (Interview, July 26, 2010).

Each of the parents shared similar examples of integrating the use of the KMPs to accompany sound in their conversations with their children. In this way, the KMPs marked sound in a concrete way in everyday experiences with oral language. The practice offered many opportunities for the children to explore sound in common experiences. The reports of the parents engaging the children in the exploration of sound with the use of the KMPs evidenced their change in the understanding of PA development and their integration of the understanding into practice.
Parents scaffolding speech. Being able to hear and express the phoneme accurately is necessary in PA development yet the articulation poses difficulty for some young children. Three of the parents noted an ability to remediate their preschooler’s speech with the use of non-verbal scaffolds as a result of the study. Their application of the non-verbal scaffolds to target clear speech for their children extended beyond what I modeled in the weekly session. This type of assisted performance indicated another understanding the three parents developed over the course of the study.

The non-verbal scaffold of the KMP and the non-verbal scaffold of stretching out a word on the arm were both used by the three parents to remediate speech errors. The practice demonstrated the specific function of anchoring the phoneme concretely for the young child, who was articulating the phoneme incorrectly. The practice reflected a change in their understanding of how to scaffold their children’s ability to hear and express sounds in oral language. Therefore, as they targeted specific speech sounds, they developed PA in their children.

For instance, Kelly described assisting Mickey with sounds in words. She shared, When he says, mail truck or the mailman he says, “Mom, there’s the mailsman” [emphasizing the insertion of the /s/ in the middle]. I said, “Oh, that’s the mail” [stretching the word out and doing the KMP for /l/, emphasizing the final sound of the first syllable]. He then says, “Oh, that’s mail [stretching the word out and doing the KMP for the final /l/ and emphasizing the sound]. And, he does the motions.
As Kelly demonstrated the dominant phonemes [/m/ /l/], her practice demonstrated Adams’ (1990) emphasis on assisting children to know that phonemes were present.

Although the study was designed to train parents to teach PA to their children during the tutoring sessions with the use of KMPs, additional findings emerged regarding a change in the parents’ understandings about concepts about print. Over the 15 week period, the data demonstrated that the parents developed the use of non-verbal and verbal scaffolds as they directed the children to text. Therefore, I turn to the discussion of the scaffolds used by the parents as a representation of changes in their literacy understanding.

Scaffolding concepts of print non-verbally. The data indicated an increased awareness in the parents’ understanding of concepts about print. An analysis of the entrance recordings of each of the seven dyads reading “Hickory, Dickory, Dock” at the beginning and end of the study illustrated common patterns of action among the parents. Five of the seven parents recited the poem to the child with expression. However, none of the five pointed to the text or guided attention to the printed word.

In contrast, the findings from the exit recordings indicated the parents’ use of the non-verbal scaffold of pointing to the text had emerged. The analysis indicated that the reading was a joint activity with the parents guiding engagement with the text by the end of the study. Five of the parents pointed to the text, matching their voice to each word as they read and pointed. The remaining two dyads had pointed to text in the entrance recordings. However, Will took on the responsibility of pointing accurately in the exit recordings, as his mother read aloud. The seventh child volleyed with his mother to
point. By the end of the study, the non-verbal scaffold of pointing to words was present in all of the readings of the poem, either by the parent or child.

_Scaffolding through pointing._ The findings demonstrated that five of the seven parents identified the non-verbal scaffold of pointing as a literacy understanding developed during the study. For instance, Cory pointed to the text in the entrance recording, but was unsure why. Yet, at the end of the study she communicated she learned the importance of pointing, as she said, “probably have him follow with his finger . . . the words. ‘Cause I would have never thought to do that before. I would have just, you know, read it . . . and, really, I mean, you would think it’s common sense, that . . . so they would know which word was which _[emphasis]_” (Cory, personal interview, July 26, 2010).

Similarly, Mary emphasized her heightened awareness regarding the non-verbal scaffold of pointing to text. She recalled learning not to slide her finger across the page, saying, “but you said [to] just put one pointer on the first letter . . . so they could see what you’re . . . what it begins with; what it sounds like . . . and I think that made a difference . . . he picked up better, when I did it [pointed] one [word] at a time” (Mary, personal Interview, July 13, 2010).

The presence of the scaffold of pointing accentuated a change in the parents’ literacy understanding of focusing children’s attention to text over the time of the study. Directing the child’s attention to a letter, matching the voice to text, and pointing to words were items addressed through pointing. Additionally, the parents developed verbal scaffolds to accompany pointing by the end of the study. The language to accompany
pointing represented another change in literacy understandings in the area of concepts about print that developed over the course of the study.

**Using language to accompany pointing.** The parents changed over the course of the study in their acquisition of the verbal scaffold of language to direct their children’s attention to printed text. The presence of the verbal scaffold represented a change in their understanding of concepts about print compared to the beginning of the study. Table 32 illustrates the language used in March as the parents or grandparent read, “Hickory, Dickory, Dock.”

**Table 32**

*Language Used to Direct Pointing in Entrance Recordings*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent</th>
<th>Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cory</td>
<td>It says . . . [before reading title]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelly</td>
<td>Look. We’re reading [pointing]. Point to it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Entrance recordings, Cory, 4/10/2010; Kelly, 4/10/2010)

Table 32 revealed that the other five adults did not use language or direct their children to print as they recited the poem in March. Please recall that six of the seven adults used language to accompany pointing in the exit recordings in July, as they read “Hickory, Dickory, Dock.” Table 33 revisits the parents’ use of language in the exit recordings.
As the parents read the poem, they directed the children to text with language. For example, Kelly, Mel, and Rose used the word, *title*. By pointing to the title and using language, they assisted their children in knowing where to begin to read. Attention to letters, words, and matching voice to text were items illuminated with the use of language and pointing for the preschoolers by the end of the study.
The scaffolds represented a change in the parents’ understanding of concepts about print. Six of the seven parents used language in the exit recordings. Although Cory and Kelly used language in the entrance recordings, their literacy understandings developed over the course of the study, also. For example, the language in the two tables indicated that Kelly expanded her repertoire of verbal directions to focus Mickey’s attention on the text over the course of the study.

In addition to the language used in the exit recordings, the findings showed that the parents identified learning to use specific language to assist their children with directionality, attention to letters, and punctuation. Six out of seven parents noted during the interviews that guiding the children’s directionality with the use of language was a new learning. Table 34 illustrates how many parents noted learning to scaffold their children with language in these areas over the course of the study.

Table 34
Parents Noting Learning Language for Certain Concepts About Print

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent</th>
<th>Directionality</th>
<th>Letters</th>
<th>Punctuation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carol</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cory</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julie</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelly</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mel</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rose</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Using language to scaffold understanding of directionality. As noted in Chapter 2, the tutoring sessions incorporated the Reading and Writing Monster (Appendix B) from Phonics in Motion (Kindervater, 2002). It is a directionality marker placed on the left side of the poem or writing surface to indicate the starting point. Playful interactions of getting away from the Monster and being pulled back demonstrate left to right movement. The parents reported using the language of the Reading and Writing Monster with their children. For example, Paul shared that he directed Jimmy with the language, as he said, “You always got to go away from the Reading Monster!” His mother added that the language helped because “a lot of children read backwards” (Paul and Carol, personal interview, July 26, 2010). Three other parents referred to the same use of language with their children. Two of the mothers were certified elementary teachers who expressed the scaffold of language for directionality helped them guide their children.

Using language to scaffold understanding of letters. In addition, four parents in the study noted learning specific language to talk about letters with their children. The two teachers acknowledged calling attention to lowercase forms for the preschooler expanded their learning. In addition, three mothers said discussing what a letter looked like helped them guide their children. They shared the identical example of using the language “l is a long, long line” from Phonics in Motion (Kindervater, 2002) as an illustration. The examples of the parents using language to teach letters responds to the National Reading Panel’s (2000) recommendation for the training of parents to teach their preschoolers about letters.
Using language to scaffold understanding of punctuation. The last example of the acquisition of specific language involved punctuation. Two parents learned to use the names of punctuation marks through interactions with the poem during the sessions. Rose shared how she did not know how to explain a comma, which Lucy called “a kickstand.” Noting her growth in understanding, she shared that now she tells Lucy, “Ok . . . pause” or “this means stop. Period” (Rose, personal communication, July 20, 2010).

The parents developed the scaffold of language to guide their preschooler’s understanding of concepts about print during the study. The findings indicated that specific language developed for directionality, letters, and punctuation for the parents. The awareness developed for six of the parents in the study, including the two college-educated teachers. The scaffold represented their deepening understandings of concepts about print from the participation in the tutoring sessions over the 15 week period.

The modeling of non-verbal and verbal scaffolds with the dyads in the study occurred with the use of poetry, nursery rhymes, and songs. The playful context related to another change for the parents in literacy understandings that developed over the course of the study. The change was an appreciation for the use of poetry with their preschool children.

Awareness of use of poetry. Substantial research supports the use of playful, interactive experiences as a context for authentic literacy experiences (Day et al., 2002; Maclean et al., 1987; Richgels, 2001; Yopp & Yopp, 2000). Each tutoring session embedded the work of KMPs within poetry, nursery rhymes, or songs, as opposed to focusing on the drill of isolated sounds and letters. The parents shared in the interviews
their discovery that poetry was fun, a manageable way to focus on learning, and a vehicle for experiencing rhyme.

Six of the parents noted valuing poetry as a fun way to engage their preschoolers in learning. Mel summed it up as, “We didn’t even know we were doing work” (Mel, personal communication, July 21, 2010). Likewise, Kelly shared the value of offering a simpler structure for the young child as a manageable way to focus learning. She enumerated, “people say stories . . . story books, but what about those simple poems? And, point to the words as you read. Point out the letter ‘s’ for star. Teach ’em that letter ‘s’ (Kelly, personal interview, July 10, 2010). In addition, poetry linked to the familiar in the parents’ background knowledge. As Rose noted, “and, I think it’s easier . . . even me [emphasis], as a child growing up . . . had heard” (Rose, personal communication, July 20, 2010).

Research notes that before manipulating the phoneme, it is important for children to experience the larger phonological units of rhyme and syllable (Lundberg et al., 1988; Stahl & Murray, 1994; Yopp & Yopp, 2000). The findings documented that four parents noted a new focus on rhyme for their children. For example, Julie referred to a song from a session and its extension into the lives of her children, “so just on their own . . . they love the rhyming, and the Willoughby, Wallaby, Woo . . . Yea! I mean, yea, yea [tickled]” (Julie, personal communication, July 21, 2010). Using poetry for spontaneous experiences with rhyme was a new understanding for these parents.

In summary, my first three research questions focused on interactions between the parents and the children with the non-verbal scaffolds of the KMPs, and the emergence of
non-verbal and verbal scaffolds to direct the children to printed text. Within the discussion, the developing understandings of the parents related to the initiation of numerous literacy engagements for the children within the sessions and beyond.

Central to the discussion was the development of parents as independent teachers of PA over the course of the study. Senechal’s (2006) meta-analysis called for direct involvement of parents in literacy development, noting the significance of training parents. As the parents taught their children over the course of the study, a change occurred in the children’s PA ability and concepts of print. The growth directs me to the discussion of my last research question.

Research Question Four: Change in the Children’s PA

The following discussion summarizes the results of the literacy assessments I administered at the beginning and end of the study. I address the change in PA specifically and additional literacy findings resulting from the assessments for the participants and non-participants. I conclude by linking the increased performance of the children in the study in the areas of PA and CAP to the specific literacy understandings the parents developed during the same time period. In this way, I highlight the importance of parents being trained to teach specific literacy skills, such as PA.

I administered eight assessments at the beginning and end of the study that were organized into two groups. The first group of assessments (Group 1) addressed the change in the children’s PA specifically. As noted, measuring the change in the PA of the children was the focus of the fourth research question guiding this study. The findings of these assessments highlighted the preschooler’s ability to hear and identify
sounds in oral language and express the awareness of sounds with the use of letters. The assessments in Group 1 were: Letter Identification (LI), Assessment of Sounds, Developmental Spelling Assessment (DSA), and the sub-tests of Rhyming and Alliteration of Get it! Got it! Go! (GGG).

The second group of assessments (Group 2) provided additional information regarding literacy. The assessments within the latter group were the Ohio Word Test, Concepts About Print (CAP), and the sub-test of Picture Naming of GGG. The measures provided additional findings pertinent to the growth of the preschool children over the course of the 15-week study.

Please recall that beyond the seven participants who attended a minimum of 12 tutoring sessions with the same adult, three other families signed onto the study and participated in the testing. However, two did not participate in the study and the third attended four sessions, with three different adults. The discussion of the results of the performance for all of the children on the measures for Group 1 and Group 2 follows.

**Group 1 assessments.** The findings from the measures of Group 1 addressed the children’s growth in PA. The children in the study demonstrated increased performance on each of the measures. I revisit their growth, beginning with the results of Letter Identification (LI). The performance on this task related to their developing ability to encode phonemes with letters.

**Letter Identification (LI).** Each of the participants increased in LI over the course of the study with five children increasing by one stanine. The three lowest scores upon entering ranged from 36-39 correct letters. By the end of the study, two of the three
students increased from the fourth to the average range, or fifth stanine, and the third scored within the seventh stanine, using Clay’s (2002) measurement for children between 5.0 and 5.50 years of age. These three children were too young for the measure, yet it demonstrated growth over time.

In contrast, one of the three non-participants increased performance on LI by six letters, measuring growth from the second to the third stanine by the end of the study. One child gained two letters, but remained in the fourth stanine. And, the third child did not increase in LI and remained in the first stanine.

Assessment of sounds. The children in the study increased their identification of sounds by an average of 9.8 accurate sounds. The greatest gain was 13 sounds. The smallest gain was 8, which was achieved by three of the seven children over the course of the study.

In contrast, one of the three non-participants increased by 4 sounds. The second child regressed in accurate sound identification by 1. The third child remained the same with 0 correct for sound identification over the same time period.

Beyond the accurate identification of sound, two other changes occurred with the children as they responded to the task over the course of the study. First, the responses changed from responding primarily with a word for the letter in March to the sound of the letter in July. For example, John responded to the letter F with “fire” in March and /f/ in July. Six of the seven participants shifted in their type of response. In addition, six of the seven participants accompanied their responses for the sound of the letter with the
scaffold of the kinesthetic motion for the phoneme (KMP). The use of the KMP in the responses ranged from 2 to 14 times.

The non-participants shifted in answer type, also. Two of the children responded with words for the letters in March and sounds in July. The third child responded with random letter names during the entrance and exit assessments. Although there was a shift in answer type from words to sounds, the increase in accurate identification of sounds occurred with only one non-participant. She identified 4 accurate sounds, compared to the average increase of 9.8 sounds for the children who participated in the study.

**Developmental spelling assessment.** The children in the study increased their performance in PA, as measured by their performance on the DSA, over the course of the study. In March, two of the children encoded phonemes with letters. Kara encoded with 5 accurate phonemes and LJ encoded with 10 accurate phonemes. The other five participants did not encode with letters; and four responded with non-alphabetic writing. By the end of the study, each child in the study encoded phonemes with letters. The greatest gain for encoding phonemes accurately was 52 for Kara; and the smallest gain was 5 accurate phonemes recorded by Will. The average increase was 21 phonemes recorded accurately with letters by the end of the study.

In addition to the increase in encoding phonemes accurately with letters, all of the participants’ attempts to encode words were without hesitation in July. Four of the children moved from non-alphabetic writing to encoding with letters by the end of the study. Another child moved from not responding in March to encoding 21 accurate phonemes with letters by July. Further, five children increased in their number of
attempts to write a word over the course of the study. The numbers of tries ranged from 5 to 25 words per child.

By comparison, no change occurred in the performance of the non-participants on the encoding of phonemes from March to July, as measured by the DSA. They wrote in the same manner in July as they had in March. Two children continued to use non-alphabetic writing and the third did not respond in March or July. Also, the number of attempts remained the same in March and July with 5 words.

**Get it! Got it! Go! (GGG): Rhyming.** Each of the seven participants increased in the *Rhyming* sub-test of GGG between March and July. One of the non-participants increased performance. However, two of the non-participants did not increase in the same measure.

**Get it! Got it! Go! (GGG): Alliteration.** Six of the seven participants increased performance on the *Alliteration* sub-test of GGG between March and July. In contrast, the non-participants did not increase on the same measure. Their accuracy in the identification of a picture beginning with the same sound as the sample picture decreased for each of the non-participants over the same time period.

**Group 2 assessments.** The findings from the measures of Group 2 addressed additional information regarding the literacy development of the children from March to July. The data reflected results for the children in reading vocabulary, Concepts About Print and *Picture Naming*. The children in the study demonstrated increased performance on each of the measures. I revisit the findings for the participants and non-participants on each measure, beginning with the Ohio Word Test.
Ohio Word Test. Four of the children in the study demonstrated growth in this measure. Two of the four children increased reading vocabulary by a score on one word; and two increased by 2 words on the list of 20 words. The increase of one or two words indicated growth for the four preschool children who participated in the study, as measured by Clay’s (2002) normalized stanine results for incoming first graders.

Two additional findings emerged in the children’s approach to reading words. They were: (a) the development of the understanding that the prompts were words; and (b) an increase in the number of attempts to read a word. During the pre-test, two children used words in their responses. Three responded with random letters. Another child spelled one word accurately and the other child did not respond.

During the post-assessment, six of the seven children responded to the list with words. Although most answers were incorrect, the children developed the strategy of seeing the word prompt as a word, as opposed to a letter. Thinking back to the example of Lucy’s responses illuminates the understanding that words on the list represented a word. She prefaced her responses with, “It’s a ______.” The exception was Jimmy who transitioned from the response of random letters in March to spelling three of four attempts accurately in July. Further, he chunked two letters, /an/, as he read the word, ‘and,’ followed by saying the last letter, “d.”

The additional change was an increased number of attempts to read words for four of the seven children in the study. Four increased from five attempts in March to attempting to read every word on the list of 20 in July. The other three children remained the same in their attempts over the course of the study.
The children in the control were similar to the three children in the study who did not increase in their reading vocabulary. However, none of the children in the control demonstrated a change in their approach to reading the list, or their number of attempts to read the items from March to July. One of the children did not respond and one responded with two letter names, unrelated to the words and three numbers. The third child responded with random words, as did the participants. However, she did not look at the list of words before she responded.

**Concepts About Print (CAP).** The findings in Tables 35 and 36 display the change in stanines for the participants and non-participants respectively in CAP (Clay, 2002), standardized for children five years and above. Although the children, with the exception of two, were younger than this, the stanine scores were used to note growth in the particular measure.

Each participant demonstrated growth in this measure. Clay (2002) noted that CAP indicated what “learners have been noticing about the written language around them in their environments” (p. 37). The change in the stanine scores for CAP pointed to a heightened awareness for each child of noticing more about print than was present at the beginning of the study.

In contrast, Table 36 displays the lack of change in stanine growth for the control group. Please reflect back to Clay’s (2002) assertion that stanine growth correlates with increased awareness of print. The non-participants demonstrated a lack of change in what they noticed about written language from the beginning to the end of the 15 week time period. As Clay noted further, the measure reports “what children are attending to”
Table 35

*Pre- and Post-Observation Results for Participants: Concepts of Print Stanine Scores*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PRE</th>
<th>POST</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jimmy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>+6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kara</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LJ</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>+5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>+5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mickey</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>+5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>+4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 36

*Pre- and Post-Observation Survey Results for Non-Participants: Concepts of Print Stanine Scores*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PRE</th>
<th>POST</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jasmine</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyrone</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(p. 37). The non-participants appeared to be attending to print in the same manner they had at the beginning of the study, compared to the children who participated in the study.

*Get it! Got it! Go! (GGG): Picture Naming.* Six of the seven participants increased in the Picture Naming sub-test of GGG. John’s performance remained
unchanged from March to July on Picture Naming. Likewise, the three non-participants increased in the Picture Naming task of GGG. Each child increased in the number of pictures they identified accurately from March and July.

In summary, I revisited the results of the eight assessments I administered at the beginning and end of the study. The children in the study demonstrated growth on all of the tests I administered. The measures of Sound Assessment, DSA, and CAP noted the most significant growth in their performance. In the following, I address the importance of these measures related to the format of the weekly tutoring sessions.

The focus of the study was the development of PA with the use of the scaffold of the KMPs in interactions between parents and children. The positive results of the Sound Assessment and the DSA demonstrated the potential of increasing PA development with the use of the KMPs with the protocol of the weekly tutoring sessions. In addition, the experiences supported significant progress by the preschool children on CAP. Therefore, I discuss the link between the success of the children on these measures and the experiences the study offered the parents and children in these particular areas.

The children’s experiences during the study broadened their exposure to the exploration of sound and to print during the sessions and expanded into their daily lives. A review of the experiences within the format of the weekly lesson is pertinent to its relationship to the growth of the children. Each tutoring session provided experiences for the parents and children to learn about PA development and to interact with written text. The lessons incorporated the use of the KMPs to accompany sounds during the recitation of poems, or while singing songs.
The lessons focused also on the corresponding letter for the sound embedded in the text. I demonstrated the reading of the text each week. In turn, each parent and child read the text together and practiced the writing of the letter of focus on a slate. They took the copy of the poem or song home and extended the use of the KMPs to experiences beyond the sessions.

The parents incorporated the KMPs into their daily experiences using them to accompany sounds in conversations. Examples, such as incorporating the KMPs at a stop sign while driving, illuminated the integration. In this way, they heightened attention to sounds in oral language interactions. Likewise, they drew their children’s attention to print by pointing and using specific language to talk about critical text features.

The parents identified attending to sound and drawing attention to the printed form as new understandings for them. Their attention to sound in oral language exchanges and to features of written language increased the time they engaged the children in experiences with sound and print over the course of the study. The enrichment of experience in both of these areas supported the children’s significant growth in Sound Assessment, the DSA, and CAP.

The increase in performance linked directly to the increased experiences of the children, based on their participation with their parents in the weekly lessons. Clay (2002) noted that growth on the measure of CAP reflected what “learners have been noticing about the written language around them in their environment” (p. 37). I extend this to the measures of Sound Assessment and the DSA in this study. The results of these, coupled with CAP, point to an increase in the experience of attending to sound and
print, through independent exploration by the children and via the direction of the parents. Therefore, the progress on these measures demonstrated that the children were noticing more about how sound and text function in their authentic experiences.

In contrast, the non-participants remained the same in their experience with sound and text. They did not improve on the Assessment of Sound, the DSA, or in their performance on CAP. This brings me to the discussion of the most significant areas of change on the three measures for the children in the study.

The first measure was Sound Assessment. The average gain was 9.8 sounds, with the greatest gain of 13, and the least was 8. As the participants responded to the letter prompt with a sound, six of the seven chose to use the scaffold of the KMP. The number of times a KMP was used ranged from 2 to 14 times by a child. In contrast, one of the three non-participants improved with an increase of 4 sounds, compared to the least amount of gain of 8 acquired sounds for a participant. The other two children did not improve in knowledge of sounds. The DSA provided the same type of marked growth in the participants, with no change in the non-participants.

Four of the children in the study improved their performance on the DSA from non-alphabetic writing and the initial score of zero to the final scores of 5, 7, 21, and 35 correct phonemes encoded. In addition, Kara encoded 5 correct phonemes of the 15 attempted in March; and she encoded 57 correct phonemes of 83 attempted in July. The smallest gain in the recording of phonemes was 5 correct and the greatest gain was 52. The increase of the average number of correctly encoded phonemes for the participants changed from 2 correct in March to 23 correct in July.
Equally important was the common response to writing a word by the end of the study. No child in the study hesitated to attempt to encode with letters to the prompt of a word by the end of the study, including the four who wrote non-alphabetically in March. In contrast, the non-participants did not improve on the measure of the DSA. Reflecting back, the three non-participants encoded non-alphabetically in March and in July. No response of encoding with letters developed over the same time period.

The participants made great strides in Concepts About Print, also. An increase of four stanines was the average. The greatest change was an increase of six stanines with the least being an increase of one. In contrast, the performance of the non-participants did not change on this measure. Their initial assessment placed each of them within stanine one, similar to five of the participants. The exit assessment indicated the non-participants remained within stanine one. Comparatively, the participants who initially placed in the first stanine, demonstrated the following gains: one child increased by three stanines; three children increased by four stanines; and one child increased by five stanines over the course of the study.

The significant growth of some of the children on the measures calls for reflection upon my extended years of teaching young children. The growth in the areas of PA, DSA, and Concepts About Print was stronger than I have seen for some children in an academic year of kindergarten. Although the study lasted 15 weeks, the average rate of attendance was 12 weeks per parent and child. When you total the 12 half-hour sessions, the time amounts to approximately one day of school! The positive growth in the performance involved experiences for the children beyond the six hours of tutoring.
sessions. The significance of the parents broadening the children’s experiences authentically in these areas cannot be understated.

Apart from the findings of the standardized measures, informal conversations supported the success of the tutoring sessions in teaching parents to interact with their children to develop early literacy skills. I encountered parents and teachers of the children in the year that followed the study because I work in the district where the study took place. One parent shared that her son and another child from the study attended a private kindergarten. She volunteered in their classroom and reported that the two children were reading by the end of year. She exclaimed, “They were the stars!”

Another mother called me to report that her son was reading by the end of December and was very successful academically, despite behavioral challenges. Likewise, the grandmother of another child reported that he “had no problems in reading” in kindergarten.

The teachers of two other participants reported that they had no difficulties with reading or writing in kindergarten, although they struggled in other areas. The seventh child moved and I had no occasion to interact with his family or teacher. However, the reports indicated that the tutoring sessions supported the children in their literacy development in the first year of formal schooling.

Beyond the conversations with people related to the study, I interacted with two teachers of children in the control group. Two of the children experienced difficulty in kindergarten, with one of them qualifying for pull-out intervention for early literacy skills
for the entire school year. I had no encounters with anyone involved with the third child, so am unable to report on the kindergarten year.

In summary, the experiences within the tutoring sessions and beyond the formal setting broadened the children’s interactions in PA development and engagement with text. The parents noted an increased awareness of the importance of sound and guided their children to more frequent interactions in PA development in their everyday lives with the use of the KMPs, especially in conversation. The children incorporated the use of the KMPs independently, and six of them chose to use the scaffold as they identified sounds in the exit texting. Likewise, the parents increased focus upon critical text features. They reported learning to point to text and using specific language about concepts of print as they read with their children at home.

The tutoring sessions engaged the parents and children in deepening their understanding of PA development and concepts of print and led to increased experiences for the children in these areas. And, the children’s performance on the standardized assessments confirmed their growth in these areas of early literacy learning.

Implications

Four categories of implications exist that offer suggestions for practice for children, parents, teachers, and schools. The categories of implications are: (a) the use of the kinesthetic motion for the phoneme (KMP); (b) the engagement of the preschooler with features of text; (c) the role of parents as tutors; and (d) the involvement of parents as equal partners in the academic development of their children. In the following discussion, I address each of the seven implications within the category of the use of the
KMPs. Each of them involves the integration of the KMP into a form of practice with young children in the development of PA.

**Implications of the Use of the KMP**

The use of the KMP has the potential of helping preschool children develop PA. The use of the KMP offers a practice for integrating a new concrete marker in the development of PA with preschoolers. Research supports the use of concrete markers in the development of PA; yet, the concrete markers used in classrooms are often formal. For example, many teachers use Elkonin boxes in Reading Recovery lessons in the development of PA. Such use requires a formal setting, as opposed to the less formal use of the KMP. Incorporating the KMP to identify phonemes while a child is singing a song in the car, or chanting a poem allows for the integration of the scaffold into authentic experiences with oral language in a playful manner for the young child. The ease of associating the KMP with a particular phoneme informally is similar to calling up a gesture in a song, such as bunny ears for the word, rabbit. This type of playful interaction with sound supported the development of PA for the children.

The informal use of the KMPs has the potential of supporting the preshooler’s independent exploration of sound and increases their engagement time in PA experiences. The study found that each of the children in the study chose to use the scaffold of the KMP regularly in extensions in their daily lives as they talked or sang; and six of the seven incorporated the use of them voluntarily in the exit testing when asked what sound a letter made. The use of the KMP increased the amount of time
the children attended to sound outside of the tutoring sessions, supporting their developing ability to hear, express and manipulate sounds in oral language.

Reflecting back to the findings, the story of Mickey exemplified how the use of the KMP scaffolded the young child’s independent exploration of sound and assisted in PA development. He analyzed the name of the store, *Save-a-Lot* independently. He performed the sounds /s/, /l/, and /t/ with the KMPs and announced within earshot of his mother, “I thought it was *Save-a-Lock!*” Mickey’s experience demonstrated how the use of the KMP scaffolded the young child’s independent and authentic exploration of sound in his daily life. Similar experiences among the children pointed to the preschool children initiating the informal use of KMPs to explore sounds independently, and thereby extending engagement time in PA activities. Teaching the KMPs to the parents assisted their development in PA, also.

**Teaching parents to use the KMPs has the potential for supporting the development of PA with the preschool child.** As noted earlier, children develop PA in their unending interactions and exploration with the sounds of oral language (Ferguson, 1986; Lindblom, 1992). The study found that teaching parents to use the KMPs increased the parents’ understanding of the importance of sound in early literacy experiences and was found to increase the time they directed their children to listen for and identify sounds in their oral exchanges. The parents reported the use of the KMPs was *like playing or fun*, and integrated them into experiences with the entire family on a regular basis. Therefore, the practice of teaching parents increased the opportunity for the young children to play with sounds in a specific way at home and assisted the
development of PA. Senechal (2007) noted the importance of teaching parents to teach a particular literacy skill to their children. The practice of teaching them to use the KMPs to explore sound is an example of such.

**The use of the KMPs has the potential of assisting parents in the remediation of speech with the preschool child.** Three of the children in the study faced speech articulation difficulties, with one on an educational plan for remediation. These parents reported that the use of the KMPs assisted their ability to support their children in the correct articulation of sounds. The ability for the parent to *show* the child the isolated sound with the use of the KMP heightened the child’s awareness of the particular difficulty. Executing the KMP with the proper tension allowed the child to imitate and attempt the appropriate physical tension as he or she emitted the speech sound. The children and parents both used the KMPs at times of confusion to clarify their communication.

**The use of the KMP has the potential for assisting the young child in writing and invented spelling.** When a child holds a KMP in front of the body physically, it allows the phoneme to be concretized as a manipulative to assist the recording of the letter on paper. The KMP creates a representation, or visual, of the elusive phoneme and supports the practice of invented spelling. Therefore, using the KMPs with young children as they write at home and in preschools scaffolds the young child’s invented spelling.

The KMP simplifies the process of writing the sound down during invented spelling. In my experience, many children use the KMP during invented spelling to
anchor the sound in a word. As they hold the KMP in front of them, they write the corresponding letter for that sound. In many instances, the young child, especially the struggler, does not know the name of the letter he or she is encoding, yet is matching the letter to the KMP that represents the sound. In this way, the experience is a one-to-one match of what the child hears to what they write. This is contrasted with the multi-step procedure of saying the sound repeatedly in an attempt to isolate and hear it, attaching the name of a letter, and then writing. During this more complicated process, the elusive phoneme is not anchored. Without the concrete image, some children lose the focus of the sound.

The image of the KMP supports the child’s development of the concept that the phoneme exists, and ultimately has a function in invented spelling. As Zull (2002) integrated brain function and learning, he emphasized the importance of images as the basis for the construction of concepts. He stressed the richness of images and the reality that “[images] are by far the easiest things for the human brain to remember” (p. 145). Zull stressed the significance of concrete experiences “for understanding, because it produces images for our brains to analyze, rearrange, manipulate, and turn into action” (p. 145). The image of the KMP gives the child support as he or she engages in invented spelling.

The use of the KMP has the potential of assisting teachers in their assessment of children’s writing. In my classroom experiences, young children performed the KMP and then recorded the sound with letters during invented spelling. Often, they encoded incorrectly. For example, they might have done the KMP for /i/ and encoded ‘e’
consistently. The performance of the KMP allowed me to see what the child was hearing and assess whether the code matched the sound. The identification of the sound was accurate; the letter-sound correspondence was the error. Often, when the child is asked about what was heard, he or she will respond with the sound of the letter that was encoded on the page, rather than what was heard. *Showing* what was heard often clarifies the confusion and allows the teacher the opportunity to assist in the learning. Therefore, the use of the KMP offers a means of assessing the child’s performance as they move from identifying what they hear to representing it.

The use of the KMP for assessment extends to assisting teachers with young children who speak a dialect. They are often misjudged for misspelling or encoding inaccurately, when they have an excellent command of the sounds of their language. I have been asked many times in workshops about children who cannot write sounds in order, or misspell words, such as the standard English use of the word, ‘ask.’ Some young children will write *aks* (/a/ /k/ /s/) to accurately encode what they speak, but are misjudged.

The KMPs are clarifying. By directing the child to “show me,” the child demonstrates the phonemes he or she heard. It becomes immediately obvious that the child has recorded the phonemes in order, and with accuracy. It becomes a powerful tool for the child to communicate what is clearly ‘in his head,’ as opposed to what an adult might incorrectly assess. As PA demands the skill of hearing and identifying sounds, then teachers must be clear about what they are assessing. The KMPs assist in this task.
The use of the KMP has the potential for broadening the experience of PA development for young children. The climate of testing young children upon school entry often stresses assessments that determine how many sounds they can identify in a designated amount of time. Directed teaching addresses deficits in the area of PA with lessons from programs with a one-size-fits-all approach. Often, the task is one of quick recall of the sounds for letters, as opposed to the ability to hear, express, and manipulate sounds in our language.

Attaching the use of the KMPs to activities broadens the experience in two specific ways. As mentioned previously, it incorporates the use of a concrete marker for the phoneme; and, it supports a multi-modal path of learning for the development of strong skills. Its use invites the exploration of sound, as opposed to a skill reduced to a quick matching of sounds to letters. If nothing more, it offers a kinesthetic modality for the individual child who needs an approach that might differ from one mandated in a prescribed program.

In summary, I discussed seven implications under the category of the KMP. Each implication extends to suggested practice in the development of PA. Next, I address the second category of implications. The implication suggests ways to support the young child’s attention to critical text features.

Implication for Engaging Children With Features of Text

Parents and teachers can help children take notice of concepts about print with the use of the non-verbal scaffold of pointing and use of academic language. The interaction with the printed poems in this study coupled with the demonstrations of
pointing and the use of consistent academic language proved effective in increasing the children’s concepts about print over the course of the study. The parents were unaware that the scaffold of pointing engaged the children with critical features such as return sweep, directionality, the concept of a word, and letter-sound correspondence.

Likewise, using the academic language as the parents directed the children to text was a new awareness. For example, some parents noted that they never used the academic words, *comma* and *period*, or *capital* and *lowercase*. They did not know to articulate “Let’s start here” as they read, or to use the word, *title*. The children’s performance on Concepts About Print (Clay, 2002) increased dramatically over the course of the study.

Therefore, teachers and parents can assist the preschool child to take note of critical text features by pointing and using specific academic language as they direct them to engage with text. The implication highlighted the parents learning to scaffold their children in specific concepts of print. The next category of implications addresses the category of the role of parents as tutors.

**Implications for the Role of Parents as Tutors**

The involvement of the parents as tutors pointed to two direct implications for practice. They stem from Wood et al.’s (1976) focus upon the necessary elements for effective tutoring. First, the tutor must understand the task. Second, the tutor must understand the tutee-the preschool child in this study. I address the implication related to the task first.
Parents can become effective tutors of their children in PA. One element of effective tutoring is an understanding of the task (Wood et al., 1976). Prior to the study, the parents noted they were unaware of the importance of calling children’s attention to sounds. Over the course of the study, they gained an understanding of PA and extended the learning beyond the sessions. They became proficient in guiding their children in the task of hearing, expressing, and identifying sounds in their daily lives. This knowledge supported their ability to tutor their children in PA.

As the parents mastered the task of PA development, they demonstrated an understanding of the child, also. Therefore, they fulfilled the two critical elements as effective tutors; their tutoring was “task and tutee dependent.” The element of understanding the child in learning experiences leads to the second implication related to involving parents as tutors.

The nature of the interactions between the parents and the children has the potential of informing teachers of ways to engage young children in learning. The parents in this study manifested an understanding of the tutee, or child in two specific ways. They adjusted to the level of engagement of the child in the learning activities and they manifested specific characteristics as they interacted with their children. I explain each of these for the purpose of broadening teachers’ view of the young child’s orientation as they interact in a learning context with adults.

First, the parents supported the children’s engagement in the activities at all times. The level of support fluctuated continuously, depending on the child. They gave more support by modeling when the child was less engaged, and reduced their support when
the child took on more responsibility. The parents’ response was always child, or tutee dependent. They did not demand participation, but adjusted their responsibility for support to the child’s level of engagement.

Two particular characteristics were intrinsic to their interactions and manifested attention to the child. They were: (a) close physical proximity of the children to the parents at all times—often touching; and (b) the maintenance of private communication. The parents and children would often whisper to each other and the redirection of the child was never public.

The children in this study entered formal kindergarten less than 6 weeks after the culmination of the study. Teachers of young children, such as the children in the study, might survey parents to learn about the engagement pattern that parents and children have established, especially in interactions that involve new learning. Does the child need time to retreat, until he or she gains confidence? Do they often observe for awhile, before they take on a new task? Do they seek close physical proximity when they seem to be faltering? What is the child’s response when interactions are public?

The current climate in schools often emphasizes mastery of requisite skills for young children as they enter kindergarten. The focus sometimes emphasizes the task and blurs the needs of the child. Referring to the elements of tutoring, the nature of the parents’ interactions demonstrated the relational aspect of tutoring and an understanding of their children at all times.

Teachers might plan for small group instruction and one-on-one conferencing on a daily basis to support individual interactions. The structure designates time to know
and understand children through personal contact and conversation, as well as skill acquisition. The parents informed the strength of such an approach as they tutored their children.

In summary, I addressed the implications within the category of parents as tutors. The implications involved their ability to attend to both the task and the tutee. The context of the weekly tutoring sessions supported the parents’ developing understanding of PA. Their participation in the process of learning over time directs the discussion to the last category of implications of the study: involving parents as equal partners in the academic development of their children.

**Implication for Involvement of Parents as Equal Partners**

The protocol of the tutoring sessions has the potential for involving parents as more equal partners in the education of their children. The National Reading Panel advised engaging parents as trainers of a literacy skill and Edwards (2005) recommended providing a plan for them to support the teaching of their children in literacy. The tutoring protocol supported both of these recommendations over time.

The format of the tutoring sessions supported the parents as they learned in joint participation with each other. They met for a common reason; they practiced what they learned from the demonstrations; and they talked with each other before and after the sessions. Most importantly, they got to know each other as they constructed meaning together in the group. In this way, a *community of practice* (Lave & Wenger, 1991) emerged that supported their acquisition of the knowledge through the shared experience of working together.
Mel’s example illustrated the group’s community of practice. She noted that belonging to the group promoted conversations and developing understandings. She recalled her communication with Julie: “did you pick that up? Did you do this with your child this week?” She highlighted the shared experience as she synthesized, “I have told my friends about it . . . they wish they were involved in the same thing I was involved in because of the setting . . . because we were learning together” (Mel, personal interview, July 21, 2010).

The protocol of sharing experiences regularly in a group designed for a common purpose upheld the parents’ learning and their perception of themselves as partners in their children’s academic development. In addition, it supported the transition from being dependent on the professional to becoming independent and confident in teaching a particular skill. In this way, the weekly tutoring sessions supported their learning over time and assisted their ability to teach their children.

Schools might examine their definition of the role of the parents within the community. Do the parents function solely in roles such as the PTA, Muffins for Moms, or Donuts for Dads? Are experiences for gaining information to support their children based on transmission models, such as the Open House or designated evenings for informing them of academic practices? If so, when do parents have the chance to access the knowledge they need to support their children? Do they have an opportunity to learn in a format that supports joint participation and equal partnership in the academic development of their children?
Schools might structure the involvement of parents in a manner that invites participation in learning how to assist their children’s academic development. This calls for refocusing the practice from telling parents how to assist their children, or assuming that they know, to establishing groups by which they can learn cooperatively. Including the children in the experience extends the opportunity of learning through practice.

Planning for equal partnership implies professionals and parents coming together in a joint venture to deepen specific academic understandings. It is more of a book club approach that forms due to a common purpose or interest; and it values what each member brings to the conversation over time. The benefits grow for parents, children, and teachers, parallel to the emerging relationships.

Summary

In this section, I addressed four categories of implications. The main categories of implications were: (a) the use of the kinesthetic motion for the phoneme (KMP); (b) the engagement of the preschooler with features of text; (c) the role of parents as tutors; and (d) the involvement of parents as equal partners in the academic development of their children. Within each category, I discussed pertinent implications.

The seven implications related to the use of the KMP were as follows: (a) potential of improving PA development for the preschool child; (b) the use of the KMP by children to increase the amount of time spent exploring sound; (c) teaching the parents the KMPs to develop understanding and increase their direction of the child in PA activities; (d) the use of the KMP in the remediation of speech; (e) incorporation of the KMP to assist children in invented spelling; (f) the use of the KMPs to assist teacher’s
ability to assess PA and early writing; and (g) the integration of the KMP into school practice to broaden the experience of PA lessons. Each suggested ways to integrate the concrete marker into authentic experiences with the young child.

The second category addressed engaging the young child with critical features of text. I discussed how parents learned to point to the text and the use academic language as they read poems with their children. The scaffolds have the potential of improving the preschooler’s concepts of print.

The last two categories involved parents in the process of educating their children. The two categories were: (a) the role of parents as tutors; and (b) the involvement of parents as equal partners in the academic development of their children. The first category explored the potential of parents as effective tutors. Two implications existed in the category. First, they demonstrated their effectiveness through an understanding of PA and their knowledge of their children. Second, they offered insights about interactions with young children during learning. The last category addressed the implication of a protocol for assisting parents to learn academic skills through participation with professionals over time. The tutoring sessions provided a context for parents to learn and practice skills to assist them in their teaching of an academic skill. In the next section, I address recommendations for further research.

**Recommendations for Further Study**

Several recommendations for further research emerged as a result of this study. They suggest extending examination to the following areas: (a) the study of the use of the KMP in various types of settings, such as larger groups and for the specific focus on
speech development; (b) an examination of the experiences for young children in preschool settings, especially daycares, to have opportunities to explore sounds in language; (c) an analysis that focuses on the relational component in learning, manifested by specific characteristics of interaction; and (d) a study of tutoring sessions designed to support parents’ ability to assist their children in other literacy areas beyond PA. In the following discussion, I elaborate on each of the recommendations.

First, the use of the KMPs as a concrete marker generated specific questions for further consideration. Their use in the study involved only seven parents and their children. Therefore, studies might be guided by the following questions, “How does the PA of the preschool child change using KMPs in parent-training sessions with a large group of dyads?” Similarly, “How does the PA of children change using KMPs in classrooms that have a large number of children per teacher, such as a preschool, daycare or kindergarten?”

Further studies in larger group settings might ask, “How does the PA of young children change with the use of the KMPs compared to children not using the scaffold?” In addition, evaluating whether the use of the KMP supports the particular population of kindergarten or first grade strugglers in their development of PA in the classroom is suggested. Many strugglers are pulled-out for small group intervention. Studying the use of the scaffold for strugglers to support access to Tier I instruction might warrant examination, also.

Another extension suggesting further investigation relates to the use of the KMPs with young children in speech development. Three parents reported successful speech
remediation with the use of the KMP in authentic experiences. Therefore, further study of the use of the KMP by speech and language therapists might be warranted. This particular investigation extends to the population of learners of English as a second language or children with hearing impairments, as accurate articulation of sounds is often a difficulty.

The next recommendation relates to the availability of particular types of literacy experiences for some children. The children in this study lived in an urban district and attended a daycare within it. The findings illuminated the lack of attention to sounds in oral language or letter-sound correspondence in the practice of the daycare or in the children’s homes. Research into the opportunities available for children to engage in PA activities might inform recommendations for the broadening of literacy experiences for some young children, in particular those children in daycare settings.

Beyond the literacy focus, further studies into the relational side of learning as manifested by interaction characteristics are suggested. Each of the parents described the KMPs as “fun” or “like playing.” In addition to enjoyment, the interactions of the parents and children demonstrated three characteristics: support of the child’s level of engagement, close physical proximity, and private communication. Within a classroom, it might be worthwhile to examine the successful academic development related to the particular characteristics of support demonstrated by parents. Of particular interest might be the discrepancy in the presence of characteristics representing support for the struggler compared to the achiever.
Lastly, the tutoring sessions supported the parents’ learning within a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991) that developed over time. The parents learned to teach the skill of PA within this context. The protocol for training parents might be used to teach parents how to develop other literacy skills with their children. The focus for further studies with parents might be: phonics and fluency through poetry, and particular comprehension and vocabulary strategies. Within each of these investigations, it would be beneficial to evaluate the extension of the practices into the lives of the children outside of the school.

**Conclusion**

This study suggests that teaching parents to guide their preschool children in the development of PA through interactive tutoring sessions was effective. But why would we want to involve parents in the teaching of specific literacy skills? Several reasons became apparent. First of all, the parents brought an understanding of the children and the ability to engage them in the literacy activities in the sessions of this study to develop PA. They knew, at some level, how to assist the development for their own particular child. Each parent tailored a uniquely targeted and effective approach to develop the skill of PA.

Secondly, research points to the importance of involving parents. Burgess (1999) noted that children who engage in literacy experiences at home have higher PA development. Teaching parents to guide children with the use of the concrete marker of a KMP in PA development increased the children’s literacy engagement outside of the directed sessions. Hence, the children had a greater opportunity to develop the skill. In
addition, the success of the parents in teaching their children PA after they participated in the on-going sessions supported Senechal’s (2006) findings that it was more effective to engage parents to teach a skill than merely suggesting reading to their children or having the children read. The children’s growth in PA was evidence of this effect over a short time.

Thirdly, many parents do not know how to guide their children in specific skill development, such as PA. Although Head Start and other programs mandate parental involvement, the type of involvement does not always support the children’s literacy growth at home or the parents’ understanding of how to assist the preschool child in literacy development. High stakes testing identifies many children who enter school not ready to learn. Often, in urban districts such as the one in which this study took place, the parents are criticized for their lack of support of their children’s early academic development. Yet, many have not had the opportunity to learn how to support their children.

Kelly, a mother in the study confirmed this; she had the desire without the knowledge of how to proceed. She discussed the classes that single mothers, like herself, attend at clinics before their children are born. She recalled her list, “like there’s Lamaze classes . . . sibling classes, how to handle the new baby.” She asked reflectively, “But, what about more literacy coaches?” (Kelly, personal interview, July 10, 2010).

Kelly noted that many parents are unaware of the importance of learning about literacy and are not afforded opportunities to learn. She relayed that the focus is often on other realities: “especially growing up now, it’s more economic, so speaking, you worry
about those [economic difficulties] . . . what about the little things [literacy]? So maybe it’s you’re not taught to really . . . pay attention to those details, how’d you ever know?” (Kelly, personal interview, July 10, 2010).

This study provided a model for developing the understanding Kelly desired and ultimately put into place for her son, Mickey. The format provided a context for all of the parents to learn how to support their children’s academic development. The experiences offered on-going modeling and support until the parents felt confident and independent in teaching the specific skill of PA.

In the end, involving parents in early literacy development by engaging them in a model of participation for the purpose of learning was effective for them and their children in the development of PA. The study upheld their willingness to learn, while it confirmed their need for support to develop necessary understandings. The tutoring sessions supported these young children in authentic literacy experiences before school entrance; and the parents in this study presented themselves as an untapped resource as teachers of their children.
APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

LETTER OF INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN STUDY
Appendix A

Letter of Invitation to Participate in Study

Dear Parents of _______________________,

You and your child are invited to participate in a study titled, “Training Parents to Teach Phonemic Awareness.” Phonemic awareness is developed in the preschool years as children play with sounds and language. It is important for success in reading.

If you are interested in learning about the study and think you might like to participate, there will be a short informational meeting on ______________________ at Strong Beginnings at 6:00 in the evening. I look forward to meeting you and answering any of your questions.

I know this is supper time, so pizza will be provided. In addition, you are welcome to bring your children to this meeting.

Please return the tear slip at the bottom of this page by ________________, or contact me via email at the following: tkinkids@gmail.com. If you would prefer to talk with me, feel free to call at 440-446-0804.

Thank-you,
Terry Kindervater
Ph.D. Candidate

---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Training Parents to teach Phonemic Awareness

_____ I will attend the meeting on ______________________ (date)

_____ I will not attend the meeting on ______________________ (date)

Child’s name ______________________

Parent’s name ______________________
APPENDIX B

READING AND WRITING MONSTER (Phonics in Motion, Kindervater, 2002)
Appendix B

Reading and Writing Monster (Phonics in Motion, Kindervater, 2002)

C thinks she's CUTE!
APPENDIX C

OBSERVATION FORM OF LITERACY BEHAVIORS

AND INTERACTIONS IN MARCH
Appendix C

Observation Form of Literacy Behaviors and Interactions in March

Rose (Mom)  
Lucy (daughter)  
One picture at the bottom of page

*Literacy Behaviors Modeled by Parents*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent Behaviors</th>
<th>Modeled Verbally</th>
<th>Modeled Non-Verbally</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pictures</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text has meaning</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sounds</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directionality</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return Sweep</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where to begin reading</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interactions: 0
APPENDIX D

OBSERVATION FORM OF LITERACY BEHAVIORS
AND INTERACTIONS IN MAY
Observation Form of Literacy Behaviors and Interactions in May

Poem: Hickory, Dickory, Dock (7/2010)             Rose (Mom)
One picture at the bottom of page               Lucy (Daughter)

**Literacy Behaviors Modeled by Parents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Modeled Non-Verbally</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pictures</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text has meaning</td>
<td>Mom said as child pointed to the title, &quot;Ok, you have to say it.&quot; Mom pointed to title</td>
<td>Pointed to first line of text</td>
<td>Child pointed to first line of text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sounds</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words</td>
<td>Mom pointed to each word and moved finger to match words with child’s recitation of poem</td>
<td>Child pointed to words as she read.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directionality</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Pointed to each word, left to right</td>
<td>Child pointed left to right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return Sweep</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Demonstrated the return sweep by pointing</td>
<td>Child demonstrated return sweep by pointing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where to begin reading</td>
<td>Mom said, “Ok, show me the title.” Mom said, “Okay, let’s read.”</td>
<td>Pointed to the first word of title. Mom pointed to the first word in first line of text.</td>
<td>Child pointed to the title and pointed at the first word. Child pointed to first word in first line of text.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interactions: 2 [encouraged engagement of the child]
Mom said, “You have to say it. Can you say it with me?” [Mom had started to read, “Hick . . .”]
Mom said, “Okay, let’s read it.” [Child not verbalizing]; Mom gestured for the child to point
### Literacy Behaviors Modeled by Parents

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<tr>
<td>Words</td>
<td>Mom said, “Can you do it again for me? This time, you point to the words.” Mom said, “Now, we got to do one -each word at a time” when child lost the voice to text match. Mom said, “The” when child hesitated and continued with the next word, “Clock.”</td>
<td>Mom pointed to the words.</td>
<td>Child pointed to words as she read, loosing voice to text match.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child read the word, “Struck”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Child said, “And.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child pointed to each word in last line as she read.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Directionality: X
Mom pointed to each word, left to right
Child pointed left to right

Return Sweep: X
Mom demonstrated return by pointing
Child demonstrated return sweep by pointing

Where to begin reading
Child pointed to first word in first line of text

Interactions: 5
Mom said, “Now, we got to do one -each word at a time” when child lost the voice to text match. Mom moved the child’s hand to the word.
Told child to speak up.
Directed return sweep non-verbally accompanied by inaudible direction.
Child stopped reading and Mom said, “The clock.”
Child stopped reading and Mom repeated the word “and” twice for the child and she pointed.
Mom told child to point and to speak up.

Elapsed First Reading: 33 seconds
Elapsed Second Reading: 48 seconds
Total Time: 1:21
APPENDIX E

PARENT LOG
Appendix E

Parent Log

Name _______________________

Child’s Name __________________

Session ____

Week of: ______________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions I want to ask:</th>
<th>My child and I used motions together:</th>
<th>My child used motions without me:</th>
<th>Comments:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Feelings?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX F

CONTACT SUMMARY SHEET
Appendix F
Contact Summary Sheet

Session 13
June 30, 2010

Miles and Huberman’s (1984) recommendation directed me to note the following after each session.

1. What research question was fundamental to this session?

A. How do parents and children interact with the use of the KMPs?
The dyads seem to be more relaxed than in earlier sessions. There is a sense of them just jumping in and participating with ease. The parents and children often work in sync, as though choreographed, but not dependent on each other. There seems to be less guiding of the child in the participation, except in the writing section. The writing of the ‘y’ was difficult, so the scaffolding seemed stronger. Last week’s writing of the ‘u’ seemed easier for the children and they worked very independently of the parents.

B. How do parents extend the learning . . . beyond the sessions?

Jimmy’s dad indicated that he uses the KMPs sometimes, but Grandma is firm that Jimmy will not do them. Dad said to me after hearing Grandma’s assessment, “He does the motions” in a firm, definitive voice.

Lucy: Lucy’s mom indicated that she’s not had time with having to find a new place to live “through no fault of my own.” However, she shared that Lucy uses the KMPs just in “normal conversation. She’ll come up to me and start talking and she’s doing the motions.” Her brother asked, “What is she doing?” He thought she was doing sign language. Mom shared that Lucy goes and gets the folder herself and brings it to her to read. She will read the poems on her own and stop and ask her [mom] if she gets stuck on a word. Lucy will ask, “What’s this say?” “I don’t even have to tell her to read them [poems].”

John: Mom indicates that the activity beyond the session is often around bedtime and involves the sister who just finished first grade. Julie asked me if she could have copies of the poems we did tonight. Mom says she’s very interested.

Kara: Mom indicates that she is sorry, but that she is so busy and forgets about doing the poems. However, Kara initiates the involvement in the car or at home.

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Mickey: Mickey’s mom told me about Mickey reading the poem at home and his baby sister [about a year] standing over him listening and trying to repeat what he was saying. He was reading, “Are you sleeping?” and although the baby couldn’t articulate the words, she was trying to sing the song, after him. Mom said that he reads and the baby babbles, or copies him. She said, “I can’t understand the baby’s words, but it sounds like she’s saying the poem.” [After talking with Kelly (his mom), we established that the lilt was present in the baby’s repetitions, as was the time envelope for the phrasing.] She added that the older brother said, “I love you” and the baby tried to repeat it. Mickey noticed that she was trying to say the same thing. He said, “She’s copying you!” [NOTE: I think this relates to a heightened awareness and attention to speech, or sound in general, on Mickey’s part. It surely is foundational to the existence of literacy experiences occurring in the home and the children’s involvement in them.]

Will: absent

LJ: didn’t discuss extension of activities with mom this week; they arrived later.

D. How does the phonemic awareness of the children change over the course of the study?
In terms of the levels of phonemic awareness development, the activities have progressed in difficulty. In the beginning, I focused on phoneme isolation and moved on to phoneme identification and categorization (as defined by the NRP, 2000). This week, I introduced blending isolated sounds into a word (jjj/ooo/nnn) to make John. It was new and puzzling, but the group tried it and was not daunted by it.

The children are initiating comments indicating comfort with phonemic awareness. Lucy pointed out words that have the same initial sound: (day and Lucy), saying, “Like Lucy.” Mickey said, “Yuk” when I said the word “Yes.”

According to Yopp and Yopp’s (2000) recommended presentation, the group of children have become quite familiar and comfortable with the following tasks:
Rhyme
Initial and final sounds
Clapping out syllables
The group is not as comfortable with blending and segmenting, but jump into the activities.

Another example of developing understanding is the behavior when I ask what one hears at the end of a word. Mickey immediately slides the word [stretches] on his arm and touches his fingertips indicating the last sound. Other children do the same, at times: Lucy and Kara.
John’s mom shared that John is making stories up for letters and writing letters, which indicates that he understands that there are reasons or explanations. To me, this indicates the understanding of the ‘how’ and that there is a rhyme and reason to all of this.

E. How do parents’ literacy understandings change over time?
The parents seem comfortable with the language of the tasks: what do you hear at the beginning? End? words that rhyme, sound the same; let’s stretch it out. In addition, some seem more comfortable asking questions. For example, Kara’s mom asked about whether to emphasize too many sounds in a word with KMPs; Lucy’s asked me about writing the word ‘you’ and how confusing it might be. “How do I help her?”

2. What was the focus of this session?
Reviewing last week’s poem and sound of /u/.
Reviewing previous sounds.
Quick review:
Phonemic isolation
Rhyme
Stretch out word
Introduction: Phoneme blending
Introduction of new poem: Love Somebody
Introduction of /y/ with KMP.
Read with parents.
Write the letter y.

3. What are my impressions, new thoughts and questions?
I am continually impressed with the way parents redirect their children and keep them engaged in the lesson/session. The other stark contrast is in the meaning of disruptions in school compared to those in these sessions. These little ones in the group might say something ‘off task’ and adults chuckle and we do not miss a beat in the experience. No negative attention is given to any interruption. Parents redirect their children and appear to be masters at ignoring any sidebars.

Another thought I had after this session is my own comfort level. As I think of what to do in the next session, there seems to be no concern over what to ‘work on’ or what to do next. I’m feeling certain that everyone is just ‘getting it.’ Fear of they’re not getting it has dissipated.

Feelings:
Bonded, as a group
Lucy’s mom felt comfortable enough to discuss her problem about the move and also if she could have extra water to take home

Question:
My question about the focus is whether parents approach the learning under the umbrella of cognitive theory, so to speak, with a cognizance of what is happening. Teachers know
that they have a clear educational objective and create an environment to accomplish the
goal. However, are parents in these sessions driven at all by the objectives, or are they
‘in the moment’ socially and the skill attainment is a by-product? Have we set up a
Community of Practice and the experience is the key?

Is there a difference between being immersed in the experience and accomplishing the
goals and looking at the experiences as points along the way, where the end justifies the
means? I don’t believe I’m seeing ‘the end justifying the means’ in any of the sessions.

All of this relates to my having a question regarding the amount of emphasis I’m seeing
on the social. Is it beyond the Vygotskian theory of cognition, is it much more broadly
social? It relates back to the reality that in tutoring the tutor must know the task and the
tutee. These parents know their children and are delicate as they monitor their
interactions toward the learning goal. Is it a dichotomy? Do teachers, in general, value
the task and therefore the social interactions are secondary to that? With parents, are the
children valued so that the task is secondary?

Is the definition of literacy learning narrowed to task attainment by many? Does this
approach fall under a narrow interpretation of cognitive theory? What about choice,
engagement, and ownership? All in all, is the enjoyment and delight I am seeing
supporting the natural engagement of becoming literate? It’s so different than a
classroom!

4. What is the possible direction for the next session?

I will focus on the letter ‘h’ because I have embedded it informally in the singing, but not
 taught it formally, especially with the handwriting. Likewise, some children were
 confused with the ‘n’ and ‘u’ and focusing on the ‘h’ will aid their observation of the
 feature of the longer line.

In addition, I want to emphasize the initial sounds in phrases, so I might focus on a
phrase from last week’s poem. I am going to focus on the ‘h’ within the “Hello” song,
which has all of the children’s names. This will be a good opportunity to demonstrate for
parents in the Word Work portion how to use their knowledge, such as their names, to
look at initial sounds.
REFERENCES


   In C. A. Ferguson, L. Nenn, & C. Stoel-Gammon (Eds.), *Phonological development: Models, research, implications* (pp. 131-163). Timonium, MD: York.


