I, __Lisa Mulford Campbell__________________________, hereby submit this work as part of the requirements for the degree of:

Doctorate of Education

in:

Literacy

It is entitled:

Beyond Fragmentation: An Investigation of Professional Development in Early Literacy Education

This work and its defense approved by:

Chair: __Dr. Penny Freppon

__Dr. Linda Anspaugh-Corson

__Dr. Regina Sapona

__Dr. James W. Koschoreck
Beyond Fragmentation:
An Investigation of Professional Development in Early Literacy Education

Lisa M. Campbell

May 2006

College of Education - Literacy

Previous degrees:

Bachelor’s Degree - Elementary Education

Master’s Degree – Special Education

Degree to be conferred – Doctorate in Education

Committee Chair – Dr. Penny Freppon
Abstract

This dissertation is comprised of a series of scholarly papers submitted in an alternative format. All four chapters represent separate, but related, studies embedded in the context of a state-wide professional development project: The CORE Literacy Specialist project 2000: A State of Ohio Professional Development Collaboration.

The first chapter presents a synthesis of what three committed teachers learned throughout participation in the CORE project. The findings presented in the study provide evidence as to what the teachers did in their own classrooms and in the professional development sessions as a result of their new learning.

Chapter Two is a single participant case study designed to examine the usefulness of the Teacher Learning Instrument (TLI) as a tool for scaffolding teacher learning. The TLI (Rosemary & Roskos, 2001) calls for literacy specialists to engage a teacher(s) in a diagnostic process of self-examination. The findings from this study capture the impact of the TLI, as a framework for assisted performance, in a school-based professional development model.

Chapter Three was designed to build on chapter two, the initial TLI study. In addition to involving more teachers, this study differs from the first in its specific focus on the application of the scaffolding features in the activity setting of the literacy specialist/teacher meetings and on coaching as assisted performance.

The final chapter was designed to examine the knowledge and skills sustained by three primary teachers in their urban classrooms two years after participating in the
CORE Literacy Specialist project. This qualitative study (Glasser & Strauss, 1967) also addressed the factors that hindered and/or supported sustained implementation efforts according to these three teachers’ report.
Acknowledgments

I would like to dedicate this document to my parents for their unwavering understanding of and support for all of my personal and professional choices.
Table of Contents

I. Preface........................................p.

II. Introduction

III. Chapter One

IV. Chapter Two

V. Chapter Three

VI. Chapter Four

VII. Conclusion
Preface

Teaching Teachers to Teach
When my son, now in high school, was asked as a young child about my occupation, answered, without hesitation, “She teaches teachers to teach.” At the time, I was employed by a large public school district affiliated with the local university. My position involved mentoring and supervising graduate students who were completing internships in Early Childhood and/or Special Education. Some of these same student interns later became the subjects of my own graduate study research. As I reflect on that time in my career, I now realize that the depth of learning on my part and on the part of the university students was enhanced to a degree that would not have occurred had I not been in pursuit of the answers to the questions posed in each of the research studies highlighted in the papers I went on to write.

At the current stage in my career, as a consultant for an educational service center, my son’s response to a question about my occupation would likely be similar in content. Although my role has shifted from work with pre-service teachers to work with veteran teachers, I still find “teaching teachers to teach” at the center of my daily efforts. Although I feel satisfied with some of the answers to the questions posed in research studies throughout my graduate work, I find myself faced with a myriad of additional questions that sometimes keep me awake at night and anxious to get to work the next day. I have chosen to highlight some of these questions, which will appear as subheadings in this dissertation.

What does the research say about teaching teachers to teach?

The 1983 publication of *A Nation at Risk* set into motion a series of reform efforts. These initiatives placed focus on issues including curriculum, assessment,
leadership, and more. However, missing from the topics suggested for continued focus was the very thing that many people inside and outside the educational community consider the most important variable in student learning, namely, the teacher.

Beginning in 1986, a shift in the research community was sparked with the publication of the Carnegie Forum’s *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century* (1986) and the Holmes Group publication *Tomorrow’s Teachers* (1986), both emphasizing the important role of the teacher. This trend strengthened in the 1990’s with the publication of *What Matters Most* (National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future, 1996). Given this adjusted focus, it is not surprising that current research in the field of school improvement focuses strongly on professional development and teaching quality. Importantly, for educators in the state of Ohio, the Governor’s Commission on Teaching Success placed emphasis on professional development that is research-based, job-embedded, data-driven, individualized, collaborative and results-oriented.

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 provided more than a billion dollars per year for reading instruction in high-poverty, low-performing schools. This was done under the premise that if the achievement gap is to be drawn to a close, targeted resources and professional development are critical. In addition, the position statement of the International Reading Association states, “Preparing beginning teachers in the United States to teach reading well must be a top priority. Better-prepared teachers who are competent to teach reading are essential if national and state goals for closing the reading achievement gap are to be realized.”

Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1995) suggest that the following are essential features for effective professional development:
• It must be grounded in inquiry, reflection, and experimentation that are
  participant-driven,

• It must be collaborative, involving a sharing of knowledge among educators
  and a focus on teacher communities of practice rather than on individual
  teachers.

• It must be sustained, ongoing, intensive, and supported by modeling,
  coaching, and the collective solving of specific problems of practice.

• It must be connected and derived from teachers’ work with their students.

• It must engage teachers in concrete tasks of teaching, assessment, observation,
  and reflection that illuminate the processes of learning and development.

• It must be connected to other aspects of school change.

Nearly two decades of research has taught some powerful lessons about how to
design and implement meaningful and effective professional development experiences
for teachers. This research is consistent across several studies. Researchers Willis
Hawley and Linda Valli (Westchester Institute for Human Services Research, 2001) in
their synthesis of the professional development literature, find that high-quality teacher
development is as follows:

• Informed by research on teaching and learning and provides foundation in
  subject content and methods of teaching.

• Integrated with district goals to improve education, guided by a coherent long-
  term plan, and driven by disaggregated data on student outcomes.
• Designed in response to teacher-identified needs and utilizes collaborative problem solving which colleagues assist one another by discussing dilemmas and challenges.

• Primarily school-based, provides sufficient time and other resources, and enables teachers to work with colleagues in their school building.

• Continuous and ongoing, incorporates principles of adult learning, and provides follow-up support for further learning.

• Evaluated ultimately on the basis on its impact on teacher effectiveness and student learning.

Does the Teacher Really Matter?

As far back as 1967, Guy Bond and Robert Dykstra realized that, “Time and again, research has confirmed that regardless of the quality of a program, resource, or strategy, it is the teacher and the learning situation that make a difference.” (quoted in the IRA position statement on Evidence-based Reading Instruction, 2002)). “It all comes down to the teacher,” parents are often heard stating while petitioning to get their child into the teacher’s classroom with the best reputation in the school. As a parent myself, I agree; it is vital to get one’s child into a good teacher’s classroom. Nothing can replace the positive influence of an excellent teacher. Further, this is particularly important in the primary grades. A majority of the general public, it seems, agrees. Haseklorn & Harris (2001) found that 60 percent of the public identifies investment in teachers as the most crucial of strategies for improving student learning, topping other strategies such as focusing on academic standards and instituting new programs.
It is a widely held belief that if students are to be held to high standards, they need teachers who are also held to high standards – who know the subject matter and are well skilled in effective strategy instruction. In Robert Marzano’s publication, *A New Era of School Reform: Going Where the Research Takes Us* (2000), regression theory is applied to study the impact of an effective teacher on student achievement. The results suggest that the achievement level of a student entering a new school at the 50th percentile can drop as low as the third percentile with the least effective teacher in the least effective school within two years. In addition, the same student entering an effective school, if placed with the most effective teacher in that school, has the potential to rise to the 96th percentile.

What Impact does *Collaboration* have on Effective Professional Development?

Just as every adult can clearly remember the positive personal and professional characteristics of his or her favorite teachers, teachers can also remember the positive aspects of professional development experiences that impacted them in a powerful way personally and/or professionally. For me, the memorable experiences with formal and informal professional development throughout my teaching career always had one characteristic in common - collaboration or interaction with colleagues. This factor has led me to explore the impact of collaboration on effective professional development.

During the past few decades the expectation has been greater that teachers work together in meaningful job-embedded ways. Building organizational capacity for collegial interaction in schools has become prominent in the literature on education reform and school improvement (Barth, 1990, Lambert, 1998, Speck, 1999). In the report
Teacher Quality: A Report on the Preparation and Qualifications of Public School Teachers (1999), the National Center for Education Statistics asked teachers about the relative values of different professional development activities. The experiences that teachers reported as having the most impact were team planning periods, mentoring from another teacher, and collaboration with other professionals.

We know from multiple sources that the ongoing study of teaching and learning through supported interaction with other professionals is integral to the growth of educators in public schools (Darling-Hammond, 1997; Freppon, 2001; Robb, 2000). While there are many schools and districts in which teachers are supported as knowledgeable and thoughtful professionals, there are still far too many environments in which knowledgeable professionals are “stuck in isolated teaching“ without support or collaborative structures. Schmoker (1996) found that in relation to school improvement efforts, “the culture of isolation and privacy generally ensured that innovations were not really implemented” (p. 20). Despite a school’s official adoption of new programs, the reality behind many classroom doors has not been innovative. “Evidence indicated that only the most partial, superficial implementation was occurring as teachers found ways to twist the innovation right back into what they had always done” (p.22).

Effective staff development is most likely to occur when experience, problem solving, and collaborative learning are integrated. “This type of learning on the part of teachers can, “redefine their work in relation to the way the entire school works” (Lieberman, 1995). Individual teachers within the same building need to be afforded the opportunity to learn from colleagues in a fashion which encourages ongoing learning towards a central goal (Lieberman, 1995).
What *Has* Changed and What is Next?

When I began teaching in the eighties, I don’t recall having or hearing conversations about scientifically research-based instructional strategies or data-driven decision making and I definitely don’t remember having any opportunities for guided practice in which coaching, descriptive feedback, and/or reflection were stressed. I didn’t come into contact with anyone that I would have considered a coach or mentor assisting me in improving practice. What I do remember are the once a year professional development offerings covering broad topics that were held in the local convention center. I remember the advice of the veteran teachers who said that if you sat in the back you could easily slip out the back door to the adjoining downtown shopping areas.

Time has led to positive changes in professional development opportunities, but room for improvement is still evident. Today, both preservice and inservice teachers often have multiple opportunities to learn from more experienced, more knowledgeable professionals. Often, this support is offered and provided in the form of mentoring and coaching. In many progressive schools, as funding allows, the role of the literacy or reading specialist has become a common addition to school and district personnel rosters. However, the confusion that often accompanies such a job opportunity is the question of whether this professional is to work with children, adults, or both. Traditionally, the primary responsibility of a teacher specializing in reading as a content area was to work with individuals or small groups of children who were experiencing difficulty in learning to read. But the role of the literacy or reading specialist is changing. The contents of this dissertation help illustrate how this role is changing in Ohio.
In the 1998 report of the National Research Council (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998) a recommendation is clearly made for schools to employ a reading specialist to work with struggling readers as well as provide support to classroom teachers. In more recent years, the presence of a literacy specialist or reading coach suggests that an opportunity is available specifically for teachers to benefit from mentoring, coaching, modeling, demonstration teaching and more. In a recent survey of reading specialists, Bean, Cassidy, et al., (2002) found that although many literacy or reading specialists still work with children, the position is evolving to include more in-class instruction and the “teaching of teachers.”

Finally, there are several movements in educational reform research that may affect the role of the literacy specialist. In addition to a call for better prepared and more qualified teachers, there is a demand for professionals who have in-depth knowledge of reading instruction and assessment to serve as coaches or mentors for teachers at the building level. This change is made evident in the studies cited above.

There are several qualities and characteristics that are specific and different relative to teaching children versus teaching adults. But, a majority of the research-based best practices that apply to the teaching of children could and should apply to teaching adults. My hope is that there will be a time in my career that if my son or daughter were asked about my occupation they would simply say, “she is a teacher.” My personal goal is to reach (and as a result teach) children as I teach the teacher/adults who interact with them on a daily basis.
Summary

Meetings, conferences, presentations, and workshops make up the typical professional development calendar and it is critical that the content of such a schedule be of quality. Glickman (1993) describes a “rather commonsensical [and predictable] three-phase sequence” (p. 75).

1. The change must be explained and modeled.
2. Opportunities must be given for applied practice and feedback by a knowledgeable and nonjudgemental coach.
3. Time must be provided for discussing the change, brainstorming desirable modifications, and revising the use of the new approach.

The National Staff Development Council (NSDC) has created professional development standards in order to provide a benchmark for program comparison and improvement (Sparks, 2001). “The council views high-quality staff development programs as essential to creating schools in which all students and staff members are learners who continually improve their performance” (NSDC, 1995; 1996). Clear objectives should be formulated within a school system to guide staff development and utilize student data as a resource to inform decisions. Although professional development can occur independently, it is important that common ground be met (Sparks, 1999). These standards, if examined closely by all stakeholders in educational communities, could serve as the springboard to improved professional practice.
If they are to excel in the classroom, even the most talented professional educators need to view learning as an interactive, ongoing lifetime endeavor. Most importantly, teachers need to learn to apply the principles of diagnostic teaching (e.g. use student data to drive instruction) to the teaching of literacy, while building on a foundation of language development, and integrating the components of strategic reading. To provide the best instruction for children learning to read or struggling to read successfully, there is no question that teachers should be provided with more and better professional development.
References


Introduction
Overview

According to a growing body of research on teacher professional development, experts in the field of evaluating staff development have found that conventional formats, i.e., workshops, are often not as effective as hoped (Barth, 1990; Corcoran, 1995; Darling-Hammond, 1997, 1998; Robb, 2000, Russo, 2005). Too often, little is taken into account regarding how professional development experiences will impact teachers or their work (Sparks & Hirsh, 1997). Over the last decade, however, increasing concern has developed regarding the effect, if any, that these types of professional development activities actually have. Moreover, we are learning that the key to successful professional development appears to lie in an organizational system that provides ongoing, job-embedded, systemic, focused efforts to impact change (Darling-Hammond, 1998, Guskey, 1999, Guskey & Sparks, 1996, Hirsh, 2004). In the alternative format dissertation document that follows, four chapters are generated through four separate, but related, research projects investigating a state-wide professional development project that meets all of the criteria that recent research suggests is critical for effective professional development.

Non-traditional format

This dissertation is written in an alternative format, as has been discussed with committee members over the past three years. Rather than the traditional format, described generally as “a lengthy document (typically 200-400 pages in length) on a
single topic presented through separate chapters for the introduction, literature review, methodology, results, and conclusions” (Mauch & Birch, 1993), I have submitted a series of scholarly papers of article length or longer, compiled through separate studies and unified with a single theme – professional development in literacy education.

The purpose of completing the doctoral dissertation is to meet the requirements of the degree program, providing evidence that the candidate has mastered the skills necessary to succeed in one’s chosen scholarly field while at the same time making an original contribution to that field. The audience of the traditional format dissertation consists of members of doctoral student’s committee, and perhaps the few friends, family members, and colleagues who can be persuaded to read it” (Duke & Beck, 1999, p.32).

Coming to this realization was a bit disheartening for me. My personal goals include working towards change and improvement in public education through preparing and presenting comprehensive professional development experiences for practicing educators. This alternative dissertation format provides evidence to the committee and others that I have mastered the skills and competencies necessary to make significant contributions to the field I have chosen. In addition, this format also makes it possible to disseminate my work to larger audiences, particularly for use with teachers in the schools and school districts I currently serve. Finally, I am certain that this format will better prepare me for the kind of writing that I am expected to do, and will continue to do, throughout my career.

A 1994 Educational Researcher article titled “A Slice of Advice,” David Krathwohl suggests that graduate students, “…write the dissertation as an article (or series or set of such articles) ready for publication, [using] appendices for additional information the
committee may desire for pedagogical and examination purposes” (p.31). While Krathwohl doesn’t provide details about what this might look like, in a later article, also published in Educational Researcher, titled “Education Should Consider Alternative Formats for the Dissertation”, Nell Duke and Sarah Beck suggest that “…each chapter of the dissertation would have its own abstract, introduction, literature review, research question(s), methodology, results, and conclusions – it would be a self-contained research article manuscript ready to be submitted for publication” (1998, p.33-34). My goals in the doctoral program in literacy in the Division of Teacher Education at the University of Cincinnati and the research on dissertation formats cited above provide the rationale for this dissertation’s alternative format.

Organization

This dissertation is organized into four sections that make up the document, but that can all stand alone for future publication. In addition, the Preface was designed to stand alone as an informational, editorial commentary for publication in an educational publication or newsletter.

Chapter One

Beyond Fragmentation: A Professional Journey for Teacher Learners

Abstract

This study was designed to investigate the impact of the CORE Literacy Specialist project 2000: A State of Ohio Professional Development Collaboration on three early
childhood educators. The study presents a synthesis of what these three committed teachers learned throughout participation in the CORE project. The study is situated in the context of a school-based professional development initiative that extended over the period of the academic school year. The findings presented in the study provide evidence as to what the teachers did in their own classrooms and in the professional development sessions as a result of their new learning.

Chapter Two

Examining Instructional Practice in Early Literacy Instruction: Themes from the use of the Teacher Learning Instrument (TLI)

Abstract

This single participant case study was designed to examine the usefulness of the TLI as a tool for scaffolding teacher learning. The purpose of this study is to investigate teacher learning and teacher change as documented through the use of the TLI. The TLI (Rosemary & Roskos, 2001) calls for literacy specialists to engage a teacher(s) in a diagnostic process of self-examination. The findings from this study capture the impact of the TLI, as a framework for assisted performance, in a school-based professional development model.
Chapter Three

Improving Early Literacy Instruction Through Structured Coaching: Use of the Teacher Learning Instrument (TLI)

This study was designed to build on chapter two, the initial TLI study. In addition to involving more teachers, this study differs from the first in its specific focus on the application of the scaffolding features in the activity setting of the literacy specialist/teacher meetings and on coaching as assisted performance.

Abstract

This study examined the viability of the Teacher Learning Instrument (TLI) (Rosemary & Roskos, 2001) as a coaching tool to improve literacy instruction. The TLI calls for teachers to work with coaches in a diagnostic process of self-examination of teaching. The aim of implementing the TLI is for teachers to become more deliberate, refined, and reflective, and experience a heightened awareness of the impact of scaffolding.
Chapter Four

Sustaining Professional Development Knowledge and Skills in Early Literacy Education: The Ohio CORE Literacy Specialist Project

At this point in the progress of my research, it became essential to critically examine the potential for teachers to sustain the instructional practices they learned as a result of prior participation in the CORE Literacy Specialist Project.

Abstract

This investigation was designed to examine the knowledge and skills sustained by three primary teachers in their urban classrooms two years after participating in the year long professional development initiative titled the CORE Literacy Specialist project. This qualitative study (Glasser & Strauss, 1967) also addressed the factors that hindered and/or supported sustained implementation efforts according to these three teachers’ report.

Conclusion

The concluding section of this dissertation was designed to tie the document together in a meaningful way. It includes a brief review of the themes and findings of the individual papers and suggests patterns that emerge in the data. This section also
provides specific commentary on the alignment of the CORE Literacy Specialist project
aligns with the professional development standards published by the National Staff
Development Council (NSDC) (Sparks, 2001).

Methodology

The research design for all of the studies presented in this document is grounded
in qualitative methods and case study research (Brogan and Biklen, 1982; Guba and
Lincoln, 1991; and Yin, 1984). Multiple data sets were examined in each of the
studies. All data were triangulated and coded conservatively. All data analysis was
shared and confirmed with knowledgeable colleagues. All four studies involved
transcription and transcript analysis and multiple interpretations were considered.

Prevention of Bias

Each of the four studies includes a detailed section related to the limitations of the
study. Caution should always be observed when making generalizations about the
relationship of professional development activities and teacher growth. But, because of
my professional position as a public school educator and lead teacher/mentor in the same
district, and in some cases, in the same building as the teachers serving as research
subjects, it was extremely important to acknowledge and address the potential for bias.
The research findings were not only shared with knowledgeable others, but with the research subjects themselves, throughout the data analysis and writing of results processes. This was done in an attempt to assure that all interpretations were reflective of the data collected and could not be subject to multiple interpretations.

Summary

Investigating the teaching of teachers is important. In the 2001 publication, *What it Takes to be A Teacher*, Penny Freppon writes,

> If we are to ensure the growth and development of children, teachers’ growth and development should also be at center stage. The concept that the best investment in children’s learning is in their teachers’ learning is of utmost importance (p. 158).

Current research helps uphold Freppon’s statement. In the related field of professional development, the research has never been more abundant. But, unfortunately for many teachers and schools, little has changed. Schools and districts often persist in outdated, short-term and less focused/structured formats. In the years to come, it will be important to examine the teachers and schools that are able to sustain change and identify the characteristics of professional development initiatives that are essential to their continued success.
References


Chapter One

A professional journey for teacher learners

“Improved teaching is most likely to occur within a supportive, collaborative context that allows sufficient time for understanding of new ideas and approaches.”

Abstract

This study was designed to investigate the impact of the CORE Literacy Specialist project 2000: A State of Ohio Professional Development Collaboration on three early childhood educators. The study presents a synthesis of what these three committed teachers learned throughout participation in the CORE project. The study is situated in the context of a school-based professional development initiative that extended over the period of the academic school year. The findings presented in the study provide evidence as to what the teachers did in their own classrooms and in the professional development sessions as a result of their new learning.

Introduction

A great deal of local, state, and federal funding for education is spent each year on professional development for teachers. Unfortunately, it is often spent on staff development workshops that are intellectually superficial, disconnected from curriculum and learning, fragmented, and noncumulative (Anders, Hoffman, & Duffy, 2000; Cohen & Hill, 1997; Little, 1993). At a time when early literacy has become a particularly high priority political and professional topic, an abundance of these teacher training seminars focus on the improvement of reading and writing instruction. In any given week across the country, teachers can attend workshops several days in a row in which various approaches, many of which are contradicted by the research, would be referred as the answer to the reading "crisis".

Traditionally, the most common form of professional development for teachers consists of the one-day, workshop, seminar, or conference. The “sit and get” model of
staff development that provides classroom teachers with handouts, quick-fix ideas, and brief sparks of enthusiasm, often results in very little change in pedagogical content knowledge or classroom practice (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Cohen & Hill, 1997; Little, 1994). As a result, teachers' bookshelves continue to fill with countless three ring binders that lack consistency, coherence, or curricular focus. Recent research suggests that the most effective professional development programs and initiatives are site-based, ongoing, and job-embedded (Darling-Hammond, 1998; Hirsh, 2000; Lieberman, 1995; Sparks & Hirsch, 1997).

Background and Purpose of the Study

What follows in this paper is a synthesis of what committed teachers learn in the context of a school-based professional development initiative and what they, as a result, do in the contexts of their own student-centered classrooms that results in increased learning for all. This study has emerged from a belief that teachers' practices change and develop only when they make a serious commitment to learning and growing as professionals; when time for learning over an extended period of time in the context of the teaching assignment is provided; and, when they engage with other teachers in thinking deeply about classroom practices.

Teacher learning is most meaningful when it takes place at the school level, among colleagues. Ronald Tharp (2000) suggests that "all school reform has one final common pathway: instructional activity." Regardless of the focus of the reform, improved student learning only results through the improvement of teaching and learning
at the classroom level. (Darling-Hammond, 1998; Sykes, 1999; Tharp, 2000).

Professionals in the field of education have spent an enormous amount of time and money attempting to define elements that are critical to improving student performance. Current research suggests that effective teachers are a critical resource in the improvement of reading for young children (Richardson, 1994; Ball & Cohen, 1999; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). Quite a bit of research has been conducted to define the characteristics of such teachers (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Cohen & Hill, 1997, 2001; Darling-Hammond, 1996, 1998; Hawley & Valli, 1999; National Board of Professional Teaching Standards, 1997; Sykes, 1999; Tharp & Gallimore 1988; Tharp, Estrada, Dalton, Yamauxhi, 2000). A common theme that emerges in the literature is that effective teachers consistently take on the role of learner within the context of their teaching assignment. The kind of teaching and learning that is most likely to produce lasting results requires that teachers become serious collaborative learners in and around their practice, rather than submerging themselves in activities and isolated lessons (Darling-Hammond, 1998; Hawley & Valli, 1999; Richardson, 1994).

In the recent National Research Council publication *How People Learn: Brain, Mind Experience, and School*, the editors state, “A key finding in the learning and transfer literature is that organizing information into a conceptual framework allows for greater ‘transfer’; that is, it allows the learner to apply what was learned in new situations and to learn related information more quickly” (Bransford, Brown & Cocking, 2000, p. 17). The professional development experience afforded to teacher participants in the CORE project provides a conceptual framework in which teacher participants assume the
role of learner in an extended professional development project and in the context of their own classrooms.

This descriptive study investigates the learning of three early childhood educators throughout their year-long participation in the CORE Literacy Specialist project. In an effort to understand the impact of participation in the CORE project on the three teachers, this inquiry is framed to address the following questions:

- To what extent do the three focal teachers develop and change as a result of participation in the project?
- In what ways do these same teachers implement learned theory/practice in their individual classrooms?

The CORE Project Defined

This study is situated in the context of the CORE Literacy Specialist project 2000: A State of Ohio Professional Development Collaboration. The Literacy Specialist project is an integral part of the Ohio Literacy Initiative. It brings together state department consultants, university reading faculty, school leaders, literacy specialists and teachers to form a supportive network of professionals learning about early literacy education. In five different regions of the state, university faculty collaborate with school-based literacy specialists who in turn provide on-site professional development sessions for K-3 classroom teachers. The content of the CORE curriculum is organized around essential understandings in the teaching of reading and writing that all effective teachers should know, apply, and reflect on as they work towards enhancing literacy education for all children.
The Reading Excellence Act (REA) established in 1999 began the movement toward a national endeavor to support teachers’ professional development, particularly in the area of early literacy. This movement became a reality in Ohio through the CORE project, an initiative available to schools and school districts funded and/or eligible for REA grants. The CORE project is supported by literature related to school improvement and professional development of teachers (Anders, Hoffman, & Duffy, 2000; Darling-Hammond, 1998; Kennedy, 1999; National Commission of Teaching and America's Future, 1998; Dykes, 1997). The CORE curriculum was developed in collaboration with the Ohio Department of Education and representative experts from eight Ohio universities. In its first year, the CORE Literacy Specialist project was initiated in over 95 school districts. Over 140 teacher leaders served as literacy specialists to bring the components of the CORE curriculum to over 1200 teachers across the state of Ohio.

The CORE curriculum consists of fifteen professional development sessions facilitated within a school by a locally appointed literacy specialist throughout the instructional school year. CORE is organized into four domains: Knowing, Planning, Doing, and Assessing. Each domain includes a set of key components and concepts that underlie the expert teaching of reading and writing. A central goal of the literacy specialist project is to help teachers improve their teaching practices in the areas of reading and writing. "The literacy specialist develops the capacities of teachers and literacy programs toward new possibilities and relationships that support literacy achievement" (www.literacyspecialist.org., 2001). In an invitation for teachers to participate in the CORE initiative, Kathy Roskos, a key project developer, writes:
At a time when educators at all levels are working to guarantee reading success for all children, many states are focusing on what children need to know and be able to do. While the literacy goal is a common one shared among many, Ohio takes a unique direction toward meeting this goal. The focus is on developing teachers' knowledge, skills, and dispositions essential for teaching children to read and write well. In a dynamic teaching-learning network, university faculty, state level educators and teachers are collaborating." (Roskos, 2000)

The CORE curriculum is presented to teacher groups with the literacy specialist serving as facilitator at the school site. Throughout the fifteen collaborative sessions, teachers have the opportunity to affirm and expand knowledge, skills, and expertise through guided lessons, which include dialogue about practice, sharing, and negotiating of ideas. In addition to the fifteen two/three hour interactive sessions, which can easily be modified to meet the needs of individual schools and teachers, a fieldwork component requires teachers to take information from each of the sessions back to their classrooms for application. The sharing and critique of the fieldwork becomes the springboard to each subsequent session. The fieldwork assignments and follow-up discussions serve as a bridge between new knowledge and classroom practices and afford teachers the opportunity to learn in context (Darling-Hammond, 1998, Little, 1982).
Social-cultural theory

Although there are slight differences in emphasis, the work of L.S. Vygotsky (1962, 1978) is central to this study. Vygotsky ascertains that knowledge is constructed through joint, social activity. Although the sociocultural perspective is shared by a number of contemporary theorists and researchers, common positions can be most often traced back to Vygotsky’s notion that individuals internalize and appropriate learning through participation in joint social activities. Vygotsky’s claim that individuals’ learning is based in social activity and is enhanced as conversations are appropriated and transformed is supported in the work of current researchers and theorists including Bruner (1986), Gee (1992), Lave & Wenger (1991), and Moll (1990).

Tharp, Estrada, Dalton, & Yamauxhi (2000) also cite the work of Vygotsky in their claim that social interaction is a critical component of learning at all ages and stages of development. “Adult apprentices draw their new skills and understandings from participation with the mentor. New teachers, or new physicians, or new carpenters learn their new perceptions of economic, political and social responsibilities from engagement with their new communities of professional practice” (Tharp, Estrada, Dalton, & Yamauxhi, 2000, p.45). The “cohort” of teachers that gather together on a regular basis to investigate the topics included in the CORE curriculum in this study represent a community of practice. The shared goals of the members of this community of practice are clearly defined and include elements critical to the complex task of teaching young
children the skills, strategies, and concepts necessary to become successful readers and writers.

Finally, Tharp and Gallimore (1988) cite social cultural theory, particularly the work of Vygotsky (1978), as a theory of development ideally suited to study education, educational reform, reform of pedagogy, and classroom organization. "Socialcultural theory provides a lens for analyzing and improving education by responsiveness to the activity patterns of the learning community" (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988, p. 64). For the purposes of this study, the learning community extends beyond the four walls of the classroom, to include the collaborative professional development activities that are engaged in by the teachers participating in the project. In the more recent publication Transforming Schools, Tharp, Estrada, Dalton, & Yamauxhi acknowledge, “As people (adults and children) act and talk together, minds are under constant construction” (2000, p.4).

**Reflection**

There is a substantial body of research related to the "act" of teacher reflection and the process of learning to act on that reflection. Schon (1983) details the process of what he refers to as "reflection in action". In his book The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action, he also describes “knowing-in-action”. This concept refers to understanding the ways of framing situations or experiences. Perfecting the art of knowing-in-action, Schon suggests, is best acquired through on the job training. "It is a dynamic knowing process, rather than a static body of knowledge, in the sense that it takes the form of continuing detection and correction, all within the framework of a
relatively unchanging system of understanding" (p.145). Observation and reflection take place during and after classroom experiences. Schon (1983) points out that a reflective teacher, “sees a child’s difficulty in learning to read as not a defect in the child but a defect of his own instruction” (p.66). Schon suggests that adults’ growth and development depend on their ability to reflect on their learning; adjust their behavior based on that reflection; and develop a theoretical framework and set of understandings based on their own experience (1983, p. 138).

Much of Schon’s more recent work can be linked closely to the original work of John Dewey (1916/1938). Dewey described reflection related to the teaching profession as the ability to thoughtfully consider one’s own practice. In addition, he argued that reflection consists of several steps including confusion, anticipation, analysis, elaboration, decision making, and action. The CORE project stands apart from traditional professional development efforts in that there is provision for the action step of the reflective process.

An additional connection to the work of John Dewey (1916/1938) relates to the emphasis on collaborative inquiry. Inquiry is not only prompted on the part of the individual teacher through the fieldwork component of the CORE project, but also through dialogue within the school-based professional development sessions. Questions are posed in the sessions by participants and by the facilitator. Possible answers to questions regarding theory and practice are internalized through experience, dialogue, and engagement in joint activity. Similarly, Dewey emphasized the inherently social nature of reflective inquiry. He believed that, “Apart from the social medium, the individual would never become acquainted with his needs and capacities” (1938, p. 388).
Not only do the participants in CORE become aware of their needs and capacities through the professional development inquiry, but they also have the opportunity to act on that awareness in their individual classrooms.

*Professional Development*

Research related to teacher learning and development is also relative to this study. Several studies show that teacher knowledge of subject matter, student learning and development and teaching methods, along with teacher expertise and related skills are important elements of teaching effectiveness. Much of this research supports that ongoing imbedded professional development opportunities can lead to significant change in teachers' classroom practice (Little, 1993; Darling-Hammond, 1996; Cohen & Hill, 1997; Hawley & Valli, 1999).

In the recent publication *Systems for Change in Literacy Education*, Pinell and Lyons (2001) ground their recommendations for literacy educators on two decades of research related to Reading Recovery, Literacy Collaborative, and a two-year research project in Chicago. All of these helped to identify concepts and skills related to teacher learning. In addition, the same book highlights the benefits of creating a community of learners to ensure the success of professional development efforts (Pinnell & Lyons, 2001). The work of Leiberman and Miller (1999) also stresses that building commitment and community is AS important as attending to content (1999, p. 39).

The recent study directed by the National Research Council for the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) provides evidence that American students and teachers are disadvantaged by a lack of common, coherent curriculum,
training and materials that match. The early findings from this study indicate that student learning is enhanced by the benefits that accompany a common curriculum; teachers who work together with a shared language and shared goals; clear expectations about what and how to teach; and professional development that is anchored in the curriculum and in the contexts of classroom situations.

Cohen & Hill (1997) spent a decade researching California’s efforts to improve mathematics teaching and learning. The results of this study strongly suggest that not all opportunities for teachers to learn are created equally. Significant differences in the impact of professional development opportunities were noted when teacher training was grounded in the curriculum that students were expected to master; included various elements of teaching practice, and provided extended learning time rather than single workshops. Although improved teaching and learning was evident, it occurred only when teachers had significant opportunities to learn together about curriculum and professional development that included instruction for teachers that was grounded in the curriculum and assessments that were expected for implementation.

Further evidence to support a coherent curricular-based professional development initiative is provided by Grover Whitehurst, assistant secretary for research and improvement, U.S. Department of Education. Whitehurst outlines seven teacher characteristics that could impact student learning. Participation in focused professional development was second only to a teacher’s cognitive ability. This claim was based on a study of Pittsburgh schools which illustrated the differences in student achievement levels were the result of strong implementation efforts on the part of teachers. The results of the study point out that the success of the cohorts whose instructional implementation
efforts were labeled as strong was directly related to the time teachers spent collaborating, discussing, and reflecting together to improve instruction.

Although the research on teacher development is quite extensive, the literature clearly indicates a need for studies situated in the context of classroom teachers participating in embedded professional development. (Anders, Hoffman & Duffy, 2000; Cohen & Hill, 1997; Hawley & Valli, 1999; Little, 1994) As stated earlier, there is agreement on many of the characteristics and principles of teacher effectiveness, but acknowledgement and implementation of these results in professional development initiatives is often rare, or at the least inconsistent (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Wilson & Berne, 1999).

Method

Setting and Participants

The School. A group of teachers at Rhine Elementary voluntarily enrolled in the CORE project during the 2000-2001 school year, its first year of implementation. Rhine Elementary is located in the heart of one of the state's largest cities. Children in preschool through eighth grade attend this urban public school. The student population is 96% African American, and 100% of the students qualify for free breakfast/lunch. One of the greatest challenges faced by teachers at Rhine is the highly mobile population. Although, the average building enrollment is approximately 350 children, as many as 850 children are in and out of classrooms in this school throughout a given year.

As stated earlier, the CORE professional development initiative is facilitated on-site by a locally appointed literacy specialist. For this project, I assumed the role of literacy specialist and the responsibility for teaching the 15 content specific sessions and
providing related coaching and mentoring. In addition to my role of researcher at the
time of the study, I had been employed at Rhine Elementary for 11 years. I had spent
several years serving as a classroom teacher at the primary level, and five years as a lead
teacher mentor. Although I had not had a long-term working relationship with any of the
three focus teachers at the time of the study, many of the other participants in the CORE
group had been my close personal friends/colleagues for a number of years. For this
reason, I felt comfortable assuming multiple roles in this project including, session
facilitator, coach, mentor, and researcher. Most importantly, I was familiar with the
children, the building, the districts' standards and the challenges and successes of this
group of teachers.

The opportunity to participate in the CORE Literacy Specialist project seemed to
be timed perfectly and in line with the on-going efforts already in place at the school. In
spite of previous staff development and focused efforts on improving teaching and
student performance, test scores at Rhine remained inconsistent from year to year and
across grade levels in all content areas. When approached with the opportunity to
participate, fifteen out of twenty-four certificated staff members volunteered without any
additional details. Once scheduling and other logistical details were ironed out, eleven
staff member voluntarily opted to participate. The three focal teachers represented in this
study were involved in the CORE project along with seven other staff members and the
building principal. The three volunteer participants were representative of the primary
teaching staff at Rhine at the time of the study. Their grade level assignments and years
of experience are detailed on the following page:
Table 1

Teacher Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>teaching assignment</th>
<th>years of experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher A</td>
<td>Cindy</td>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>22 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher B</td>
<td>Sarah</td>
<td>2-3 multiage</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher C</td>
<td>Janie</td>
<td>1,2,3 multiage</td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Sessions

The CORE professional development sessions were held every other Tuesday immediately after school in the school library, and on three occasions in participant’s classrooms. A typical session included guided participation, purposeful sharing, questioning, brainstorming, and problem solving. Each session involved a topic essential to effective reading and/or writing instruction. The sequence of sessions/topics is detailed below:

CORE Sessions:

Domain I - Knowing
- Session 1 - Literacy Development
- Session 2 - The English Language
- Session 3 - Literacy Processes
- Session 4 - Literacy Education Models and Methods

Domain II - Planning
- Session 5 - Literacy Curriculum Expectations
- Session 6 - Organizing for Instruction
- Session 7 - Preparing the Literacy Environment
- Session 8 - Bridging Home and School

Domain III - Teaching
- Session 9 - Teaching Oral Language
- Session 10 - Teaching About Words
- Session 11 - Teaching Reading Comprehension
- Session 12 - Teaching Writing
Domain IV - Assessing
Session 13 - Assessing Reading and Writing Behaviors
Session 14 - Translating Assessment Results
Session 15 - Reflecting on Literacy Assessment Goal and Uses

Procedures and Analysis

The research design for this study is grounded in qualitative methods and case study research (Brogan and Biklen, 1982; Guba and Lincoln, 1991; and Yin, 1984). The data collected from both inside the professional development sessions and inside the classrooms included:

Data set 1: Participant Reflections

Written reflections were completed independently by all participants in the closing 10 minutes of each of the 15 sessions. Written reflections ranged from one paragraph to two written pages. All written reflections were collected as data sources, but only the reflections from the three focal teachers were formally coded and analyzed. Janie was present at all 15 sessions. Sarah and Cindy missed one session each. A total of 43 written documents were coded and analyzed.

Data set 2: Fieldwork Artifacts

The fieldwork component of the CORE project required teachers to apply new learning within their classrooms. Teachers brought to each subsequent session evidence of their implementation or investigative efforts. The fieldwork artifacts that teachers provided twice monthly served as yet another source of data for analysis. The completed fieldwork artifacts turned in from
the three focal teachers provided concrete evidence related to the extent that they were applying the information from the sessions in their individual classrooms. On a few occasions, fieldwork assignments were completed in small groups or adapted and completed during the sessions. Only independently completed fieldwork was included in data collection for analysis. A total of 38 individual fieldwork assignments were coded and analyzed (Janie – 13 products, Cindy – 13 products, Sarah – 12 products).

Data set 3: Classroom Observations

Each classroom was observed three times formally and multiple times informally throughout the course of the academic school year. The first formal visit was not scheduled. Subsequent observations were scheduled with teacher participants, with adjustments made as needed for logistical reasons (field trips, assemblies, testing, etc.). Field notes and memos from classroom observations included information related to teachers’ instructional talk and action. Documentation of the classrooms physical environments was also made as it pertained to the content of the CORE curriculum. A total of 36 written notes and/or memos were analyzed.

In addition to the above data sets, all of the professional development sessions were audiotaped. These audiotapes (15 total) were partially transcribed and analyzed for evidence of the three focal teachers’ meaningful participation and professional discourse related to the topic of the session. These instances were documented in researcher memo and notes. Also, as the facilitator of the CORE sessions and primary researcher, I made
informal notes in preparation for sessions, during sessions, and upon completion of sessions. All reflections, notes and memos generated in the above instances were complied and used to inform, confirm and disconfirm findings, but were not coded for analysis.

Coding

Analysis of the multiple data sources was completed throughout the year and more extensively at the end of the project. The initial coding system for the field notes, reflections, transcriptions, and reflections came through inductive analysis, allowing themes to emerge rather than imposing them prior to data collection (Patton, 1990). As analysis continued, the themes that emerged were distinctively aligned to Bloom’s Taxonomy (1957). Based on this realization, in the next phase of coding included analyzing and coding the data using the features detailed on the following page:

**Table 2**

*Key to Coding*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Exhibits memory of previously learned material by recalling facts, terms, basic concepts and answers.</th>
<th>K</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>Demonstrates an understanding of facts and idea by organizing, comparing, translating, interpreting, giving descriptions and stating main ideas.</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>Application</td>
<td>Solves problems to new situations by applying acquired knowledge, facts, techniques and rules in a different way.</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>Examines and breaks information into parts by identifying motives or causes. Makes inferences and finds evidence to support generalizations.</td>
<td>AA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>Synthesis</td>
<td>Compiles information together in a different way by combining elements in a new pattern or proposing alternative solutions.</td>
<td>S</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VI Evaluation Presents and defends opinions by making judgments about information, validity of ideas or quality of work based on a set of criteria.

All decisions were supported with raw data. Coding decisions were shared with knowledgeable others for the purpose of validation through member checks (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Conservative coding decisions resulted in clear distinctions between the multiple level(s) of teacher change and learning.

Written Reflections

In early reflection, Sarah reported,

Today we discussed and learned more about alphabetic principle, orthography and types of texts (narrative and expository). The discussion centered around elements of the English language. It was a good review for me. I look forward to exchanging ideas and teaching strategies with the group (Session 2).

This comment was coded at the Knowledge (K) level of Bloom’s taxonomy because it demonstrates the teacher’s ability to recall basic facts and terms from the session.

A later example of Sarah’s written reflection follows:

Personally, I am most focused on the mechanics of writing. Probably because that’s what seemed important to my teachers when I was in school. However, as a teacher, and especially with an understanding of the writing process, I know that I need to focus more of my energies on
the brainstorming and prewriting stages. I believe these are the most important stages when in comes to providing children with the necessary information to effectively compose meaningful writing (Session 12).

This comment was coded as Synthesis (S) because it shows evidence that the teacher was identifying a pattern in her own teaching and learning and proposing an alternative solution (to focus more on the beginning stages of the writing process). It was also coded as Evaluation (E) because there is evidence of an opinion being identified and a judgment being made.

Fieldwork

Fieldwork was also coded using Bloom’s taxonomy. Examples from the fieldwork for session 8 from Janie and Cindy, and an example of Sarah’s session 12 fieldwork submission are included in the Appendixes of this paper. Coding decisions were as follows:

The assignment for session 8 on the topic of Family Literacy prompted participants to create and submit family literacy newsletter or similar document. Evidence of Janie’s and Cindy’s thinking and action related to the assignment is detailed below:

Janie submitted a letter to parents was also which detailed the daily literacy “block” with definitions of each component (see Appendix). This fieldwork submission was coded as Comprehension (C) because it provided evidence that Janie had developed an understanding of facts and ideas. She has also organized, interpreted and described her understandings within the fieldwork assignment.
Cindy’s Session 8 fieldwork submission (see Appendix) was in the form of a letter to families. Her letter described a new classroom routine she refers to as “book shares”. This entry was coded as Synthesis (S) because it compiles information together in a different way by combining elements in a new idea or proposing alternative plan. It was also coded as Evaluation (E) because information is presented and judgments are made about the validity of book shares and family literacy activities.

A final coding example comes from Sarah’s session 13 fieldwork submission. The assignment for session 13 included applying a teaching protocol to a writing lesson and completing a self-assessment of the lesson. In addition, the lesson was to be audio or video taped for sharing and discussion with the total group at the next session. Sarah identified the drafting and revising stage of the writing process for her protocol/lesson. A reflection template was included in the session materials (see Appendix). Sarah’s fieldwork (video, discussion, and template) was coded as Application (A) because her work showed evidence of her ability to apply the knowledge and techniques of the written protocol to the lesson. It was also coded as Evaluation (E). This coding decision was based on the presentation and defense of her opinions and judgments regarding her own teaching. She was able to discuss and document what worked, what didn’t and most importantly, what she would do differently if given the opportunity to reteach the lesson.

Classroom Observations

Field notes from classroom observations were also coded using Bloom’s taxonomy. In Janie’s classroom, a word wall and individual word banks were a new feature within a short period of time following session 10. Field notes indicating this
change in physical classroom environment were coded Comprehension (C) and Application (A). Janie exhibited memory of session content and learned material. She also applied her acquired knowledge in a different way than she had previously. This was evidenced through the changes and additions she purposefully made to her classroom environment and student resources.

In classroom observations following the session related to reading comprehension, I noted two of the three teachers (Janie and Sarah) implementing almost the exact same structure, format, and assessment practices for time designated within their lesson plans for “Independent Reading”. Both teachers facilitated students in self-selection of appropriate and challenging leveled texts; required children to record their selections in a book log; encouraged children through verbal and nonverbal prompts, cues, and open-ended questions; moved around the room providing individual and small group instruction and interventions other students read quietly in pairs and/or individually; and engaged in conferences with individual students. In both classrooms it was evident that the conference was the assessment portion of the lesson.

The field notes from the classroom observations detailed above were coded as Synthesis (S). Janie and Sarah both exhibited evidence of combining several elements of the content of the CORE curriculum sessions. The combination of knowledge, strategies, and instructional delivery materialized in a unique, but distinctive and systematic pattern or routine; an instructionally sound alternative to sustained silent reading.
Findings

Reflection

A theme that resonates throughout all of the data collected clearly relates to the importance of reflection throughout the project. Teachers were not only required to reflect on the professional development sessions, but also on their own related teaching practices. In line with Dewey's notion of reflective inquiry, teachers were asked to acquire and apply knowledge simultaneously. In short, they learn by doing and reflection-on-doing. The effectiveness of the change or realization is very dependent on the ability of the teacher to become a reflective practitioner. Teachers are not only challenged to do, but to reflect on doing (Dewey, 1938, Schon, 1983) in writing and in subsequent sessions with others.

Initially, teachers' reflections were similar to journal entries. The content of reflections included factual accounts of the content of the session, and in some cases admittance of lack of knowledge in a particular area. Over the course of the year, teachers began to share, discuss, interpret, evaluate, and critique within their written reflections.

Excerpts from early written reflections:

I need to practice identifying evidence of student’s understanding of orthography and alphabetic principle in their written work. (Janie, session 2)
Good information in this session, interesting, useful! (Cindy, session 3)
Looking at different models and having discussions about best practice is always useful. I always wonder how much we are or are not on the same page. (Sarah, session 4).

Excerpts from later written reflections:

The last session was a good jumpstart for me. It was also a good lead in to this session. I am reminded that I need to make use of more print that is accessible to
students. My experience with children at this school is that their exposure is limited and they often have very limited knowledge of word usage and often their interpretation of language is very literal. (Cindy, session 8)
This discussion provokes my thoughts on my own classroom’s literacy environment and improvements that I can and will make. (Sarah, session 7).

I must reflect first that the last session was very powerful for me. The three Ps made be come in over the weekend and examine my classroom – sit back and rearrange everything from a student’s point of view. (Cindy, session 8).

I know that my own reading development suffered as a child because I was barely read to. I know now that I need to develop a systematic way of developing a direct line between families and school to make sure that the strategies I incorporate in my room are understood and enhanced through home/school communication. (Janie, session 8)

I think it is important to include the child in the assessment process and to find ways to focus on strengths of individual students. This will promote investment in learning. All assessment should ultimately be self-assessment – both for the child and for the teacher. Am I making sense? (Sarah, session 14)

Collaboration and group development

Perhaps even more important than the information related to theory and practice that was presented and discussed in the sessions, was the culture that emerged among participants within the CORE group. The three focus teachers were observed as they interacted with collegues throughout each session. In addition to field notes, each session was audio taped in an effort to record professional conversations related to the research questions. At the end of each session, participants completed a written reflection. Written reflections from the three teachers studied indicate that one of the most powerful features of this initiative was the formation of a network/cohort of teachers within the same building working towards common goals. These professionals share the same children, the same challenges, a common language, past experiences, and the same environmental setting. Cazden (1988) has helped show that teaching is embedded in a
cultural context. The context provided by this project was one that relied heavily on social interactions as well as trust among the participants. Teachers' understandings and related practices were developed and supported through their interaction with others within the sessions. The written reflections provided evidence that learning for the three focus teachers was enhanced as a result of collaborating with each other, as well as other participants. Sample reflections that support this evidence are as follows:

It was helpful to hear and discuss ideas and methods with other staff members. (Janie, session 8 reflection)

The fieldwork activities apply directly with what is going on in the classroom. This gives me a chance to hear what others are doing. (Sarah, session 8 reflection)

Being able to spend time sharing and talking about literacy provided personal insight into my own understandings or lack thereof. (Janie, session 15 reflection)

With peers, in house - makes it so much more relaxed and relevant. Also this course is helping to build a literacy network and support group among our staff. (Cindy, session 15 reflection)

Talking with other teachers makes me aware of the importance of clarity and knowledge of audience. (Sarah, session 10 reflection)

These samples from the teachers’ written reflections indicate the possibility of a new capacity and growing awareness for professionals to learn with and from others in the context of a professional development project, making the learning a collective endeavor. Just as children's identities and social practices impact their learning (Vygotsky 1962,1978), teachers bring their own identities to the way they approach literacy instruction. The opportunity to engage in conversation related theory and practice can provide teachers a with a context for clarifying their own understandings,
develop ideas, expand strategies, and gain a sense of themselves as contributing members of professional practice (Stein, Silver, Smith 1994).

A session related to building partnerships with families invited participants to remember their own literacy experiences as a young child. All three of the focus teachers included references in their reflections of this particular session as to the impact of hearing the early literacy remembrances their colleagues shared. This kind of formal and informal conversation and collaboration not only enhanced personal and professional relationships among participants, but most importantly, facilitated and enhanced development of shared understandings related to reading and writing instruction. Transcriptions from the sessions, fieldwork artifacts, and field notes indicate that participants have begun to develop and use a common language for discussing teaching and learning. This may be related in part to many factors including the determination on the part of the entire staff to create a common literacy vision and related common practices before the start of this project, but was certainly enhanced for the cohort of teachers participating in the CORE project.

Field notes: Nov./Dec. classroom observations:

- All three classrooms include the following physical characteristics: word wall, students seated at tables working collaboratively, literacy centers.

- All three rooms have a listening area, computers, writing table, book area, big books, multiple copy books, and a wide variety of literature representing different genres present throughout the room.
Field notes: Feb 3, 6, 7 classroom observations:

- In all three rooms, teachers’ daily schedules and lesson plans provide evidence that all three teachers implement the following on a daily basis: Guided reading groups, independent reading block, shared reading, writing workshop (or engagement in the writing processes).

- Observations and lesson plans also document daily word work/word study in two out of the three classrooms.

Fieldwork

As previously described, the teachers accepted the challenge of applying their new and affirmed knowledge in the context of their own classroom instruction. This practice was referred to as fieldwork. The fieldwork assignments provided the teachers the opportunity to use the real task of practice as the context for their work. In these instances, teachers drew from their own teaching and reporting. Using real artifacts, records, moments, and events, permitted a focus that would not have been possible in the abstract. Much of what teachers must know is in the context of the moment. Effective teachers may not know the particulars in advance, but can anticipate likely elements based on student responses and classroom situations (Ball & Cohen 1996). The fieldwork is an important component that sets this project apart from traditional workshops and inservices, providing the potential for immediate and on-going impact on classroom practice. What teachers take back to their classrooms and apply is very specific and deliberate within this initiative, particularly through sessions 9-12, in which teachers
studied and developed protocols for literacy lessons in reading, writing, and oral language.

For several of the fieldwork assignments, particularly in later sessions, participants chose to collaborate rather than completing this work in isolation. This occurred for the first time following the session on classroom environment. After the session, teachers were asked to return to their own classrooms and self-evaluate the literacy environment for “print, proximity, and productivity”. Several of the participants, including all three of the focus teachers, agreed to not only "rate" their own classrooms based on the criteria suggested, but also to invite another participant into her room for peer critique. This provided clear evidence that the classroom doors were beginning to open in meaningful ways.

Additional evidence of growth and change at the classroom level was evidenced in the change in fieldwork products over the course of the year. Initially, teachers seemed to view the field work assignments as something they were completing for me or for each other to fulfill the requirements of the training/course. This was obvious when teachers who were to be late or miss a session would dutifully report to me when they would “hand in” their “homework”. By mid-year, the fieldwork assignments were evolving into teacher “work” that the teachers were doing for themselves and for the children they served in the context of meaningful instruction. Rather than simply filling out the organizer provided in the CORE folders, teachers began to arrive with elaborate examples of implementation, videos of themselves teaching and anecdotes to share related to the lesson or activity they had implemented in response to the fieldwork assignment. The change in the products and the depth of conversations surrounding the
products serve as evidence that the teachers were implementing their new or affirmed learning in the context of their own classrooms.

More than one of the fieldwork assignments involved communicating with families the components or a specific practice related to the school’s and/or individual classrooms’ literacy practices. Examples of rough drafts on the part of the three focus teachers to complete fieldwork components are included in the Appendixes of this chapter. Multiple drafts and finals were shared and edited in CORE sessions and sent home with children in their classrooms. The fieldwork examples provide even further evidence of a shared vision and common language and theoretical base emerging between the focus teachers and the entire CORE group.

The enthusiasm and collaborative efforts created within the CORE group was contagious and spread throughout the school beginning with the fieldwork assignment from session 6. This assignment asked teachers to survey their colleagues, including those teachers not participating in the initiative, to find out what research-based practices teachers were engaging in on a daily basis and for what length of time. I detailed a summary of the assignment, the results of the survey, and a challenge to all teachers to examine their daily schedule and current practices in a memo following one of our most engaging sessions and related discussion. The results of this survey provide additional data that teachers were not only developing a common language and shared vision, but that they were also beginning to spend large quantities of their instructional time engaging in similar instructional practices.
Discussion

The conceptual difference between this professional development initiative and those that I described as "sit and get" inservice models is in the potential for learning to become a collective endeavor, and in the potential for change and sustainability that is the result of such a comprehensive project. The nature of the change within this project was individualized to the context of its participants. The effectiveness of the change or realization was very dependent on the ability of the teacher to be both collaborative and reflective her practice. The CORE project provided the opportunity for teachers to investigate their own classroom practices with provisions for systematic study and analysis of learning and teaching.

Another aspect of this initiative that set it apart from traditional workshops and inservices was the depth of learning on a continuum that was evidenced from the three teachers. Over the course of the year, the three teachers moved beyond participating, as they engaged in sharing, discussing, interpreting, evaluating, critiquing, and applying strategies individually and collaboratively. There was evidence in the data analyzed of a clear connection between the ongoing professional development of three teachers' pedagogical understandings and related classroom applications. The teachers participating in this initiative are all at different levels of experience, age, and level of understanding. Because professional development is rarely seen as a continuing enterprise for teachers, it is rarely developmental (Cohen, 1998). This project was
enhanced by the differing characteristics and levels of training/experience of the participants.

With the implementation of the CORE project, the days of teachers getting pumped up in workshops only to have the excitement die as they return to their schools and work in isolation are gone. The traditional individualistic structure of teaching was put aside for this venture. Teachers, who rarely saw teaching other than their own, saw student work produced in different classrooms and participated in meaningful interactions around and about their own teaching practices and the practices of others. If the growth in reflection and the growth in classroom practice experienced by the three teachers in this study is any indication of the impact on teachers across the state, then this may be the beginning of a new era in the field of literacy education. The task of improved literacy education is complex. However, the implementation of the CORE project is a beginning of the unpackaging and addressing of the serious issues facing the future of literacy in Ohio and across the country.

As I reflect on this year-long project, three themes resonate throughout the multiple data sources: Interactions, Connections, and Reflections.

**Interactions**

The participants were encouraged and required to become collaborative and contributing members of a learning community. The social aspects of this project were initially reserved for every other Tuesday. But, as relationships were built and enhanced through participation in the “cohort”, it became common for teachers to meet and discuss informally, not only with each other, but also with other staff members and educators.
Connections

In addition, participation in the CORE curriculum sessions resulted in clear connections to classroom practice/practical application. These connections may not have been clear at first, but became increasingly evident over time. Teachers were initially willing, and eventually confident in applying new and affirmed practices in their own classrooms without fear of failure or judgment.

Reflections

Finally, the importance of meaningful reflection and reflection-in-action became apparent in both the sessions and in the classroom data collected. Participants not only reflected on the professional development sessions, but also on their own related teaching practices. Affirmation and encouragement were provided even when early reflection proved to lack depth. With facilitation, modeling, and knowledge, the quality of reflection improved, increase, and began to become reflective of classroom practice, as teachers’ growth and development became apparent.

Several important factors are yet to be developed and studied in relation to this or any other large-scale professional development initiative. Most importantly, the relationship between teacher learning and student learning/achievement has not been carefully examined. At Rhine Elementary, the students served by the three focus teachers, all reported marked improvement in standardized test scores at their particular grade. “Although the path to improved student learning is unclear, any form of improved student learning would rely heavily on teacher understanding and action for its ultimate
effectiveness (Sykes, 1999). An important agenda for future research should be to produce studies that would provide a clear link between teacher learning and student learning in relation to this and other professional development initiatives.

In closing, the results of this study are only an initial step in broadening and clarifying the understanding of what characteristics of quality on-going professional development will lead to an impact on and change in individual teachers’ pedagogical understandings and related classroom practices. However, the results clearly imply that the CORE project has the capacity to provide for professional learning as a collective endeavor. Professionals coming together, learning from each other, and drawing from the expertise of one another, thereby broadening opportunities to learn may only be the first step, but it is a very important one.
References


Beyond Fragmentation:
A professional journey for teacher learners

Appendixes

Appendix A Graphic depiction of the framework of the Literacy Specialist Project – 2000-2001
Appendix B Coded reflection from Session 12 – Sarah
Appendix C Coded fieldwork sample. Originally drafted in small group and later submitted by Janie
Appendix D Coded fieldwork sample. Originally drafted in small group and later submitted by Cindy
Appendix E Coded fieldwork sample – Assessing Reading and Writing
Appendix F Student work sample that accompanied the fieldwork submission depicted in Appendix E
Appendix G Sample of completed reflective template from Session 2
Appendix H Sample of completed reflective template from Session 8
Appendix I Sample of coded reflective statement submitted by Cindy on last CORE session
Appendix J CORE Curriculum Matrix including content and conceptual elements of each of the CORE sessions
Chapter Two

Examining Instructional Practice in Early Literacy Instruction:
Themes from the Use of the Teacher Learning Instrument (TLI) as a tool for supporting teacher growth and reflection

“We ought then to study the experience of learning by doing and the artistry of good coaching”

-Donald Schon
Abstract

This single participant case study was designed to examine the usefulness of the TLI as a tool for scaffolding teacher learning. The purpose of this study is to investigate teacher learning and teacher change as documented through the use of the TLI. The TLI (Rosemary & Roskos, 2001) calls for literacy specialists to engage a teacher(s) in a diagnostic process of self-examination. This findings from this study capture the impact of the TLI, as a framework for assisted performance, in a school-based professional development model.

Introduction

As an experienced classroom teacher, teacher leader, and lead teacher mentor, I have had many experiences that have led me to the conclusion that teaching and learning in all content areas is primarily dependent on the individual teacher’s expertise. Teachers must understand as much as possible about how children learn, what they know, and what they can do. Equally important, teachers must be able to apply a wide range of teaching techniques to lesson sequences to meet the needs of all students.

For six years prior to this study, my professional responsibilities included coaching and mentoring beginning and experienced teachers in the early grades. But, I had never been exposed to a tool or even a venue for structured coaching, and often struggled with assisting teachers in unpacking and analyzing teaching actions associated with successful lesson implementation. Countless workshops and inservices on coaching and mentoring over the years have provided me with strategies for building relationships, effective communication techniques, and ways to enhance teachers’ understandings of
broad educational issues. But, none of these experiences have provided me insight, structure, direction, or a process for coaching teachers in the mastery of the complex task of teaching content specific strategies effectively.

Fortunately, I became familiar with the Teacher Learning Instrument (TLI) (Rosemary & Roskos, 2001) during the 2001-2002 school year, through my work as a school-based literacy specialist. The TLI provided the structured framework and the process for me to support primary literacy teachers in the complex task of diagnostic teaching. What follows in this paper, includes the documented learning and change on the part of a first year teacher participating in the CORE literacy project and the TLI process.

The research questions which ground this investigation are as follows:

- Is there evidence that supports the usefulness of the TLI as a tool for scaffolding teacher learning, and, if so, what is the evidence?
- How can information gathered through the use of the TLI lead to improved teaching practices?

Background and Rationale

Recent research detailing the importance of quality early literacy instruction (National Research Council, 1998; National Reading Panel, 2000; Department of Education, 2001) has resulted in increased funding at the state and federal level. Some of the available funding is designated specifically to improving reading and writing instruction through the implementation of comprehensive professional development initiatives. In the state of Ohio, the Ohio Literacy Initiative resulted from the critical
need to better understand effective research-based literacy practices and to build capacity across the state for quality professional development sustainable over time (Anders, Hoffman, & Duffy, 2000; Darling-Hammond, Wise, & Klein, 1998; Hawley & Valli, 1999). The CORE Literacy Project 2000, which continues to date, is one of the critical professional development components of the statewide literacy initiative.

*Teaching Reading and Writing: A CORE Curriculum for Educators (CORE)*

The CORE project was developed in cooperation with the Ohio Department of Education and representative experts from several Ohio universities. In 2000-2001, its first year of implementation, bi-monthly professional development sessions were facilitated at the school level by a designated literacy specialist in over 95 school districts across the state. More than 140 teacher leaders served as literacy specialists to deliver the components of the CORE to over 1200 teachers throughout the academic school year. In the years to follow, the CORE project expanded to include more universities, literacy specialists, teachers, schools, and school districts across the state.

The CORE curriculum engages teachers in the examination of theory, research, diagnostic teaching, and evidence-based practices. The content of CORE is organized around essential understanding of the teaching of early literacy. The professional development sessions are organized into four domains: Knowing, Planning, Teaching, and Assessing. Each domain includes key components and concepts that underlie the expert teaching of reading and writing. Throughout fifteen collaborative sessions, teachers have the opportunity to affirm and expand knowledge, skills and expertise. The
sessions are formatted as guided inquiry and are designed to include dialogue about practice, sharing and negotiating of ideas.

*The Teacher Learning Instrument (TLI)*

This study was designed to investigate teacher learning and teacher change documented through the use of the TLI. The TLI was introduced as a tool for literacy specialists in the CORE project to use in supporting teacher growth and change. Through systematic transcript analysis, the TLI provides for teacher engagement in self-evaluation and reflection aimed at improved instructional practice. In addition to its use by literacy specialists in the CORE project, the TLI was also piloted throughout the spring of 2001 in university settings and community centers across seven states.

The TLI process calls for teacher participants to audio-tape and transcribe a series of lessons with the support of the literacy specialist across a 6-8 week period. This includes four formal lessons transcripts and analysis. Upon analysis of the transcripts, the literacy specialist and classroom teacher discuss evidence of the essential components in the instructional activity. Collaboratively, goals are set for future teaching sequences based on the evidence in the transcripts and the related interpretation of the classroom teacher.

Relevant Literature and Theoretical Grounding

Concerns about the quality of the nation’s public education system have resulted in increased attention and research publications related to key elements of teacher
effectiveness (Darling-Hammond, 1997, 2000; Lewis, 1999; Mayer, Mullens, & Moore, 2001; National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future, 1996). There is little disagreement that, in order to significantly impact student learning, changes in teacher understanding and action must occur first. At a time when controversies surrounding high stakes assessments and teacher accountability are at the center of educational reform efforts, teacher professional development is emerging as a key element in meeting the demands of a nationwide commitment to educate all children at high levels of accomplishment. The TLI process examined in this study is not only a framework for coaching, but it is a comprehensive professional development experience that gives the classroom teacher multiple opportunities to experience change in understanding and related teaching actions.

In the quest to identify characteristics that effective teachers have in common and what constitutes effectiveness, there are two aspects of teaching and learning that are often emphasized in the research. First, the knowledge, skills, and competencies held by classroom teachers, and second, instructional practices employed by the teacher at the classroom level (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Wise, Klein, 1999; Anders, Hoffman & Duffy, 2000). The TLI process addresses both of these aspects of teaching and learning through a structure that includes a series of comprehensive steps.

There is also relevant research in the area of teacher development and inquiry to support the idea that knowledge and expertise in the subject/field can positively impact the level of student performance and serve to enhance teacher competencies (Bereiter & Scardamala, 1998; Hawley & Valli, 1999). The TLI process described in this study was simultaneously participating in the bi-monthly CORE Literacy professional development
sessions. The curriculum of the CORE sessions includes essential knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are research-based and considered foundational in literacy teaching.

Literature describing the CORE initiative states:

The expectation is that educators who understand the teaching of beginning reading and writing can explain, interpret, apply, and reflect on it in diverse situations (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Wiggins & McTighe, 1998). This is to say that they understand the what, how, and why of early literacy teaching well enough to discuss it intelligently within and beyond the professional community and to demonstrate many of its essentials in their daily practice (Roskos, 2000).

The TLI process gives teachers a structured venue for applying their new learning to everyday classroom practice, with consideration built in for feedback and reflection.

In addition, decades of research in the area of early literacy document that implementation of effective teaching strategies improves children’s’ literacy development at the classroom level. (Beck, McKeown, Hamilton & Kucan, 1997; Brown, Pressley, VanMeter & Schuder, 1996; Liberman, Shgankweiler, Fischer, & Carter, 1974; Ogle, 1986; Palinscar & Brown, 1984). The work of Virginia Richardson (1994) also supports engagement in a practical inquiry model of deepening understanding of reading pedagogy, while at the same time enhancing teaching performance.

Another important aspect of the TLI process as a professional development experience is that it is imbedded in the context of the teacher’s current teaching assignment and not separated from instructional planning and daily teaching episodes, a factor that often impedes implementation of new knowledge. There is evidence in related research that suggests that contextual learning is more sustainable than learning which is

Finally, the TLI process is situated in sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky suggests that knowledge is constructed through joint, social activity and that individuals internalize and appropriate learning through participation in joint social activities. The structured conversations between the literacy specialist and the teacher, as well as the time spent jointly interpreting the transcripts provides a venue for powerful discourse. Secondly, Vygotsky's notion of identifying and teaching within an individual's zone of proximal development (ZPD) is evidenced both in the contrast between what the child(ren) can do independently and with support from a more knowledgeable other (peers/classroom teacher), as well as in the contrast between what the teacher-learner can do independently and the capacitates in which she becomes competent in performing when provided with appropriate support from the literacy specialist and the structure provided within the TLI process. (Berk & Winsley, 1995; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988; Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976).

Method

Research Participants and Setting

This study was conducted in an inner-city school located in the mid-west during the Spring of 2001. In the 2000-2001 school year Janie (a pseudonym), the volunteer teacher participant described in this paper, was a first year teacher in a multi-age classroom serving 6-9 year olds. My primary role at the same school involved mentoring
and coaching Janie and several other first year teachers. I also served as a literacy specialist (LS) in the building and facilitated the CORE Curriculum session over a nine-month period. These sessions were held on-site and Janie was a voluntary participant in the CORE sessions as well as in the TLI study.

The elementary school where Janie and I were both employed is located in the heart of one of the state’s large urban districts. One hundred percent of the children who attend this school in preschool through eighth grade qualify for federally funded free breakfast and lunch. More than 98% of the students are African American and the school’s diminishing performance levels as measured by state proficiency tests put the school in the category of academic “emergency”. Although, the average building enrollment is approximately 350 children, as many as 850 children are in and out of classrooms in this school throughout a given year.

The administrator and teachers in the building welcomed the implementation of the CORE project, as the instructional leadership team had for several years identified improving literacy instruction as a top priority and possibly the most important step towards improving the school’s academic performance levels in all content areas.

When given the opportunity to pilot the TLI instrument/process, Janie enthusiastically volunteered before even internalizing the specifics of her role and responsibilities in the study. She was even more engaged after reading and listening to the details outlining the goals and intent of the TLI study. At the time of the study, Janie was enrolled in an Early Childhood graduate program at a large nearby university. Much of the teacher “work” that Janie engaged in through CORE and TLI (reflections, summaries, etc.) easily connected to her university coursework.
The Teacher Learning Instrument (TLI)

The TLI process provides teachers a framework to systematically self-evaluate their teaching actions, interpret data, translate interpretations to practice, and reflect on the process of teaching and learning. Analysis of teaching episodes by the classroom teacher (CT) and the literacy specialist (LS) occurs along two dimensions: (a) evidence of teaching actions (protocol steps), and (b) evidence of teacher’s instructional talk that scaffolds learning (scaffolding features). The protocol features are individualized to the context and content of the instructional strategy chosen by the classroom teacher. The protocol features are written by the classroom teacher with support from the literacy specialist. The scaffolding features are pre-determined (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988) and remain constant for all lessons. Details, information, and practical experiences related to the scaffolding features were addressed for all participants in the final four sessions of the CORE Curriculum project in which the TLI is embedded.

Throughout four lessons, over a period of 4-6 weeks, written transcripts of audio recordings of brief (10 minute) segments of instruction are analyzed by both the LS and the CT. Prior to the first lesson, the CT and LS get acquainted with the TLI procedures, which include:

**Before Lesson Sequences**

- The CT selects a research-based instructional strategy as a focus for developing pedagogical knowledge and skill (e.g. interactive writing, shared reading, K-W-L).
- With support from the LS, the CT develops the protocol steps.
• The LS and CT review the protocol and scaffolding steps.

Lesson One

• The CT plans, teaches, and audio-tapes Lesson One. LS transcribes a 10 minute segment of the audio-tape. LS codes the transcript with features of protocol and scaffolding features. LS write qualitative and/or quantitative statements summarizing analysis. CT and LS meet to debrief the lesson and discuss the transcript analysis. LS writes a summary and a reflection of the process.

Lesson Two

• The CT and LS review the protocol and scaffolding features and the previous coding. The procedures from Lesson One are repeated, with two exceptions. (1) The CT and LS code the lesson transcript together, jointly negotiating coding decisions, and (2) The CT and LS both write summaries and reflections.

Lesson Three

• The procedures from Lesson Two are repeated with the following exceptions: (1) The CT codes the lesson transcript with support from the LS, (2) The CT writes an analysis of the coding, a summary and a reflection, (3) The LS writes a reflection of the discussion.

Lesson Four

• CT independently performs the TLI process (teaches lesson, tapes and transcribes, codes and analyzes, writes summary and reflection). CT shares her work with the LS. The LS and CT both write a reflection on this discussion.
Janie and the TLI

Without hesitation Janie chose book introductions/“picture walks”, as a pre-reading strategy she felt it was important for her to master. Justification of her choice of instructional strategy included comments that implied that she understood the importance of introducing texts in a manner that would motivate children to read critically, but at the same time, she questioned her expertise in this area. With support, Janie identified the following protocol steps:

P1- Focus attention on task
P2 – Introduce cover, title page, and other features of the book
P3 – Guide discussion, view pictures, question, and encourage predictions
P4 – Teacher takes notes of students’ oral responses and predictions (chart paper)
P5 – Teacher reads book aloud, children follow the reading
P6 – Teacher compares children’s predictions to actual text (from notes)

Before the study was initiated, Janie had been meeting for a minimum of 30 minutes per day with a group of six beginning readers (late emergent and early conventional). Because the timing was appropriate and she had been experiencing challenges with this group, she elected to focus her TLI work on this particular small group. As outlined in the TLI procedure, Janie brainstormed the teaching actions (later termed protocol steps) that she felt would be important to include in each of her lessons. With guidance, she selected the reading materials (multiple copy books, big books) for her small group of beginning
readers. Once the strategy and students were established, dates were outlined for her to teach the series of four lessons.

Coding

For each lesson, a 10 minute segment, representative of the pre-reading, during reading, or after reading part of the lesson, was transcribed. The lesson segment transcripts were coded in an effort to document evidence of the protocol and scaffolding features. The codes were easily determined as follows: \( P \) = protocol, \( S \) = scaffolding, 1-# to be negotiated by classroom teacher and coach (number of protocol features), and 1-5 (scaffolding features). Original copies of the coded transcripts from Lesson One and Lesson Three are included in the Appendix A and B of this paper.

The LS transcribes and codes the first lesson independently. For subsequent lessons, responsibility is gradually released to the CT. By the final lesson, the CT transcribes and codes the lesson and prepares for a discussion with the LS. The coded transcript in Appendix B includes codes that were negotiated between the LS and the CT, with the CT leading the discussion.

Changes in the framework

For the first lesson Janie identified six protocol features. Following her implementing of lesson one and completing the TLI analysis conference, she decided to add a seventh protocol features. The changes in protocol features are shown in the first and second frameworks. Both the original and the revised protocol are included as Appendixes C and D.
Data analysis

Analysis was conducted using the constant comparative method of analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Goetz & LeCompte, 1984). The data sets included protocol planning grids, teacher lesson plans, coded transcripts, written summaries, written reflections, transcripts of audio-taped discussions between the CT and LS, field notes, memos, and artifacts. Summaries and reflections and transcripts were read and re-read and multiple interpretations considered. Included in the findings are some preliminary results on this qualitative data analysis (Goetz and LeCompte, 1984; Yin, 1984), as well as the analysis of presence or absence of protocol and scaffolding.

The data were analyzed across all four lessons in several ways. First, the number of times each protocol feature was present and documented in each lesson was determined. This number, in relation to the number of protocol features possible (6 for the 1st lesson, and 7 for lessons 2-4), is documented in table one. Next, the same analysis was conducted for the number of scaffolding features (out of 5 possible) present in each lesson. Finally, a determination of which scaffolding features were evidenced more or less often throughout the four lessons was established.

Note: The appendix of this document includes one complete coded transcript (lesson 3), a sample reflection written by the literacy specialist, a sample reflection written by Janie, a sample summary written by Janie, and a sample of Janie’s lesson plans for one of the transcribed lessons.
Findings

Findings from coded transcripts

Initial findings for this study are detailed in the tables and supporting narrative on the following pages. Table One shows the number of protocol features (PF) evident or present (the numerator) in lessons one, two, three, and four and the number of protocol features (PF) possible in each lesson (the denominator).

Table 1

Comparisons of Use of Protocol Features Across Teaching Episodes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Lesson 1</th>
<th></th>
<th>Lesson 2</th>
<th></th>
<th>Lesson 3</th>
<th></th>
<th>Lesson 4</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PF</td>
<td>4/6</td>
<td></td>
<td>6/7</td>
<td></td>
<td>6/7</td>
<td></td>
<td>7/7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>evidenced</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td></td>
<td>86%</td>
<td></td>
<td>86%</td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- evidenced = The number of protocol features found in the data as determined by the investigator(s) (CT, LS, and/or FF). Each PF is counted only as present. The number of times that particular feature is coded is not considered.
- possible = The number of protocol features identified before the lesson by the CT with support from the LS and/or FF.
- PF = protocol features

Evidence of teacher change / learning is shown in the increased use of protocol features across lessons two, three, and four with the number of PF evident remaining higher than in the first lesson. This increase in the use of protocols, and in Janie’s changing the protocols themselves after her first lesson, provides evidence of professional development and constructive use of reflection. Initially, Janie identified six protocol features for the book introduction lessons she intended to teach. Four of the six protocol features were present (identified and coded) in the first lesson. A discussion/interview
after the first lesson, inspired her to alter the protocol steps. This change seemed to come about as a result of the debriefing conversation and structured reflection that followed the first lesson. The results indicate that Janie became more attuned to the instructional protocols and more intentional in her teaching from the first teaching episode to the last.

**Findings in scaffolding**

Tables two and three summarize findings on the presence of scaffolding features (SF) evident in the total number possible.

**Table 2**

*Comparisons of Use of Scaffolding Features Across Teaching Episodes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Lesson 1 SF evidenced/SF possible</th>
<th>Lesson 2 SF evidenced/SF possible</th>
<th>Lesson 3 SF evidenced/SF possible</th>
<th>Lesson 4 PF evidenced/SF possible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2/5</td>
<td>5/5</td>
<td>5/5</td>
<td>5/5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| SF = scaffolding feature

Evidence of teacher change/ learning is shown in the increase of Janie’s use of all five scaffolding features across lessons two, three, four, and five. The decisions reached on why Janie changed her teaching so dramatically after Lesson One include these factors:

- After the first post-lesson meeting Janie’s anxiety about her teaching and about being “right” or “wrong” were acknowledged.
• Instructional talk and structured reflection helped clarify the intent and purpose(s) of the TLI and of this study.

• The review of TLI procedures prior to the second and third lessons is also had a positive impact. (e.g., Janie had more clarity on what she wanted to do in the “act” of teaching).

• A review of the coding of Lesson One’s transcript and the discussion that followed on the coding results and other aspects the lesson sequence had an impact on Janie’s planning and implementation of the following lessons.

It is reasonable to infer that a combination of all the factors detailed above impacted Janie’s attention to detail(s) and ability to engage in deliberate actions that included the protocol steps more clearly, while at the same time including the more deliberate use of predetermined scaffolding features (Tharp and Galimore, 1995).

Table Three, included below, provides another level of analysis on the use of scaffolding features. The table describes the number of times Janie used any one of the five scaffolding features. Thus, the table created for this finding shows the number of times each scaffolding feature was documented in relation to the total number of scaffolding features present in each lesson.
Table 3

Comparisons of Use of Scaffolding Features Across Teaching Episodes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson One</th>
<th>Lesson Two</th>
<th>Lesson Three</th>
<th>Lesson Four</th>
<th>Lesson # SF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S1 S2 S3 S4 S5</td>
<td>S1 S2 S3 S4 S5</td>
<td>S1 S2 S3 S4 S5</td>
<td>S1 S2 S3 S4 S5</td>
<td># of each SF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 1 0 3 0</td>
<td>0 3 3 4 3</td>
<td>4 1 2 4 3</td>
<td>4 1 2 4 3</td>
<td># of total SF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Janie included only scaffolding features 2 and 4 in the first lesson. Scaffolding feature 4 (staying in ZPD) was the feature Janie seemed to be most comfortable demonstrating in this first lesson. In a discussion prior to Lesson One, Janie indicated that she felt comfortable in her understandings of the scaffolding features. However, in the discussion following Lesson One, it became evident that Janie needed clarification and examples of each of the scaffolding features.

I know we talked about all of these (scaffolding features) in detail. But, I’m not really comfortable with all of them. But, now that I think about the lesson, I’m not sure I’m clear on the differences between some of them. Like…um…joint problem solving. I’m not sure I can tell the difference between that and intersubjectivity. Can we talk about them some more – especially those two? (Janie, Lesson One post-lesson meeting).

Another significant event after Lesson One was that Janie felt it necessary to alter the protocol features (instructional steps) in a way that would allow her to more clearly demonstrate the scaffolding features consistently across the lesson. It was apparent in the subsequent lessons that this discussion, and the deeper understanding of the scaffolding
features, enabled Janie to demonstrate more of the features on a more consistent basis. Janie maintained the same number of total scaffolding features for the final two lessons (14), which was slightly more than lesson two and a considerable difference from lesson one. In lesson four, as in lesson three, Janie included all 5 of the scaffolding features. S1, which was absent from the first two lessons, was exhibited four times, as it was in the third lesson. S4 was also exhibited four times.

It appears that Janie was the most comfortable with S4, as it is the feature, which is demonstrated in all four of the lessons most consistently. Although S2 is also present in all four lessons, the number of times it is demonstrated is much less consistent throughout. Only S1 was absent from the second lesson. This same feature was absent in the first lesson, but present in the final two lessons. By the final lesson, Janie exhibited S1 four times (4 is the highest number of times any of the Ss were present in a lesson and by the final lesson, a majority of the Ss were performed 4 times). The fact that the specific features exhibited across the four lessons varies throughout may be attributed to her increasing her focus on one or more of the specific features. While doing this, she may have neglected to include one or more in a lesson in her efforts to be sure to include others. Purposefully demonstrating the scaffolding features is a balancing act carried out in the moment of teacher thinking and action in the context of instruction.

Findings from TLI conferences

As outlined in the TLI procedures, formal post-lesson meetings occurred after each of the four lessons to discuss the coding, share our insights related to successes and challenges associated with the lesson and plan for the next lesson. Findings from our
initial meeting, the four post-lesson conferences, and our final meeting to reflect on the entire process documented that Janie benefited from the support provided through the TLI process. Evidence of this is detailed below:

- Janie discovered that the selection of the book for her lesson made a big difference in the delivery of the lesson. She found that highly structured teaching and following a protocol wasn’t enough to guarantee a successful lesson.
  - In post lesson conference following Lesson Two she stated, “This book really lent itself to using the pictures and making the predictions. *The Carrot Seed* didn’t at all. It makes me realize how important the materials are. The book you choose, can change the whole lesson.”
  - Janie reflects that her book selection improved for each lesson. She was able to incorporate read aloud and shared reading strategies to a varying degrees in the final lessons. Based on this, Janie began to demonstrate a deeper understanding of book introductions. She began to refer to her chosen strategy as a “book walk”, as opposed to the term “picture walk” that she often used early in the process.
  - After Lesson Two, Janie concludes that the book itself had more details (than the first book) and that this second book supported the children’s’ comments and predictions more. “The children’s having the words and the pictures helps them predict better.” (evidence of teacher learning about the impact of her reading aloud in combination with a “picture walk.”). “Also, because of the type of story. In the first two (lessons) the text matched the pictures, where as in this story the elaborate pictures were
sending a message on their own.”

- Janie was initially frustrated in her quest to define her teaching as “right” or “wrong.” By the final lesson, she did not have these same insecurities. At that time she reported, “This is really helping me. I feel like I am really getting better.”

- The topic of the earliest post-lesson discussion quickly turned to how to write a summary and/or reflection and how the two differed and/or were alike. “I wrote two different accounts – a summary and a reflection. But, I’m not sure they are really very different. Maybe they’re both summaries and maybe their both reflections. What is really the difference between the two?”

- Janie questions (in writing) her ability to code even with LS support. By the final lesson, she was reportedly very comfortable with her own coding.
- Janie clearly internalized the importance of selecting appropriate materials for instruction.

**Discussion**

The primary goal for this study was to determine if concrete evidence of teacher learning emerged and what benefits of that evidence could be attributed to the use of TLI. It was determined that evidence of teacher learning and change is clear in the TLI procedures. Prior to using the TLI there was no way to tell if Janie was actively questioning/analyzing her own instructional practice. Her investment in the TLI procedure was very clear by the final post-lesson discussion. She was reportedly comfortable coding the lesson transcripts on her own and did not hesitate to provide
verbal and written analysis detailing the strengths and weaknesses of her teaching episode(s). The structured conferences before and after each stage of the TLI revealed that Janie noticed an increase in student engagement throughout the four lessons. She reflected that the children were “talking more” and she was “talking less”. The final interview indicated that Janie felt as if this was the most positive aspect of her participation in the TLI process.

The TLI succeeded in supporting diagnostic teaching and learning for this beginning teacher. This was evident through the discussions, the analysis, the verbal and written reflections and the investment in planning for future instruction. In providing specific meaningful support and scaffolding, teacher change and development CAN become a reality. The TLI process provides literacy specialists and teachers a systematic approach for providing the kind of support that is empowering to new or inexperienced teachers. It is possible through use of the TLI in school-based professional development, that schools can be a place for, teachers, as well as students, to learn and grow (Lyons & Pinnell, 2001, Tharp & Gallimore, 1988, Freppon, 2001). There is opportunity for individual and situational variations (choice of the strategy and the protocol steps/the opportunity to re-examine and revise those steps, etc.), but at the same time, there is a framework that is constantly providing for deeper engagement in practice.

Limitations

The findings of this study are limited to the teacher studied under the specific circumstances described in this paper. Caution should be observed in making generalizations about the impact of the TLI for teachers in other contexts. Gaining
insights into the impact of the TLI as a coaching tool in various settings would involve a much larger body of data and larger number of focal participants.

Another limitation of this particular study is the acknowledgement that evidence of each of the protocol features and scaffolding features, alone, does not necessarily ensure the success of a lesson. A closer look at the student work produced and the specific content of the teacher and the student talk would be important to determining the quality of an instructional sequence.

In addition, as the researcher and a member of the school staff, I had insights and interpretations that may not have been available to an “outside” researcher in a similar study. In order to account for possible bias, data were triangulated and reviewed by knowledgeable others throughout the coding and analysis phases of the study.

Suggestions for Further Research

Several important factors are yet to be developed and studied in relation the TLI or any other coaching tool or process. Most importantly, the relationship between teacher learning/change and student learning/achievement has not been carefully examined. “Although the path to improved student learning is unclear, any form of improved student learning would rely heavily on teacher understanding and action for its ultimate effectiveness (Sykes, 1999). An important agenda for future research should be to produce studies that would provide a clear link between teacher learning and student learning in relation to this and other professional development initiatives.

Another important topic research agenda related to the TLI project would be to investigate and report on the growth and change experienced by the literacy specialist.
By design, the literacy specialist has a solid grounding in research-based reading strategies and a firm grasp of the concept of scaffolding. However, the potential for increasing the knowledge, skills, and competencies of the “expert” has not been studied carefully. Beyond the focused pre and post lesson discussions, there are various opportunities throughout the course of the year for the literacy specialist to serve as a coach and mentor. A narrative case study or studies of literacy specialist(s) learning could add to the body of current research on instructional coaching.

The research questions that grounded this study were not designed to capture the impact of the activity setting and the possibility of social interaction enhancing levels of learning for the teacher and the literacy specialist. However, it was impossible not to notice the importance of mutual trust and meaningful talk among the teacher and the literacy specialist. Further research and qualitative study from this lens could be critical to the future of the TLI.

Finally, a long-term goal of this researcher and others is to investigate the potential for sustainability. Questions that will ground this investigation should include: (a) To what extent do teachers engage in continued implementation of the research-based instructional practice that was their focus in the TLI sequences, and (b) What factors hinder and/or support continued reflective practice and implementation of learning from the TLI process?

Implications for Pedagogy

The results of this study are only an initial step in broadening and clarifying the understanding of the characteristics of structured reflection and coaching that will lead to
a change in individual teachers’ pedagogical understandings and related classroom practices. However, the findings do indicate that the Teacher Learning Instrument (TLI) has the capacity to provide for improved professional teaching and learning. The structure and content of the TLI guides the teacher in learning “how to” teach a research-based literacy strategy. Knowing what and how to teach is the heart’s desire of every teacher. The TLI provides concrete guidelines for “how” (scaffolding features) to teach, and provides for negotiating with support, “what” (protocol features) to teach. These two features (how and what) are made meaningful and rich through the collaborative coding and conversation processes that call forth repeatedly the teachers reflection of teaching before, during, and after each lesson.

As literacy teacher educators, we want teachers to use research-based techniques in their teaching, tie the techniques to learners’ needs, and carry them out effectively. One way for teachers to improve their instruction in this way is to engage in a dynamic process of self-evaluation, such as the TLI process. According to Ball & Cohen (1999), “The best way to improve both teaching and learning would be to create the capacity for much better learning about teaching as a part of teaching” (pp.11-12). In this same body of work, Ball & Cohen, describe the “disposition of inquiry” in which critique and intense focus on the artifacts of teaching becomes essential to the discourse of professional learning. The TLI engages the literacy specialist and the classroom teacher in a discourse of professional learning through close examination of practice.

In a school-based clinical context (Morris, 1999), the TLI provides teachers a comfortable space to improve their practice through focused attention on instructional talk and action. The current study contributes to the literature on teachers’ professional
development. The work of Anders, Hoffman, & Duffy (2000) reminds us that instructional improvement is to be realized teacher examination of instruction and proactive responses toward change are critical.
References


Freppon, P. (2001) *What it takes to be a teacher*. Heinemann, Portsmouth, NH.


Roskos, K. 2001. Professional development in Early Literacy Instruction: several Difficult problems and a messy solution. Paper read at the Colloquium on Early Literacy Instruction for Children At-Risk: Research based Solutions. CIERA. March 24, 2001, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor MI.


Chapter Two

Examining Instructional Practice in Early Literacy Instruction: Themes from the Use of the Teacher Learning Instrument (TLI) as a tool for supporting teacher growth and reflection

Appendixes

Appendix A – 2 pages  Coded transcript – Lesson One
Appendix B - 6 pages  Coded transcript - Lesson Three
Appendix C – 1 page  Original protocol template negotiated between CT and LS
Appendix D – 1 page  Revised protocol template following lesson One
Appendix E – 1 page  Reflection on Lesson Three written by the LS
Appendix F – 2 pages  Reflection on Lesson Four written by the CT
Appendix G – 2 pages  Summary of Lesson Four written by the CT
Appendix H – 2 pages  Lesson plans for Lesson One written by the CT
Appendix I – 1 page  Comments and Observations on TLI process written by LS after TLI cycle was complete

- LS = Literacy Specialist
- CT = Classroom Teacher
Chapter Three

Improving Early Literacy Instruction Through Structured Coaching: Use of the Teacher Learning Instrument (TLI)

“A real voyage of discovery consists not of seeking new landscapes but of seeing through new eyes.”

– Marcel Proust
Abstract

This study examines the viability of the Teacher Learning Instrument (TLI) (Rosemary & Roskos, 2001) as a coaching tool to improve literacy instruction. The TLI calls for teachers to work with coaches in a diagnostic process of self-examination of teaching. The literacy specialist/coach assumes the role of the supportive, more knowledgeable other as they skillfully carry out teaching actions which scaffold the children’s development towards independence. At the same time, the literacy specialist provides scaffolding for the teacher learner, which leads to observable and deliberate shifts in teaching actions. The aim of implementing the TLI is for teachers to become more deliberate, refined, and reflective, and experience a heightened awareness of the impact and importance of scaffolding.

Introduction

The question of how to best support teacher competence in early literacy instruction is a growing concern sparked by over a decade of research (Darling-Hammond, Wise, & Klein, 1999; Ferguson, 1991; Pressley, Allington, Wharton-McDonald, Collins, Morrow, 2001; U.S. Department of Education, 2002). Research has been done on various aspects of literacy learning, but a research focus on literacy teaching has been lacking. Anders, Hoffman, and Duffy (2000) state, “Teaching is much more than using ‘best practice’, good classroom management, or certain materials” (p. 719). One way to increase professional understanding of the characteristics of effective
literacy instruction is to study what teachers do in a closely supervised coaching model with focused instruction and reflection.

This study is designed to investigate teacher learning throughout a structured professional development experience that includes focused coaching. The overall goal is to describe a framework of assisted performance (Tharp & Gallimore, 1995) in school-based professional development. More specifically, in relation to the TLI framework of collaborative inquiry, the research questions are:

- What evidence supports the usefulness of the TLI as a coaching tool to support teacher learning?
- How does the TLI function as an effective coaching tool?

Theoretical Framework and Related Literature

Research on teacher thinking and development, including cognition over the last two decades has determined that teacher knowledge of subject matter, student learning and development, and teaching methods, along with skills developed in classroom practice are all important elements of teaching effectiveness (Anders, Hoffman & Duffy, 2000; Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1998; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Hawley & Valli, 1999; Lambert & Clark, 1990; Lave, 1988; Wise & Klein, 1999). According to Snow and colleagues (1998), teachers need support and guidance throughout their careers in order to maintain and update their knowledge and instructional skills. In “Teaching Reading IS Rocket Science”, Louisa Moats (1999) suggests that in order for teachers to teach reading effectively they must have in-depth knowledge of their subject matter and the
instructional strategies that will enable them to provide the best literacy experiences for their students.

The standards of the National Staff Development Council (2001) call for attention to content, context, and process in professional development. In addition, these standards call for building the capacity of teachers to use research-based teaching strategies that are appropriate for their students. The one-on-one structured coaching that is afforded through the use of the TLI provides for all of the aspects of effective professional development addressed above. An essential aspect of supporting teachers is providing opportunities for them to learn in practice (Ball & Cohen, 1999), and as Sykes (1999) suggests, professional development supporting teachers’ learning is the centerpiece of reform efforts.

To date, only teachers who are currently or have previously participated in the state-wide professional development project - Teaching Reading and Writing: A CORE Curriculum for Educators have had the opportunity to engage in the TLI process. This CORE professional development is on-going and job-embedded, as is the TLI – providing the crucial characteristic of learning in-practice.

This study builds on previous research on teacher learning through use of the TLI as a coaching tool (Rosemary, Freppon, & Kinnucan-Welsch, 2002). Researchers from eight universities in eight states engaged in collaborative inquiry to investigate the viability of the TLI as an analytical tool. Several questions stemming from that research underlie the current study, which further explores the use of the TLI in classroom settings. The original TLI study (Rosemary, Freppon, & Kinnucan-Welch, 2002) was grounded in the sociocultural perspective (Vygotsky, 1978), as is the current study. This
point of view accepts the constructivist view of cognitive development, but with an additional emphasis. That is, while agreeing that a learner creates knowledge and understanding during and from joint activity, the social aspects of activity provide for acquisition of new knowledge. As people (children and adults) act and talk together, minds are under construction, particularly for novice and the young. Although the sociocultural perspective is shared by a number of contemporary theorists, common intellectual ancestors include Vygotsky, Dewey, and Bakhtin.

Relying on the sociocultural view for studying the teaching act depends on an analysis of the activity setting. Activity settings are the contexts that provide the social scaffold for achieving a shared goal (Weisner, 1984; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). The TLI provides an activity setting in which coaches and teachers examine instruction jointly. The activity setting for the TLI helps make teaching and learning visible. Through the instructional conversation the teacher(s) and coach discuss instruction using the lesson transcript that is produced as a part the Teacher Learning Instrument (TLI) (Rosemary & Roskos, 2001).

This also study draws on Tharp & Gallimore’s (1988) research in the Kamehameha Early Education Project (KEEP) that advances the idea of assisted performance in professional development. Assisted performance (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988; Vygotsky, 1978) occurs on two levels during the TLI process. First, the teacher’s assisting students during instruction, and once removed, the coach’s assisting the teacher to improve assistance to students. The goal for the teacher is to successfully move students toward more independence in the use of literacy skills and strategies. The goal for the coach is to successfully move the teacher(s) towards more independence and more
skillful teaching. The activity setting framework is useful in this study because it helps to make visible the processes of teaching and learning.

Hatton & Smith (1995) point to professional growth of reading professionals following four stages: technical examination, descriptive analysis, dialogic exploration and critical thinking. Throughout the TLI process, participants engage in these four stages. The technical examination occurs during the coding, assisted coding, and independent coding procedures. The descriptive analysis, dialogic exploration and critical thinking are evident in the TLI process in the pre and post lesson meetings, during discussion of coding, and the purposeful reflections performed at the end of each of the lesson sequences.

Participation in the TLI process allows for teachers to engage in gaining and using the knowledge, skills, and competencies that result in data-driven decision making. The shifts in teaching actions that are documented occurrences in the TLI process are deliberate and can be documented through changes in instructional practices (Hawley & Valli, 1999; Hoffman & Pearson, 2000; Wilson & Berne, 1999).

Hawley & Valli (1999) point to eight characteristics of effective professional education to develop teacher expertise in the area of literacy. These characteristics include: a student-centered focus, teacher ownership, job-embedded learning, collaborative problem-solving, graduated assistance, rich information, theoretical understandings, and time to practice what is being learned. These principles are evident within the TLI coaching process.

Research on effective coaching structures is relevant to this study. Coaching models proposed by Costa & Garmston (1994) and Glickman (1990) include four stages:
planning, observing, analyzing/reflecting, and conferring. Planning, analyzing/reflecting, and conferring are purposely embedded within the TLI process. Although formal observation of classroom practice is not a part of the TLI, the Literacy Specialist’s (LS) review and analysis of the transcripts provide a very up-close look at classroom practice.

One-to-one school-based coaching models in Reading Recovery and The Literacy Collaborative have also shown their positive impact on improving teachers’ knowledge base and improving early literacy instruction (Pinnell, 1999; Pinnell, & DeFord, 1993). Building on and learning from these models, the TLI was developed. It is accessible to teachers and can be integrated into existing school-based professional development.

Recent publications suggesting the importance of literacy coaches include the International Reading Association publication, “The Role and Qualifications of the Reading Coach in the United States” (2004), and the Carnegie Corporation publication “Literacy Coaches: An Evolving Role” (2005). Both of these important contributions to the field suggest that literacy or reading coaches are key players in the change process and advocate for a coaching and learning process that involves pre-conference meetings, lab-site activities, debriefings and classroom follow-up. In the 2005 July/August issue of Harvard Education Letter Alexander Russo writes, “After years of disappointing results from conventional professional development efforts and under ever-increasing accountability pressures, many districts are now hiring coaches to improve their schools. These coaches don’t use locker-room pep talks to motivate their teams, but they do strive to improve morale and achievement – and raise scores – by showing teachers how and why certain strategies will make a difference for their students” (2005, p.11). The TLI as
a coaching tool meets many of the criteria in these recent publications as characteristic of effective coaching.

Finally, relevant research in the area of teacher reflection is important to the current study. Schon (1983) provides a useful insight into the act of reflection when he suggests that moments of inquiry and those of reflection overlap for the classroom teacher. He suggests that effective inquiry requires an explicit focus and plan of action or study. Explicit focus and a plan of action is created and closely facilitated within the TLI structure.

Schon’s work (1983) demonstrates that reflection is central to clarifying one’s understanding and sense making. Schon suggests that adult growth and development depends on their ability to reflect on their learning and adjust their behavior based on that reflection. Although research related to the “act” of reflection dates back to Dewey (1901/1933) and, Schon (1983), an even more recent body of work specifically related to the importance of reflective practice among literacy educators was completed by Roskos, Vukelich, & Risko (2001). This and other research suggests that teachers’ growth and development is dependent on their ability to reflect on learning (their own and their students’) and adjust behavior accordingly. “Experience itself is not enough. Reflection on experience is the pathway to improvement” (York-Barr, Sommers, Chere, Montie, 2001, p. xvii). The TLI structure provides for purposeful reflection on experience and classroom practice.
Method

This study was conducted with three teacher participants in a large urban school district located in the Midwest. All three participants had voluntarily participated in a state-wide professional development experience the year prior to this study. The first year of this professional development experience – Teaching Reading and Writing: A CORE Curriculum for Educators could be followed with an additional year of structured coaching through use of the Teacher Learning Instrument (TLI). Details related to the CORE project and the TLI are essential in framing the methods utilized throughout this study. Therefore, additional information related to setting and participants is preceded by the following specificities regarding the CORE project and the TLI instrument.

*Teaching Reading and Writing: A CORE Curriculum for Educators (CORE)*

The CORE project (Teaching Reading and Writing – A CORE Curriculum for Educators, 2001) was developed in cooperation with the Ohio Department of Education and representative experts from several Ohio universities. In 2000-2001, its first year of implementation, bi-monthly professional development sessions were facilitated at the school level by a designated literacy specialist in over 95 school districts across the state. More than 140 teacher leaders served as literacy specialists to deliver the components of the CORE to over 1200 teachers throughout the academic school year. In the years to follow, the CORE project expanded to include more universities with their field faculty who assist literacy specialists, teachers, schools, and school districts across the state.
The CORE curriculum engages teachers in the examination of theory, research, diagnostic teaching, and evidence-based practices. The content of CORE is organized around essential understanding of the teaching of early literacy. The professional development sessions are organized into four domains: Knowing, Planning, Teaching, and Assessing. Each domain includes key components and concepts that underlie the expert teaching of reading and writing. Throughout fifteen collaborative sessions, teachers have the opportunity to affirm and expand knowledge, skills and expertise. The sessions are formatted as guided inquiry and are designed to include dialogue about practice, sharing and negotiating of ideas. Sessions are highly interactive. The expectation of participation in the CORE project is that, “Educators who understand the teaching of early reading and writing and that of middle school and adolescents can explain, interpret, apply, and reflect on it in diverse situations” (A CORE Curriculum for Educators, 2001, p.2).

**Honing the Craft: The Teacher Learning Instrument (TLI)**

In the current study, three CORE participants engaged in a second year of the CORE professional development experience, titled “Honing the Craft”. During this year, the literacy specialist and teachers who participated in Teaching Reading and Writing: A CORE Curriculum for Educators continued to collaborate for a second year. The purpose of the second year of professional development is to deepen the understanding of the key conceptual elements presented in the initial year. The second year calls for an in-depth examination and application of teaching protocols and scaffolding. This is done through use of the TLI (Rosemary & Roskos, 2002). The TLI was introduced as a tool for
literacy specialists in the CORE project to use in supporting teacher growth and change. Through systematic transcript analysis, the TLI provides for teacher engagement in self-evaluation and reflection aimed at improved instructional practice. In addition to its use by literacy specialists in the CORE project, the TLI was also piloted throughout the spring of 2001 in university settings and community centers across seven states. A subsequent study on this pilot indicated that the TLI was a useful tool for teachers to systematically examine and self-evaluate their instructional practices ((Rosemary, Freppon, & Kinnucan-Welch, 2002). This current study takes an in depth look at three teachers’ practices.

The TLI process calls for teacher participants to audio-tape and transcribe a series of lessons across several weeks with the support of the literacy specialist. This includes three formal lesson transcripts and analysis. Upon analysis of the transcripts, the literacy specialist and classroom teacher discuss evidence of the essential components in the instructional activity. Collaboratively, goals are set for future teaching sequences based on the evidence in the transcripts and the related interpretation of the classroom teacher.

The TLI process provides teachers with a framework to systematically self-evaluate their teaching actions, interpret data, translate interpretations to practice, and reflect on the process of teaching and learning. Analysis of teaching episodes by the classroom teacher (CT) and the literacy specialist (LS) occurs along two dimensions: (a) evidence of teaching actions (protocol steps), and (b) evidence of the teacher’s instructional talk that scaffolds learning (scaffolding features). The protocol features are individualized to the context and content of the instructional strategy chosen by the classroom teacher. The protocol features are written by the classroom teacher with
support from the literacy specialist. The scaffolding features are pre-determined (Tharp & Gallimore, 1995) and remain constant for all lessons. Example of protocol and scaffolding templates are available in Appendixes A-C. Details, information, and practical experiences related to the scaffolding features were addressed for all participants in the final four sessions of the CORE Curriculum project in which the TLI is embedded.

Throughout four lessons, over a period of 6-8 weeks, written transcripts of audio recordings of brief (10 minute) segments of instruction are analyzed by both the literacy specialist (LS) and the classroom teacher (CT). Prior to the first lesson, the CT and LS get acquainted with the TLI procedures, which include:

Before Lesson Sequences

- The CT selects a research-based instructional strategy as a focus for developing pedagogical knowledge and skill (e.g. interactive writing, shared reading, K-W-L).
- With support from the LS, the CT develops the protocol steps.
- The LS and CT review the protocol and scaffolding steps.

Lesson One

- The CT plans, teaches, and audio-tapes Lesson One. LS transcribes a 10 minute segment of the audio-tape. LS codes the transcript with features of protocol and scaffolding features. LS write qualitative and/or quantitative statements summarizing analysis. CT and LS meet to debrief the lesson and discuss the transcript analysis. LS writes a summary and a reflection of the process.
Lesson Two

- The CT and LS review the protocol and scaffolding features and the previous coding. The procedures from Lesson One are repeated, with two exceptions. (1) The CT and LS code the lesson transcript together, jointly negotiating coding decisions, and (2) The CT and LS both write summaries and reflections.

Lesson Three

- The procedures from Lesson Two are repeated with the following exceptions: (2) The CT codes the lesson transcript with support from the LS, (2) The CT writes an analysis of the coding, a summary and a reflection, (3) The LS writes a reflection of the discussion.

Lesson Four (optional)

- CT independently performs the TLI process (teaches lesson, tapes and transcribes, codes and analyzes, writes summary and reflection). CT shares his/her work with the LS. The LS and CT both write a reflection on this discussion.

Participants and Setting

The three focal teacher participants were all teaching in the same urban school district located in the heart of one of the mid-west’s largest cities. These teachers had participated in the CORE curriculum project previous to the TLI coaching. Although teachers from several schools in a variety of districts across the state have participated in the initiative over the past several years, this study is designed to investigate the teaching and learning patterns of three participants in case study research (Brogan and Biklen, 1982; Guba and Lincoln, 1991; and Yin, 1984). Only teachers serving in the same, or a
relatively similar classroom teaching position as the year they participated in the initial year-long CORE project were considered as participants in this study.

The three participant teachers Jon, Beth, and Terry (pseudonyms) voluntarily participated in the study which was offered as an opportunity to nine teachers within their district who had participated in the CORE professional development the year prior to this study. These three teachers were chosen based on their willingness to participate in the coaching sequences involved in the TLI process, their geographical proximity to the primary researcher, and their specific teaching assignments during the year of data collection. In addition, all three teacher participants were known to be enthusiastic informants. The six teachers not selected for participation in this study were sincerely thanked for their willingness to participate and informed of other school-based professional development and possible future research opportunities. All three of the selected teacher participants taught at schools with similar demographic characteristics. Each teacher selected his/her own instructional foci for the TLI process. Assigned grade levels and instructional foci during the course of this study were as follows:

Table 1

Teacher Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher/Setting</th>
<th>Teaching Strategy Targeted for Improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jon/3rd Grade</td>
<td>Fluency – Reader’s Theatre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beth/Kindergarten</td>
<td>Word Work – Making Words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terry/1st Grade</td>
<td>Read Aloud/Think Aloud</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data Sources and Analysis

The overall research design for this study is grounded in qualitative methods and case study research (Brogan and Biklen, 1982; Guba and Lincoln, 1991; and Yin, 1984). Several data sources were used in the analysis, including:

(a) Transcripts of initial meetings to introduce TLI procedures and establish protocol. These meetings lasted from 60-90 minutes. All meetings were transcribed in full.

(b) Protocol and scaffolding guides (Appendixes A-C). Protocol and scaffolding guides were produced in the initial meetings. All protocol and scaffolding guides were generated on TLI provided templates and were one page in length.

(b) Coded lesson transcripts. The coded lesson transcripts documented evidence of protocol and scaffolding features. Each 10 minute lesson transcript (16 in all) were transcribed in full. One hundred and eighty seven pages of lesson transcripts were analyzed.

(c) Transcripts of debriefing meetings or post-lesson conversations between the classroom teacher (CT) and the literacy specialist (LS). Post lesson meetings lasted from 30-60 minutes. All meetings were transcribed in full. Three hundred and seventeen pages of meeting transcripts were analyzed.

(d) Written summaries and reflections from the teacher and the literacy specialist after each lesson sequence. After each “before, during, after” lesson sequence (16 total) the CT and LS wrote a summary and reflection. Most often the summary
and reflection were included in the same document with separate headings. In all thirty-nine pages of written summaries and reflections were analyzed.

The constant comparative method of analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was applied to all data sets. Memos and field notes written by the researcher/literacy specialist were used to support the raw data as needed. Conservative judgments in coding were used to determine findings.

The literacy specialist/researcher collaborated on data collection and analysis with the 3 teachers. The classroom teacher (CT)’s and literacy specialist (LS)’s content analysis (coding) helped to document: (a) self-teaching behaviors; (b) instructional dynamics and various factors influencing instruction; and (c) the areas that the classroom teacher wanted to change and develop. The instructional conversations associated with the TLI process were audio taped. These included the teacher-student(s) interactions during the lessons, and the coach/teacher(s) interactions during planning and debriefing sessions. The questions that were asked and the issues that arose as the teacher learns how to collect and analyze data are important to the study.

Prior to the first lesson, each teacher identified an instructional focus (e.g., fluency) and a teaching strategy for improvement (e.g., reader’s theatre). The CT and LS planned and discussed the teaching actions based on a careful study of protocol features that support student learning. The scaffolding features (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988) were the same for each lesson, but the protocol features varied depending on the lesson purpose and the teaching strategy selected. See figures 1-3 for protocol/scaffolding charts for each of the three focal teachers.
### Table 2


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protocol Features</th>
<th>Scaffolding Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1 – focus attention on syntax (particularly punctuation/implications)</td>
<td>S1 – joint problem solving (involve children in meaningful activity; helping children learn by doing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2 – model fluent reading/expression (oral language)</td>
<td>S2 – Intersubjectivity (coming to a shared goal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3 – engage students in repeated oral reading/practice</td>
<td>S3 – Warmth and responsiveness (creating a positive emotional tone; providing verbal praise; attributing competence to child)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4 – guide students in recognizing words</td>
<td>S4 – Staying in the Zone of Proximal Development (organizing activities that are challenging for children, but achievable by them with assistance; using instructional talk that prompts them to talk, encourages them to tell more, and add to their thoughts and ideas)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5 – facilitate partner/choral reading that reinforces fluency</td>
<td>S5 – Self-regulation in (stepping back to let children take control of own activity; providing assistance as needed to support children’s problem solving)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6 – focus attention on/refer to visual material/literature (big book/overhead)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protocol Features</th>
<th>Scaffolding Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• P1 – Introduce words</td>
<td>S1 – joint problem solving (involve children in meaningful activity; helping children learn by doing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• P2 - Discuss word features</td>
<td>S2 – Intersubjectivity (coming to a shared goal)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- P3 - Reinforce/practice through clap, chant, spell, say
- P4 - Incorporate new words in context of discussion
- P5 - Facilitate learning through discussion and modeling
- P6 - Provide a script and direct instruction for the manipulation of letters.

S3 – Warmth and responsiveness (creating a positive emotional tone; providing verbal praise; attributing competence to child)

S4 – Staying in the Zone of Proximal Development (organizing activities that are challenging for children, but achievable by them with assistance; using instructional talk that prompts them to talk, encourages them to tell more, and add to their thoughts and ideas)

S5 – Self-regulation in (stepping back to let children take control of own activity; providing assistance as needed to support children’s problem solving)

**Table 4**

_Terry – Teacher Learning: Procedures and Coding Guide for: Read Aloud/Think Aloud_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protocol Features</th>
<th>Scaffolding Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1 – model connections to include text to self, text to text, and text to world</td>
<td>S1 – joint problem solving (involve children in meaningful activity; helping children learn by doing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2 – facilitate discussions related to students connections</td>
<td>S2 – Intersubjectivity (coming to a shared goal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3 – Use higher level questioning techniques to guide students in strengthening connections</td>
<td>S3 – Warmth and responsiveness (creating a positive emotional tone; providing verbal praise; attributing competence to child)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4 – Provide students with an oral script for making connections</td>
<td>S4 – Staying in the Zone of Proximal Development (organizing activities that are challenging for children, but achievable by them with assistance; using instructional talk that prompts them to talk, encourages them to tell more, and add to their thoughts and ideas)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5 – record student responses related to connections (teacher records on chart paper with student initials)</td>
<td>S5 – Self-regulation in (stepping back to let</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The teacher participants audio taped all of the lessons, and selected a 10 minute segment containing ample teacher/student interactions for transcriptions. The literacy specialist/coach transcribed the lesson segment.

For the first lesson, the coach coded the transcript and discussed the coding with the teacher. The coach and teacher jointly coded the next transcript, and the teacher independently coded the final transcript. After coding, the teachers all wrote summaries of each lesson summarizing the analysis. The summary could relate to frequencies of coded features, patterns of instructional talk, children’s actions, or other elements of instruction. In addition to the written analytical summary, the teacher wrote a reflection on the lesson.

The last phase was debriefing. During the debriefing, the teacher and the coach discussed the lesson and transcripts and any artifacts of the lesson that were available. Finally, the coach also wrote a summary/reflection after each of the lesson sequences.

_Data Coding and Interpretation_

As noted previously, analysis was conducted using the constant comparative method of analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Goetz & LeCompte, 1984). All of the data sets (transcripts of initial meetings, protocol and scaffolding grids, coded lesson transcripts, transcripts of debriefing conversations, and written summaries and reflections) were read and re-read and multiple interpretations were considered. The data were analyzed across all three teachers and all of the lessons in several ways. First, the
number of times each protocol features was present and documented in each lesson was determined. Next, the same analysis was conducted for the number of scaffolding features (out of 5 possible) present in each lesson. The number of protocol and scaffolding features present in each of the focal teachers’ lessons is documented in the Findings section of this paper. Appendixes D-F of this document include one complete coded transcript from each of the focal teachers.

Protocol Features

In some instances, multiple codes or several instances of protocol action were required to verify evidence. In other instances, the protocol feature was clear in a single instance. To illustrate how the protocol was coded, a short segment of Terry’s six-step think aloud protocol is featured below. Taken from the second lesson in Terry’s TLI cycle, this excerpt illustrates P1 – model connections to include text to self, text to text, and text to world, P2 - facilitate discussions related to students’ connections, and P4 - Provide students with an oral and written script for making connections.

P1 – Teacher: This part reminds me of when I was little and it would rain on my street. There would be tons of water standing on the ground. The water didn’t drain the way it was supposed to and my brother and I would just splash and play in it.

P2 – Teacher: What does this part remind you of? Anything about your self or you life? That’s what text to self means. Has anything like this ever happened to you? What is happening in this picture?
Child: It reminds me of when my mama walked with me in the rain to school yesterday.

Teacher: Good! This story reminds Martine of yesterday when her mom walked with her to school. Did anyone else walk to school in the rain yesterday?

P4 – Teacher: If you have a connection (pointing to a chart near the front of the room), you use the sentence on the colored chart to share…(reading from chart)…I can make a text to _____ connection, because this part of the text reminds me of …

Child: I can make a text to world connection because it rains all over the world.

Scaffolding Features

Tharp & Gallimore (1988) maintain that, “Teacher assistance and instruction are contingent on student productions, rather than being preplanned, scripted or didactic. Because student productions are not predictable, responsive teaching involves thoughtful, reflective tailoring of assistance to learners as the instructional opportunities and need arise” (p. 135). As the lessons progressed for all three teachers, clear patterns began to emerge within the transcripts and coding.

The TLI scaffolding features were consistent across all of the TLI cycles for all three teachers as prescribed in the TLI procedures. In some instances, segments were given more than one code (e.g. S1 & S2). To illustrate how the scaffolding features were coded, the following excerpt from a transcript is provided below. This lesson is Beth’s third “making words” lesson. The excerpt contains examples of S1- joint problem solving, S2- intersubjectivity, and S3 – warmth and responsiveness.
S1, S2, & S3 – Teacher: Okay, so “ow” makes an “oo” and an “ow” sound. That is important to remember when you are trying to spell words. Now, add a letter to now and make snow.

Child: Just add one letter?

Teacher: Yes, you are going to add one letter. Wow! Some of you got it right away. Good Jasmine. Great! You too! Okay, let’s look at your word. That says sow. You took a letter away. What do you need to do now?

Child: Put the N back?

Teacher: Where will you put the N?

Child: I know! Want me to help him?

Teacher: You’ve go the n, but where will it go? Snnn…ow. Okay. Good. Will you spell snow for everyone?

Additional Coding of Scaffolding Features

The coding that was embedded within the TLI process was sufficient for use in addressing the first research question, (1) What evidence supports the usefulness of TLI as a coaching tool to support teacher learning?, But an additional coding system was needed to document evidence to support the second research question, (2) How does the TLI function as an effective coaching tool? These additional considerations are part of what sets the current study apart from the original TLI study (Rosemary, Freppon, & Kinnucan-Welsch, 2002).

Scaffolding has been described as a “process that enables a child or novice to solve a problem, carry out a task, or achieve a goal which would goal which would be
beyond his unassisted efforts” (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976, p. 90). Just as children were provided support and assistance through scaffolding, the teacher participants were scaffolded to improve their practice through coaching as assisted performance within the authentic contexts of their own teaching (Lyons & Pinnell, 2001; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). Therefore, each coach/teacher transcript was coded using the same scaffolding features prescribed in the TLI guide (S1-S5).

This study makes clear the importance of the work of Vygostsky (1978) to this study. The cornerstone of Vygotsky’s theory is the zone of proximal development (ZPD), the contrast between what a learner can do with support, and what s/he can do independently. Although all of the scaffolding features (S1-S5) were carefully analyzed in the coding prescribed through the TLI process, additional coding was done in relation to S4 – staying in the zone of proximal development. The S4 scaffolding feature is at the heart of the coaching talk, just as it is at the heart of instructional talk at the classroom level. Tharp & Gallimore (1988) describe specific means of assisted performance (pp.44-69) within activity settings as part of scaffolding the learner to desired performance.

The additional coding was done using the 6 different means of assisted performance detailed by Tharp and Gallimore (1988):

- Modeling: offering behavior for imitation (pp. 47-51);
- Contingency management: using talk that is either rewarding or punishing in nature (pp.51-54);
- Feeding back: giving specific feedback based on goals for improved performance (54-56);
- Instructing: calling for a specific action (56-57) ; and
• Cognitive structuring: providing explanatory structures that organize and justify (pp.63-69).

In addition to the S1-S5 codings, the CT/Teacher/Coach meeting transcripts were analyzed with the following coding structure:

• modeling (S4M),

• contingency management (S4CM),

• feeding back (S4F),

• instructing, (S4I), and

• cognitive structuring (S4CS)

Findings related to the coding of scaffolding features within the coach-teacher transcripts are documented in the upcoming Findings section. To illustrate how the coach teacher scaffolding features were coded, some excerpts from one of their meeting transcripts is provided below. This meeting is the first meeting to establish protocol features with Jon, who decided on an instructional focus of building fluency through Reader’s Theatre.

Jon: So is fluency specific enough? I mean, some of the examples you gave, like picture walk, that’s pretty specific.

Coach: I think fluency is specific enough for your instructional focus. But, for exactly what you decide to use to improve fluency, is a place for being more specific. For example, you might want to think in terms of…”I’m going to focus on fluency through ---choral reading lessons, Reader’s theatre, repeated readings. Because fluency is a wide topic, there are lots of different ways you could attack it.
Jon: That makes it a lot less daunting. Because when I was thinking about what to choose. I mean, I thought I don’t know what to pick, but if I was going to do three or four reader’s theatre lessons. That seems a lot more manageable.

Coach: Now, there are a lot of differing definitions and examples of reader’s theatre.

Jon: Like acting out the book or doing a play.

LS: Yes, with or without props. The text selection is going to be really important for your focus, because some texts lend themselves to reader’s theatre much better than others. And, if your focus is fluency, remember that you want them to be reading and practicing fluency, not making up parts or adlibbing.

Jon: Right! Hey, a book like Henny Penny already has characters defined.

The above transcribed conversation segment illustrates S1- joint problem solving, S2 – shared understanding, S4F- providing feedback, S4I – instructing, and the beginning of S5 – self-regulation. This segment was multiply coded and several segments were double coded. This entire section of coded conversation is included in Appendix G.

Findings

Usefulness of the TLI to Support Teacher Learning

In relation to the first research question, (1) What evidence supports the usefulness of TLI as a tool to support teacher learning?, the findings in the current study are similar to those found and presented in Rosemary, Freppon, & Kinnucan-Welsh (2002). Given that all three of the focal teachers increased or maintained a complete use
of all of their pre-determined protocol steps by the fourth lesson, it is concluded that all three teachers participating in the TLI process in this study became more attuned to their protocol features and more deliberate in their teaching. Intentional changes in the talk and actions of the three teachers is evident from the first TLI lessons to the final lessons. Figure Four below details the comparisons of protocol features across teaching episodes for all three focal teachers.

**Table 5**

*Comparisons of Use of Protocol Features across teaching episodes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Lesson 1</th>
<th>Lesson 2</th>
<th>Lesson 3</th>
<th>Lesson 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jon</td>
<td>3/6 – 50%</td>
<td>4/6 – 67%</td>
<td>5/6 – 83%</td>
<td>6/6 – 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beth</td>
<td>3/6 – 50%</td>
<td>6/6 – 100%</td>
<td>6/6 – 100%</td>
<td>6/6 – 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terry</td>
<td>3/6 – 50%</td>
<td>5/6 – 83%</td>
<td>5/6 – 83%</td>
<td>6/6 – 100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another important finding related to the presence of protocol features (teaching actions or instructional steps) was the importance of the initial meeting between the coach and CT to determine the protocol. The LS was intentional in scaffolding for assisted performance. It is reasonable to conclude that the teachers were personally invested in the negotiating of protocol steps, more planned and purposeful teaching occurred. Two of the three focal teachers mentioned this fact as an important one post-lesson reflections. On the following page, excerpts are included from each of the teachers’ initial meeting transcripts and from Beth and Jon’s written reflections.
Jon’s Protocol Meeting: Reader’s Theatre

LS: Now remember, there are no rules about how many or how few of these we generate. If you think these are the critical pieces, we can leave it at this. Or, if you can think of other important steps…

Jon: The hardest part is, because I don’t know a lot about fluency. I don’t really know what is going to be important.

LS: We can review and adapt. These do not have to be written in stone. Once you read your first transcript you might say, “Look at what I did here, and here that worked well, and we didn’t even have a protocol feature to address it.

Jon: Okay – Yeah! Can we add other to include the material, like use of a big book, overhead or some kind of visual. You know, directing students attention to – something?

Beth’s Protocol Meeting – Making Words

Beth – …okay, well, um…I guess introduce the words would be P1 right?

LS: Yes! Okay.

Beth – We usually talk about the letter. The basement letter, the upstairs letters, the vowels. We usually clap, chant, spell, say.

LS: Is that a routine they already know?

Beth: Pretty much. I mean we do it with each new word

LS: Okay – so, would you like a protocol step to involve reinforce and practice and that is where you could account for the clap, chant, spell sequence?

Beth – Great! Then when we actually get to the manipulation of the letters and making words it won’t all seem so new to them.
Terry’s Protocol Meeting – Think Aloud

LS: So, would you like the reading of the text itself to be included as a teaching or protocol action.

Terry: Yes, then I will for sure get at least one protocol feature each time (laughs). Is it okay to include the reading?

LS: Of course, but what you would actually be doing is modeling, right? You would read sections and model the thinking aloud and connections that you can make, right?

Terry: Yeah!

Terry: I also want questioning to be a step. Something specific about questioning.

LS: So, questioning techniques to guide students….

Terry: . . . in making connections.

LS: Or in strengthening connections. They may be able to make them, but how you react and interact with students will have an impact on the direction of their connection. It is one thing to say I have a connection to this story because I have a brother. And you could say, What is your brother’s name? Or, you could say, Does your brother remind you of this character, in what way, and so on? See the difference the question makes?
Jon’s lesson 1 reflection

I feel like there are going to be more protocol codes than scaffolding because I felt like I was making sure the whole time to consider what we had written in the meeting in terms of steps.

Beth’s lesson 2 reflection

After discussing the protocol features in such detail I made an effort to include the protocol as much as possible. Especially P3, orienting and reorienting the children to the task. I’m really glad we included that one.

Scaffolding Features

All three focal teachers demonstrated heightened awareness of the five scaffolding features. The scaffolding feature that was documented to be missing most often was S5 – stepping back and letting children take control of the learning. Over the course of the four lesson sequence, all three teachers improved their use of scaffolding features from the first to the last lesson. For Jon and Terry, this was gradual progression towards the final lesson. For Beth, her use of the scaffolding features dropped for lesson 3, but then reached 100% again for the final lesson. In lesson 3, the scaffolding feature not present was S5 – stepping back and letting children take control of the learning. This drop could be attributed to the fact that her Making Words protocol was highly directive and the act of stepping back had to be very purposeful. The comparisons across teaching episodes for scaffolding features are documented on the following page.
**Table 6**

*Comparisons of Scaffolding Features across teaching episodes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Lesson 1</th>
<th>Lesson 2</th>
<th>Lesson 3</th>
<th>Lesson 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jon</td>
<td>4/5 – 80%</td>
<td>4/5 – 80%</td>
<td>5/5 – 100%</td>
<td>5/5 - 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beth</td>
<td>5/5 – 100%</td>
<td>5/5 – 100%</td>
<td>4/5 – 80%</td>
<td>5/5 – 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terry</td>
<td>3/5 – 60%</td>
<td>3/5 – 60%</td>
<td>4/5 – 80%</td>
<td>5/5 – 100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The findings above are evident in the three teachers meeting transcripts and coded lesson transcripts. As the lessons progressed, the focal teachers became more aware of their use of the protocol and the scaffolding features.

*Effectiveness of TLI as a Coaching tool*

With regard to the second research question, (2) How does the TLI function as an effective coaching tool?, the pattern that emerged most clearly throughout the data was the scaffolding (S4) that results in (S5) – stepping back and letting the learner take control of the learning. Several instances of this are evident in the excerpts from the initial protocol meetings presented on the previous pages. This was also repeatedly evident in the debriefing conferences over time with all three teachers. An example of the change in conversation and the presence of S4 and S5 is provided in the comparison table from Jon’s debriefing meetings after his first and third lessons. The types of S4 that are illustrated in this example are: S4M – modeling (for upcoming meetings the ability to talk through the coding); S4F- feeding-back (providing factual feedback on a segment of the lesson and reasons for coding decisions).
Table 7

Jon’s Debriefing Meetings – Fluency – Reader’s Theatre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson 1 post-lesson transcript</th>
<th>Lesson 3 post-lesson transcript</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LS/Coach: I went ahead and coded it (first lesson transcript). By the last lesson, you will be doing the coding. I will tell you want I coded and why and that kind of stuff and then if you have any questions we will talk about them. Jon: okay LS/Coach: This whole exchange I had an S2, which is coming to a shared understanding. Also, this part where you asked them to raise their hands if they think you read the poem fluently was an S2 also. So, on that page I found a P2, model fluent reading, and two S2s- coming to a shared understanding. (turns page of transcript) Okay, P4 – guides students in recombine words. I circled words and put P4 there. This one was a little confusing because you weren’t really guiding them to recognize words in the poem. But you did talk about the importance of recognizing words, you just weren’t talking about a specific word or words. That’s why I put P4.</td>
<td>LS/Coach: For this one, I’m going to kind of listen to your review of the transcript and if I have things to add, noticed something that you don’t mention, agree with a point that you make or question something you say, I will just cut in, Okay? Jon: Now, you did say that there can be more than one S (scaffolding feature code) at a time, right? LS/Coach: Right, I did that several times. Jon: Okay, I think that the end of this page shows both S4 (organize activities that are challenging but achievable) and S1 (joint problem solving). I’m trying to involve them in the doing and in problem solving through the examples that I ask them to give the group, but also I encourage talk and try to challenge them, but help them as they need it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The findings discussed above were consistent across the three teachers and throughout the transcript, summary, and reflection data.

Limitations

This study is limited by the small number of focal participants (three), and the fact that all three participants were representative of the same large urban school district. There were limitations related to the collection of data as well. For example, the
considerations that need be taken into account when implementing the TLI. In context, all of these considerations proved to be limitations. The considerations included:

- The process requires that a literacy specialist/coach, have a solid grounding in research-based reading strategies and a firm grasp on the concept of scaffolding (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988).
- The process for getting to the heart of the instructional conversation is the coding of transcripts. For all of the classroom teachers, this was a first experience at coding data.
- Time and space to allow for ongoing conversations and the tedious work of transcribing lessons are critical.
- The literacy specialist and teacher relationship must be collaborative and built on mutual trust.

In addition, the study was limited by the lack of information related to the chosen instructional strategies used by the three focal teachers before participation in the TLI process. There is no direct data available that suggests the presence, or lack of presence of the self-selected instructional strategy before participation in the TLI process.

Finally, follow-up studies on coaching and professional development can be problematic in that other influences, besides the structured coaching, could be involved in the teachers’ thought and action, resulting in a limitation of the study. However, the study was designed and conducted with the best qualitative methods possible given its design and the essence of beginning research related to the TLI as a coaching tool.
Summary and Conclusion

This case study research lends support to the notion that examining learning through scaffolding using a structured coaching tool such as the TLI can help to sharpen and refine the teacher’s ability to more effectively implement a particular teaching strategy. The findings presented here illustrate how these three teachers developed more strategic teaching through a process of structured self-critiques that were carefully guided by a literacy specialist/coach. As stated previously, what sets the current study apart for the original TLI study (Rosemary, Freppon, & Kinnucan-Welsch, 2002) is the focus on the ways in which the TLI functions as an effective coaching tool and the in depth investigation of three teachers.

The literacy specialist/coach was able to guide the teachers in understanding and utilizing the different strategies (word work, think aloud, fluency) by analyzing instructional conversations in relation to both intentional teacher moves (protocol features) and instructional talk that fosters learning (scaffolding features). In each transcribed debriefing conversation, the transcribed lesson served as a concrete tool for highlighting each lesson’s successes and challenges for creating an awareness of the concepts of protocol and scaffolding their importance in honing the craft of teaching.

In addition, the transcribed meetings between the teacher and the literacy specialist/coach provided a means for viewing the teaching and learning as shared inquiry and for the literacy specialist to demonstrate scaffolding for the teachers. Through this shared discourse, the teacher has a mechanism for moving forward in her teaching by becoming more informed of the strengths and needs of her/himself and the students with a greater appreciation of the complexities of teaching and learning. The ultimate benefit
of such work belongs to the students who are guided to higher levels of performance while becoming more independent, strategic, and successful readers.

Suggestions for Further Research

Further research in the area of coaching and on the impact of the relationship between coaches and teachers is needed as more schools employ literacy specialists and coaches who collaborate with teachers to improve teaching and learning. It is essential to understanding the role and practice of a coach as one who mentors, or assists the teacher in the process of professional growth. Coaching, as one way to assist teachers to more competent teaching performance, has evolved as an integral component of preservice and inservice teacher education.

Research studies on a modification of the TLI or other coaching tools that would include assessment of student learning would help develop a better understanding of the relationship between teacher learning and student learning are needed. Finally, an area for further study on the TLI or similar coaching tools should examine the conditions of coaching and the ecological characteristics present in the school settings. This type of investigation would point to the level(s) of support that would be most effective for implementation of the TLI.

Moreover, it is important to study coaching that does not go smoothly. One challenge of coaching is the issue of evaluation. The structure of the TLI and the relationship of the literacy specialist and the teachers in the current study helped assure that the typical evaluation was not taking place within the coaching setting. If
coaching is to be effective, it is essential that teachers do not experience a feeling of evaluation during what is intended to be a supportive, mentoring process.

**Discussion**

This study contributes to a better understanding of how to support teachers’ development and ways to best support teachers’ self-examination of their own literacy instruction. Through this self-examination using the TLI, teachers move beyond application of “best practice,” classroom management techniques, and certain materials. One way for teachers to engage in deliberate reflection on instructional practices is to participate in a structured self-reflection and analysis such as the TLI. This process includes systematic data collection, analyzing and interpreting the data, translating the interpretations to practice, and then reflecting on the teaching-learning process in the new situation. In “The Teacher as Researcher”, Berthoff (1987) suggests that teachers “do not need new information. We need to think about the information that we have. We need to interpret that information and in turn interpret our interpretations” (p. 30). Through systematic and intentional inquiry, teachers can prompt a powerful intellectual critique of strategies, assumptions, and goal in the classroom.

The power of the social context of learning has been widely accepted and translated to practice in teacher preparation and professional development (Rogoff & Lave, 1984). In working with the TLI, practitioners have opportunities to develop representations of the pedagogical wisdom and opportunities for reflective rationalization (Shulman, 1987). This is to say that they have opportunities to hone their understandings of their teaching in implementing research-based instruction. This study provides more
information on our understandings about teaching teachers. Although the structure and contexts of the instrument itself is limited, it nevertheless provides a context for teacher learning that is promising and in need of further research. This research provides another layer of information that points out the tremendous complexities that occur in teaching and learning.
References


Chapter Three

Improving Early Literacy Instruction Through Structured Coaching: Use of the Teacher Learning Instrument (TLI)

Appendixes

Appendix A  Protocol template – Jon
Appendix B  Protocol template – Beth
Appendix C  Protocol template – Terry
Appendix D  Complete coded transcript – Jon, Lesson One
Appendix E  Complete coded transcript – Beth, Lesson Three
Appendix F  Complete coded transcript – Terry, Lesson Three
Appendix G  Transcription excerpt from Protocol setting meeting – Jon
Appendix H  Summary and Reflection – Lesson One, Beth
Appendix I  Summary and Reflection – Lesson Three, Jon
Chapter Four

Sustaining Professional Development Knowledge and Skills in Early Literacy Education: The Ohio CORE Literacy Specialist Project

“Improved teaching is most likely to occur within a supportive, collaborative context that allows sufficient time for understanding of new ideas and approaches.”

Abstract

This investigation was designed to examine the knowledge and skills sustained by three primary teachers in their urban classrooms two years after participation in a year-long professional development project. This qualitative study (Glasser & Strauss, 1967) also addresses the factors that hindered and/or supported sustained implementation efforts according to these three teachers’ reports. The professional development project, titled Teaching Reading and Writing: A CORE Curriculum for Educators (CORE), also referred to as the Literacy Specialist Project, is a statewide professional development initiative launched by the Ohio Department of Education in August 2000.

Introduction

Background

Over a period of almost 15 years as an elementary school teacher, I had the opportunity to participate in numerous professional development initiatives. Most often in the format of a one shot, typically day long, in-service or workshop, these experiences provided me with brief sparks of enthusiasm and short term practical teaching advice. However, this training most often resulted in very little change in my theoretical understandings or long-term classroom practices. In more recent years, I served as a school-based literacy specialist charged with delivering the CORE curriculum, a state-wide professional development initiative. The CORE project began in 2000, and because it lasts over an entire school year and involves teachers in their own practice, the hope is...
that it may result in a more lasting impact than the typical short-term professional development. At the milestone of five years from the initial statewide implementation of the CORE project, it became important to investigate the extent to which the knowledge and skills of teacher participants continued to reflect the content of the CORE curriculum. Use of the terms curriculum and practice in this paper refer to evidenced knowledge and skills. The following research questions grounded this investigation:

- Do the focal teachers engage in continued implementation of the CORE curriculum two year after their initial participation in the project, and if so, in what ways?

- What factors hinder and/or support continued CORE related classroom practices?

**Context and Content**

The CORE Literacy Specialist project is an integral part of the Ohio Literacy Initiative. It brings together state department consultants, university reading faculty, school administrators, and teachers to form a supportive network of professionals learning about early literacy education. In multiple regions throughout the state of Ohio, school-based professional development sessions for classroom teachers are held at the school site. The content of the CORE curriculum is organized around essential understandings in the teaching of literacy that all effective teachers should know and apply.

The CORE curriculum consists of fifteen professional development sessions that occur approximately twice monthly throughout the academic year. Sessions are
facilitated by a locally appointed literacy specialists at the school site. The fifteen sessions are purposely linked to:

- Scientifically-based research
- Ohio’s Academic Content Standards
- Diagnostic Teaching
- Ohio’s Standards for High Quality Professional Development

The content of CORE is organized into four domains: Knowing, Planning, Teaching, and Assessing. Each domain includes a set of key components and concepts that underlie the expert teaching of reading, writing, and oral language. A central goal of the literacy specialist project is to help classroom teachers adapt and change their literacy teaching practices. "The literacy specialist develops the capacities of teachers and literacy programs toward new possibilities and relationships that support literacy achievement” (www.literacyspecialist.org.2001).

Throughout the fifteen collaborative CORE sessions, teachers have the opportunity to affirm and expand knowledge, skills, concepts and expertise. Sessions also include dialoguing about practice, collaborating, sharing, and negotiating of ideas. A fieldwork component requires teachers to take information from each of the sessions back to their classrooms for experimentation and documentation. The field work component clearly demonstrates the constructivist grounding of the CORE initiative. Serving as a bridge between old and new understandings, the sharing and critiquing of the fieldwork becomes the springboard to each subsequent session. At the heart of the CORE project, the fieldwork provides constructivist grounding. The field work assignments afford teachers the opportunity to learn in context and make change in practices real (Darling-Hammond,

Literature Review and Theoretical Grounding

*Characteristics of High Quality Professional Development*

Scores of research reports are available to define the characteristics of effective professional development, but very little information is available to better understand the characteristics of professional development efforts that may be sustained over time. Numerous efforts to improve education since the 1983 publication of *A Nation At Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education) have primarily centered on restructuring and improving schools organizationally. School improvement efforts including changing course content, establishing charter schools, lowering class sizes, testing for accountability, etc. – all left classroom practice largely untouched (Sparks & Hirsh, 1999). As a result, many teachers, despite well-intentioned efforts, have generally continued to teach as they have in the past.


From a professional perspective, the highly qualified teacher knows subject matter (what to teach) and pedagogy (how to teach) but also knows how to learn and how to make decisions informed by theory and informed by feedback from school and classroom evidence in particular contexts. Recent literacy research
along these lines suggests that teachers’ ability to exercise professional discretion is a major factor in student achievement (Cochran-Smith, 2003, p. 96).

In addition, the National Commission on Teaching and America’s 1998 publication of *What matters most: Teaching for America’s Future* made it clear that improved teaching must be at the center of any local, state, or national discussion regarding school improvement. Considering this shift in focus over the past two decades, it is critical to generate research related to effective and substantive professional development initiatives.

Linda Darling-Hammond (1998) asserts that systemic reform often evokes overload and incoherence, as it requires teachers to implement changes in practice without reflection. She argues that there is no packaged program or process that will promote success. But there are, she continues, common “structural features” that promote success. The features she details include professional autonomy, explicit goals for student learning, teaching teams, time for teachers to collaborate, and ongoing inquiry. All of these features are clearly reflected within the framework of the CORE professional development initiative (Roskos & Rosemary, 2000).

To be effective and to have the capacity to sustain change in practice, scores of researchers report that professional development must be: a.) ongoing, b.) deeply embedded in teachers’ classroom work with children, and c.) specific to grade levels or academic content, and focused on research-based approaches (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Cohen & Hill, 1998; Hawley & Valli, 1999; Guskey, 2000; Joyce & Showers, 1995; Lieberman & Miller, 1999; Richardson 1994; Speck, 1996; Speck & Knipe, 2000). The
current study, grounded in the CORE initiative, meets the above characteristics during the nine months of ongoing professional development sessions (www.literacyspecialist.org).

Collaboration

Another important element of the CORE project that can be linked to research is the collaborative nature of the project. The framework of the CORE project allows classroom doors to open and a sense of community to develop among teachers participating in a cohort. The cohort of teachers and literacy specialists gather together for ongoing CORE meetings. The shared goals of the cohort members are defined to include the CORE curriculum with a focus on elements critical to the complex task of teaching young children the skills and strategies necessary to become successful readers and writers. In turn, the literacy specialist teaching CORE meets with university-based field faculty monthly to study CORE content and the practice of teaching/coaching teachers. The literacy specialist teaches the CORE curriculum and concepts and content during the professional development sessions. She/he also coaches teachers through informal discussions in daily school life and in particular during interactions with fieldwork. “The literacy specialist and field faculty communicate well beyond the monthly meetings. Research has shown that teachers change while participating in the coaching strand of the CORE curriculum (Rosemary, C. A., Freppon, P., Kinnucan-Welsch, K., with Grogan, P., Feist-Willis, J., Zimmerman, B., Campbell, L., Cobb, J. Hill, M., Walker, B., & Ward, M., 2002). However, the question remains as to whether or not new understandings and changes in practice can be sustained over time once formal contact with the initial year of the CORE curriculum is complete.

Professional development must be built on the shared knowledge of teachers in a
collaborative setting providing a structure for teachers to learn, reflect, and grow together (Joyce & Showers, 1995; Little, 1993; McLaughlin, 1994; Sparks & Hirsh, 1997). The most promising strategy for sustained, substantive school improvement is building the capacity of teachers to function as a professional learning community (Barth, 1990; Dufour, 1998; Schmoker, 2004). Cazden (1988) also maintains that teaching is embedded in a cultural context. The current study provides important information on questions posed in the field of teacher learning and literacy.

*Constructivism*

The work of L.S. Vygotsky (1962, 1978) was central to this study. Vygotsky ascertains that knowledge is constructed through joint, social activity. Although this perspective is shared by a number of contemporary theorists and researchers, common positions can be most often traced back to Vygotsky’s notion that individuals internalize and appropriate learning through participation in joint social activities. Vygotsky’s claim that individuals’ learning is based in social activity and is enhanced as conversations are appropriated and transformed is supported in the work of current researchers and theorists including Bruner (1986), Gee (1992), Lave & Wenger (1991), and Moll (1990).

Professional development opportunities must honor teachers as learners who construct their own knowledge. Learning processes must be modeled and guided rather than directed and mandated. “Professional development today also means providing occasions for teachers to reflect critically on their practice and to fashion new knowledge and beliefs about content, pedagogy, and learners” (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995, p. 597). The CORE project does this by providing multiple opportunities for
teachers to participate in and learn from constructivist settings so that they may construct for themselves reflective educational and instructional practices.

A key principle in constructivist theory is related to the role that reflection plays in learning. Research on reflective practice that suggests that reflection is developmental is relevant to this study. Sustaining change is supported by reflection since reflection itself is necessary in analytic teaching. Schon’s work (1983) demonstrates that reflection is central to clarifying one’s understanding and sense making. Schon suggests that adult’s growth and development depend on their ability to reflect on their learning and adjust their behavior based on that reflection.

Although research related to the “act” of reflection dates back to Dewey (1901/1933) and more recently, Schon (1983), A recent body of work specifically related to the importance of reflective practice among literacy educators was completed by Roskos, Vukelich, & Risko (2001). These researchers’ review suggests that a teachers’ growth and development is dependent on their ability to reflect on learning (their own and their students’) and adjust behavior accordingly. “Experience itself is not enough. Reflection on experience is the pathway to improvement” (York-Barr, Sommers, Chere, Montie, 2001, p. xvii)

At the end of each of the fifteen CORE professional development sessions, teacher participants are given the opportunity to systematically reflect on content and facilitated experiences. As noted previously, reflection is also ongoing in fieldwork. Structured reflection again occurs at the beginning of each subsequent session as teachers share their CLASSROOM implementation efforts. In their book Reflective Practice to Improve Schools (2001), York-Barr, Sommers, Ghere, and Montie devote two full
chapters to the importance of moving beyond individual reflection to reflecting with a partner and reflecting in small groups or teams. The structure of the CORE curriculum sessions allows for individual and group reflection. Moreover, informal reflection takes place throughout literacy specialist and teacher meetings.

Theory to Practice

The current study is needed because it investigates a project in which resources and energy are expended across the state to support an initiative that is inclusive of the characteristics of high quality professional development and the Ohio Content Standards in Language Arts. While it is crucial to provide professional development to teachers it is also very important to research the impact of the professional development experiences on classroom teaching practices. This study is a beginning step in connecting theory to practice that has the potential to be sustained over time.

Method

The curriculum outlined in the CORE project focuses on developing the knowledge, skills, and dispositions essential for expert literacy teaching. Each of the four CORE domains includes major components and related conceptual elements. The information that follows provides a description of the content included within each domain.
The CORE Curriculum Defined

Domain I: knowing. Knowing the Content of Literacy Education is the touchstone domain as it focuses on the content teachers must know in order to make instructional decisions. An understanding of basic ideas and facts about literacy lays the foundation for critical thinking, problem solving, and reflection that support the continuous improvement of literacy teaching practice.

Table 1

**Domain I: Components and Elements**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain of Practice</th>
<th>Components (Topics of study)</th>
<th>Conceptual Elements (Key ideas related to the topic)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domain I: Knowing the Content of Literacy Education</td>
<td>Knowing about Literacy Development</td>
<td>• Development of oral language, reading, writing, and orthography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Home/community influences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• School influences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Neuro-biological and psychological influences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Knowing about the English Language</td>
<td>• Alphabetic principle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Orthography (spelling system)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Basic text structures (narrative and expository), graphics, and illustrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Knowing about Literacy Processes</td>
<td>• Prior knowledge (schemas)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Language systems (syntactic, semantic, phonologic, and pragmatic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Reading processes of predict, check, and integrate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Writing processes of prewriting, composing, conventions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Knowing about Literacy Education Models and</td>
<td>• Models: phonics, basal, whole language, balanced, and second language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Methods</td>
<td>• Methods: part-to-whole; whole-to-part</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Domain II: planning for literacy instruction. The Planning domain addresses the design work of literacy teaching. Design is a problem-solving process that must take into account a wide variety of possible behaviors in an array of physical, social, and cultural contexts. It must be mindful of outcomes and performance criteria yet at the same time allow for the dynamic interplay of place, materials, and persons. Teachers use their design skills to create learning places and experiences that develop young children's literacy. Such skills include planning, inventing, making, and doing to realize worthwhile educational goals.

Table 2

Domain II: Components and Elements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain of Practice</th>
<th>Components (Topics of study)</th>
<th>Conceptual Elements (Key ideas related to the topic)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domain II:</td>
<td>Acknowledging Literacy Curriculum Expectations</td>
<td>• Ohio Language Arts Competency Model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning for</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Professional organizations standards (e.g., IRA, NAEYC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy Instruction</td>
<td></td>
<td>• District standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organizing Instruction</td>
<td>• Reading to children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Independent reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Shared reading/writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Guided reading/writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Word study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Sentence work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preparing the Literacy Environment</td>
<td>• Design criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Materials selection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bridging Home and School</td>
<td>• Family literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Building community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Domain III: teaching literacy and domain IV: assessing literacy achievement.

Domains III and IV constitute the everyday work of beginning literacy instruction.

Teaching and assessing are interacting processes that involve, at least, four sets of higher-
order instructional skills. One of these has to do with talking and listening in the
instruction setting. Another involves teacher's abilities to observe children's literacy
behaviors and to document them systematically. A third targets teachers' abilities to
analyze and interpret the flow of literacy instruction and its outcomes. The fourth requires
the teacher to choose from an array of diverse instructional techniques that helps children
learn how to read and write and assessment tools to keep tabs on their literacy
achievement.

Table 3

_Domain III: Components and Elements_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain of Practice</th>
<th>Components (Topics of study)</th>
<th>Conceptual Elements (Key ideas related to the topic)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domain III:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Literacy</td>
<td>Teaching Oral Language</td>
<td>• Language of literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Language of inquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Language of social interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teaching about Words</td>
<td>• Letters and sounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Words in context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Fluency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teaching Reading</td>
<td>• Semantic mapping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>• Predict/confirm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teaching Writing</td>
<td>• Prewriting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Composing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Conventions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4

_Domain IV: Components and Elements_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain of Practice</th>
<th>Components (Topics of study)</th>
<th>Conceptual Elements (Key ideas related to the topic)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domain IV:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessing Literacy</td>
<td>Assessing Reading and</td>
<td>• Assessment cycle (observe, document, analyze,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement</td>
<td>Writing Behaviors</td>
<td>interpret, and evaluate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Participants

The K-3 teacher participants in this study are representative of early childhood educators from a large urban school district in southwest Ohio who voluntarily participated in the CORE project two years before data collection for this study began. This study was designed to investigate the CORE implementation patterns of three participants in case study research (Brogan and Biklen, 1982; Guba and Lincoln, 1991; and Yin, 1984). Research indicates that while teacher understanding and willingness to consider new grade-level content and pedagogical approaches are critical, knowledge of local school culture may only be minimally important (McLauqlin, 1990; Ellmore, 1996; Gersten, Chard, & Baker, 2000). Thus, only teachers serving in the same, or a relatively similar classroom teaching position as the year they participated in the initial academic year-long CORE professional development project were considered as participants. These potential participants were also representative of the same urban school district located within close geographic proximity to the researcher so that the study could be conducted without long distance travel.

A short survey to enlist participant interest was given to 22 teachers within the same urban school district who met the criteria stated above. The teachers’ years of experience at the time of the study ranged from three years to 29 years. Of the 14 (out of 22) teachers who responded to the initial survey, 10 indicated that they would be willing to
participate in follow-up research, including an in depth interview with the researcher, classroom observations, and submission of current lesson plans. Five teachers had transferred to different building within the same district and two had left the district. The final three selected were in the same grade level as they had been in the CORE training year and they were considered good informants. A fourth teacher still teaching the same grade level was participating in a .5 job share the year of data collection, and was not selected for this study due to her half-time position.

The information gained from all 22 teachers that led to the selection of the three focal teachers is summarized in the table that follows. They are listed in the order in which surveys were returned. The three focal participants (Teachers 3, 5, and 8) are represented in bold in the table below. Pseudonyms were given to these teachers upon their agreement to participate further in the study.

Table 5

Summary of Initial Survey Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Assignment during initial CORE training</th>
<th>Assignment during data collection year (2 years later)</th>
<th>Willing to participate in depth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 1</td>
<td>4th grade</td>
<td>6th grade (same building)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 2</td>
<td>3rd grade</td>
<td>1-2 multi-age (same building)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 3 (Beth) pseudonym</td>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>Kindergarten (different building within same district)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 4</td>
<td>Preschool</td>
<td>Preschool (.5 job share/same building)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 5 (Terry) pseudonym</td>
<td>1st grade</td>
<td>1st grade (different building within the district)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Procedures and Analysis

The research design for this study is grounded in qualitative methods and case study research (Brogan and Biklen, 1982; Guba and Lincoln, 1991; and Yin, 1984). The data collection included the following:

- **Data set 1: Initial teacher Surveys** (refer to Table 1)

  The initial surveys were sent to 22 teachers that participated in CORE curriculum professional development during the first year of implementation (2000-2001).

- **Data set 2: Participant Interviews**

  All three focal teachers were interviewed. Interviews were informal and conversational. Open-ended questions included a.) How do you feel about your own

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher 6</th>
<th>Principal</th>
<th>Principal (different building within the district)</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 7</td>
<td>4th grade</td>
<td>6th grade (same building)</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher 8 (Janie) pseudonym</strong></td>
<td>3rd grade</td>
<td>3rd grade (different building within the district)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 9</td>
<td>1,2,3 multiage</td>
<td>Preschool (different building out of the district)</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 10</td>
<td>Intermediate Special Education</td>
<td>Primary Special Education (different building within same district)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 11</td>
<td>1st grade</td>
<td>Literacy Coach (same district)</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 12</td>
<td>3rd grade</td>
<td>1st grade (different building within same district)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 13</td>
<td>Librarian</td>
<td>Librarian (different building within same district)</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 14</td>
<td>2-3 multi-age</td>
<td>Reading Intervention (different building out of the district)</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
skills and level of expertise in early literacy instruction? b.) Do you feel better prepared or more capable than before engaging in the CORE project? And c.) What, if any, specific strategies or instructional methods do you implement regularly that are reflective of the CORE curriculum? The interviews lasted from 60-90 minutes were audio taped. All interviews were transcribed in full.

- Data set 3: Classroom Observations

Formal observations in all three focal teachers’ classrooms occurred three times over the course of data collection. The observations were all completed between January and May 2004 two full years after the teachers’ participation in CORE. Observations lasted for a minimum of 90 minutes each. Informal observations and short visits from the researcher to the school and/or classrooms occurred for shorter time periods throughout the study. The number of informal observations ranged from 4-6 in each of the focal teachers’ classrooms.

- Data Set 4: Lesson Plan Artifacts

All three focal teachers submitted lesson plans that reflected a minimum of one week’s typical lesson plans for literacy instruction. The lesson plan documents were coded for evidence of individual teacher implementation efforts that included concepts and components in the CORE curriculum project. In total, 5 days of lesson plans were collected for each of the three teachers. The 15 days of lesson plans were written and/or typed for a total of 18 pages.
Analysis and Interpretation

Analysis of the data sources was conducted from January through September and more extensively at the end of the project. The total case study (Yin, 1984) documents analyzed included two hundred and eleven pages. The constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was applied to each data set. All coding decisions were supported with original data and were shared with knowledgeable others (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Judgments were conservative and grounded in the CORE curriculum and the research-base.

The initial coding of the multiple data sources was two-fold. First, the data gathered were coded to search for any evidence of implementation of the CORE curriculum throughout data sets two through four. Evidence of implementation of the CORE curriculum was coded as Implementation Yes (IY). The following are examples from each of the data sets that were coded IY. The rationale for use of these examples as evidence of sustained practice reflective of CORE is provided in the results section.

- Observation: 2/18/2003 – 10:18 a.m. Teacher: Terry (coded IY – Implementation – Yes)

  Terry facilitates a guided reading group with six students. During this time, all students were given multiple copies of grade level books. The objective for the small reading group includes having students make predictions of what is likely to happen in the text. The students who were not working in small group with Terry (12 total) are engaged in literacy centers (listening center, book area, writing center) located around the perimeter of the room.
• Interview with Janie: 12:54 (Tape 3) transcribed from
  interview dated 1/12/2003 – coded IY (Implementation – Yes)
  
  I definitely consider the information I learned and the materials I gathered from CORE when I am planning lessons. But, what I use more than anything is the assessment strategies I got, well...what I learned to do in CORE. I do running records on a regular basis to determine student’s reading levels and progress. This is something I didn’t do before CORE.

• Lesson Plan Artifact #14 – Beth (coded IY Implementation – Yes)
  
  In lesson plan data beginning 3/1/2003, evidence of lessons for five consecutive days included lessons titled “word work”. These lessons specified teacher and student actions that would lead to vocabulary acquisition through the study of word families and spelling patterns. In an earlier interview, Beth described that the “word work” referenced in her plans replaced what had previously been direct instruction supported by worksheets and traditional phonics materials.

  Second, data sets two through four (interviews, lesson plans, and observations) were coded for evidence of factors that supported OR hindered implementation. This information was coded SF (Supporting Factor) and HF (Hindering Factor). In several instances, information coded SF and/or HF were coded in the interview data and then supported, therefore multiply coded, with evidence documented in observations and/or lesson plan data. For example, one teacher described a school practice of administering traditional weekly spelling test as something that hindered her ability to implement
research-based strategies for teaching spelling that she learned in CORE. This was coded HF (Hindering Factor) in the interview data, and the administration of this type of spelling tests was also observed on two occasions and evidenced in the lesson plans submitted from this teacher. Another example of data being multiply coded SF (Supporting Factor) or HF (Hindering Factor) occurred when an excerpt from the interview data was coded SF:

02:33 (Tape 3/Janie)

…having the materials at hand is helpful. Like when I plan an author study, I know that I can easily access a collection of the books I need. It is also easy to get support within the building. If no teachers at my grade level have what I am looking for, I know that there are lots of other people that do have collections of quality children’s literature.

In addition to the initial SF (Supporting Factor) coding, the information Janie shared was observed on an occasion when a lead teacher at the school came into her classroom to bring the department wide “book of the month” with a packet of lessons and extension activities to accompany the book. Also, the author study she referred to in the interview was evidenced in her lesson plans. This indicated that teaching reading with children’s literature was embedded in the curriculum.

After the coding to determine the general existence of CORE being sustained within the three teachers’ classrooms, it became apparent that this coded evidence could be linked to specific CORE sessions. For example, Beth’s word work lessons were reflective of Domain III – Teaching. Session 10 in Domain III of CORE is titled Teaching About
Words. Outcomes on the coding of the three teachers’ practice for specific CORE sessions is provided in the upcoming Findings section (Table 6).

Limitations

This study is limited by the small number of focal participants (three), and the fact that all three participants were representative of the same large urban school district. It is also limited by the fact that the teachers and the researcher were very familiar with each other and worked together on a daily basis. There were limitations related to the collection of data as well. For example, observations were all scheduled at the teachers’ convenience, the time of the school year in which the study was conducted, and the fact that teachers choose the week of lesson plans to submit.

In addition, the study was limited by the lack of information related to the instructional and assessment strategies used by the three focal teachers before participation in the CORE project. There is no direct data available that suggests the components of the three teachers’ classroom practices and/or beliefs that were or were not in line with the CORE curriculum prior to the project/experience.

Finally, follow-up studies on professional development can be problematic in that other influences, besides CORE, could be involved in the teachers’ thought and action, resulting in a limitation of the study. However, the study was designed and conducted with the best qualitative methods possible given its design and the essence of beginning research into this previously unresearched area. The findings are carefully grounded in specific evidence of CORE in teachers’ voices (from interviews) and supported by observation and lesson plan data.
Findings

Continued Implementation/Sustained Practice

The findings related to the first research question, (1) Do the focal teachers engage in implementation of the CORE curriculum two year after their initial participation in the project, and if so, in what ways?, were represented in three different data sets - a.) interviews, b.) lesson plan artifacts, and c.) classroom observations. Thus, data were triangulated in order to confirm and/or disconfirm findings. Codings from interview data were cross-checked and supported with codings from observation and lesson plan data to determine definite patterns. In cases which cross-checked interview data were not supported with one or more other data sources, data were not included. Eighty percent of the cross-checked data were supported by two other data sources and are reported here. The findings that follow are reported individually by data set.

Interview data. Two of the three teachers addressed their prior and post CORE implementation efforts in the interviews. Excerpts from interviews that directly support sustained implementation of new knowledge include:

4:16 (Tape 1/Terry)
I got the most out of the sessions on Writing. I think I did a decent job with writing instruction before. I taught the writing process, modeled and emphasized editing and revision, used word walls, and held writing workshop regularly. But, now I am more aware of the why and how of these strategies. I still do a lot of the same things, but I have also added interactive writing and shared writing. (Terry)

3:34 (Tape 3/Janie)
I was doing a lot of this before, (CORE) but the difference is now I am doing things purposely and not just because I read a great idea in a book or heard it from another teacher (Janie).
Although all three of the focal teachers self-reportedly displayed aspects of effective teaching before participation in CORE, after the training and time for practice and continued implementation, it was clear that the teachers had solidified their teaching and become metacognitively aware of new knowledge.

All three teachers reported that participation in the CORE project gave them increased understandings of reading and writing instruction.

2:46 (Tape 1/Terry)
I don’t feel like anything in college prepared me for how to teach reading. Before CORE, I had to figure it out as I went along. I watched what other people were doing, but I didn’t always agree with what I saw. I feel better prepared to make decisions that are research-based now. (Terry)

4:12 (Tape 3/Janie)
I feel better prepared. I didn’t know what I didn’t know before CORE. I still have a lot to learn, but at least I am aware of that fact (Janie).

1:24 (Tape 2/Beth)
Some of the things we covered in CORE I had in college, but it was really pretty general then. The classes we had, like Children’s Literature were not very much about teaching and assessing. It was more like the importance of reading aloud and providing lots of opportunities for kids to read. All of that is important, but it was like they taught us that if kids loved books they would learn to read. Before CORE I didn’t really know what kinds of things to do when kids aren’t learning, or how to diagnose what they need next (Beth).

Lesson plan artifacts. The lesson plans submitted from The three teachers provided evidence of implementation of the CORE components. Common components of lesson plans among The teachers included:

- Guided reading (The components of guided reading are part of the CORE curriculum)
- Process writing
- Read Aloud
• Assessment techniques
• Ohio Content Standards (referenced in detail)

Other evidence of sustained implementation of the knowledge and strategies within CORE were demonstrated within lesson plans for one, two, or all three focal teachers include:

• Choral Reading (Janie, Beth)
• Family involvement component (Beth)
• Shared Reading (Beth, Terry)
• Interactive Writing (Terry)
• Word Work (Janie, Terry)
• Running Records (Beth, Janie)
• Read Aloud (Beth, Janie, Terry)

The most commonly coded domain was Planning. This was reflective of CORE’s session 5 (Acknowledging Literacy Curriculum Expectations) and session 6 (Organizing for Instruction). The assessing domain was also coded throughout the lesson plan data, as several lesson plans contained a reference to assessment and/or evaluation. For example, students’ correct or logical responses, teacher observation, running records, etc. Lesson plan artifacts alone did not indicate the extent to which “plans” were followed as written on a regular basis. This information could only be confirmed through classroom observation and interview data.

Classroom observations. *Examples of evidence related to sustained implementation of the CORE content, and therefore coded, in formal observations included:*

a.) Read Aloud and Shared Reading instruction (Beth, Janie, Terry)

b.) Guided Reading instruction (Janie, Terry)
c.) “What good Readers do” bulletin board (Janie)

d.) Leveled books and/or “book buckets” (Beth, Terry, Janie)

e.) Word Walls (Terry, Janie, & Beth)

f.) References to guided reading groups and/or Reader’s Workshop (Terry, Janie)

(g.) A large selection of quality literature easily accessible to children (Beth, Janie, Terry)

(h.) Writing Centers (Beth, Terry)

Classroom observation data were most commonly coded as reflecting session content from the teaching domain. However, in several instances, data were multiply coded with sessions from the planning domain. Teaching practices were first noted in the lesson plan artifacts and then cross-checked and supported with classroom observations.

Teaching as a Reflective Practice

As earlier stated, an element of CORE that sets it apart from traditional professional development initiatives is the structured opportunities for teachers to reflect on their classroom practices. The effectiveness of the change is very dependent on the ability of the teacher to become a reflective practitioner. Teachers in CORE are not only challenged to do new/better instruction but to reflect on doing (Dewey, 1933, Schon, 1983) in writing and in subsequent meetings with others. Teaching as a reflective practice appeared to be common practice at the two-year mark following the CORE.

4:21 (Tape 2/Beth)
I still use some of the organizers from the (CORE) fieldwork to organize my thoughts before and after teaching a lesson (Beth)

1:45 (Tape 1/Terry
I am more purposeful in choosing standards, lessons, and activities (Terry).
3:50 (Tape 3/Janie)
I reflect a lot on the ongoing assessments I do with kids. It’s not just knowing where they are, but what am I, or what should I do, about it. I didn’t think so much about that before (Janie).

Having acquired (and being able to verbalize) new learning increases the possibility of sustained implementation into one’s ongoing teaching practice over an extended period of time. These kind of “ah-has” are career-altering. Additional examples of the three teachers’ reflection on their learning and implementation efforts are as follows:

4:34 (Tape 3/Janie)
One of the things I learned through CORE was to base my teaching decisions on the kids needs, not what I might think or a book might say is the next step in their learning. I try a lot of different approaches to find one that is best for an individual student (Janie)

2:11 (Tape 2/Beth)
I know I am a better teacher now. Maybe just having more experience has helped, but as far as CORE, now I am more able to pinpoint what to do when kids aren’t making progress and how to determine reading and writing levels. I learned a lot about assessment techniques (Beth)

1:34 (Tape 1/Terry)
I am more confident and professional. I can have conversations with other teachers, parents, or administrators and I can use the buzz words and explain what they mean. Teaching or explaining something to someone else is the best way to really learn something for yourself and CORE gave me the confidence to feel like I know what I am talking about and I know what I am teaching. It was affirming (Terry).

The comments above are most reflective of the Knowing domain. The fact that the three teachers were able to verbalize the importance of the knowledge they gained (specific to teaching reading and writing) helped clarify sustained practice two years after engaging in the CORE initiative. In contrast, the teaching domain was most often coded in the classroom observations and lesson plan artifacts.
Evidence of Sustained Practice Across All Data Sets

Table two below represents the codes placed on interview transcripts, observation memos and notes, and lesson plan artifacts. The uppercase letters are representative of the four CORE domains: K = Knowing, P = Planning, T = Teaching, and A = Assessing. The numeral following K, P, T, and A, respectively, represent the number of the CORE session in which the specific evidence of CORE session content appeared. The final column in the table represents the number of times each of the sessions was evidenced across all three teachers and all three data sets.

Table 6

Evidence of CORE Session Domains Across Data Sets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domains</th>
<th># of times evidenced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domain I - Knowing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 1 - Literacy Development</td>
<td>K1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 2 - The English Language</td>
<td>K2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 3 - Literacy Processes</td>
<td>K3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 4 - Literacy Education Models and Methods</td>
<td>K4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowing Domain</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domain II - Planning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 5 - Literacy Curriculum Expectations</td>
<td>P5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 6 - Organizing for Instruction</td>
<td>P6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 7 - Preparing the Literacy Environment</td>
<td>P7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 8 - Bridging Home and School</td>
<td>P8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Domain</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domain III – Teaching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 9 - Teaching Oral Language</td>
<td>T9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 10 - Teaching About Words</td>
<td>T10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 11 - Teaching Reading Comprehension</td>
<td>T11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 12 - Teaching Writing</td>
<td>T12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Domain</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domain IV – Assessing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 13 - Assessing Reading and Writing Behaviors</td>
<td>A13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 14 - Translating Assessment Results</td>
<td>A14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 15 - Reflecting on Literacy</td>
<td>A15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

164
The table above was created to illustrate the frequency of documented evidence of CORE session content for all three teachers. This table makes it clear that the teachers were demonstrating the use of knowledge and skills from the CORE project within their classrooms two years after their initial training.

In addition, the next table (Table 7) illustrates the frequency, regardless of the session number, across the four domains, that each of the three focal teachers demonstrated knowledge and skills related to CORE content.

Table 7
Frequency of Codings by Domain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Knowing</th>
<th>Planning</th>
<th>Teaching</th>
<th>Assessing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beth</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terry</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janie</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Factors That Supported and Hindered Implementation

The findings related to the second research question, (2) What factors hinder and/or support continued reflective practice and implementation of new learning?, were best reflected in the interview data. For example, one teacher reported being supported by a school-wide adoption of the Four Blocks Reading program. She reported that many of the components of CORE fit well with the Four Block requirements. References to the
components of Four Blocks were also observed during formal observations and evidenced in lesson plan artifacts.

Other findings related to the factors that supported and/or hindered participant implementation and sustainability are summarized below. The summary statements are reflective of the participant interviews. All statements were affirmed with classroom observation and lesson plan data.

**Supportive Factors.** The three teachers indicated that they sought out and appreciated any and all informal and formal opportunities to collaborate with “like-minded” colleagues. Having a cohort, or group, that shared the journey of improving teaching and changing practice was reported as of significant importance in interviews. Another factor that supported sustained practice was professional trust/respect from administration. Administrative (school and district level) support was seen as vital to continued implementation by all three focal teachers.

The acquisition of new knowledge, skills, and competencies, particularly in relation to specific strategies for instruction and assessment, was reported by the focal teachers as a support for continued implementation. In addition to simply gaining new knowledge, the teachers all demonstrated a sense of responsibility to students to implement best practices. A strong tenet of CORE is that classroom teachers are responsible for implementing sound instructional and assessment programs/practices.

**Hindering Factors.** The following excerpts from interview data, specifically reflect factors that hindered sustained implementation of the CORE curriculum.
It’s not like I can collaborate with other teachers here. With just a few exceptions, everyone is very traditional in their use of instructional strategies and materials (Terry).

The fact that [the principal from previous school] took CORE with us made a big difference. I don’t think the principal here knows anything about best practices (CORE) in early literacy and it makes it hard not to slip into what everyone else…well, what most people here…are doing (Janie).

Sometimes I miss having the group of other teachers in CORE to talk to. Just having a scheduled regular meeting…class, whatever you want to call it time - made it impossible NOT to implement the content of the sessions. You weren’t in it alone. Even if I waited until the last minute to try some things, I always wanted to have something meaningful to contribute when everyone got together again (Beth).

As noted in the Methods section, the focal teachers were employed at a school building different from where they worked during their initial CORE training. In the large urban district where these teachers worked, teacher mobility is common. The interview data suggests that changing schools was another factor that hindered implementation efforts.

It’s very different here with [comprehensive reform design at a new school]. There is a lot more independent work built into this program, if I could, I would allow more time for modeling (Janie).

Moving schools has hindered my implementation. Getting to know different routines and administration has taken a lot of my focus (Terry).

There are a lot of things I would do differently if it were just me (referring to a team teaching situation in a new school setting). But, we have different philosophies and so we both give a little….well sometimes a lot (Beth).
An additional factor which reportedly hindered implementation efforts was relative to the time available for the focal teachers to meet with their grade level partners for the purpose of planning for instruction and assessment. Two of the three focal teachers reported a lack of common planning time with grade level colleagues. When asked, the third teacher also expressed that implementation efforts would be better supported by collaboration time during the school day.

Conflicting philosophies and/or personalities among colleagues at the building level also appeared in the data as a factor which hindered sustained practice. The focal teachers addressed conflicting beliefs and/or classroom practices among other members of the staff, whether at their grade level, or among the larger staff. This was reported most specifically from one teacher. Another teacher referred to “other staff members (administrators, teacher, and civil service staff) who wish “to work alone” and stay in their “comfort zone”. The third teacher reported, “No collaborative groups… a lack of interest in doing things differently.”

Discussion and Implications

The findings of this study related to both research questions indicate that the possibility of sustained practice up to two years after a job-embedded professional development experience is possible. Although support for implementation was sustained throughout the CORE project, teachers had to find unique ways to sustain classroom practices reflective of the CORE curriculum after their initial year of participation.
The results of this study indicate that the CORE project has the capacity to provide for a level of sustained professional learning as a collective endeavor. The impact of a project which involves professionals coming together, learning from each other, drawing from the expertise of one another, and carrying the skills and expertise learned to new settings, thereby broadening opportunities to learn, is but one step towards better understanding of what qualifies as sustainable professional development. However, it is an important step.

Although the facilitation and support embedded in CORE is only formally structured throughout the nine months of the initial training, it is possible, as evidenced in this study, for its participants to find unique ways to sustain curriculum implementation on the local level. This study also points out the need for Ohio’s school administrators to become fully informed about the CORE project.

Suggestions for Further Research

The focal teachers in this study were coached to the extent possible in their 15 CORE meetings with the literacy specialist during the school year. Currently, there is a newly implemented formal CORE coaching strand. Teachers who participate in the CORE curriculum project have the opportunity to be formally coached for an additional school year. More research is needed on how the formal coaching strand may impact sustained practice at the classroom level.

In addition, studies with more CORE participants and across multiple settings would contribute to a deeper understanding of the factors that result in sustainability of learned practice(s). It is important to study further the long range impact of this state
supported initiative. More research of various professional development initiatives with similar characteristics (e.g.: ongoing, job-embedded, standards-based, cohort-based, etc.) would also be pertinent. Finally, research on the impact of student performance in classrooms with teachers who have engaged in the CORE curriculum and its coaching strand must be an investigative focus in the future.

Pedagogical Implications

The Reading Excellence Act (1999), NCATE curriculum guidelines of the International Reading Association (1998), and recent research report from the National Research Council all call for study of teacher professional development in the area of literacy instruction. The current study provides some evidence that indicates that professional development with the characteristics of CORE can be sustained for at least two years. The professional development opportunities provided through the CORE project are specific to improving literacy teaching. The results of this study contribute to a growing understanding of what constitutes high quality professional development in the field that can be sustained. However, this study helps support the notion that even long-term and high quality professional development must be continually supported. These case study teachers indicated this much when they said:

3:29 (Tape 1/Terry)
There are a lot of things I learned in CORE that I would like to do more of, but I don’t really get the support from my principal and other teachers that I had before. (Terry)

2:10 (Tape 2/Beth)
It was nice to have a time to share and learn and try new things. That was all set up at [school name], but now I have a teaching partner with very traditional ideas. I try not to make waves. (Beth)
The literacy coach here brings us things and offers support. She wasn’t a part of CORE, but it’s similar thinking. We have a book of the week for the whole primary and it’s always quality literature. Everyone has to do guided reading, shared reading, writing workshop, reading workshop and other things that we covered in CORE. Some teachers don’t seem to buy in as much, but at least the expectation is the same for all classrooms. That helps, and I feel like I am supported in my beliefs. I know there are lots of schools [in the district] where that isn’t the case. I’m lucky that I’m allowed to do the things we learned. (Janie)

This evidence suggests that teachers need follow-up support and formal coaching (Barth, 1990; Dufour, 1998; Schmoker, 2004) after the initial CORE project and embedded coaching during the school year. In this study, as in others, it has become clear that schools must become life-long learning places for teachers as well as for children (Freppon, 2000). The CORE project supports the notion that professional growth and development is not a one time event, but a career long, life long, endeavor. This notion is illustrated in the following quote from the United States Department of Education publication, Every Child Reading – An Action plan.

“Effective professional development requires extended time for initial training that includes discussions of research on how children learn to read as well as specific instructional strategies. In addition, it requires extensive in-class follow-up….Professional development needs to be seen as a never-ending process that involves the entire staff, not a one-time event.” (Every Child Reading – An Action Plan (p.21-22).

The current study affirms the premise that quality professional development is beyond higher education course work, workshops, and inservice programs – it is about framing opportunities to learn within professional educational communities over time. Schools and communities must recognize and perpetuate this congruence so that teacher learning can be designed around similar principles and premises.
References


Chapter Four

Sustaining Professional Development Knowledge and Skills in Early Literacy Education:

The Ohio CORE Literacy Specialist Project

Appendixes

Appendix A  Initial Survey to enlist teacher participants
Appendix B  Excerpt from Interview transcription

Note: There are significantly fewer appendix documents for this final chapter, as much of this information has been inserted throughout the text.
Conclusion

In this conclusion, I provide closure and coherence to this document as a whole. Throughout its writing my purpose was to identify patterns that were found in the four studies and to point to reoccurring themes.

I began in chapter one with my original study of the CORE Literacy Specialist project and its impact on three teacher learners. Since a second year in this project was possible with further participation through the implementation of the Teacher Learning Instrument (TLI), the second study focused on one of the original study participants as she engaged with me in the coaching and related procedures that made up the TLI process. The second chapter came out of this particular TLI study. Chapter three also focused on the TLI process, but differed from the second chapter in that it increased the number of focal teachers and added the investigation of the coaching dynamic. The rationale for conducting the research for chapter four came out of an evolving understanding of the importance of the teacher learning evident in the previous three studies and a need to determine if the practices were sustainable.

Patterns/Themes from Chapters One, Two, and Three

Following a brief review of the patterns and themes embedded in the first three studies, I provide remarks on the fourth study set in chapter four. The patterns/themes of the three studies represented in chapter one, two and three are as follows: Collaborative Inquiry, Reflective Practice, and Scaffolding.
Collaborative Inquiry

The professional development sessions throughout the CORE Literacy Specialist project and the TLI process provide opportunities for conversation, group inquiry, and problem solving that is generated as the participants collaboratively construct their own learning. The importance of the collaborative culture created among teacher participants as a group and between the classroom teacher and the literacy specialist is evidenced in the data in each of the first three chapters.

Linda Lambert, Deborah Walker, and their colleagues (1995) point to an “enlightenment” that has been brought to the field with the onset of the learning community in the 1980s. This and other current research suggests that fostering collaboration and shared inquiry in professional development planning and implementation is essential.

The evidence presented throughout the first three chapters suggested fairly strongly that collaboration was very important to the teachers involved in the studies represented. This finding and the literature I’ve studied support the reasonable conclusion that, rather than teachers attending exclusively to their individual work in the classroom, they should be afforded opportunities to share, discuss, and critically examine instructional practices with colleagues. Although individual professional growth is important, initiatives without provision for collaborative inquiry are highly likely to further isolate a school’s or district’s staff members.
Elmore’s (2000) research affirms that, “Privacy of practice produces isolation: isolation is the enemy of improvement” (p. 20). Professional development without collaborative inquiry invites fragmented attempts at improvement rather than the systematic and cohesive change desired. This point is mirrored in the title of this dissertation, namely, Beyond Fragmentation. The research presented in the individual studies in this dissertation provides evidence of professional development experiences with the potential to move beyond fragmented professional development.

Reflective Practice

The theme of reflection was most evident in the two TLI studies that comprise chapters two and three, but was also very present in the structured formal reflective opportunities that were a component in the initial professional development sessions delineated in the first study. To help ensure success in the continued development of literacy teachers, there is a need for well-prepared educators to have the knowledge and skill necessary to exercise informed professional judgments. One way to do this is to support reflective practices. This idea is nothing new. We know that reflection allows learners time to critique their experiences, thoughts, and actions. Schon’s (1983) work asserts that reflection is a purposeful strategy for reshaping or adapting our behavior based on new understandings that result from gaining new perspectives. Repeated use of reflection as a habit of mind enables teachers to frame future action based on learning (Jensen, 1998). All three studies discussed thus far included evidence of teacher reflection, both formal and informal.
Scaffolding

In the Introduction, I maintain that the effective teaching of students and of teaching teachers to teach are similar and that many instructional practices that “work with” children are appropriate for adults and essential for effective professional development. One of these instructional strategies which reoccurred throughout the three studies was the importance of scaffolding, which includes assisted performance or gradual release of responsibility.

The concept of scaffolding (Bruner, 1975) is based on the work of Vygotsky, who proposed that with assistance from a more knowledgeable other, learners can accomplish tasks that they would not be able to perform independently. Scaffolding instruction is “the systematic sequencing of prompted content, materials, tasks, and teacher support to optimize learning” (Dickson, Chard, & Simmons, 1993).

Hogan & Pressley (1997) summarize the literature on scaffold instruction and suggest eight guidelines. Although this 1997 body of work was focused on scaffolding learning for children, the results of the three studies in the first three chapters suggest that the same scaffolding principles can apply to instruction for adult learners. The elements of scaffolding identified by Hagan & Pressley are characteristics of the CORE literacy project and the TLI process and are evidenced in multiple data sources throughout the first three chapters. The elements are as follows:

- Pre-engagement,
- Establish a shared goal,
- Actively diagnose the needs and understandings of learners,
• Provide tailored assistance,
• Maintain pursuit of the goal,
• Give feedback, control for frustration and risk,
• Assist internalization, independence, and generalization to other contexts.

Chapter Four: Sustainability

My evolving understanding of the CORE Literacy Specialist project, of the coaching aspects of the TLI process, and most importantly of professional development itself helped guide the final study in this dissertation. The fourth and final chapter differs from the first three in that it was not designed to study teacher learning throughout academic year in which the CORE project or TLI process is implemented, but rather, to investigate whether or not learned practices might be sustained two years after participation.

As reported, the findings in the fourth study indicated that some practices learned in the CORE Literacy Specialist project were sustained. This study also presented findings that support the themes of Collaborative Inquiry, Reflective Practice, and Scaffolding. The presence of these themes is most evident in the interview data and in the support systems that the teachers discussed. For example, all three teacher participants reported that they missed interactions with other cohort or like-minded teachers. Moreover, in instances where sustainability was evidenced, the teachers were successful in seeking out collaborative relationships for themselves.
Additional evidence in the fourth study that illustrated conditions that supported sustained practice included opportunities for the teachers to receive support and guidance from a colleague, literacy “coach”, or building administrator. Although the teacher participants did not specifically indicate that this “support” did or should include scaffolding, the evidence of the kind of support they sought or received included characteristics of scaffolding. Finally, the teacher participants in the forth study were given formal opportunities, as participants in the study, to reflect on their growth and change over a period of two years.

Discussion

After years of professional development that hasn’t met with sufficient progress and with the mounting pressures of new accountability demands, many schools and districts are in search of new and different approaches to teacher training. With the initiation of professional development initiatives such as the CORE Literacy Specialist project and the new requirements for Highly Qualified Teachers and High Quality Professional Development teachers, schools, and districts have access to more and more supportive information and opportunities.

However, it is not enough for the education community to simply trust that structural, or format changes in professional development will be a “silver bullet”. To continue to build and improve teaching, professional development must be continuously researched and refined. Linda Darling-Hammond (1997) verifies that:
Studies of change efforts have found that the fate of new programs and ideas rests on teachers’ and administrators’ opportunities to learn, experiment, and adapt ideas to their local context. Without these opportunities, innovations fade away when the money stops or the enforcement pressures end. (p. 214)

The four studies presented in this dissertation suggest that the CORE Literacy Specialist project has the potential to change the context of professional development, while building the capacity of improved contexts for teaching and learning.
References


**LS Project 2000-2001**

**Classroom Teachers**
- 210 Classroom Teachers
- 70 Classroom Teachers

**Literacy Specialists**
- 21 Literacy Specialists/15 School Districts
- 7 Literacy Specialists/4 School Districts

**Field Faculty**
- 24 Literacy Specialists/17 School Districts
- 19 Literacy Specialists/14 School Districts

**LS Project Hub**
- JCU/ODE
- CORE Curriculum

**NRPDC**
- 16 Literacy Specialists/13 School Districts
- 23 Literacy Specialists/13 School Districts

**Universities**
- University of Toledo
- University of Southern
- University of Dayton
- University of Cincinnati

**State Universities**
- Kent State University
- The Ohio State University

**Total Classroom Teachers**
- 170 Classroom Teachers
- 160 Classroom Teachers
- 230 Classroom Teachers
- 160 Classroom Teachers
- 240 Classroom Teachers
Session 12 - Reflection

Today we discussed protocols for teaching writing. We discussed prewriting, writing/drafting, and editing/publishing. Personally, I am most focused on the mechanics of writing. However, as a teacher, I use most of my energies on the prewriting. I believe it provides the children with the necessary info in which to effectively successfully write a piece.
Dear [Name] Parents,

Your child is part of the [Grade] team. Our team consists of three multi age classrooms. There is a Kindergarten/First grade room, a Second/Third grade room and a First-Third grade room.

Since it is in the best interest for parents, teachers and students to work together, we would like to share with you our literacy program. Throughout the day we integrate Reading and Writing in a variety of ways. Everyday the children actively participate in Independent, Guided and Shared Reading as well as Read Alouds. They also engage in Independent, Guided, Shared, and Interactive Writing along with Think Alouds.

Independent reading consists of children reading on their individual level a wide range of materials on their own.

Guided reading, also known as “book clubs”, is a time when teachers work with a small group of readers to introduce and reinforce strategies used while reading.

Shared reading occurs when students and teachers read a book together. The teacher models and reinforces skills to become a successful reader.

Read Aloud is a time when the teacher reads a diverse selection of materials to engage the students interest.

Independent Writing occurs through journal writing, portfolio pieces and their Expedition work. The child completes this work alone or with limited teacher support.

Guided writing, also known as Writer’s Workshop, is when the students are guided through the writing process in small groups with a teacher.

Shared writing is when the teacher and children work together to compose text.

Think Alouds are used throughout all of the reading and writing activities. Think Alouds allow students to express their thoughts and make connections throughout the day.

We hope that this will help you to support your child’s learning during this school year. Feel free to contact us, participate or volunteer at anytime. We look forward to seeing you often and making this a very productive year.

The [Grade] Team

And (C)

Teacher recalls facts and concepts
Interprets (for parents) describes idea(s)
Dear Parents and Guardians,

We have started something new in our classroom because the children are enjoying it so much. I thought I would share the idea. It is something that Once a week we are now having book club or book share. First we read a good book or poem, then we chose a partner to discuss or talk about the book. One of the most important parts of this is settling the mood. We put out napkins and placemats and make hot chocolate. Then we talk while we sip hot chocolate. The children enjoy this special time to share food and a good book. We talk about the characters in the book, the plot - or how the problem in the story get solved. We might talk about the author and all the other books he/she has written. Sometimes we draw pictures together about the story or the characters.

The more you read and discuss books with your children the better readers they will be. Reading to them more than 3 times a week increases their success as a student. Book shares are a fun way to accomplish this and you can include all your children at once. I hope you give it a try. Start with 5 or 10 minutes meeting the first time. If you can increase the time as your children get better at discussing books. And don’t forget that a special touch - maybe it’s tea with milk and sugar or lemonade in the summer. I think we’ll be doing hot chocolate all year long.

[Signature]

K
**Session 13 – Assessing Reading and Writing Behaviors**

**Purpose:** To begin the assessment process by observing one child's literacy behaviors.

**Directions:** Collect information such as writing samples, notes from oral reading, responses to questions, data from word/sentence work, etc. Complete the chart and interpret what your observations mean in terms of literacy development.

Record your observations on the chart to share at the next session.

### Observations of Reading and Writing Behaviors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literacy Learning Domain</th>
<th>Tools and Techniques</th>
<th>Observations What You Noticed</th>
<th>Analysis What They Are Doing</th>
<th>Interpretations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Print/Code</td>
<td>Writing Sample</td>
<td>- spacing</td>
<td>- writing in paragraph</td>
<td>Still in early writing stage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- word bank</td>
<td>- sentencing structure</td>
<td>- uses ending punctuation</td>
<td>- uses punctuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy/ Meaning</td>
<td>- prompts</td>
<td>- has meaning</td>
<td>- structure to sentence with commas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- main point</td>
<td>- uses punctuation</td>
<td>- phonetic (spelling)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling/Writing</td>
<td>- student wrote</td>
<td>- she used correct spelling</td>
<td>- used correct spelling and those that are misspelled</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- errors in</td>
<td>- correct spelling</td>
<td>- used commas, punctuation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- context</td>
<td>- proper nouns, and details/elaborate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What stage of development is suggested by the observations?
- Early Writing

What does the child know?
- Punctuation goes at end of sentences
- Beginning/ending/middle sounds of misspelled words

What does the child need to learn?
- Use of commas, indentation, capitalization on proper nouns, and details/elaborate.

What can be done to advance the child's literacy learning?
- Keep writing on a daily basis
Student work for Session 13 - Field
4/20/01

My dad told me
at the end of August we
are going to King Island.

First we are going
to eat at a nice
restaurant. Then we are
going to get a hotel
to stay in, but we have
to wake up at 7:00. So
we can eat breakfast.

5/01/01

Remember when I wrote about King Island? My family will not go. Because we
are going to Florida. We are staying for
a week. In the summer.
REFLECTIONS: SESSION 2

Summary of key points: alphabetical principle, orthography identification in children's writing

New Learning: the above terms as well as some of the more complex grammar rules

Questions:

Personal Reaction: Right now I feel behind but hopefully will seek the benefits of new knowledge.
REFLECTIONS: SESSION 8

It was fun thinking about what early experiences (literary related) took place in my home. It keeps me mindful of how important early is!

Going back to Session 7, I must reflect that it was powerful for me. The 3 P's made me think during the weekend and imagine my classroom - sit back, read, and look at everything from the students' point of view. This class is getting accumulatively more helpful 😊.

(K) recalls basic information
(C) demonstrates understanding
(A) applies acquired knowledge/faction
(S) proposes new alternative (changes environment)
APPENDIX I

Reflection.

This was a great way to go to class—
with peers, in groups—made it so much more
relaxed and easy to attend. Also helped to
build a literacy framework and support group
among our members.

- Group development
- Networking
- Awareness of importance of
contextual learning
- Interaction/social
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Conceptual Elements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Knowing the Content of Literacy</td>
<td>I.a. Knowing about literacy development</td>
<td>1) Development of oral language, reading, writing, and orthography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td>2) Home/community influences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3) School influences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4) Neuro-biological and psychological influences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I.b. Knowing about the English language</td>
<td>5) Alphabetic principle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6) Orthography (spelling system)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7) Basic text structures (narrative and expository), graphics, and illustrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I.c. Knowing about literacy processes</td>
<td>8) Prior knowledge (schemas)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9) Language systems (syntactic, semantic, phonologic, and pragmatic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10) Reading process of predict, check, and integrate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11) Writing process of prewriting, composing, conventions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I.d. Knowing about literacy education models and methods</td>
<td>12) Models: phonics, basal, whole language, balanced, and second language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13) Methods: part-to-whole; whole-to-part</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Planning for Literacy Instruction</td>
<td>II.a. Acknowledging literacy curriculum expectations</td>
<td>14) Ohio Language Arts Competency Model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15) Professional organizations standards (e.g., IRA, NAEYC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>16) District standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>II.b. Organizing instruction</td>
<td>17) Reading to children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>18) Independent reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>19) Shared reading/writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>20) Guided reading/writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>21) Word study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>22) Sentence work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>II.c. Preparing the literacy environment</td>
<td>23) Design criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>24) Materials selection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>II.d. Bridging home and school</td>
<td>25) Family literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>26) Building community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Teaching Literacy</td>
<td>III.a. Teaching oral language</td>
<td>27) Language of literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>28) Language of inquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>29) Language of social interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>III.b. Teaching about words</td>
<td>30) Letters and sounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>31) Words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>32) Words in context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>33) Fluency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>III.c. Teaching reading comprehension</td>
<td>34) Semantic mapping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>35) Predict/confirm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>36) Summarizing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>III.d. Teaching writing</td>
<td>37) Prewriting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>38) Composing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>39) Conventions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Assessing Literacy Achievement</td>
<td>IV.a. Assessing reading and writing behaviors</td>
<td>40) Assessment cycle (observe, document, analyze, interpret, and evaluate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>41) Early literacy assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>42) Informal reading assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IV.b. Translating assessment results</td>
<td>43) Instructional implications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>44) Reporting to multiple audiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IV.c. Reflecting on literacy assessment goals and uses</td>
<td>45) Instructional change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>46) Professional efficacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>47) Professional ethics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following concepts are common to the Teaching Literacy Domain:
- Teaching protocol
- Instructional talk
- Scaffolding
Appendix A

Teacher -
LS - Lisa Campbell
FF - Penny Frepon
Date - April 17, 2001
1st lesson

focus: book introductions/predicting/discussing through a picture "walk"

T: We're going to start a new book and it's called The Carrot Seed. Let's look at the pictures and see. You guys can think of what's going to happen in the book.

D: There go the seed.

T: So you see a seed Dajuan? P3

D: It's droppin out of his hand.

T: It's dropping out of his hand? What do you think he's going to do with it? P3

C1: Put it in the ground.

C2: Put it in his hand.

D: He's going to plant it.

T: .......... the carrot seed A

C3: I know it's the carrot seed.

T: How do you know it's the carrot seed? P3

D: I know it is.

T: You know it's the carrot seed? P3

D: Yea. She read it to us.

T: You have been read this book before? P3

D: Yea.

T: Marcell, what do you think about the picture? P3

T: What do you think is going to happen? P3

M: He gonna grow a tree.
T: We will have to look into that. That book is in the classroom. Or maybe they used the same pictures for both books. We will check. Maybe they have the same illustrator.

(Teacher turns the page)

M: They getting on the bus.

T: Where do you think they are going Marcell?

M: Home

T: You think they are going home?

M: They going to get some more flowers.

K: They going home.

D: They taking the bus to home and there going to get home with their flowers.

J: They are going the wrong way.

T: You think they got on the bus because they live a long way?

D: Yeah!

T: You don't think they live between walking distance?

T: We'll find out. O.K. next picture

D: She dropped a flower.

T: Yes, she did. What is she doing in this picture?

D: She walkin down the stairs aad she see at cat and she dropped a flower.

M: She going to her room.

T: Do you think her room is upstairs? (There are stairs in the picture)

K: She is walking up to her house.

T: If she is walking to her house, what do you think she lives in? Do you think her room is upstairs or her whole house?
Appendix B

Lesson 3
Book Introductions
FF- Penny Freppon
LS – Lisa Campbell

T – So, let’s read the title together and look at the cover. We can decide what we think it is going to be about. ..(Points to big book while reading) ..The Crocodile and the Ostrich.

All – The Crocodile and the Ostrich

T – OK! Looking at the pictures, what do you think this book is going to be about?
Kameron

C – The…uh…crocodile and the ostrich are friends.

T – Ok Dajuan, do you think anything different?

C – The crocodile and the ostrich, they probably going to go to..uh..they probably gonna go to the..uh..crocodile’s house.

T – going to his house? Can you tell that by this picture?

C – Yes.

T – Jeffery what you think?

C – I don’t know.

T – you don’t know? O.k. (Opens the book) Let’s read the first page. Will you read along with me. Or you can join me when you chose to.

“Long long ago when the earth was set down and the sky was lifted up, the ostrich had a short neck. He had to sit down to catch insects on the ground. And he could not reach berries that were high on the bushes” (Just teacher is reading).

T – So, reading that and just looking at the picture, what is happening?

didn’t seem as choppy
C – He’s got a long neck.

T – He’s got a long neck?

C- And he’s catching different bugs and..uh..stuff.

T – Does he have a long neck or a short neck?

C- Cx3 – short neck

T- And what is wrong with the short neck?

C- Cause it like he can’t get no berries.

T – Jeffery, do you want to add anything?

C – And the alligator gonna make it grow.

T – Do you think so? Do you think it might… (muffled)

T – Jeff?

C- It gonna grow three foot, like if he stand up it gonna make his mouth up to, uh, uh,

T – To get the berries?

C – yea

T – Lets turn the page.

“In those days, ostriches lived by the river. In the river lived a crocodile. One day when the clouds were still pink from the sunrise, a crocodile woke up with a terrible toothache. The crocodile swam down the river looking for help. Her tears dripped into the water with tiny splashes. Soon the crocodile came upon a codoo drinking.

T – Ok, on these pages, pages 2 and 3, what have we learned about the crocodile? So far?
C – He’s got a toothache.

K – and it’s crying. It looking for help and it found a...uh...a keelo?

T – A coodo

C – the coodo, it was drinking water and it didn’t know what to do.

T – o.k., anyone else?

C – Oh, and the, oh, oh

T – Did you want to add something, Dajuan I’m sorry.

C – The ostrich is gonna help him though.

T – Do you think the ostrich might come along and help?

C – Yeah...Yeah, its like he probably gonna squeeze his tooth and his neck is gonna get longer.

T – Jeff, do you have anything?

C – If the bird is gonna help the uh..crocodile, then he mabye, uh......

T – What is the name of the bird? What kind of bird is it?

Cx2 – ostrich

C – The ostrich I think they gonna, help the crocodile and he gonna use his neck to wiggle it. I think, then it won’t hurt no more.

T – O.k., so our predictions for pages 6 and 7 are that the ostrich is going to help the crocodile with the toothache. It that right?

All – yeah

T – O.k., Let’s see.
T - Where were you?

C - And his mouth is wide, cause I seen one before.

T - Why do you think that? What do crocodiles have that maybe could be dangerous.

C - They would kill him.

T - They don't trust the crocodile? What is wrong with crocodiles?

C - Because they, he would eat them to.

C - The rest of the animals leavin.

C - The monkey gonna run to.

T - He met the baboon?

C - So he ran away and so he went to. um. to see the monkey and then... um...

T - That. um. he didn't want to trust him.

C - Right he didn't want to trust a crocodile.

T - So, one these pages, have we met the ostrich yet? Has the ostrich come into the pictures yet?

T - The crocodile called, "Hey coddo, could you pry out my bad tooth?" But the coddo knew better than to trust a crocodile. He galloped away. Further down the river, the crocodile saw a baboon bending over the water to drink. "Hey baboon she called, "Have a terrible toothache. Maybe you could dig out the bad tooth with your sharp claws."
T - I was with my uncle at the zoo

C - Yeah and its like being......(K interrupts)

C - See its like from here to this part (pointing to the big book)

T - You think his mouth is that wide? It very well could be. Hold out your arms. Sometimes crocodiles, Jeff hold out you arms (children do this) Sometimes crocodiles’ mouths are as wide as Kamerons’ arms. Dajuan, I don’t know if they could be as long as your arms. Your arms are pretty long. But just their mouths alone could be as long as your arms.

C - really a man’s arms..

T - I just wanted to point out that a crocodiles’ mouth could go from your shoulder to your fingertips.

T - Do you think he is going to come across another animal, or do you think he will come across the ostrich next?

C - animals

T - other animals Jeff?

C - I think the ostrich gonna come like and pull out his tooth with his, um.. beak.

T - Maybe.

C - he gonna come next.

T - o.k., pages 8 and 9

C - Oh yeah he is gonna be comin now

"But the baboon knew better than to trust the crocodile. She ran off with her tail curled over her back. The crocodile swam on, her tears still dripping. The ostrich was drinking a little further on. The crocodile called, "Hey ostrich, I have a terrible toothache. I’m sure you could pull out the bad tooth with your strong beak."
T - OK, so he comes across the ostrich and he wants the ostrich to....(D interrupts)

C - Oh yeah, he's gonna pull out this tooth (points to the book) I..I think..um..I was right. He is gonna pull out the tooth with his beak.

T - Do you think he's going to trust him?

C - Yeah I think he is. He probably gonna pull out this tooth.

T - Why do you think he's going to trust the crocodile when no other animal has trusted the crocodile.

C - Because I know he can fly.

T - Maybe he can fly and that means he could get away faster than the other animals?

T - jeff Do you think he will help?

C - Yeah.

T - And why do you think that he would trust the crocodile.

C - Because the crocodile ain't mean.

T - Why do you think he might not be mean?

C - Because he......(c. interrupts)

C - I know why

C - Because he hurt

C - He in a lot of pain.

T - He's hurting and in a lot of pain. Kameron would you like to add anything?

C - Yeah, um he gonna have to pull the ostrich's neck and it supposed to be long.
## Framework for TLI Procedures and Coding Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protocol Features</th>
<th>scaffolding Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S1 Joint problem solving (involve children)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(focus for instructional improvement)</td>
<td>In meaningful activity; help children learn by doing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1 Focus attention on task</td>
<td>S2 Intersubjectivity (coming to a shared understanding; working toward a shared goal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2 Introduce cover, title pages (features of the book)</td>
<td>S3 Warmth and responsiveness (creating a positive emotional tone; provide verbal praise; attributing competence to child)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3 Use questioning techniques to Facilitate children in making predictions</td>
<td>S4 Staying in the ZPD (organizing activities that are challenging for children, but achievable by them with assistance; using instructional talk that prompts them to talk; encourages them to tell more, and to add to their thoughts and ideas)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4 Teacher writes down children's Predictions in notes to revisit later</td>
<td>S5 Self-regulation (stepping back to let children take control of own activity; providing assistance as needed to support children's problem solving)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5 Read text to /with children and Checks (discusses) their predictions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D

Problem Solving

Formal observations: Provide assistance as needed to support children's activity and to ensure that all students are engaged.

Self-regulation (bring back to life children fake control of classroom)

Children (discuss) their predictions

Predictions in notes to teacher later

Prepare children in making predictions

Use questioning techniques in

Introduce cover, take pages from book

Re哑 silence on task

Second Framework for TLI Procedures and Code Guide
Appendix E

TLI
Teacher – Lisa Campbell
Region – 3b
FF – Penny Freppon

Reflection on Lesson 3 and Reflection on discussion of Lesson 3
Lesson May 15, 2001 – Discussion May, 2001
Written by Lisa Campbell / LS

The text that chose for this lesson was much less predictable than the last two had been. It is almost as if she is scaffolding for the students in her choices of books. We have discussed the factor of the level of the book and the appropriateness for a book introduction/discussion/picture walk in all of our post lesson meetings, and her choices appear to be very purposeful. This time, rather than sticking to the “picture walk” format, included some reading aloud as they moved through the book. Also, rather than waiting until the end of the text to check the children’s predictions, she read aloud in order to confirm or defy predictions throughout sections/pages of the book. This seemed to make the lesson much less choppy. In past lesson, a lot of the focus was on “o.k., now let’s look at the next page”. This time, the children seemed to gain a better understanding of the “wholeness” of the story, rather than isolated events within the pages of the text.

The protocol and scaffolding features were spread out throughout the transcript much more evenly and much more often with this lesson. This may have been due to the read aloud portion and the fact that predictions were made and immediately confirmed or defied within the next section of the lesson. Also, it could be reflective of’s improving practice and growth in engaging students in the instructional “talk” to a greater extent. s use of P3 (questioning techniques that facilitate student predictions) was also present in this transcript more often than in the others. The continual presence of that particular protocol feature led to the presence of scaffolding features in almost every instance.

It is very noticeable that S3 (warmth and responsiveness) is now very explicit (but still sometimes implied rather than stated) than it has been in any of the transcripts. It is more’s nature to be warmth and responsive in her facial and body expressions that to give meaningless words of praise and affirmation. This is obviously not evident in the transcript itself as often as it is observed.

The discussion, which followed this lesson, was the most meaningful by far. I provided multiple copies of the transcripts for the three of us, which I had done in the past, but this time led the discussion and did the initial coding on her form as Penny and I discussed and then made our own notations. In the past sessions, I had led the discussion and done the initial coding as and Penny followed.
Appendix F

Session 4

Reflection

The last taping session went very well. We have been studying plants and what plants need to grow so the children could really relate to the story. Again, as with the 3rd session, the children actively participated and came up with responses when questions were addressed to them.

I think this one also went just as well as the 3rd session because we read the text along with looking at the pictures. This book is a bit more difficult to predict using the pictures alone so I felt that it really helped the children focus better and made it easier to answer the questions as well as to get them in a mini discussion about the book.
Throughout my participation in this study, I have become more aware of the importance of book walks. They are very crucial to understanding the book and allow the children to make predictions about what is going to happen. They can then confirm their predictions by looking at the next page or by reading the words.

I have enjoyed my part in this assignment and look forward to my first year of teaching to use the knowledge I have gained by taking part in this activity.
Session 4

Summary

On the first page of the transcripts evidence was seen in both scaffolding and protocols. As I have in the past I or focusing attention to the task was seen. This should be seen here since it is the start of the tape.

I feel this session was very similar to the last because we talked about the pictures and read the text.

There was evidence of all the protocols throughout the transcript and with the past two P5 were not seen because of the fact we only looked at pictures instead of reading and looking at pictures.

There was also evidence of the scaffolding features throughout the transcript. 54 was rarely seen in the just 2 but in the second 2.
It was seen a lot more. I think this happened for several reasons. The first is the children were not very comfortable doing bookwalks, so it was like pulling teeth to get them to respond. The second is that when you look at the pictures and read the text, you get a better understanding of what is happening, which helped the children become more aware of what was happening and they could create a dialog together and add on to what each other is saying. SSE was also seen more in the past 2 sessions than the first 2 for the above reasons as well.
Tuesday 4/17
0- 1-5 TW demonstrate sense of books & how they work book.
A- Picture Walk: Have childled look at pictures and predict what they think will happen. Take notes - then read - compare to notes.
C- TW be able to tell story by looking at pictures.

Weds 4/18
0- A- Read book
C- Chorally - Retell story in own words - Make a list of other vegetables that grow in garden.
E- TW retell story and come up with list of other veggies

Thurs 4/19
0- 4.1 Write in response to a given prompt
A- Make own book about growing a veggie that grows underground.
Rewrite according to story - Add people from family.
E- TW begin making book.

Fri 4/20
0- 4.1 Write in response to a given prompt
4.4 Compose a complete series of ideas in organized manner.
A- Work on book completion - Start illustrating & coloring.
E- TW continue making book.
The Carrot Seed cont...

Mon 4/23
0.4.4 compose a complete series of ideas in an organized manner.
A. Finish book - illustrations allow time Tues if needed.
E. TLW complete book about their veggie that grows underground.

Wed 4/25

Thurs 4/26
A. Re-read with partner own produced book - as well as original book.
E. Eat carrots and other veggies that they picked.
TALK ABOUT LIFE CYCLE OF A PLANT AND WHAT PLANTS NEED - WRITE/ILLUSTRATE PLANT GROWING PROCESS.
E. TLW be able to tell how plants grow + what is needed.

Tues 4/24
0.4.4 compose a complete series of ideas in an organized manner.
A. Re-read story that they wrote to other group members.
E. TLW be able to read own work.

Thurs 4/26
- see Weds - plant cycle - finish writing + illustrating

Fri 4/27
0.5.3 show awareness of spelling errors
A. Spelling analysis
E. Students will write 30 mins re-telling their story or original TLW produced flip books.
Comments and Observations on TLI process

Lisa Campbell – LS Region 3b

- How do we move teachers from looking at what children do/say to looking more specifically at what they do/say that in turn impacts what children do/say?

- Is it possible for this to be a more powerful learning experience for the LS than for the CT? Not that both don’t benefit, but the LS, having years of experience, is more prepared to apply the discussions and the information gained “through” the CT to their own practice and the practice of others with a level of critical analysis that the CT might not fully internalize yet. This question may be related more to the fact that the CT that I worked with is a first year teacher. I know that she (Jen) will never ask questions the same and that she will apply “pieces” of this experience to her practice from here on out, but I also believe that I, personally, will more immediately benefit from the experience in that I have several professional “hooks” on which to “hang” the information so that it won’t be lost or put aside for a time in the day to day business and busyness” of the classroom.

- What is it, internally, professionally, or within the culture of the learning community (school or team) that enables a teacher to even consider taking on such a professional experience (TLI and/or CORE) and/or makes in unmanageable, overwhelming, or just uninteresting.

- How do we obtain depth in reflection and/or “true” reflection? How do we define, for teachers and for ourselves the specific differences and similarities between reflection and analysis?
* Text selection/material will be an important aspect.

Audio-tape record the lesson. (Use a lavaliere microphone for clear audio).

- Transcribe a 10-minute segment of the lesson.
- Using the codes listed below, code the teacher's talk in two ways: first) code the protocol features; second, the scaffolding features. (Note: The codes may not apply to all instances of the teacher's talk; and more than one code may be applied to some instances of the teacher's talk.)
- Write statements summarizing your analysis of the transcript
- Write a 1-page reflection on the lesson.

### Protocol Features for **Fluency**/Reader's Theatre

| P1 | Focus attention on syntax (particularly punctuation/implications) |
| P2 | Model fluent reading/expression/oral language |
| P3 | Engage students in repeated oral reading/practice |
| P4 | Guide students in recognizing words |
| P5 | Facilitate partner/choral reading that reinforces fluency |
| P6 | Focus attention on/refer to visual material/literature (big book/overhead) |

### Scaffolding Features

| S1 | Joint problem solving (involve children in meaningful activity; helping children learn by doing) |
| S2 | Intersubjectivity (coming to a shared understanding; working toward a shared goal) |
| S3 | Warmth and responsiveness (creating a positive emotional tone; providing verbal praise; attributing competence to child) |
| S4 | Staying in ZPD (organizing activities that are challenging for children, but achievable by them with assistance; using instructional talk that prompts them to talk, encourages them to tell more, and asks to their thoughts and ideas) |
| S5 | Self-regulation (stepping back to let children take control of own activity; providing assistance as needed to support children's problem-solving) |
Audio-tape record the lesson. (Use a lavaliere microphone for clear audio).

- Transcribe a 10-minute segment of the lesson.
- Using the codes listed below, code the teacher's talk in two ways: first, code the protocol features; second, code the scaffolding features. (Note: The codes may not apply to all instances of the teacher's talk; and more than one code may be applied to some instances of the teacher's talk.)
- Write statements summarizing your analysis of the transcript.
- Write a 1-page reflection on the lesson.

---

**Protocol Features for: Word work/word families**

**Focus of instructional improvement**

1. Introduce words
2. Discuss word features
3. Reinforce practice through clap, chant, spell, say
4. Incorporate new words in context of discussion
5. Facilitate learning through discussion & modeling
6. Provide script and direct instruction for the manipulation of letters
7. [Handwritten notes]
8. [Handwritten notes]

---

**Scaffolding Features**

S1 Joint problem solving (involve children in meaningful activity; helping children learn by doing)
S2 Intersubjectivity (coming to a shared understanding; working toward a shared goal)
S3 Warmth and responsiveness (creating a positive emotional tone; providing verbal praise; attributing competence to child)
S4 Staying in ZPD (organizing activities that are challenging for children, but achievable by them with assistance; using instructional talk that prompts them to talk, encourages them to tell more, and add to their thoughts and ideas)
S5 Self-regulation (stepping back to let children take control of own activity; providing assistance as needed to support children's problem-solving)
Audio-tape record the lesson. (Use a lavalier microphone for clear audio).

- Transcribe a 10-minute segment of the lesson.
- Using the codes listed below, code the teacher's talk in two ways: first, code the protocol features; second, code the scaffolding features. (Note: The codes may not apply to all instances of the teacher's talk, and more than one code may be applied to some instances of the teacher's talk.)
- Write statements summarizing your analysis of the transcript.
- Write a 1-page reflection on the lesson.

### Protocol Features for: 
**Read Aloud/Think Aloud**
- Focus of instructional improvement

### Scaffolding Features
- S1 Joint problem solving (involve children in meaningful activity; helping children learn by doing)
- S2 Intersubjectivity (coming to a shared understanding; working toward a shared goal)
- S3 Warmth and responsiveness (creating a positive emotional tone; providing verbal praise; attributing competence to child)
- S4 Staying in ZPD (organizing activities that are challenging for children, but achievable by them with assistance; using instructional talk that prompts them to talk, encourages them to tell more, and add to their thoughts and ideas)
- S5 Self-regulation (stepping back to let children take control of their own activity, providing assistance as needed to support children's problem-solving)
Appendix D

TLI - 1st lesson
April 2002
Fluency
Reader's Theatre

Before (summary)

T - ...introduces poem, provides context....author/collection of poems.....states that they will work on fluency.

T - (Reads aloud (asks children to follow along) Reads very choppily with no expression, emphasizes in inappropriate places... tone and clarity are affected..(negatively on purpose)

Then....reads again with fluency, expression, making note of all syntax "clues", changes voice for characters, very antimated (Children are responding with laughs, "ummmm, ohhhh, hummmmm"

T - From those two readings, I would like to know if anyone thinks they can tell me what fluency means. ....take a guess. I still haven't given you the definition, so I just want to know in your words what you think fluency might be...Raven, I noticed your hand up first.

R - Like um...(inaudible)

T - Maybe when you read more quickly. You make it sound more fun. What else Jerell?

J - um (inaudible)

T - Yes, that's part of it. What else? Mykia?

C - When you read, you can hear the way you make it sound like the character.

T - You can hear the way the characters might sound. I like that one.

T - Raise your hand if you think I read the poem with fluency the first time. Raise your hand if you think I read it fluently, with fluency the first time.

T - O.k., raise your hand if you think I read it with fluency the second time.

T - So, it looks like we pretty much agree that the second time was much more fluent. O.k. it flowed much more smoothly. Fluency has a lot to do with the way it sounds when it comes out. It has to do with whether or not you know the words for one. That's a big part of it. Because if you are not sure of the words than you cannot read as fluently. It
also has to do with your articulation in a way. The speed that you read and whether or not you look at what you reading and see clues in it. So, before we take turns reading this or before we read it together I am going to have you.....(tape skips) the poem that you think gives you a clue as to how to read it. O.k. I did some at lunch. I prepared the one that told how I think they go. What I need you to do is highlight things in the poem that give you clues as to how to read it. Highlight clues. It might be words, it might be capitalization, it might be how the poem is broken up. Alright. If you think that where the word is in the sentence gives you a clue how to read it then highlight it. If you think that punctuation gives you a clue, then highlight it. Whatever you think gives you a clue how to read this is what I need you to highlight.

(Students work for a period of time with highlighters. T. assists individual children as they work)

T – O.k. I need someone to raise their hand and share with us one clue that you found. What was one thing that you highlighted that you found that told you a way to...that helped you to read this correctly.

C – question mark

T – A question mark. Did anyone else highlight a question mark. Raise your hand if you did. When you see a question mark it tells you that someone is asking?

Cx 15 – a question

T – O.k. Do we ask questions differently than we make statements?

T leads group in reading a statement from the poem: “The crocodile went to the dentist”

T – O.K. Now, I’m going to ask a question. “Did the crocodile go to the dentist?” (A LOT of emphasis/inflection to imply a question)

Cx12-15 – Yes!

T – O.k. You can tell that I’m asking something and you made a statement to answer. What is the difference between a question and a statement when you look at the paper. What tells you the difference? Mykia I need your attention over here so you can answer the question.

Cx – a few students provide muffled responses.

T – If a sentence starts with did what do you know?

C – It gonna be a question.

T – O.K. What are some other words that tell you that the sentence will be a question?
C – Why
C – Can
T – O.K. What are some others, Courtez?
C – Was
T – O.k.
C – Less
T – O.k. Start a sentence with less. (child doesn’t respond
C - What
T – o.k., What is another clue that you highlighted.
C – (must be pointing)
T – Alright, how would it sound if that were at the end of a sentence?
C – That drop zone was cool!!
T – That drop zone was coooool!!! (excitement obvious
C - COOOLLLL
T – Perfect. That is how it would sound. Now tell me words to explain how it would sound. You gave me a good example of how it would sound.
C – loud and excited
T – Perfect! That is what I was thinking of. Because an exclamation point shows that people are excited and when they are excited they get loud. That is way at football games a lot of people are loud. They don’t usually get excited and say “oh, yeah. That was fabulous. I’m so happy.” (with no intonation). O.k. Give me another clue. There are some other things you have highlighted.
C – a comma
T – o.k. when you write more than one, you have to put commas in between. Who knows what a comma is for? What does a comma tell you to do? When you are reading and you come to a comma what are you supposed to do.
C – stop

T – a period is when you stop. It is the end of the sentence. You come to the end of the sentence and you stop. If you see a comma in the middle of a sentence, you read, you pause and then you keep going.

C – like and

T – very good like before you get to the word and.

* A lot of S3’s cues re tone of voice, enthusiasm, proximity, etc. that isn’t indicated in typed text.

P1 - x9
P2 - x4
P3 - x1
P4 - x1
P5 - x1
P6 - x4
S1 - x2
S2 - x5
S3 - x3
S4 - x2
S5 - x1

* A lot of frequency of P + S features depended on the focus of this lesson/portion of lesson. More focus on syntax. 1st lesson more directed as intro. So... lack of
T has facilitated the making of two words up to this point (was and saw).

T - Change one letter and spell law. I will always try and obey the law. How many letters are you going to change James?

J - one

T - just one?

T - Is this somebody's name or a place?

C - No

T - So, we shouldn't have any capital letters.

C - Let's change one letter

C - I got it.

T - O.k. Markayla, will you spell law for us?

M - l.a.w.

T - Great! Now, change the vowel and spell low. We went to the beach at low tide. Low. Way down low.

C - which letter will we change.

T - You are going to change the vowel. And the vowel? What is the vowel?

C - a

T - That's right, it was a and what is the vowel going to be now?

C - o

T - Yes, o. You change the vowel from a to o. Name? if you can, will you spell low.

C - l.o.w.
T - I.o.w, Nice work Josh. O.K. change just one letter to spell now. Do it now. Change one letter to spell now. "Do it now," said (inaudible).

C - making sounds ow and aw, talking among themselves

T - Yes, but the aw has a different sound. O.k. lay it out. Noooowww. O.k., what are you going to change. You have no and you need now. Change one letter. Add one more.
(To another student, What is the first sound?)

T - o.k. Let's spell now together because it's a tricky one. All together. N.o.w. And the last two sounds are the same as low, but does it sound the same?

Cx8 - No

T - say low

Cx8 - low

T - say now

Cx8 - now

T - o.k., so the ow makes an oo and an ow sound. That is important to remember when you are trying to spell words. Now, add a letter to now and spell snow. So, you are going to add one letter to make snow. Some of you got it right away. Great, Jasmine. O.k. Jasmine. (to another student) o.k. lets look at your word. That says sow, so what letter do you need to put back in there to make snow?

C - the n

T - uhmmmmmm. Where is it going to go? That's right. Very good

C - it says snow (pronouncing now at the end)

T - It looks like sNOW, but this ow is pronounced like oo like low and know.

C - it's ow

T - o.k. where does the n go? You've got the n, but where does it go? Snow....o.k. Keiasha will you spell snow. Markayla, pick up you letters and go sit over there. I will help you carry them over. You (to another student) are doing a really nice job, keep it up.
O.k., I'm going to move on. Change one letter and spell snow. The turtle is a very slow mover. So you are just going to change how many letters Jasmine?

C - one.
T – How did you get two trays? O.k. take those off. You are just going to change one letter. You do know how. What will you change. You have what?

C – snow

T – Snow. Listen. Snow, slow....what letter are you going to take out. Look at yours. What letter will you take out. Snow....slow.....

C – I don’t know.

T – Do you hear nnnn in slow?

C – no

T – o.k., then take the n out. Now, listen Sllllllow. What letter do you hear?

C – lllllll

T – very nice, put in an l. Good job. Now, James, please spell slow.

J – s.l.o.w.

T – Now, will you spell it in you regular voice so everybody can understand.

J – s.l.o.w.

T – Thank you. O.k. moving on.....Start again and use....listen you are going to need to hear the directions. Start again use four letters to spell ball.

C – fall?

C – fill, I mean...

T – I think everyone can spell bball. You need four letters.

C – I know how to spell ball. B...a.

T – Don’t call out.

C – I got it.

C – Can I spell it?

T – Very good o.k., I see a lot of capital letters.
P2
C – it is a thing

P2
T – it is a thing, so we do not need capital letters. Josh you need a vowel.

P2
C – Can I spell it?

P2
T – You can in just a minute, let me get around the room. (To another student) Where are you going to put that letter? Ballll, bbbballlll. (students get loud) 5…4..3..2..1. (students settle down). O.k., Josh spell ball.

P6
J – b..a..l..l..

P3
T – b.a.l.l. When we get to, Joshua, you are doing a really good job and I want you to keep it up. We have about three more minutes. Now let’s spell a five letter word. Allow. My mom does not allow me to stay up late on a school night. How many letters are in allow?

P1
C – 5

P2
T – 5, so you will need 5 letters and it has the ow sound. Ow..ow... how do we spell the ow sound?

C – o.w.

End of tape.
T – (reading from a book) "Don't stare my mama said. It's not polite." Any connections? Does anyone have a text to self connection? Tony

C – I can make a text to self connection, because this story reminds me of when I...

T – What does this story remind you of?

C – about a book

T – What does this story remind you of about yourself? That's what text to self means. This story reminds me of when I....Did something like this ever happen to you? What is happening in this picture?

C – When people.....

T – Not people, I want to know about Tony. This story reminds me of when I....

C – My mama walked with me.

T – That's good! This story reminds you of when your mom took you for a walk. O.k., Martine

C – I have a text to world connection!

T – A text to world connection, okay.

C – I can make a text to world connection, because all over the world people have skin and all over the world there are doctors.

T – Are there doctors in this story?

C – No, people

T – Okay, all over the world there are people with different color skin. Is that your connection?

C – Yeah.

T – Ok I'm going to keep reading and I want people who haven't made connections yet to try to think of one. ...."It rained a lot that summer. On rainy days that girl sat on a fence with a rain coat. She let herself get all wet and acted like she didn't even care. Sometimes I say her dancing around in puddles and laughing." This part reminds me of when I was little and it would rain on my street. There would be tons of water standing on the ground. The water didn't drain the way it was supposed to and we would just splash and play. We didn't wear a rain coat like this little girl, but we did splash around and laugh just like she did.
C – It was a farm?

T – It wasn’t on a farm. It was in the street. But a difference is that when I was little, I played with a lot of other people in the rain. This little girl is all by herself. So, that is different, but it still reminds me of that time. Christopher.

C – I have a text to self connection.

T – O.k., let’s hear you text to self connection.

C – I can make a text to self connection. This story reminds me of when I was playing with my brother in the rain.

T – You and Isiah were playing in the rain. Did you do any of the things this little girl?

C – We was splashing away in the water.

T – You were splashing in the water too? I want you to keep thinking. I am going to read on. And I want you to keep thinking of connections...(Teacher reads on)

T – (stops reading) Any connections? Okay, Martine

C – I can make a text to world connection because all around the world it rains.

T – Very good all over the world it rains.

C – I got a text to world.

T – alright, let me hear about it.

C – I can make a text to world connection, because all over the world there are dogs.

T – okay is there a dog in the story?

C – No dolls, like doll babies.

T – okay and the one girl plays with her dolls when it rains instead of going outside. For those of you who just came in, I made signs for our three different connections. Ok?

C – I can make a text to self connection because this story reminds me of when I ...

T – When you do what (other students are sharing among each other)? This is Angeline’s turn. The rest of you need to wait your turn. Okay Angeline.

C – when I ..the little girl, she wanted to go outside and play in the rain.
T – It reminds me of a time when I went swimming with my dog and when we got out he shook and got water all over me. And in Henry and Mudge, Mudge shook and got water all over Henry. What kind of connection is that?

C – text to text

T – well, text to text is when one story reminds me of another story. Was I talking about another story?

C – If he shook, was you in the water?

T – We were both out of the water when he shook on me. But I was remembering something that happened to me that was like what happened in the story. So what kind of connection is that?

C – text to self.

T – Text to self, good, because the text to self sentence is This story reminds me of when I........... What if I made a connection with the story Dreams. If I said, I can make a connection that all over the world people dream. What kind of connection is that?

C – text to self... I mean text to world

T – Right. Text to world. What if I said, the story Jake Baked the Cake reminds me of the story Did you Hear About Jake? Because in both stories there are boys named Jake and they are both baking a cake. Both of the Jake’s are baking a cake. What kind of connection is that if I am talking about two stories?

C – text to text

T – Right! Text to text because I am talking about two different books. Tomorrow we will practice some more and we will read our new story Pets. Thank you. Thank you for working so hard!

Modeling connections throughout

facilitate discussion - it's a stretch much of the time - but is there throughout

higher level questions - often more on quickly

oral script - Oral script is there and they are observing referring to it for each child (the tape indicates they
Appendix G

Jon - Protocol setting conference continued:

Lisa: Remember, only 10-12 minutes is transcribed, so if it turns out the some of the protocol are not evident, it could be that they happened before or after the transcribed portion.

Jon: So is fluency specific enough? I mean, some of the examples you gave, like picture walk, that's pretty specific.

Lisa: I think fluency is specific enough for your instructional focus. But, for exactly what you decide to use to improve fluency, is a place for being more specific. For example, you might want to think in terms of... I'm going to focus on fluency through ---choral reading lessons, Reader's theatre, repeated readings. Because fluency is a wide topic, there are lots of different ways you could attack it.

Jon: That makes it a lot less daunting. Because when I was thinking about what to choose. I mean, I thought I don't know what to pick, but if I was going to do three or four reader's theatre lessons. That seems a lot more manageable.

Lisa: Now, there are a lot of differing definitions and examples of reader's theatre.

Jon: Like acting out the book or doing a play.

Lisa: Yes, with or without props. The text selection is going to be really important for your focus, because some texts lend themselves to reader's theatre much better than others. And, if your focus is fluency, remember that you want them to be READING and practicing fluency, not making up parts or adlibbing.

Jon: Right! Hey, a book like Henny Penny already has characters defined.
Summary and Reflection – lesson one

Summary
I had prepared well for the lesson. I had the letters ready in bags. The children were engaged throughout the lesson. We have done word work a lot, but never used the manipulative letters and trays. They seemed more involved, like it was a game. I wasn’t as focused on getting in the protocol and scaffolding features as I was at just getting through the lesson and making sure they were manipulating the letters purposefully. I think everything went well, but I will probably have a lot more to think about once we have our meeting to discuss the transcript.

Reflections
I was comfortable with most of the protocol steps. I am not sure about the clap, chant, say protocol. It didn’t happen in this lesson, but we do it at different times. I think that one might need to be more general. I do think it’s an important part, but there are other ways to “practice” the words. I am glad that I decided to use the Cunningham book and to have the lessons to use. I don’t think it would have gone as smoothly if I had tried to figure it all out by myself. I am still confused about the differences between the different scaffolding features. I’m not sure how or if I included many of them, or if they are even exactly what I think they are.
Lesson 3
Reflection/Summary

Summary - The material I chose this time was a book titled Picnic that is already written as a play with specific parts. Although there were not enough parts for all of the students, there were some ALL parts designated throughout that all of the students were assigned to. There was also a part for a narrator. I chose to assume this part myself, so that I could provide the modeling throughout the lesson when it was the narrator's turn. The students had been working with this text for 2 days before this particular lesson. They had been assigned their parts and had been provided time for practice. I spent a lot of time in this portion of the lesson trying to reinforce the differences between fluent and non-fluent speaking more generally. I felt if they could distinguish between what sounds appropriate when speaking or what is more appealing that they may start to hear the differences when they are reading fluently. Or at least that they might start to identify when they are reading fluently and when they are not.

Reflection - I don't know that any of these lessons were spectacular, but I do think that they were solid lessons that included some meaningful parts. I also feel that each time I got better in accounting for the protocol and the scaffolding. This third lesson doesn't necessarily read better than the other two (reading the transcript), but it felt better while teaching. I think that the students became used to the strategies I was implementing and were better able to participate in the discussion, particularly about syntax because it was a conversation similar to many we'd had over the weeks that we had been working on fluency. I know that I wouldn't have focused on fluency at all if it weren't for this process or this series of lessons. I was very hesitant to choose it as a focus and now I am very glad that I did. I still think I have a lot of room for improvement in consistently including the protocol and scaffolding, but at least I am aware what they are and why they are important. I think it is difficult to tell or reflect on the lessons as a whole when there is such a small part of the lesson transcribed. Just because there may not have been as much of one or more of the features (Ss or Ps) in one part of the lesson doesn't necessarily mean that they aren't very present at a earlier or later stage in the lesson, or that maybe that particular day didn't call for that component or strategy.
Initial Survey sent to 22 teachers to enlist teacher participants. Participants were sent the template below, along with a stamped envelope for returning the information.

Name ___________________________ Date ____________

Current School/Position ____________________________

School/Position at the time of participation in the CORE Curriculum project _______

Please indicate the location of your ongoing professional development sessions (CORE Sessions 1-15) e.g. my school, another elementary in the district, at the district professional development academy, etc) ________________________________

Who was the facilitator of your CORE sessions? ________________________________

Would you be interested in participating in a research study examining the potential for and evidence of sustained instructional practices two years after participating in the CORE project? _______ if so, please indicate how you would prefer to be contacted and list contact information below:

Thank you for taking the time to complete and return this document and for your consideration of participating in ongoing research related to the CORE Curriculum Project.

Lisa Campbell
Appendix B

I don't feel like anything in college prepared me for how to teach a child how to read. So, I had to figure it out as I went along. I kind of watch to see what other people are doing. The state standards help because they are more specific. Better at it than last year.

I feel better prepared. Particularly learning terms that I now know that I didn't before. Things I had heard of but didn't know what they meant and things that I had never heard of.

Shared writing sessions stand out. Now I implement that, didn't before.

Changes I made in writing are a specific result of CORE. Reading trial and error.

"What specific strategies or instructional methods do you implement regularly that are reflective of the CORE curriculum?"

Shared Writing, Guided Reading, Word Work.

Small groups (reading) picture walks, reading journals, book clubs, independent reading, the writing process, conferenceing, peer editing. Assessing, running records, growth in children, management, organization.

"What factors have enhanced your implementation over time?"

Support from other teachers, administration hasn't helped me out this year. The CORE curriculum mixes a lot with America's choice, but the rituals and routines are predetermined, to scheduled, structured. CORE is more based on kids needs and leads to restriction.

Terry

practice, support of other people. I don't feel that the other teachers at my grade level share my philosophy. Younger teachers have my philosophy. Older teachers are more traditional. I do more of a balanced approach than other teachers.

"What factors have hindered your implementation efforts over the past year(s)?"

not being able to collaborate with other teachers. Am excited about next year teaching 1-2 multiage. Time for planning.

America's choice. A lot of independent work, at their seats a lot. only allow for 15 minutes of modeling and then work independent, particularly.

Materials - don't have a lot, multiple copy books are limited. Basal reader is only resource sometimes. Not having a shared philosophy. No common planning time with team members.

Moving schools hindered implementation. Getting to know new routines, administration. But at new school, kids are more capable. Needed to come up with harder, more challenging things to do.

The researcher will photocopy all lesson plans submitted by teachers and return the originals immediately. Photographs will be taken by the researcher with a standard 35-mm camera.