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Practitioner Inquiry: Teaching literacy with English language learners

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Practitioner Inquiry: Teaching Literacy with English Language Learners

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Abstract

This qualitative research examines a practitioner inquiry group comprised of teachers of

English Language Learners (ELLs) with the following research questions in mind: What

happens when a group of ESL teachers collaborate in a dialogically inspired professional

development context to learn about navigating discussion with complex texts and their

ELL students? How does teacher learning evolve and address the complexities of the

teacher/learner discourse under discussion in the professional development inquiry?

What are the thematic and discursive contours of teaching and learning in this

professional development context? In what ways will lesson development be relevant to

the needs of those in the practitioners' settings? This study documents the concerns,

strengths, and weaknesses that ELL teachers express about teaching ELLs' literacy

through an examination of teachers' experiences over eight months of group sessions.

Dialogic teaching is presented in the inquiry as a lens to compare and contrast teachers'

ideas about their engagement with ELLs in comprehending complex texts in literacy

learning. Data sources include (1) digital recordings of initial interviews, (2) field notes

and digital recordings of group meetings, (3) digital recordings of exit focus group, (4)

transcripts of observed lessons, (5) digital recordings of debriefing interviews after

observations, (6) a case study of two teachers in their classrooms, and (7) the researcher's

reflexive journal. Case studies of two teachers include additional classroom observations

and in-depth interviews. Data analysis tools included narrative structure (Gee, 2011;

Labov & Waletzky, 1987), critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1992; Rogers 2011),

and grounded theory techniques (Strauss & Corbin, 2008). Findings show that

practitioners' discourse changed to include more positive appraisals of their students'

classroom discussions after working through readings about dialogic teaching

(Alexander, 2008; Boyd & Markarian, 2011; Reznitskaya, 2012; Wells, 2002). An

awareness of how EL students are positioned in higher education is revealed with an

understanding of the complex nuances of English language practitioner discourse. This

research adds to existing scholarship in professional development for English language

teachers and in-service teachers as well as to narratives about teaching literacy with

ELLs.

Key words: Practitioner inquiry, English language learners, dialogic teaching, design

study, literacy, critical discourse analysis, professional development

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Chapter One: Situated Practitioner/Researcher

As a practitioner of teaching English to speakers of other languages, I have been influenced by my prior education in teaching English as a Second Language to speakers of other languages (TESOL) that was grounded in an Applied Linguistics degree, but I have also been influenced by my experience in the field of teaching ELLs (English language learners) for the past 36 years. With this experience, mostly at the higher education level, I have taught all facets of English as a Second Language (ESL) to ELLs, including all levels of reading, writing, speaking, presenting, pronunciation, listening, and English for specific purposes, such as English for Business, Law, Social Work, Medicine, and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) at two different universities.

When I teach, I strive to position learners in positive, interactive learning environments that help them feel confident and aid them in increasing their language and literacy proficiencies. This stance has evolved over the years and continues to evolve, especially recently, in my encounters with professional literature regarding practitioner research and dialogic teaching. Cochran-Smith's and Lytle's (1993) ideas of what constitutes teacher knowledge allowed me to see my teaching stance also as my learning stance within the classroom, and crystalized my teaching questions into inquiry from an insider's point of view. "In analyzing the patterns and discrepancies that occur, teachers use the interpretive frameworks of practitioners to provide a truly emic view that is different from that of an outside observer…" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993, p. 18).

I enacted this inquiry with four other practitioners cultivating this "emic" or insider's view especially when alongside the practitioners as we transformed our teaching

to a more dialogic pedagogy with our learners when attempting to scaffold their reading

of complex texts. Dialogic teaching (Alexander, 2008; Wells, 2002) seemed like a

perfect vehicle for ELL literacy learning in the professional literature, but we wanted to

know how it worked practically for our learners in our classrooms. The research problem

involved classroom enactments of instructional conversations; previous research

indicated a lack of classroom oral language work. The evolution of the questions,

therefore, centered on finding the concise language to gain focus on the process of

learning how to enact dialogic teaching.

      The conceptualization of the research questions evolved with the help of my

adviser and work within my capstone course in research methods. I wanted to study the

practitioners' process of taking up dialogic teaching, but I was having a difficult time

finding words to describe what I wanted to see. I sent several versions of the first and

second question to my adviser for comments over approximately a two-week period. As

a result, each iteration received a few tweaks and in a sense, the first and second

questions were co-constructed by my adviser and me: What happens when a group of

ESL teachers collaborate in a dialogically inspired professional development context to

learn about navigating discussion with complex texts and their ELL students? and How

does teacher learning, including my own, evolve and address the complexities of the

teacher/learner discourse during discussion? The process was similar for the third

question. I wanted to bring discourse analysis into the scheme of things so I attempted to

express using discourse analysis in a question and after various e-mails to my adviser,

the third question was settled: What are the thematic and discursive contours of the

teaching and learning in this professional development context? In one of our research

methods classes, we also brainstormed questions. I wanted to showcase the lessons that might result from the inquiry collaboration, but again, finding the descriptors did not roll off my tongue. After some brainstorming however, the fourth question came into being: In what ways will the lessons developed as a result of the group inquiry be relevant to the needs of those in the practitioners' settings?

In my previous work, I mentored students as they struggled to master the advanced literacy skills needed for university endeavors. I have also worked with many students who knew English grammar, but who could not communicate in English comfortably. Consequently, I have honed my own ideas about classroom language learning for academic work and believe that language teachers play a key role in guiding students to navigate academic registers through instructional conversations and close reading and writing.

To initiate thinking about collaboration within the practitioner inquiry, I drew on a framework for comparing successful and unsuccessful cooperation. John-Steiner, Weber, and Minnis (1998) suggested using an "integration of multiple models of collaboration" (p. 774). They define collaboration this way: "The principals in a true collaboration represent complementary domains of expertise. As collaborators, they not only plan, decide, and act jointly, they also think together, combining independent conceptual schemes to create original frameworks" (p. 776).

While John-Steiner, Weber, and Minnis (1998) indicated that conforming to this ideal definition of collaborative work varies, their ideas were a good starting point for discussion in the practitioner inquiry group. Based on a Vygotskian framework for understanding learning and development, John-Steiner and Mahn (1996) advocate for a

systematic approach to examine the social sources of individual development, semiotic mediation, and genetic analysis of group learning. Drawing on the dialectical methodology of Vygotsky (1978), which posits that in joint activity, collaborators construct knowledge and are constructed by it, John-Steiner and Mahn (1996) assert that learning is distributed, interactive, and contextual and results from the learner's participation in a community of practice (Rogoff, 1994).

Educational Realities

In this section, I focus on the needs of English language (EL) students in the wider context of U.S. educational systems with the increasing numbers of students who speak another language at home and who are thus English Language Learners (ELLs) in our public and private schools.   In 1967, the Bilingual Education Act of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) established governmental funding to provide bilingual programs for students who did not speak English. Later in 1974, the Lau v. Nichols decision required every school district to take appropriate action to make available instructional programs and effective instruction so that ELLs could achieve within the school curriculum just as every other student who is a native speaker of English. Providing ELLs access to the curriculum is a work in progress nationwide. As a result, there is a need for teachers who feel prepared to ford the stream of the many complexities inherent in ELL teaching.

In the U.S. in 2008, every one in ten students was an ELL (Goldenberg, 2008, p. 10). In my state, in 2008, there were 19,053 limited English proficient (LEP) learners; in 2011, there were 24,779 LEP learners, a 23% increase (DESE, 2013). In this dissertation, LEP learners will be referred to as English Language Learners (ELLs).

In addition to an increase in the number of ELLs, the situation of their learning in U.S. public schools is challenging because of the nature of language learning itself. Second language acquisition research has shown that while it takes one to two years for learners to become proficient speaking conversational English; it takes a full seven to twelve years for learners to become proficient in reading and writing academic English (Cummins, 2000). While English speaking students use their native tongues to develop academic literacy, ELLs cannot do so; as a result, there is a need for English language learners to receive extra support in developing their content knowledge as they develop their language abilities in English because their task is delineated with a double burden of learning the language at the same time that they are learning academic content (Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007). A majority of English language learners-approximately 60 percent in the United States- receive instruction in all English environments (Goldenberg, 2008, p. 10). There is a need for all teachers to become more cognizant of ELL issues and more proficient in knowing how to provide needed support. Moreover, becoming aware of how to use student linguistic diversity as a resource in the classroom can bring benefits for all learners (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & González, 2005).

Teacher Demographics and Repercussions

There have been assertions that because teachers are predominantly White, there is likely to be a disconnect in understanding between White teachers and students from racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds. Sleeter and Thao (2007) note, "It is widely recognized that the demographic gap between students and teachers is large and growing" (p. 3). Goldring, Gray, and Bitterman (2013) report from their 2011 survey:

About 82 percent of all public school teachers were non-Hispanic White, 7

percent were non-Hispanic Black, and 8 percent were Hispanic. Among private

school teachers, about 88 percent were non-Hispanic White, 4 percent were non-

Hispanic Black, and 5 percent were Hispanic. (p. 3)

While race does not predetermine whether a teacher is effective or not, Sleeter

and Thao (2007) assert that "…race, ethnicity, and language shape the nature of

experiences teachers bring to the classroom as well as insights they bring to the teaching

profession at large" (p. 4). Although there has been a substantial focus in teacher

education programs on how a predominantly White population can be adequately

prepared to teach a more diverse student population, (Estrada, Tharp, & Dalton, 1999;

Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1994), as Portes and Smagorinsky (2010) note, for

linguistically diverse students "unequal learning opportunities prevail through college"

(p. 241) due to numerous factors.

Grant and Wong (2003) acknowledge that reading professionals and ESL teachers

traditionally have served distinct populations and that "turf protecting" (p.388) by faculty

at universities hamper interdisciplinary programs that would be beneficial for ELL

students. They advocate that reading professionals should learn more about the needs of

language minority students and that ESL educators should learn more about literacy

development. This dissertation lays down a bridge between these two domains.

Who are the ELLs in my state? The population make-up of ELLs reflects the

nation's statistics that show a dominance of Spanish speaking students in the ELL

population. The majority of ELLs in my state are Hispanic students, followed by

Bosnians and Vietnamese (DESE, 2012).

While there are many complexities that impinge on the education of ELL students outside the classroom, what happens in the classroom is a key component in the examination of how to improve ELL education. After teaching ELLs for more than 30 years, I have a keen interest in researching ELL literacy learning from a teacher's standpoint, keeping in mind the numerous issues which are ever present in the classroom, such as individual student learning needs, past educational histories, family resources, cultural preferences, individual motivation, etc. as well as the cultural and linguistic histories teachers bring with them to the classroom (Au, 1993).

ELL Literacy Learning Research

Despite the complexities surrounding literacy learning, what does the research say about the best way to teach ELL learners? There is no one-size-fits all solution, but in 2006, the National Literacy Panel (NLP) and the Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence (CREDE) published two separate reviews of the research in an effort to focus on the best approaches to help ELLs succeed in school. The NLP culled over 3,000 reports from 1980-2002 and reviewed 300 articles which were based on empirical research and focused on language minority student populations between the ages of three and 18.

The CREDE report centered on approximately the same period with a similar population and a focus on empirical research, but they looked at 200 different reports. While they both examined similar materials, they differed in that CREDE focused exclusively on the study of English in quantitative studies whereas the NLP also analyzed qualitative reports and included studies about first languages as well. The NLP looked at literacy learning and its influences, whereas the CREDE report looked at literacy and

achievement in the content areas. Both studies distilled the research resulting in various summaries regarding what to focus on and how to implement effective teaching for ELLs (as cited in Goldenberg, 2008). Classroom oral language development for ELLs was found to be wanting. The lack of attention to classroom oral language development and reasons for this are elaborated below.

Oral language. The NLP reported that high quality reading instruction alone is "insufficient to support equal academic success" and that "simultaneous efforts to increase the scope and the sophistication of these students' oral proficiency is also required" (Lesaux & Geva, 2006, p. 26). The CREDE reports also called attention to oral language:

> This chapter shines a spotlight on an area of the curriculum-oral language that typically remains in the shadows. This has been consistently noted by researchers of L2 development …by researchers of L1 development… and by scholars who document the history of the English Language Arts… The results of our review confirm what seems to be a continuing neglect of oral language research. (Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders, & Christian, 2005, p. 42)

I interpret from the information that there is indeed a need to look at oral language development within the classroom in conjunction with ELL literacy learning. There is also an implication that teachers need to be proficient at orchestrating their classes in a way that draws the ELL learner into conversations about the content at hand. In other words, teachers do not just need to know that conversation about academic topics is important for ELLs; they need to be able to enact conversations with their EL learners in

the classroom, assess the language and content strengths and weaknesses of the students in the process of speaking with the students and gain insights for further instruction based on the conversations.

This dissertation specifically looks at how teachers think about and use dialogic teaching. Dialogic teaching (Alexander, 2008; Boyd & Markarian, 2011; Reznitskaya, 2012; Wells, 2002) focuses on using classroom talk to stimulate and extend students' thinking and advance their learning and understanding. Dialogic teaching was a major topic of the practitioner inquiry group and, in a parallel manner, the group sessions were conducted in a dialogic manner.

That said, it is true that there are many paths to understanding a text, so it was important to find out how teachers talk about and plan for ELL literacy learning before trying to convince them that the students need more work in verbal expression. The perspectives expressed in the reviews previously mentioned are consonant with my experience that oral language and literacy learning for ELLs needs much more attention (Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders, & Christian, 2005; Lesaux & Geva, 2006).

Teacher Knowledge of English Language Learners

Because ELL teachers need to attend to both language and content learning for students, they need strong literacy teaching skills and a program that focuses on the growth of students' word knowledge, fluency, comprehension, and writing (Strickland & Alverman, 2004). The continuum of EL literacy learning moves from a focus on basic language to reading and learning of content. Currently, there is an emphasis on professional development for all teachers to pay more attention to the language and literacy needs of students. Strickland and Alverman (2004) assert, "The need for teachers

with reading preparation [at the high school level] is now officially recognized...” (p. 50).

Language learning and literacy learning are intertwined.

Unfortunately, there is a disconnect between the knowledge base of L2 education

and the activity of language teaching itself. Researchers of L2 education began to

recognize that teachers’ prior learning and experiences gained through a more situated

perspective explained teacher practices more effectively than a focus on content

proficiency alone (Freeman, 2002). This change of perceptions in how to understand L2

teacher preparation is similar to the recognized disconnect between the traditional

knowledge base of teacher education and the actual situated practices (Shavelson &

Stern, 1981). Johnson (2009) has theorized such shifts in thinking as *a sociocultural turn*

because many of the theoretical bases of the new perspective stem from the work of Lev

Vygotsky (1978; 1986).

Moreover, a positivistic paradigm that positions teachers as conduits of

knowledge to passive students does not adequately describe L2 teacher work. That is why

a dialogic approach, excercised from a teacher-researcher perspective, is so important.

Regardless of the shift to a more sociocultural view and qualitative epistemological

stance in many fields, however, the change from a positivistic position to a more

qualitative research perspective in teaching English as a second language has been slow.

Johnson (2009) remarks that “…despite this sociocultural turn and the challenges it has

created for L2 teacher education, it has yet to infiltrate the positivistic paradigm that

continues to dominate the public discourse surrounding the professional activities of L2

teachers” (p. 237). In fact, debate continues around the question of whether L2 teacher

education should remain focused on knowledge about language and language acquisition

(Yates & Muchisky, 2003), or draw more on how L2 teachers learn to teach English in classrooms (Freeman & Johnson, 1998a).

A focus on how language is acquired in classroom settings centers on language use. As a result, Johnson (2009) posits that, "the construct of *praxis* is more suitable for the preparation of teachers because it captures how theory and practice inform one another and how this transformative process informs teachers' work" (p. 240). The idea of praxis implies L2 teaching is more than knowledge of language and language acquisition as indicated above. Johnson advocates for professional inquiries to allow for spaces where L2 professionals can examine disciplinary knowledge and "reflect on and relate to such knowledge in ways that foster an understanding of experience through multiple discourses of theory and …cultivate the co-construction of knowledge that informs their practice" (p. 249). This research fits that description.

Literature and practical teaching gaps. A review of the literature shows that there are multiple studies pertaining to EL teachers, dialogic teaching, and literacy learning in the lower grades (Boyd & Maloof, 2000; Boyd & Markarian, 2001; Boyd & Rubin, 2002, 2006). Discussion based approaches are also advocated for L1 middle school and high school students (Applebee, Langer, Nystrand, & Gamoran, 2003). There are likewise studies of classroom teachers focusing on scaffolding and instructional conversations (Frey & Fisher, 2010; Wilkenson & Silliman, 2000), how to prepare classroom teachers for instructional conversations (Roskos, Boehlen, & Walker, 2000), and the merits of dialogic teaching for classroom teachers (Reznitskaya, 2012). But there is no work focusing on how EL teachers talk about and learn to teach dialogically with upper grade students or above.

Teaching contexts. In addition to issues surrounding epistemological

understandings, ELL teachers in K-12 are subject to the No Child Left Behind (NCLB)

federal mandates, which are in flux throughout the country. The law requires that ELLs

make annual yearly progress (AYP) as measured on standardized tests of English

language proficiency and academic content given in English. States may now opt out of

the AYP accountability restrictions if other accountability measures are taken. At the

time of this writing, it is not clear what my state will do. Standardized tests are high

stakes tests in that results are used to evaluate students, teachers, schools, and states.

The reality of standardized tests is that ELLs who have been in the United States

for one year must take the test in a language they are still acquiring. Menken (2008)

notes that it becomes impossible to entirely divorce language proficiency from content

knowledge. Testing research is conclusive that a content-area test administered to an

ELL in English is unlikely to give a true portrait of what the student knows and is able to

do, because language affects the results. (pp. 122-123). While researchers recognize that

such a test is invalid, it has taken 10 years since the NCLB laws were first enacted for

officials to begin to change procedures that are clearly disadvantageous for ELLs. Poor

test outcomes result in negative labels of "low performing" and call into question teacher

abilities and school performances. Even though the tests are not valid, public

stakeholders somehow have been slow to understand the connection between language

proficiency and poor test results. Nevertheless, there are examples of exemplary EL

programs in K-12 (Echevarria, Short, & Powers, 2006) as there are in post-secondary

schools, especially at community colleges, (Valenciana, Morin, Morales, 2005; Curry,

2004), but issues related to unhelpful epistemological rigidity, standardized testing

myopia, and policy blind spots abound in post-secondary education as well (see Strauss, 2012).

ELL Literacy Learning and Dialogic Teaching

The term dialogic teaching is often described as what it is not. It is neither monologic teaching nor recitative question and answer cadences where the teacher does all of the talking and the student is limited to simple answers. There are several different theoretical roots; the one most called on for teaching stems from Bakhtin's (1986) and Vološinov's (1973) writing. Bakhtin theorized more about the quality of the interaction and what it meant to understand and think in conversation. For ELL practitioners, the usefulness of classroom talk is determined by the nature of the talk for the learner. As Nystrand, Gamoran, Kacher, and Prendergast (1997) note,

> The key features of effective classroom discourse cannot be defined only by identifying particular linguistic forms such as question types, or even the genre of classroom discourse (lecture, discussion, etc.). Ultimately the effectiveness of instructional discourse is a matter of the quality of teacher-student interaction and the extent to which student are assigned challenging and serious epistemic roles requiring them to think, interpret, and generate new understandings. (p.7)

Dialogic teaching is not a panacea for all that is problematic in ELL literacy learning, but it is a key piece in enabling students to develop a self-extending system of learning so that they may experience success (see Clay, 1991; Dozier, Johnston, & Rogers, 2006 for a discussion of a self-extending system in literacy learning).

ELL teachers' perspectives in higher education: **My pilot study**. To understand the nuances of dialogic teaching, I conducted a pilot study of ESL instructors

in Higher Education with a classmate, Claire Christianson[1], for a Research Methods class. Higher Education ELL teachers confront many of the same teaching issues as K-12 teachers do. The main research question for the pilot study was the following: How do ESL teachers think and feel about enacting instructional conversations?

Participants in the pilot study were teaching international students in ESL classes in a mid-sized university and although the teaching situations were different from K-12 classrooms, ELL students' reticence to speak out in class while they are still learning the language is a characteristic of many language learners. This aspect of language learning is theorized as an "affective filter" by Krashen (1982, pp. 9-32). Briefly, the small pilot study findings are discussed in terms of deficit positioning, which Gutiérrez (2006) and Orellana and posit as identifying "people as the problem" which hampers creative problem solving.

Because we were interested in discovering the meaning that four EL teachers attached to enacting instructional conversations, a qualitative design, using interviewing and grounded theory tools was implemented. We interviewed four teachers with varying years of experience.

A recurrent theme in the teachers' discussion was the challenge of enacting instructional conversations. An important property of discussion mentioned was "affect." Language use was connected to affect and if the affect of the classroom was not right, students would not speak. In addition, the teachers articulated their knowledge of facilitating instructional conversations and their knowledge of language teaching

[1] All names are psuedonyms.

pedagogy. The teachers also revealed their appreciation for learning in conversations In spite of this acknowledgment, there was a tension surrounding the teachers' explanations of why there is a challenge of enacting a discussion in class.

Students' language proficiency level can make having discussions more challenging and surely there are affective factors which hinder some students. From my teacher educator's viewpoint, however, the data also showed a variation in the teachers' own descriptions of pedagogical moves they took in the face of student reticence to speak. There was a range of responses: from no preparation with the articulation of the situation as a problem due to the students' culture to a careful description of the exact conditions which are needed, such as teacher preparation, and a sequence of different student grouping strategies to allow for full participation. Although it was a small study, the findings raised questions and hinted at patterns of either absence of knowledge about enacting conversations or rejection of knowledge about enacting instructional conversations.

One way of looking at the teachers' unclear articulation of the defined version of instructional conversations is to recognize that the teachers were not well versed in the pedagogy of dialogical teaching. The research supporting the effectiveness of dialogic teaching has been published in the last 15 years (Boyd & Markarian, 2011; Hayes & Matusov, 2005; Mercer, Wegerif & Davies, 1999; Nystrand, 2006). As in most teaching situations, there is variation in teachers' knowledge bases. Indeed, the data from my pilot study indicated that teachers' knowledge is "socially constructed out of the experiences and classrooms from which teachers have come and in which they teach" (Johnson, 1999, p. 18).

The finding that the teachers spoke of class discussion in terms of the students'
reticence hints at the kind of thinking that Gutiérrez and Orellana (2006) ascertained.
They perceived that deficit constructions might keep us from noticing other aspects of the
situation that are important. They also noted that "resisting dominant frameworks, [in
this case that the problem is within the students themselves] requires concerted and
deliberate efforts, as well as models for how to do so" (p. 119). It might have seemed
natural to the teachers that the students are positioned as having the problem. Orellana
and Gutiérrez (2006) assert:

> By avoiding frameworks that identify people as problems, we may be better able
> to shine the spotlight on institutional practices, social processes, material
> resources, and situational contexts, and see other problems that are currently
> obscured. The point here is that people, in this case students, must be understood
> in relation to the practices of which they are a part, the available resources, and
> the specific demands of the context. This is a different approach than focusing on
> the student as the unit of analysis, which inevitably makes the student the
> problem. (p. 119)

After reviewing the pilot study, I hypothesized that there were some key pieces of
teacher knowledge which were not informed by the latest theory/research in
consideration of literacy and language learning in higher education and that even
secondary teachers with TESOL certification might have similar gaps. This idea
stemmed from my studying literacy and noting that, in general, some TESOL programs
do not require teachers to study literacy learning and as a result, some teachers with
TESOL training who did not have elementary education backgrounds might not be aware

of some key aspects of knowledge about literacy learning that would help their

facilitation of ELL literacy learning.

Practitioner Inquiry Group

With a mindfulness to avoid blaming the students for issues, I created a teacher

inquiry group to engage ELL teachers in talking about teaching and learning. In this

dissertation, the terms, *practitioner inquiry*, *teacher, inquiry*, and *teacher research* will

be used interchangeably.

By creating an inquiry group to talk about teaching practices with EL learners, I

anticipated that we might be able to decide if dialogic teaching worked in our settings

with our students or not. How does it work? Is it the same for all of the classes we

teach? If dialogic teaching does not work with the learners we have, what could improve

our practices? We employed this type of questioning in our group inquiry.

Various questioning protocols allowed me to lead our joint inquiry. The

questioning protocols from the National School Reform Faculty (NSRF) materials, for

example, are comprised of processes not meant to fix dilemmas, but to uncover "puzzling

moments" (Ballenger, 2009, p. 4) for group dialoguing about issues surrounding a topic,

in this case, ELL literacy learning with an emphasis on oral language development and

academic discussions centered on complex texts.

An open-ended practitioner inquiry was created so that teachers could narrate

their own ideas and concerns and decide to investigate their own teaching. I functioned

as mentor/researcher, colleague, co-inquirer in this project which had a special emphasis

on academic discussions, i.e. dialogic teaching (Alexander, 2008; Boyd & Markarian,

2011; Reznitskaya, 2012; Wells, 2002).

To begin the group sessions, I planned to think aloud about the topic of literacy learning discussions and solicit teachers' opinions about enacting discussions. Teachers' perspectives can reveal the complexity of classroom situations, especially concerning student participation in classrooms (Hosford, 1980). Moreover, "there is growing consensus among researchers and educators that open-ended discussions make a difference for engagement, learning, and achievement" (Juzwik, Nystrand, Kelly, & Sherry, 2008, p. 1111). Dialogic teaching (Alexander, 2008; Boyd & Markarian, 2011; Reznitskaya, 2012, Wells, 2002) focuses on using classroom talk to stimulate and extend students' thinking and advance their learning and understanding. It entails using talk as a constant diagnostic tool of students' needs. Moreover, dialogic teaching is not just talk; it is distinct from the question-answer of traditional teaching. It requires interactions that encourage students to think, questions that invite more than retelling, and answers that are justified and built upon rather than merely received.

Research Purpose

The purpose of my research was the following: first, to systematically inquire with a group of ELL teachers from middle school, high school, community college and pre-university settings about how dialogic teaching is enacted with complex texts; second, to observe and investigate how practitioners thought dialogic teaching worked out in their classrooms, after they created dialogic teaching scenarios for their particular texts and students; and third, to learn how the process of dialogic teaching constrained or afforded practitioners the achievement of their literacy teaching goals. After three phases of discussion, scenario development, and revision, there were observations of classroom

enactments with digital recordings of individual participant's performance and then post-observation debriefing.

In this research, there were four focal areas of possible unforeseen difficulties or contingencies: (1) the students involved as described by their teachers, (2) the context of the practitioner, (3) the type of text that was used as the springboard for discussion, and (4) the success of the projected learning outcomes.

Significance of the study. The significance of this study lies in the opportunities to record systematically how collaborative action afforded the participants' examination of their own practices and how the inquiry informed classroom instruction and curriculum development with regard to dialogic teaching around complex texts across different learning sites and levels. As Lytle and Cochran-Smith (1994) remind readers, is essential to remember that teachers are not committed to teacher research for its own sake...Rather the commitment of teacher researchers is to change their own classrooms…It is the synergy that comes from close collaborative work, then, that will make it possible to renegotiate the boundaries of research and practice and reconfigure it. (p. 47)

While study of teacher researcher groups has been done before, this study was unique in its focus on these particular teachers' individual challenges in teaching ELL literacy learning with complex texts, especially concerning dialogic teaching; how collaborative thinking afforded or constrained the teachers' professional development, and what changed in their classroom as a result. As indicated earlier, ELLs need support in their efforts to learn both English and academic content. My aim was to work with

teachers toward developing that support within a sociocultural framework while explicating dialogic teaching with complex texts.

Researcher Perspective

Because a qualitative design posits the researcher as one of the primary instruments of the research, I disclosed my past experiences earlier. Also, other biases might stem from the knowledge I gained in my doctoral work. While I always tried to keep abreast of TESOL professional literature, by reading and going to International TESOL and MIDTESOL (Midwest Teachers of Speakers of Other Languages) conferences, my efforts were focused on the immediate issues I perceived in the classrooms in my teaching role. It wasn't until I had the luxury of reading more widely for my doctoral coursework that I became familiar with Sociocultural perspectives informed by theoretical traditions from Vygotsky (1978, 1987) and the work of Vološinov (1973) and Bakhtin (1986).

After reading in the sociocultural tradition, I felt that many of my concerns about teaching could be investigated more successfully using a sociocultural perspective as a theoretical frame. The dialogical aspect of interaction and the emphasis on interactions that stem from this theory enabled me to see my teaching as a holistic endeavor of interaction. I also began to see the importance of conceptualizing language as interaction in social practices (Perry, 2012). The many linguistic pieces of language learned in my earlier study for a Master's Degree, such as the syntax, pronunciation, semantics, sociolinguistic aspects etc. which are involved in second language acquisition, are still relevant, but the sociocultural framework helped me focus on what I feel is the most

important aspect: the quality of teachers' scaffolding to enable learners to participate in the language around text analysis.

Definition of Terms

DESE — Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

ELL — English language learner

Emic — The quality of being an insider

Etic — The quality of being an outsider

Dialogic — The process whereby what is being expressed is simultaneously considered in regards to that person who is receiving the message.

Dialogic teaching — It is not just talk; it is distinct from the question-answer of traditional teaching. It requires interactions that encourage students to think, questions that invite more than retelling, and answers that are justified and built upon rather than merely received.

IELTS—International English Language Testing System. This test is jointly owned by Britich Council, IELTS Austrailia, and Cambridge English Language Assessment. Similar to TOEFL, it is widely used as a gatekeeping test for international students who must get a certain score to be eligible for university admission.

Interdiscursivity — Fairclough's (1992) concept which calls attention to the traces of one discourse within another.

i + 1 — Krashen's theory (1982) of the appropriate level of instruction, "i" is the level of language proficiency already attained, +1 is the level of language the student should be exposed to for language growth.

Intersubjectivity ---- Basically the same as interdiscursivity. See above.

Language contours — During discourse, a chunk of language has a pattern that is recognizable in terms of the meaning expressed.

L1 — The first language, language one.

L2 — The second language, language two

Metalanguage — Terms which name abstract concepts so that analysis can give way to understanding.

Multiliteracies — The term coined by the New London group that refers to their emphasis on more than print bound texts.

Privileging — Wertsch's (1991) concept of viewing one mediational means, for example, semi-formal language, as more apropos than others in a certain setting.

Revoicing — This means saying something someone else says in a higher or lower pitch to call attention to the specialness of the words. This technique is often seen in discourse style or voice analyses.

Sociocultural theory — The theory stemming from Lev Vygostsky's work (1978, 1986) that stipulates that learning is socially constructed with language as the prime source of mediation.

Stanza — (Gee, 2005) a set of lines devoted to a single topic, event, image, or perspective

TOEFL— Test of English as a Foreign Language, an English Testing Service product widely used as a gatekeeping test for international students who must get a certain score to be eligible for university admission.

Zone of proximal development (ZPD) — "The ZPD is the distance between the actual development level [of a person] as determined by independent problem solving

and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under

adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86).

Chapter Two: Review of the Literature

Theoretical Roots and Conceptual Frameworks

I draw on complementary perspectives from the fields of literacy learning, second language acquisition, and teacher knowledge in order to develop a coherent conceptual frame which comprises theoretical lenses that assist me to orient to, understand and inform these traditions. I begin with epistemological underpinnings, explicating sociocultural perspectives in general; I also detail some of Krashen's (1982) ideas about language learning compared to Vygotsky's (1978, 1986) ideas of learning. Next, I elaborate on the pedagogical thinking for language learning that derives from sociocultural theory.

This dissertation examines the key ideas of a sociocultural perspective in relation to literacy learning and discussion practices to highlight how these domains of scholarship can help practitioners understand how harnessing language use in the education of ELLs can afford language learning within literacy learning classrooms. Previous scholarship on language learning may have focused on language use in isolation, but by using a sociocultural lens tied to the dual goal of language learning and literacy learning, EL practitioners can become more focused on constructing dialogic classrooms with ELLs, which I believe, can benefit both their language participation and comprehension in literacy learning.

Epistemological Underpinning of the Research

To elaborate on contexts of language learning for ELLs as emergent bilinguals and bi-literates, I examined language pedagogy frameworks influenced by the work of Lev Vygotsky (1978, 1986). Students whose oral proficiency has developed to a level

which enables them to manage the daily requirements of surviving at school but who continue to grapple with the literacy demands of academic study were the focus of our teaching discussions.

Sociocultural theory. In many sociocultural perspectives, Vygotsky's (1978) work provides a foundational account of learning and development as processes that are mediated through speech. He developed a theory of concept development and *the zone of proximal development*, which are fundamental for the work of talking about texts in ELL literacy learning situations.

I focused on a sociocultural perspective as a framework because it has implications for how language work is conceived of within the classroom and that is one of the major foci of this dissertation. The ideas of a sociocultural perspective are not monolithic, static concepts to be implemented in lockstep fashion. I drew on Vygotsky's (1978) initial ideas, but likewise I looked to more recent work to highlight aspects of the theory that have been researched and that could contribute to a dialogic stance. Van Lier (1996) focused on the shared conceptual understandings which need to be built on; McCormick and Donato (2000) elaborated on questioning as a vehicle of participation enhancement; Wells (2002) remarked on the qualities of thinking together; Gibbons (2006) noted the use of teacher language to guide students; Boyd and Rubin (2006) further refined this and explained how a teacher's language becomes contingent on what students say, and Mercer and Dawes (2008) advised that discussion rules be explicitly articulated so that students can gain an understanding of what a dialogue looks like. These authors interpret the ideas of a zone of proximal development widely and zeroed in

on aspects of importance for their settings. The subtle distinctions made by these authors

mediated my learning and helped me understand the complexity of dialogic teaching.

As the source of the theory, Vygotsky (1978) posits that learning is shaped by

social activities; in other words, learning can be traced from social activities. Vygotsky

(1978) named the process internalization. Internalization is not straightforward from the

outside in, "the process of internalization is not the transferal of an external activity to a

preexisting internal 'plane of consciousness': it is the process in which the plane is

formed" (p. 57). This form of sociocultural theory (SCT) stipulates that learning does not

involve a plugging in of a new skill, but it is thought to be a transformation of self and, as

a result, a change in activity. Other theories, especially Krashen's (1982) theory, which

is widely studied in TESOL programs, gives an account of language acquisition. My

contribution to the literature is to articulate how concepts of context, social action, and

verbal interchanges can be used to link language learning and literacy learning by using

dialogic teaching and to connect those concepts to teacher interpretive frameworks so that

language learning within the classroom can be strategically understood and utilized for

the benefit of ELLs.

Krashen and Vygotsky. There are multiple theories of how language is learned

in the classroom (Cook, 1991; Stevick, 1996) but, in my opinion, the one that best

explains the dimensions of language learning within the classroom is sociocultural theory

(see Johnson, 2009). Krashen's (1982) theories explain learner processes using a

mechanistic metaphor "comprehensible input" which does not clearly explain or account

for what happens to the input while it is being comprehended or what happens once it is

comprehended. Because SCT is a theory of learning and human development, it goes

beyond the input analogy and explains more succinctly how language is used to learn. Also, a good portion of Krashen's theory focuses on the beginning stages of language learning; it does not necessarily account for the learning challenges of emergent bilingual speakers of English who must use English to learn content in classes (Freeman & Johnson, 2005). Vygotsky (1978) asserts language develops because of the need to communicate and that it begins as social interaction then becomes private speech and eventually automatic internal speech that organizes thought. Therefore, speech becomes thought; in other words, language use mediates thought development.

i+1 and the ZPD. Krashen's (1982) concept of i+1 which is a description of the input necessary for language learning and Vygostsky's (1978) concept of the ZPD which is "the distance between the actual development level [of a person] as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86) could, in general, seem very similar because they are both concepts used to talk about language use.

Krashen's i+1 concept denotes i which is the current language stage of learner language competence and the +1 denotes the next level of learning. If the learner understands what is said, if the speech is "roughly tuned" (Krashen, 1982, p. 25) to the level of the student's learning and the principle of "here and now" (p. 25) is observed, i.e., the focus of the input is of immediate interest, and the input is just beyond the capability of the learner, language acquisition will occur, according to Krashen (1982). Vygostsky (1978) discussed the zone of proximal development (ZPD) when speaking of learning processes. Krashen focused on the input, the language, whereas Vygotsky

focused on interaction that depends on intersubjectivity and mutual engagement. Intersubjectivity means that there are traces of another's language in a person's language; the language is comprehended because there is an echo of familiarity. Moreover, mutual engagement infers an engagement between the speakers.

What is gleaned from multiple versions of sociocultural theory is that language use in interaction is essential for language growth. Van Lier (1996) notes that "researchers in the Vygotskian mold propose that social interaction, by virtue of its orientation towards mutual engagement and intersubjectivity, is likely to hone in on the ZPD and stay within it" (p. 191). This can be interpreted as an accommodation of the learners' ZPD. Therefore, interaction can guide the learner.

Interaction vs. comprehensible input. The crux of the matter is that, in light of Vygotskian thought, new knowledge can be developed when there is interaction, mutual engagement, and intersubjectivity (Van Lier, 1996), which refers to common knowledge, either established by the teacher or background knowledge the student has about a topic. Krashen's (1982) idea of "roughly tuned" speech, often called comprehensible input, posits that the learner somehow understands the input. For the learner, what occurs in regard to the i+1 is not described. Vygostsky's theory (1978) indicates that interaction oriented towards mutual engagement and intersubjectivity is the process whereby new knowledge is created. The learner must be engaged and there must be common ground or intersubjectivity. In other words, the Vygotskian theories shine a light on the conditions and social processes of the interaction, whereas Krashen's (1982) theory focuses on the item[s] to be delivered to the learner.

Theoretical concepts matter because they are the ideas drawn upon in teaching. They orient us to see our vantage points and help us comprehend what we are experiencing. In Krashen's model (1982), there is an assumption of unspecified delivery of "input"; the learner receives the comprehensible input, but because the language used to describe computers is employed one might think of little packages of data streaming toward the learner. The Vygotskian (1978) emphasis on interaction, which highlights mutual engagement and intersubjectivity, leaves no doubt about the context teachers need to provide and it is not a unidirectional stream of knowledge. This is important. It is the speech in interaction, in mutual engagement, that is required. There is a contingency in interaction that ELL teachers in particular need to pay attention to. In other words, concerning language use, a reciprocal relationship where students feel comfortable with their teachers and others is essential.

Pedagogy which Evolved from Vygotsky's Ideas

From a Vygoskian perspective, it is through speech that everyday ways of thinking are reconstructed in concept development. "Real concepts are impossible without words, and thinking in concepts does not exist beyond verbal thinking. That is why the central moment in concept formation, and its generative cause, is a specific use of words as functional 'tools'" (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 107).

Unfortunately, as Wells (2002) asserts, "until recently, the talk through which learning and teaching is enacted was treated—like water by fish—as transparent and taken for granted" (p. 2). From my own perspective, teachers' co-construction of meaning with students is a teaching skill which is under-developed; it is this kind of teaching and how or what teachers report they do in interactive situations surrounding the

discussion of text with ELLs which motivated this research. Basic to this approach is the

idea that teaching provides "developmentally oriented assistance" (Wells, 2002, p. 4) so

that learners can achieve their own goals.

Scaffolding. The idea of developmentally oriented assistance brings this

discussion back to the idea of the ZPD and the challenge for teachers to extend students'

area of self-regulation into areas of attainable work. For this teacher work, the notion of

scaffolding (Bruner, 1975) is utilized. Van Lier (1996) focuses on the dynamism of

working within the ZPD, which he characterizes with features such as "repeated

occurrences over a period of time" (p. 190). The most interesting aspect of van Lier's

(1996) pedagogical scaffolding is its emphasis on scaffolding as a multilayered teaching

strategy. He describes pedagogical scaffolding as consisting of episodes of recurrent

activity planning, the sequencing of the activities, and the acknowledgment that at the

interactional level "interactions are partly planned and partly improvised. At every level,

the focus of the scaffolded activity is on an understanding of, indeed a continuous

scrutinizing of, what is difficult and what is easy for the students" (Van Lier, 1966, p.

199). Often the idea of scaffolding is brought up without such a rich contextual

specification of what the teacher needs to do. The on-the-spot assessment of ELLs is of

paramount importance because individual ELLs have their own ZPDs and if

intersubjectivity is to be achieved, verbal exchanges need to be contingently adjusted to

accommodate the student's language (Boyd & Rubin, 2006).

Spoken discourse as cultural practices. The theories of Wells (1999) and Van

Lier (1996) focus on the role of teacher-spoken interventions in student learning within

individual ZPDs. Wells (1999) remarked that researchers of spoken discourse in the

classrooms agree on three major aspects: the discourse is co-constructed and is dialogic; the activity in which the dialogue is embedded is important; and the artifacts that mediate the knowing are equally significant (p. 127).

It was important that these intellectual antecedents were explicated. As Goswami, Lewis, Rutherford, and Waff (2009) remark, "Because the implementation of theories in the classroom has such powerful implications, close scrutiny and deep understanding of their impact is nothing short of essential" (p. 8). Understanding teachers' roles in providing a context of learning, i.e., how to scaffold for work in the ZPD is essential to dialogic teaching. I believe as Rojas-Drummond and Mercer (2003) suggest that "education success and failure, may be explained by the quality of the educational dialogue rather than being just the result of the intrinsic capability of individual students or the didactic presentational skills of individual teachers" (p. 100). That said, teacher questioning naturally follows as a focal point of analysis.

Questioning. Questioning is a part of scaffolding. McCormick and Donato's (2000) study reinforces the ideas that have been examined so far. Underlying their investigation of questions is "the metaphor of language learning as participation--one that contrasts sharply with the more common metaphor of language learning as acquisition and the accumulation of knowledge in the individual" (p. 185). They investigate "how one discursive feature of classroom life, teacher questions, develops class participation, learner comprehension, and comprehensibility" (p. 186). Specifically, they connect the use of teachers' questions with the expressed course goals. The teacher's questioning process scaffolds the student's learning during difficulty with text comprehension. They

function as dynamic discursive tools to build collaboration and to scaffold comprehension and comprehensibility.

Question types. Traditional kinds of teaching interactions are defined by display types of questions where the teacher knows the answers. Some researchers noted that student interaction was hampered by such questions (Cazden, 1988; Mehan, 1979), but others have asserted that display questions can serve a purpose if teachers follow up instead of evaluating the questions (Boyd & Rubin, 2006; Narraji & Wells, 2000; Wells, 1993). Boyd (2012a) insists that the pattern of exchange that teachers set up in the classroom over time will influence the type of interaction as well. So if teachers routinely ask open questions but they have a ready answer in response to the students' contributions, students will respond with unelaborated answers.

Thinking together. Besides teachers leading the learning through questioning, setting up peer collaboration is, as noted above, part of scaffolding. Because international students sometimes do not have much practice in articulating their thoughts in a group due to a dominance of lecturing teaching methods in their home countries (Rogoff, 1994), thinking aloud together in a group needs to be sanctioned by frequent practice. Collaborative work can be successful if it is carefully scaffolded (Gibbons, 2006), but if the scaffolding is taken away, some groups of students do not, as Mercer (2002) argues, have dialogic strategies to think collectively. Mercer and Dawes (2008) articulate that rules for discussion are often left implicit and some students may not know how to carry on a productive discussion (p. 66). The authors call for the development of a more reflective, critical application of how dialogic teaching can be used by both teachers and students.

Language challenges. Before examining pertinent literacy theory and moving on

from a discussion of theoretical roots of dialogical teaching, it is also useful to discuss

dimensions of what kind of language emergent bilinguals are being asked to grapple with

in school contexts and how, conceptually, teachers can think about making connections

with their learners. From second language acquisition theory (Cummins, 2000), we know

that language learners learn basic interpersonal communication language (BICS) within

two years by being immersed in and interacting in an English dominant environment.

We also know that learning to read and write in a second or third language is a slower

process, taking up to more than seven years in some cases (Cummins, 2000). Because

academic language used in written texts in the middle and upper grades is not readily

accessible in ordinary social environments in schools, this is one more reason for a

connection between the spoken language and the thinking of the students around texts in

the classroom be made.

Theories and Concepts Drawn on for ELL Literacy Learning

Literacy as Social Practice

There are many theoretical threads which taken together make up the

sociocultural perspectives of literacy. But before theoretical aspects of literacy as social

practice are explicated, the concept of literacy itself needs to be examined because it is a

complex construct which needs to be understood for pedagogical clarity. In this

dissertation, literacy is understood to be a collection of social practices which enables

people to discern meaning in what is said and done with texts for the purpose of gaining

and displaying knowledge in academic settings. The word text is taken in the broad sense

to include spoken and written texts. There are discreet skills which are mastered in

literacy learning such as writing grammatical sentences and reading for the main point which have been emphasized in the past in TESOL, but this research emphasizes the social context needed for advanced literacy learning of discerning meaning from complex texts.

A text is considered complex by examining various factors. The constructs of text structure, language features, meaning, and knowledge demands were examined. In other words, we looked at the levels of meaning which coud be dense or complex, with figurative language or not and having an unclear, subtle or clear purpose. The structure of the langage includes the genre, organization, text features, and graphics. The knowledge demands involves background or prior knowledge, cultutral knowledge, and type of vocabulary. And the language conventions and clarity included whether standard English was used or there were variations and specific registers. The factors just mentioned make up a qualitative measure of a text. A quantitative measure considers text complexity factors such as word length or frequency, sentence length, and text cohesion which are difficult to measure so usually a measure from a computer such as a lexile measure can be used, but the inquiry group was not going to depend on a lexile since the number, usually a grade level, was not meaningful for them. Besides the qualitative measure and quantitative measure, text complexity can also include reader and task considerations such as motivation, knowledge, and experiences and the particular tasks such as purpose, The questions posed can also be considered when determinng whether a text is approporate for a certain student (Fisher & Frey, 2012).

Street (1985) distinguished between the autonomous and ideological models of literacy within the tradition of literacy as social practice. The autonomous model of

literacy emphasizes the technical, individual nature of cognition. This model of literacy is still prevalent in university lecture halls and classrooms where the lecture mode is dominant. In contrast, the ideological model of literacy focuses on social practices which are grounded in particular contexts and reflect culture and power structures of the society enacting them. By focusing on social practices, different kinds of literacies associated with different domains of life can also be discerned (Barton and Hamilton, 2000).

Moreover, there are additional distinct theoretical traditions in which literacy is described. Besides viewing literacy as a social practice which emphasizes understanding social practices with print literacies, some scholars focus on more varied modes of literacy. Kress (2010) calls this work with multi-literacies, multimodality. Perry (2012) notes that "multiliteracies theorists do not limit their definition of text to print only and instead include a variety of forms and semiotic systems" (p. 59).

Critical literacy is another tradition in the scholarship of literacy. It emphasizes the power and empowerment of literacies which impact identity and agency (Moje, Luke, Davies and Street, 2009). This dissertation was influenced by a mélange of literacy as social practice scholarship and critical literacy scholarship. The focus was on how practitioners orally mediated complex print literacy with the ELs in their classrooms and the resultant social forces within the classroom which need attention.

I focused on the intertextuality of the literacy sources drawing on a broad view of what texts are; they can be in different modes other than print, but because older ELLs need to have a grounding in literacy skills in academic settings which they may or may not have been exposed to before, there is an emphasis on literacy skills such as identifying an author's point and understanding nuances. Furthermore, the social and

cultural contexts of the classroom are foregrounded to recognize the role of identity and power in literacy learning. Gee's (2005) concept of "situated meaning" (p. 198) is fundamental to literacy as social practice. He asserts that the mind is social and that it recognizes patterns which are understood from experience. Barton and Hamilton (2000) assert "the notion of *literacy practices* offers a powerful way of conceptualizing the link between the activities of reading and writing and the social structures in which they are embedded and which they help shape" (p. 7). They emphasize what people do with literacy, but they also elaborate that "… practices are not observable units of behavior since they also involve values, attitudes, feeling and social relationships" (p. 7).

Gee (2005) explains that reading and writing not only mediate activities in social practices, "They also always mediate different socially and historically situated identities" (p. 159). He comments that if reading and writing are considered as devices for describing "identity-relevant positions, they accomplish this with "*oral language*" (my emphasis) (p. 159). So when students are trying to speak, write, read and listen with a certain social language within a given Discourse, a question arises, "what sorts of experiences (if any) has this person had that can anchor the situated meanings of words and phrases of this social language" (Gee, 2005, p. 165)? This question was key in the practitioner inquiry and it points to cross-cultural understanding as a baseline skill the practitioners displayed. While the practitioners' students may have experience as students in their own countries, for example, they may not have the experience of being a student in this country. This fact, that EL students might not have the experience of being a student in the United States was an essential understanding of the group. The

students' identity can be fragile because of their new experiences in a new land.
Therefore, understanding of texts needs more mediation.

Literacy as social practice foregrounds the identity and agency of readers. Moje,
Luke, Davies and Street (2009) examined the social construct of identity and found that
numerous theorists have "…recognize[d] that people's identities mediate and are
mediated by texts they read, write and talk about" (p. 416). How EL practitioners take
this into account in their teaching was an important aspect of the inquiry group's
discussions. Dialogic teaching positions learners as the ones with authority and
accomplishes in practice what the literacy as social practice portends. It links student
speech to comprehension and concept development making it a viable vehicle for literacy
learning and language participation/acquisition.

Theoretical Underpinnings of the Practitioner Inquiry Group

In this section, I explain the seminal ideas of practitioner inquiry and present
recent scholarship regarding teaching. Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2009) portray
practitioner inquiry as an umbrella category for five major genres of research: action
research/participatory action research, traditional teacher research, self-study, the
Scholarship of Teaching, and using the practice as site for research. I focused on the
second and third genres. Many iterations of practitioner research resemble university-
based studies, such as this research. In order for ELL teachers to be better equipped to
teach literacy, it is clear that more attention be paid to the particulars of ELL teacher
training. The linguistics emphasis of many ELL teacher training programs of necessity
should give way to more emphasis on literacy courses rooted in sociocultural
perspectives for ELL teachers.

Teachers' Personal Interpretative Framework

I drew on a theoretical frame of teachers' professional development that Kelchtermans (2009) developed that were built up on the narrative tradition coupled with a biographical perspective. Narrative theory asserts that teachers make sense of their work through stories embedded in cultural language use, but it is a specific type of language use as a sense-making tool (personal communication, Kelchtermans, 7/28/14).

Kelchtermans (2009) argues that teachers develop "a personal interpretative framework" (p. 260) comprised of two different yet interconnected domains that involves a set of cognitions, or mental representations that operate as a lens thorough which teachers look at their job. This framework thus guides their interpretations and actions in particular situations (context), but it is at the same time also modified by and transformed through these meaningful interactions (sense making) within a situated context.

Dialogic mediation. An underlying proposition of the group was to seek out how to "privilege" (Wertsch, 1991, p. 124) their students' talk. So what was done in the group in some part was to call attention to our actions and build metacognition of our processes in the same way we approach discussion in our classes with students. Cultural artifacts of readings, activities, concepts, and social relations were tools that mediated activity and later were drawn on to modify and re conceptualize activity. The next chapter will lay out the design features of this study. Chapter Four, Five, and Six will describe the findings, chapter seven will present the case studies, and chapter eight will describe the conclusions.

<div align="center">Chapter Three: Methodology</div>

In this chapter, I describe the methods for conducting my research study. A brief introduction of a basic qualitative study is given first. Then I include a description of the

overall design, sampling strategies, descriptions of the participants, research setting, specifics of the research design, as well as and my role as facilitator (see Figure 1) and researcher. Next, I detail the qualitative types of data to be collected and the methods utilized for analyzing the data. Finally, I preview the case studies and the findings and interpretations that follow.

Middle
- Chose the texts
- Planned the sequencing of texts/ideas
- Created a webiste and posted the reading
- Assigned the readings and began digitally recorded discusssions

Beginning
- Recruited practicing teachers
- Interviewed the practitioners
- Set the schedule of eight sessions of two and a half hours each
- Reveiwed the literature

End
- Reinforeced salient points
- Continued the discussions
- Co-planned and schduled the practitioners' dialogic demonstrations
- Observed the practitioners teaching and digitally recorded the de-briefing

Figure 1. Facilitator's Roles Across the Inquiry.

This research draws from the ontological viewpoint that knowledge is created. That is, we construct our world; there is no objective reality that everybody would describe in exactly the same way. Moreover, the art of understanding and interpreting this world will be accomplished by drawing on the hermeneutic spiral of understanding and interpreting from whole to part and part to whole.

Specific approaches to research in this study all have basic qualitative research qualities used to achieve understanding. Merriam (2009) writes, "Qualitative researchers

are interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences" (p. 5). To narrow down the type of qualitative approaches I might use from the six common approaches Merriam (2009, pp. 23-34) lists, I reviewed the basic qualitative approach, phenomenology, ethnography, grounded theory, narrative analysis, and critical qualitative research to clarify my thinking. Although these approaches have some attributes that allow them to be labeled, "qualitative," they also have distinct ways of looking at the phenomenon.

Using a basic qualitative research design was an attractive choice for this study in that generic qualitative research designs take parts of potentially all the qualitative methods but it does not rigorously adhere to all the tenets of any particular approach. That said, it should be understood that the term basic and generic are synonyms and they are used to indicate research, as Caelli, Ray and Mill (2003) have stated, "which is not guided by an explicit or established set of philosophic assumptions in the form of one of the known qualitative methodologies" (p.4) in that way, as various questions developed over the course of the research, different approaches could be implemented. The "central characteristic of qualitative research is that individuals construct reality in interaction with their social worlds…" (Merriam, 2009, p. 22), so choosing a basic qualitative approach allowed for maximum freedom in figuring out which tools would further the research purpose of understanding how ELL teachers made sense of their teaching.

Likewise, narrative analysis was a possible approach because the teachers would share their stories. For this study, interviews were the initial mode of gathering data so teachers were able to point to how and when they used dialogical teaching. The

interviews and co-constructed narratives from the inquiry group were looked at as longer

narratives, so Gee's (2011) approach of discourse analysis, breaking the interview into

stanzas (pp.75-77) was a useful tool. The inquiry group discussions and classroom

observations needed to be included in the data mix to capture the process of teacher

change, so narrative analysis alone was not sufficient to document patterns of activity.

Moreover, critical qualitative research was considered because the dimension of

looking at the macro- and the micro planes of the personal and the societal was a

possibility as well. But again, critical analysis was not the only goal or outcome of the

interviews and practitioner inquiry group.

Grounded theory, or the building of "substantive theory [which] has as its referent

specific, everyday-world situations" (Merriam, 2009, p.30) was also an appropriate

approach for this research because it is useful "for addressing questions about process"

(Merriam, 2009, p.30). The process of enacting dialogical instructional conversations

was the focus. It was important to be able to explain what and how teachers think about

their teaching during instructional conversations and what the results were. Corbin and

Strauss (1990) note that grounded theory " specifying phenomena in terms of conditions

that give rise to them, how they are expressed through action/interaction, the

consequences that result from them, and variations of these qualifiers" (p.9) is grounded

in data through the coding processes. These will be explained later.

In sum, being able to analyze the teachers' ideas in terms of their interviews and

narratives that emerged, and examining the question of process and the conditions that

gave rise to them using grounded theory coding tools for inquiry observations were both

warranted as part of this practitioner inquiry. As a result, generic qualitative research was

the most appropriate alternative for this study in that generic qualitative research design takes parts of potentially all the qualitative methods, but it does not rigorously adhere to all the tenets of any particular approach. In that way, as various questions developed over the course of the research, different approaches were implemented.

The research questions I focused on have determined the decisions I made about overall research design. A basic qualitative research design allowed me to describe, interpret, and explain answers I found to the following questions: What happens when a group of ELL teachers collaborate in a dialogically inspired professional development context to learn about navigating discussion with complex texts and their ELL students? How does teacher learning, including my own, evolve and address the complexities of the teacher/learner discourse during discussion? What are the thematic and discursive contours of the teaching and learning in this professional development context? In what ways will the lessons developed because of the group inquiry be relevant to the needs of those in the practitioners' settings?

Data emerged from multiple sources explained below. Because there are multiple dimensions of literacy teaching and learning, qualitative research permitted teacher talk about these complexities, in their many dimensions, to be examined (Carrasquillo, Kucer, Abrams, 2004).

Research Design

This generic qualitative study used case study, grounded theory tools, narrative analysis, discourse analytic tools, and design study to understand how ELL teachers make sense of dialogic teaching in literacy learning classrooms. What ELL teachers thought about dialogic teaching in literacy learning contexts was important to understand because

language and literacy learning from complex texts hinges on spoken interactions. This

interaction is necessarily orchestrated by teachers. A qualitative design enabled a focus

on teacher practitioners' process of constructing dialogic environments. By inductively

analyzing the social phenomenon of the practitioner inquiry, interpretations of the

conditions and processes were made. Teacher educators and other ELL teachers can

better understand the what, how, and why of ELL literacy classroom environments

through this inquiry. This qualitative research design, likewise, incorporated an

embedded design study, which was a method of analyzing instructional contexts as they

are being constructed.

 Design study. Design studies emphasize narrative reporting of teaching and

learning processes in classroom settings. As Cobb, Confrey, diSessa, Lehrer, and

Schauble (2003) note, "They are conducted to develop theories, not merely to empirically

tune 'what works'. These theories are relatively humble in that they target domain-

specific learning processes" (p. 9). Cobb et al. (2003) assert that this kind of theory

might be appropriate for describing teaching and learning processes, allowing for better

understanding of a "learning ecology" and how multiple elements evolve to support

learning. They note that a learning ecology includes a specification of tasks, discourse,

norms, tools, and suggestions about how classroom teachers can "orchestrate relations

among these elements" (p. 9). In addition, an explanation of why a design worked and

how it could be adopted for other settings emerged from such studies. The design study

method answered the question, "Will this lesson development be relevant to the needs of

the practitioners' students?"

A design study, (Cobb, Confrey, diSessa, Lehrer, & Schaubble, 2003) or as it is

sometimes called "emerging design research," was used to organize this practitioner

inquiry; it is distinct from an emergent research design. Design studies have an iterative

feature in the collection of data that is foregrounded. An emergent research design is

iterative in the use of analytical methods in the analysis of data, such as the constant

comparative method. The design study, as described by Cobb, et al. (2003), has a cycle

of trial and revision of data assessment built into it. The outcomes that come from one

cycle are the focus of the investigation of the next cycle. This cyclical feature was

important as the practitioner group discerned what might work to help their students

understand complex texts.

Participants

The criteria for the selection of the participants for the practitioner inquiry group

included the following: Teachers had to have a) at least two years of teaching experience

in middle school or high school, community college or university levels and b) be

working with an English language learner in a reading and writing class. The group of

participants who volunteered to join the practitioner inquiry group was a purposeful

sample; preference was given to those who were working primarily with ELLs and who

had an MATESOL (Masters in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages), an

M.A. with a TESOL specialty, or teachers who have a teaching English to Speakers of

Other Languages (TESOL) endorsement. These choices were made because they were

tied to the objective of the study, to understand the processes of ELL teacher planning,

learning, and reaction to dialogic teaching in literacy learning contexts. This purposeful

sampling was a critical case sampling in that decisive examples of planning were used to

explain the phenomena. The thinking that underlay this kind of sampling was that if generalizations are made in one case, it is probable that they are applicable to other cases. "While studying one or a few critical cases does not technically permit broad generalizations to all possible cases, *logical generalizations* can often be made from the weight of evidence produced in studying a single, critical case" (Patton, 2002, p. 175). As noted by Patton (2002), critical cases are especially important when there is a small study such as this one. Identifying the critical case of planning entailed recognizing the key dimensions that made the case critical, according to the practitioners' deliberations.

The teachers in the inquiry group were asked to focus on literacy skills, such as reading, writing, and speaking about texts with their learners. Moreover, teachers of grades five through 16 were preferred as group participants who could provide "information-rich cases" (Coyne, 1997, p. 624) of those directly working with ELLs in school contexts. Teachers who volunteered were working in middle school, community college, and university settings. Midway in the study one of the practitioners moved from teaching middle school to teaching high school. Practitioners were asked to commit to trying out dialogical teaching in their ELL classes and discussing their impressions, constraints, and affordances in the practitioner inquiry group over the course of two semesters. The fact that three of the practitioners who volunteered for the study knew me professionally added a threat of bias to the findings given they might have been predisposed to try to please me. However, as will be seen later, the dialogic nature of the inquiry itself allowed for contradictions to be aired and resistances to be voiced. Moreover, the participants were established professionsals who were used to voicing their opinions and teaching the way they wanted to obtain their learning objectives.

Four participants volunteered to participate in the study. Initially, to recruit participants, I sent an e-mail with a flier announcing the program to coordinators of ESL programs at higher education locations throughout the area and school districts with high numbers of ELLs. Also, I announced the opportunities on social network sites and special websites such as the local National Writing Project website and the Educators for Social Justice website. A recruitment letter was sent to those who answered the e-mail. Teachers had to commit to participating in the professional development for the whole time and to allow me to use the data I gathered for my research. No one was able to participate in the professional development without participating in the research.

Research Setting

Once I received responses from teachers, I decided where we would locate our group meetings and sent out e-mails about an initial meeting. Participants from the university setting requested that I use their conference room because their ESL classes lasted until 6:00 PM and locating the sessions there would save time for them and allow the sessions to conclude at an earlier hour in the evening.

The unifying aspect of the study was that teachers focused on students who speak English as an additional language, but who have trouble reading grade level texts. Before the first group meeting, I gave the teachers a questionnaire to find out demographic information. Information about the type of ELL program and the type of literacy program in the schools and information about library and computer resources was also solicited. Details about what kind of curriculum guidelines the schools give the teachers likewise was requested. Every practitioner was interviewed before the first group session for at least 30 minutes.

Participant Profiles

Daphne. Daphne is a Caucasian, middle career ESL teacher at a medium-sized private university in the Midwest. Before moving to the midwest, she lived in a Spanish speaking country and taught English as a foreign language (EFL) there. She has a Ph.D. in English, but she had not had any course in literacy pedagogy at the time of the inquiry. However, because she teaches teachers, she had read about many literacy aspects of teaching reading and writing at the higher education level. She is bilingual in Spanish as her father is from a Spanish speaking country. Daphne is director of the English language programs at a midwestern university and has taught for 29 years.

Lucy. Lucy is an African American/ Caucasian, mid-career ESL teacher who speaks two other languages because she majored in a foreign language and married a man who speaks another language. She has taught 24 years always in the U.S. She has a Master's Degree in TESOL, but did not have a class on teaching oral language skills. Nevertheless, she has a certificate in teaching writing and is connected to the local Writing Project. Lucy is the coordinator of ESL classes at River Community College, which is a mid-sized community college. Lucy prides herself as an intuitive teacher who interacts with students on a very personal level. She uses a variety of techniques to help students understand difficult books they have to read and write about for her class.

Anita. Anita is an Asian-American, mid-career ESL teacher who works at a middle-sized private university in the Midwest. She has taught ESL or EFL for twenty years and she has a PhD in Education with a specialty in Applied Linguistics. Both her parents are from an Asian country, and as a result, Anita is bicultural and bilingual. She lived in her parent's homeland for several years and has family there. Anita is the

reading coordinator of ESL classes at the same midwestern university that Daphne teaches at. She wanted to learn more about teaching reading and dialogical teaching because she did not have any coursework in teaching literacy or in teaching oral skills with ELLs. Anita uses a variety of techniques to help her learners get the main idea when they read and learn more vocabulary.

Debra. Debra is a Caucasian early mid-career teacher at a public middle school in the Midwest. She has not taught abroad and she does not speak another language, but she is active in the local Writing Project professional development group, leading sessions of teachers to explore new materials. She taught the sixth grade at the time of the interview; 40 percent of the students in one of her classes were Spanish speakers. Later in the inquiry, she changed jobs to teach at a high school. Debra uses multiple techniques to engage her learners and she expresses her concern about their level of thinking.

Design Study Procedures, Problem Analysis, and Design Solution

The design process began with my observing how difficult enacting instructional conversations with ELLs was and noticing a gap in oral language skill development pointed out by two different research summaries as noted in Chapter Two. These observations led to gathering relevant literature, enacting a pilot study, and the gathering of possible extant methodologies and materials to start with. The design procedures were ongoing and led to the practitioner group work of specifying the local teaching challenges and eventually designing solutions in the form of scaffolds for their own contexts and for general use.

Table 1

Phases of the Practitioner Inquiry Group

Phase 1: Group Beginning	Practicing EL teachers were recruited.	A schedule of approximately eight meetings of two hours and a half over a nine month time span was set.	Each participant was interviewed for thirty minutes to an hour.	Professional literature was chosen and made available. Initial contextual requirements of teaching and learning were described.
Phase 2: Joint Activity	Practitioners learned about leveling texts.	Practitioners discussed their class learning goals.	Practitioners chose texts for their dialogic teaching demonstration.	Practitioners discussed their possible questioning lines and a rubric was designed.
Phase 3: Implementation and Debriefings	Practitioners revised plans and utilized them in their classes.	After the dialogic lesson, the facilitator and practitioner debriefed it with the rubric.	Practitioners led a discussion about transcriptions of their lessons.	Practitioners reflected about the affordances and constraints of using dialogic teaching with complex texts.

The design study part of the research design encompassed multiple phases over approximately a nine -month period, which is broken into three phases (see Table 1). The first two questions of this proposed research were answered through design study processes: What happens when a group of ESL teachers collaborate in a dialogically inspired professional development context to learn about navigating discussion with complex texts and their ELL students? and, What does teacher learning look like in this

context of professional development? The first phase of elucidating the local questioning protocols working in the classrooms captured the diverse situations of the EL teachers and surfaced core ideas regarding student and teacher discourse in ELL literacy learning situations. Factors such as learner English language proficiency, previous literacy learning, cultural background, and first language background impact decision-making; these situated factors are not usually discussed in the literature.

The additional research questions for this study were aptly answered given the multiple data types and next phases of the interactions: What are the thematic and discursive contours of the teaching and learning in this professional development context? and Will this lesson development be relevant to the students in the practitioners' settings? By surfacing weak areas of their instructional conversations in discussion, revising them, enacting them, and then reflecting on them, the data was triangulated and refined across the three phases.

Phase 1. Across the eight sessions, this collaborative inquiry took a sustained look at practitioners' understandings of materials, practices, and enacting literacy discussions with ELLs, starting with a general discussion on teaching literacy with ELLs who could be classified as expanding on the WIDA performance standards (see "Performance Standards," n.d.), but who have trouble reading and writing at grade level. Professional discourse focused on how to decide if texts fit the ELLs in their classes, why discussion might be helpful at this level, and what progression of scaffolding and grouping made sense. Through reading and discussing selected professional literacy learning and teaching materials published for teachers working with English language learners, the group decided what ideas from the readings were salient.

To establish starting points for the inquiry, the practitioners were interviewed individually and asked to enact a whole class discussion in their own classrooms within the first week of the first inquiry group meeting so they could report on that to the group. The practitioners' students fell in a range from reaching fluent speaker, expanding competent speaker, and developing competent speakers; there was a mix of proficiency levels represented (see "Performance Standards," n.d.) in the practitioners' classes. Practitioners also shared how they established learning goals and instructional points for their literacy lessons with ELLs with a special emphasis on eliciting background knowledge and intertextual ideas, ideas that were already studied or read about that they take into consideration when planning a discussion. Then, we probed what instructional strategies and materials might be needed to accomplish the goals and how these might be scaffolded across lessons and within lessons. This involved an elaboration of what resources were available and how successful practitioners had been in utilizing various instructional strategies and how the students reacted to the proposed teaching scenario. The affordances and constraints of the entire learning endeavor were shared. This first session was closed by the practitioners conjecturing about their specific intentions for the inquiry. As the first phase showed, this practitioner inquiry explored what teachers thought about and how they planned instructional questions when contemplating dialogic teaching.

Phase 2. As the activities of the practitioner inquiry unfolded, existing professional literature and materials were examined and discussed and practitioners were asked to use some of the ideas in the readings and from our discussions in their classrooms, and then to report back to the group. The ideas about the contextual requirements and conjectures

about scaffoldings or "the local contextual theory" negotiated in phase one was revisited at the beginning of this second phase. "When all the preparation has been done, the overall endpoints are specified, the starting points defined, and a conjectured local instruction theory formulated…" (van den Akker, Gravemeijer, McKenney & Nieveen, 2006, p. 24). In this second phase, the teachers presented an explicit plan for their observation. They elaborated on their discussion objectives, scaffoldings, and possible prompts. The practitioners also specified what they wanted me to focus on during my classroom observations. A rubric was devised collaboratively to encompass the agreed upon objectives for their own work. Discussion after practitioner presentations centered on text choices, questioning, and grouping scaffolds, which were useful for interpreting the readings in their classrooms. Referring back to our shared readings and discussions, teachers explained reasons for their decisions.

Besides an assessment of the varying contextual preparations for discussion planning, expected qualities of the enacted discussion for both the practitioners and students were articulated by the group. In preparation for my observation, the practitioners revised their scaffolds to demonstrate their dialogic lesson.

Phase 3. In the third phase, practitioners actually used the readings and discussion protocols they created with their own students in their classrooms. I observed a full class period, with at least a 20- minute segment of discussion with each of the four participants. The lesson was digitally recorded along with the de-briefing with each teacher. The rubric that was previously created as a group was used as a springboard for the de-briefing discussion.

In the practitioner group sessions which followed the observations, segments of the lesson transcriptions were discussed centering on what worked and why or why not. The practitioner whose lesson was being reviewed led the group discussion with her analysis of the recorded dialogue from her class. Then I added observations of specific moments of dialogic teaching, which I noted. This phase ended with a focus group that was digitally recorded and acted as a summary of teachers taking stock of their learning and any remaining felt needs for their discussion leading with complex texts.

Data Collection

Data was collected in this study over the course of eight months, during the second semester of the school year and the following fall semester. Demographic information of the teachers, descriptions of the teaching settings, and a digitally recorded initial interview of each practitioner were collected at the beginning of the research. I also collected eight group sessions of researcher notes and plans. The study included discussion protocols centering on a difficult text chosen by each practitioner with a focus of capturing the theory-into-practice and learning that occurred over time across multiple phases in the discussion, preparation, practice, and analysis of enacting discussions. Along with the protocols, a rubric for self-assessment and protocol assessment was produced from the discussions around the protocols.

There were eight transcriptions for the sessions with researcher notes and additional five transcriptions from the case study observations. One session was online; the practitioners read the transcripts of the group sessions one through five and reflected on their learning (see http://umsl.edu/go/AAV). In sum, there were multiple types of data sources gathered for this study, including four digitally recorded initial interviews, eight

group digitally recorded sessions, scaffolding protocols, and a rubric. Also, digitally

recorded debriefings were collected. Case study observations of the two practitioners

who chose to continue added to the data (see Table 2 for a complete list of all the data

sources collected over the course of the study).

Table 2

List of Data Collection

Data Sources	Data Collection
Researcher plans and notes for the group inquiry	1 per session written before the inquiry session takes place
Researcher field notes/	1 per session written after the inquiry takes place
Digital recordings of the group sessions and class observations	1 per lesson * Recordings were uploaded onto the researcher's password protected computer.
Transcriptions of the recordings	All of the recordings were selected for transcription.
Digital recording of the de-briefing after the class observation	The 10 de-brief recordings were rolled into the transcriptions
Digital recordings and transcriptions of the interviews	There were four initial interviews and two case study interviews.
Practitioner written protocols and notes on revisions	There were four protocols.
Rubrics for protocols.	One rubric was designed by the group

Observations. Observations, recorded in field notes were written after all group

sessions. I strived to achieve thick description (Geertz, 1973). For example, this means I

paid attention to the context and the actions of the group members and recorded as much

detail about the flow of the discussion. The group sessions were recorded. The

recordings of the sessions were listened to and transcribed verbatim except when the talk

was of an inconsequential nature. For instance, if a practitioner made comments about

how bad traffic was or how cold it was etc., the comment was not transcribed. I took

notes of the classroom observations to record impressions of the student participation and

ambience of the various classroom communities. These notes were combined with other notes summarizing the observations.

Individual interviews. I learned about the teachers' individual attitudes and knowledge regarding text choice and dialogic teaching in interviews at the beginning of the inquiry group sessions. This was necessary because if the teachers did not buy into the idea of more dialogic classrooms, then their responses in the interview would have told me that and I would have had to ask them to leave the study. Luckily, all the participants agreed to experiment with dialogic teaching in their own classrooms and were willing to report their experiences to the group.

All participants were interviewed in either their offices or a semi-private location. The initial interviews took place before the first group session. Each interview began with a brief introduction, a review of the research project and an explanation of the informed consent. In the e-mail before the initial interview, each participant received an explanation that the interviews would be digitally recorded. The day of the interview, the participants were asked to review the consent form, ask any questions, and then sign the form. After this was completed, I asked a few brief demographic questions, and then turned the digital recorder on to begin the interviews.

Interview data, as well as all of the data collected, is accessible to my dissertation committee and me. Great care will be exercised to protect the data files. All data saved electronically will be behind two passwords in my home computer. The teachers were informed that there were no risks associated with the research from the beginning of their involvement through the informed consent process and this dialogue about risks and the

volunteer nature of their participation in the inquiry group continued throughout the

length of the research.

The interviews followed the structure of a "responsive interview" (Rubin &

Rubin, 2012), a type of semi-structured interview in that an interview structure was

envisioned and suggestions were implemented for explaining implicit information. A

responsive interview "emphasizes the importance of building a relationship of trust

between the interviewer and interviewee that led to more give-and-take in the

conversation" (Rubin & Rubin, 2012, p. 36). In responsive interviews, there is an

accommodating tone with questions amenable to the interviewee so that the comfort zone

of the interviewee is maintained. This was necessary because the interviewees were

potentially joining the inquiry group, so an effort of rapport building was begun during

the interview so that participants felt safe with me to experiment later on with possibly

new teaching repertories.

Responsive interviewing is in-depth interviewing which aims to encourage

participants to "raise issues that are important to them" (Rubin & Rubin, 2012, p. 37) and

requires a reciprocity which suggests that the interviewer reveals something of herself.

This type of interview does not require a standardized list of questions, but the imagined

interview protocol was followed, when there were divergences in topics because of

interviewee input, that was not a problem. The objective of responsive interviewing was

"to build a solid, deep understanding" (Rubin & Rubin, 2012, p.38) of how the

interviewee plans, views, enacts, and assesses instructional conversations with their

ELLs. The personalities of both the interviewee and interviewer affect the interview so

that what was learned in one interview question influenced the next interview question as the details of the issues begin to be raised.

The main questions of the interview were given in the interview protocol. Follow-up questions and probes were added as needed. The interviews ranged in length from 30 minutes to 60 minutes, contingent upon the participants' openness and their desire to elaborate on certain questions. I began each interview with the open-ended question, "Why did you decide to join this group?" This broad opening question set the stage for the rest of the interview and served as a "warm-up" during which the interviewees could elaborate on their teaching, use of discussion in the classroom, and choice of classroom texts. Subsequent questions were asked about the frequency of the use of discussion in the classroom as well as both a successful and unsuccessful examples of discussion. The participants often needed a bit of extra time to think of an example, so I provided ample wait time, scaffolding or redirecting the questions as necessary. Because the interviews were semi-structured, there was flexibility in the wording of the questions, and their order and delivery varied somewhat among the interviews. Often, a participant's answer satisfied multiple questions, so I followed the flow of the interview and interjected a question that seemed most appropriate to the direction of the interview.

The interviews provided baseline narratives of how the practitioners see their work in relation to enacting dialogic conversations with their students, which partially answered the questions, "What are the thematic and discursive contours of teaching and learning in this professional development context?" And, "What happens when a group of ESL teachers collaborate in a dialogically-inspired professional development context to learn about navigating text complexity with their ELLs?"

Digital recordings of the group sessions. Each practitioner group session was

recorded using multiple small recorders to capture the group discussions. During the

inquiry sessions, I used oral protocols adopted from National School Reform Faculty

Resource Book (2013) to structure the interactions because I wanted to have some kind of

structure to fall back on during the group sessions. Questions led participants to engage

in reflective conversations, descriptions of students' work, and collaborative analysis and

interpretations of student language patterns. These discussions took place over the 90-

minute sessions.

Transcriptions. For session discussions, I began listening to the digital

recordings and typing up a nearly verbatim transcription of the verbal interaction as soon

as possible after the group sessions. I had to listen to the recordings multiple times to get

the correct wording, contiguous utterances, and pauses. Some parts of the recordings

were difficult to hear, so I made notes of places where there were transcriptionist doubts

or where the verbal language was inaudible. I used many of Jefferson's conventions as

described by Atkinson and Heritage (1984).

Initial meeting. In the first meeting of the group sessions with the practitioners,

frameworks of working together (Edge, 2002; National School Reform Faculty Resource

Book, 2013) were presented while I simultaneously elicited practitioner ideas, comments, and

preferences. Our discussions about assigned readings made up the bulk of the transcriptions of

the group sessions one through five. I put copies of discussion plans on our website

(http://umsl.edu/go/AAV), and our reference books gave us ideas and served as models for

practitioners to work out protocols for their texts. I asked the practitioners to view the plans

and reflect on any questions or concerns they had at the beginning of the group sessions. At

first, I used the EDMODO platform, but the practitioners did not like the sign on procedures

for that website. So I requested a university website space for our group. Reflections were

open-ended, allowing the practitioners to make personal connections to the text, protocols,

and/or rubrics. The documents posted on the website offered a way for me to capture the

thoughts of the practitioners as they began to think about discussion protocols for their texts.

I also engaged the practitioners in informal conversations around their texts and

protocols. These conversations gave me insight into how the practitioners were

interpreting the work of enacting discussions with their students, what their decision-

making process was and why they decided to respond as they did in their discussions.

Discussions were digitally recorded, but, if for some reason the digital recorders were not

recording, I made notes of the discussions.

In the following section, I elaborate on how I analyzed the data, how I insured

trustworthiness, and how I kept ethical behavior in the forefront. Assumptions,

delimitations, and limitations that I considered are also noted.

Data Analysis

Data collection and analysis occurred simultaneously throughout the study. I

relied on tools for analysis such as grounded theory, with open and axial coding (Corbin

& Strauss, 2008; Merriam, 2009) and narrative structure (Gee, 2011; Labov & Waletzky,

1967), as well as discourse analytic techniques that utilize critical discourse analysis

(Fairclough, 2011; Gee, 2005, 2011). Broadly, critical discourse analysis differs from

discourse analysis in that critical discourse analysts are generally concerned with a

critical theory of the social world, the relationship of discourse in the construction and

representation of this social world, and a methodology that allows them to describe, interpret, and explain such relationships (Rogers, 2011).

I also used constant comparative analysis (Charmaz, 2010; Corbin & Strauss, 2008) to continuously re-analyze previous analyses in light of new data. In addition, Juzwik and Ives' (2010) dialogic approach to studying identity-in-interaction tool was implemented as well Brandt and Clinton's (2002) literacy-in-action tool to understand data across the inquiry. Data from transcriptions of the initial interviews, and the inquiry group sessions along with the case study observations and interviews were coded with open coding and axial coding. As a result, analysis from each group session was compared to the data as a whole, so that themes that occurred across sessions could be detected. Evidence of teacher development in planning, enacting, and analyzing dialogical teaching with the difficult texts surfaced through this heuristic process.

Grounded theory tools aided me in explaining and describing the practitioners' reactions to the implied and overt changes inherent in the dialogical teaching practices under discussion in the inquiry group. My role as researcher was to elicit and analyze the participants' perceived teaching conditions and how the participants responded to the changing conditions highlighted within the inquiry group, and to explain their understandings of the consequences of their actions. Being able to explain the teachers' ideas in terms of their interviews and group sessions was instrumental to this endeavor and part of the data triangulation. I did not extend the grounded theory tools to identify a core category in the complete grounded theory approach. Nevertheless, open coding and axial coding methods for data analysis were used.

The coding process that broke the data apart allowed me to interpret and make connections among the issues in the data. Reading line-by-line, I asked questions. Strauss and Corbin (2008) noted the type of research questioning needed: "...we are stimulated to ask abstract theoretical questions (probing questions that stimulate discovery of properties, dimension, conditions, and consequences such as who, when, what, how and why ..." (p. 66).

Thinking comparatively, the aim was to examine taken-for-granted ideas and engender thoughts about the implications and the assumptions present in the data: "How do they know this, why do they know this, what are the consequences, and when do they apply?" By systematically asking abstract theoretical questions, an analytic distance was achieved and the data was allowed to speak. Strauss and Corbin assert

> Doing line-by-line coding through which categories, their properties, and relationships emerge automatically takes us beyond description and puts us into a conceptual mode of analysis. Classifying indicates grouping concepts according to their salient properties, that is, for similarities and differences (1990, p. 66).

Making these theoretical comparisons was a way to raise more questions and discover more properties and dimensions than were originally apparent. "The making of constant and theoretical comparisons also forces the researcher to confront respondents' assumptions and to provisionally make hypotheses about the implication of those assumptions" (Strauss & Corbin, 2008, p. 68).

Thus, open coding was used to discover concepts and categories. To code, I read the transcripts or parts of the transcripts I was analyzing, e.g. interview transcripts, lesson notes/reflections, session and class transcripts, debrief and focus group notes several

times and made notes in the margin when I noticed something I thought was important to understanding the teachers' responses. I looked for recurring words and topics and noted possible concepts. As I named various concepts, I examined them for definition of their "particular characteristics, [and I was] interested in how these properties var[ied] along their dimensional ranges" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 116).

I put the data into Dedoose (www.Dedoose.org) and coded for concepts and categories, but later I abandoned Dedoose as I found it cumbersome. Once things were put in categories, it was not easy to move them around, so the possibility of collapsing categories, for example, was not readily apparent. Probably there is a way to do this, but after attempting to collapse a category multiple different ways, I decided not to invest any more time in learning the ins and outs of the website.

Back to a paper mode, I looked at the variations and dimensions within the categories as well. Moreover, I related "categories to subcategories along the line of their properties and dimension levels… to see how categories crosscut and link[ed]" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 124) which was axial coding. A codebook describing the codes and identifying quotes to support them is located in Appendix B. As I went along, I used memo writing to be explicit about what I was thinking as I coded. Analytical memos to consolidate the ideas gathered during coding were compared and consolidated, looking for areas of convergence and divergence. The analytical memos were part of the information used to generate a statement of relationships. This reassembled the parts at a conceptual level, giving an interpretation of the phenomena.

To clarify, open coding involved the development of concepts which when compared were grouped into categories. Initial codes were grouped into concepts

through an analysis of their similarities laid bare by constant comparison. Axial coding

consolidated the categories by relating them to sub-categories and by analyzing the

relations between categories. Categories and subcategories were formed along with the

dimensions of those categories (see Appendix B for the Code Book).

Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis was also used to analyze the data**.** Before the discourse

analytic approaches of critical discourse analysis (CDA) are detailed, a justification of

why discourse analysis is needed in this study is warranted. Grounded theory can result

in a theoretical interpretation of the phenomena. In some research situations, the

language affect, modality, or sequences of meaning captured in a longer stretch of data,

for example, can be brought out more completely with discourse analytic tools. In fact,

the salient features of discourse analytic tools are the examination of both the language

and the social meaning making resources of the phenomena simultaneously. While there

are opportunities to examine language and social meaning making in grounded theory

methods, with discourse analysis methods either or both of these aspects could be

foregrounded, not subsumed in a category. The question of what the thematic and

discursive contours were in the teaching and learning of this professional development

context were directly addressed by discourse analysis.

Gee's (2011) approach to discourse analysis, breaking the interview into stanzas

(pp. 75-77), was employed with the answers to the open-ended questions from the

interviews. This technique is similar to open coding in that the data is examined

microscopically in its linguistic phrases and clauses. Relevant segments from the

interview gained from that process were then segmented into a narrative structure of the

type described by Labov & Waletzky (1967). The narrative structure entailed parsing interview segments into setting, catalyst, crisis, and evaluation and coda according to the stories the practitioners told and was yet another way of scrutinizing the data for language use, tenor, and meaning making (Martin & Rose, 2007). This merger of two approaches was used when narrative structures were detected after reading the data over multiple times and seemed worthy of more detailed examination. Because I had done the grounded theory coding first, I was alerted to the sub-categories of meaning: attitudes about dialogic teaching, attitudes about student work, and attitudes about collaboration. After reading the data over many times and noticing what topics were in the data, I segmented the data into narrative structures, noticing the tenor of the narratives.

Discourse analysis, like grounded theory, was used to look at the macro- and the micro planes of the personal and the societal which were factors in what the teachers presented (Fairclough, 2011; Gee, 2005; Rogers, 2011). Gee's (2011) theoretical tools, which link language to the world and culture, foreground language and allow for closer analysis of the types of language at play (pp. 150-151). Fairclough's (1992) insights on looking at language as social practice were also very useful.

Discourse analysis was an appropriate vehicle for looking at the reflections, discussions, and the interviews because it allowed me to analyze the layers of meaning in the data in meaningful chunks. Therefore, as detailed above, the data was read for narrative structure. Then the narrative structures, consisting of setting, catalyst, crisis, evaluation, resolution, and/or coda, (Labov & Waletsky, 1967) were considered and a finer grain analysis was used to focus on those structures. Fairclough's orders of

discourse (1992), according to genre, discourse, and voice, allowed me to connect the

language of the narrative data with social practices and positioning.

After examining the narratives again, I reasoned that in one instance where

Those narratives that were negative appraisals (Martin & Rose, 2007) were noted.

According to Martin and Rose (2007), "an appraisal is a system of interpersonal

meanings. We use the resources of appraisal for negotiating our social relationships, by

telling our listeners or readers how we feel about things and people" (p. 26). This

involved expressions of emotions, character evaluations and value judgments. An

attitude was expressed by the vocabulary used to express affect, judgment, or

appreciation. The attitude was amplified or dampened by adverbs or adjectives, and

sourced to other voices by revoicing of other voices or reporting others' speech.

After examining the narratives again, I reasoned that in one instance where

standardized tests were involved, literacy-in-action (Brandt & Clinton, 2002) was a more

appropriate way of thinking about what occurs in relation to ELL literacy at the

university level. Brandt (2001) posited the construct of "sponsor" to bridge the micro

and macro levels of social structure in which to think about literacy. The concept of

"sponsor" bridges humans and things and clarifies "the multiple interests or agents that

are most usually active when reading and writing are taken up" (p. 350). In terms of ELL

literacy at the university level, the sponsor is the university and the non-human agent is

the standardized test, the Test of English as a Second Language (TOEFL) or International

Test of English Language (IELTS), which are used as admision tools for entry into the

university. The tests are also the globalizing connect to the students at the local level.

Moreover, the tests "fold in" (Latour, 1996, as cited in Brandt & Clinton, 2002) the lives

of the students extending the relationship between the university with the students. As a

result of noticing the layers of influence, I was able to discern how inequity first remarked in practitioner speech is sustained by the influence of the standardized tests in the students' lives. Brand & Clinton (2002) noted, "Social practices are not necessarily the shapers of literacy's meaning; indeed, they may be the weary shock absorbers of its impositions" (p. 354). Thus, though practitioners can strive to make their social practices more dialogic, some ELLs at the university level may not pay much attention because they have the habit of focusing on standardized testing.

Finally, in addition to analyzing the narratives for genre, discourse and voice (Fairclough, 1992), I used Juzwik and Ives' (2010) dialogic approach to narrative analysis to identify how the practitioners' narrative performances mediated the positioning of students over space and time. Juzwik and Ives' (2010) dialogic approach looks at practitioners' narratives as language-in-use, but I shifted the focus from the practitioner's identity to their students' identities. Looking at the practitioners' positioning of students across time in the inquiry, I noticed how student identities were evaluated. By locating student identity in a chain of speech communication within the practitioner inquiry, it was possible for me, like Juzwik and Ives (2010) "to imagine how a teachers' narrative practices [could have] become patterned over time…and constitute resources upon which teachers draw to build relationships with students" (p. 48).

Case studies. To deepen and triangulate the data I gathered in the description of the group sessions, I followed two teachers of interest to their classrooms after the original group had finished, using a case study approach to focus on further iterations of dialogic lessons and planning. The purpose of the case studies (Stake, 2005) was to triangulate the data from the eight months of sessions. Both participants volunteered to

continue. I had one participant, Lucy, in a community college context who appropriated

dialogical teaching right away for her students, and another participant, Anita, in the

university setting who needed more time. The focus of the case studies was a detailed

account of what the practitioners thought about dialogic teaching in their classrooms.

The practitioners' contexts were thickly described and their interviews and class

observations and de-briefs were analyzed to get a more detailed sense of the

practitioner's perspectives and actions (Dyson & Genishi, 2005). Lucy's classroom was

observed and digitally recorded twice and Ann's classroom was observed and digitally

recorded four times. (See Table 3.) The two practitioners who continued working on

their use of dialogical teaching consulted with me to fine-tune their ideas on different

readings.

Table 3

Case Study Observations and Debriefs

Lucy's Case Observations and Debriefs	Anita's Case Observations and Debriefs
-Session #1 -Date 10/2/14 -Duration 75 minutes # pages in transcript 19	Session #1 -Date 11/11/14 -Duration 60 minutes # pages in transcript 10
-Session #2 -Date 12/5/14 -Duration 75 minutes # pages in transcript 13	Session #2 -Date 11/20/14 -Duration 75 minutes # pages in transcript 15
	Session #3 -Date 12/7/14 -Duration 75 minutes # pages in transcript 15
	Session #4 -Date 12/16/14 -Duration 75 minutes # pages in transcript 15

There was a discussion of options. Then, I observed the teachers' classes so that additional student discussions could be observed and debriefed. A final interview was given to complete Anita's case study at the university setting, but Lucy did not have a final interview, as her supervisory duties near the end of the semester at the community college did not afford us the time.

Data collection and analysis for the case study occurred simultaneously. As with the analysis of the other parts, I relied on tools for analysis such as narrative structure (Gee, 2011; Labov & Waletzky,1967), grounded theory, with open and axial coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), as well as critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2011; Gee, 2005, 2011; Rogers, 2011) to analyze the data I collected. As a result, analysis of the data from each participant was compared to the data of each other and to the data as a whole so that themes could be uncovered that occurred across sessions. Using evidence of practitioners' development and then changes in planning, as well as their enacting dialogical teaching with complex texts, I was able to able to deconstruct their process of appropriation.

Trustworthiness. Prior to elaborating on the tactics of trustworthiness which were employed, it is useful to mention that once I began data collection and analyses, I was alert to the multiple sources of bias that could weaken the findings. I turned to the writing of Miles and Huberman (1994) for ensuring basic quality of the data: "Data quality can be assessed through checking for representativeness (1) checking for researcher effects (2) on the case, and vice versa; and triangulating (3) across data sources and methods" (p. 289). These were used for data verification as the findings

were discovered. Triangulation is listed as number three above, but as Miles &

Huberman (1994) assert further in their article,

> triangulation is not so much a tactic as a way of life…If you self-consciously set
>
> out to collect and double–check findings, using multiple sources and modes of
>
> evidence, the verification process will largely be built into data collection as you
>
> go. (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 267)

To insure that my data was trustworthy, I triangulated the data with multiple

sources of data with four participants over eight group meetings and five observations.

Multiple methods of data collection were utilized including the following: interviews, my

own notes, field notes from sessions, transcriptions from group session recordings,

transcriptions of debriefing sessions, transcriptions from the videotapes and teacher plans

and rubrics along with two case studies. Moreover, I had a classmate review my coding

processes early on in the data gathering and analysis process to make an external audit of

the coding process and the codes which emerged (Miles & Huberman, 1994) for the

grounded theory coding parts. To ensure inter-coder reliability, I thought aloud about my

coding process while my classmate looked at the coding of the first page of data to see if

she agreed with the codes. Also, I remained available for the duration of her checking of

the codes in case she had any questions.

Looking at Table 4, we can see which data sorces were used for which research

questions. For the first question on the left, we note that the artifacts, field notes for the

eight sessions, (one online) debriefings made after the classroom observations, and the

Table 4

Questions Related to Data Sources

Questions	Data Checks and Data Types						
		Audit		Member check			
What happens when a group of ESL teachers collaborate in a dialogically-inspired professional development context to learn about navigating text complexity with their ELL students?		Transcriptions and open coding and axial coding of initial interviews	Field notes for group sessions	Transcription of digital recordings of class observations and de-brief	Transcriptions of digital recordings of group sessions Transcriptions of digital recording of focus group	Final interview of teachers in case study	My session plans Power points
How does teacher learning, including my own, evolve and address the complexities of the teacher/learner discourse under discussion in the professional development inquiry?	Digital recordings of initial interviews	Transcriptions and open coding and axial coding of initial interviews	Field notes for group sessions	Transcription of digital recordings of class observations and de-brief	Transcriptions of digital recordings of group sessions Transcriptions of digital recording of focus group	Final interview of teachers in case study	My session plans Power points
What are the thematic and discursive contours of the teaching and learning in this professional development context?	Digital recordings of initial interviews	Transcriptions and open coding and axial coding of initial interviews	Field notes for group sessions	Transcription of digital recordings of class observations and de-brief	Transcriptions of digital recordings of group sessions Transcriptions of digital recording of focus group		
Will the lesson development be relevant to the needs of those in the target setting?	Digital recordings of initial interviews		Field notes from the observations	Transcription of digital recordings of class observations and de-brief			Class Plans

digital recording of the focus group at the end of the eight sessions were used. A member check was conducted several times with the practitioners reading the transcripts of the group sessions.

From Table 3, we can likewise see that the question, "Will this lesson development be relevant to the needs of those in the target setting?" was answered by the practitioners in the de-brief as well as in the initial interview. In addition, field notes

from eight sessions and from the classroom literacy conversations were examined for this

question. Similarly, the transcriptions for the sessions and transcription for the focus

group were scrutinized for data useful for this question. Table 3 also shows us that data

from the case study was examined for all of the questions. Initial and final interviews of

Anita provided framing data to triangulate field notes of the classroom literacy

conversation observations. Also, I maintained an audit trail to elaborate on my coding

decisions. Moreover, because this is a dissertation study, I had the luxury of having the

seasoned researchers on my committee scrutinize my analysis to safeguard against bias

(Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 11). Moreover, group collaboration contributed to the

trustworthiness of the study as I learned about the participants' perspectives which

afforded a better understanding of my own thinking. In their description of practitioner

inquiry, Cochran–Smith and Lytle (1993) noted the importance of generating knowledge

of practice as a community. The data in the chapters that follow will detail the

collaborative context of this study.

Analysis of Potential Design Flaws

The quality of the data is always a concern. I took several measures to insure that

the data analysis shows "the relative neutrality of and reasonable freedom from

unacknowledged researcher biases" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 278). I point to the

detail I have tried to provide of the methods. I relied on Miles and Huberman's (1994)

discussion of five issues effecting qualitative work: (1) the objectivity /confirmability of

the procedures, retaining and sharing of data; (2) the reliability/ dependability/

auditability of the data, meaning the research questions are clear and relate to the features

of the study design; (3) Internal validity/ credibility/authenticity was checked by the

context-rich and meaningful descriptions, the triangulations, and the linked categories to prior theory. Care has been taken so that areas of uncertainty were made plain, negative evidence exposed, and rival explanations considered. Committee checks stated whether the conclusions could be considered accurate.

Whether the conclusions of this study will have any larger import depends on many factors. The fourth issue effecting qualitative work: (4) external validity/transferability/ and fittingness hinges on careful description and interpretation. Examining Miles and Huberman's (1994) relevant queries for this fourth issue (p. 279), I noticed a need to summarize the scope and boundaries of reasonable generalization from the study. Depending on the detail and quantity of thick description, there is a potential transferability for readers to assess the appropriateness for their own settings.

Nevertheless, as emphasized in the design study portion of the research, "local" theories that applied to the participants' situated contexts were the main findings. It will be useful if transferal could be made if "the processes and outcomes described in the conclusions [are] generic enough to be applicable to other settings, even ones of a different nature" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 279), but it is not a certain outcome because it depends on a variety of contextual matters. However, care in the description of the procedures should allow replication.

Finally, Miles and Huberman's (1994) fifth issue, (5) utilization/ application/action orientation was addressed by the design study portion of this proposed research. Care has been taken to formulate a professional development sequence for ELL teachers who might not have been fully using dialogical teaching to assist their learners. Therefore, the practitioners learned and developed new capabilities by participating in

this professional development. The outcome of enacting dialogic instructional

conversations centered on complex texts was achievable, and the possibility for specific

actions to enhance their teaching was embedded in the inquiry readings and proposed

actions.

Design Study Criteria

In regard to data analysis, viability, legitimacy, and efficacy will be major criteria.

McKenney, Nieveen, and van der Akker (2006) note:

> Three aspects of viability are distinguished: practicality, relevance, and
>
> sustainability. Viability questions include: Was lesson development realistically
>
> usable in everyday practice? In what ways was lesson development relevant to
>
> the needs of those in the target setting? Can its use be sustainable? (p. 79)

In terms of legitimacy, one wants to know if the design was based on contemporary

scientific insights and if there was consistency in the design components. "Efficacy

relates to how well the design yields the desired results" (McKenney, et al., 2006, p. 80).

McKenny et al. (2006) assert, "At the heart of the process are the tenets of research rigor,

local relevance, and collaboration with participants" (p. 80).

Transforming criteria. The transformative quality of this dissertation topic

refers to the possibility of ESL teacher change to more dialogic teaching. EL student

transformation as a result of more dynamic oral interactions enacted in the classroom

were evident in the practitioners' observations that students were able to use oral

discussion to demonstrate understanding. Reinking and Bradley (2008) state that

"interventions most worthy of study are those that address pedagogical goals that are

valued …" (p. 21). The results of two major research summaries in the introduction of

this proposal established the need for more oral development for ELLs, and the idea that

literacy learning can provide a worthwhile springboard to discussion were valued goals.

Ethics and Subjectivity

At times, I was more assertive than my participants were about my views of

dialogic teaching. For example, I tried to be open to different ways of thinking, but at no

time did I pretend to be neutral in my teaching inclinations. To balance my interests with

those of the group participants, however, I needed to actively ask myself if I was keeping

their best interests in mind, and examine whether I was staying open to hear what they

told me.

There is a relationship between knowledge and ethics in participatory research. A

set of ethical guidelines for relationships of shared endeavors is provided by McIntyre

(2007). She suggests an ethic of transparency for the researcher, sharing the intent to

publish at the beginning of the group formation, among other guidelines. Moreover, my

position as a privileged white woman who has experienced only a small degree of

marginalization as an ELL instructor on a university campus and a PhD student may have

positioned me, at times, as more of an outsider to the group of teachers no matter how

strongly I identify as a teacher.

Actually, both ELL teachers in K-12 and ELL teachers in higher education are

marginalized. K-12 ELL teachers are often not considered "classroom teachers"; many

are itinerant "specialists" who are teachers who pull out students from "regular" classes

for short help sessions. Many higher education ELL teachers with Masters Degrees are

considered "staff" and many higher education ELL students do not receive credit for

courses at the same level of proficiency of first year students who study Spanish, for

example. Moreover, in many higher education settings, full-time ELL teachers make up barely 25 percent of the number of teachers in a program whereas part-time ELL teachers teach more than 70 percent of the classes. Tensions such as these were acknowledged as the research continued.

Assumptions, Delimitations, Limitations

I assumed that there would be practicing teachers who had the time and interest to participate in the inquiry group. My assumption was that at least some teachers would engage in the group without credit or grades. My involvement in the construction of the data records informed the open-coding, axial coding, and formed the bases of my theory making. Since I convened the group, I led the group by providing readings and materials, but I also assumed that we would co-construct the group processes as we went along. However, the practitioners who joined the group were happy to let me lead. My role shifted and my own journaling became a subject of study as well to highlight how my role and my own knowledge base were changed by our interactions.

In regards to limitations, a constraint of the study was that it was limited in scope. All four practitioners were initially observed in their classrooms once. It is true that the case study of two practitioners allowed further class observations, but further observations of all the practitioners would have added more depth to the data. Furthermore, the findings cannot be generalized to other contexts. But, this research can be useful to those interested in detailed descriptions of the intersection of professional development, design research, critical discourse analysis (Rogers, 2011) literacy learning, and language learning with English language learners.

After this description of the methods used to collect data, the data analytics employed, and the measures taken to insure trustworthiness, the following chapter will describe the findings.

Chapter Four: The practitioners' ZPDs: awareness of self and students

In the following chapters, Chapters Four to Eight, I present the results of this study. I describe a linear progression of activities and learning from beginning, middle, and ending points to capture the arc of activities and learning in the inquiry group. While each practitioner inquiry group session had a number of commonalities, there were distinctions amongst stages of the inquiry. Throughout Chapters Four to Eight, I present the participating teachers' narratives to provide insight into their expression of their own teacher agency, and underlying tensions. How critical discourse analysis, along with related tools, allowed for a multi-dimensional look at both my viewpoint and the practitioners' views of teaching English language learners literacy were noted.

In Chapter Four, I present the narratives that the practitioners revealed in individual interviews, and how the practitioners presented themselves as teaching selves (Kelchtermans, 2009). Before diving into the specifics of the first phase of the inquiry group, I share my analysis of the thematic focuses of the inquiry group associated with the first phase.

In Chapter Five, I present narratives that show how individual attitudes within the inquiry group gradually changed and synthesized into a dialogical teaching stance (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996). In Chapter Six, I note how practitioners transformed their representation of ELLs (Juzwik & Ives, 2010). Finally, I present a cross inquiry-group analyses (Fairclough, 1992; 2011) that illustrates creative transformations, pointing to ways forward to understandings of the complexity of educating ELLs in the ways of academic discussion.

Context of the Practitioner Inquiry: Beginnings

The practitioners' concepts of themselves and their students, and their conceptual knowledge tied to their English language teaching knowledge are interpreted as making up their zones of proximal development. I use this knowledge in the creation of a reading list to respond to the felt needs of the practitioners, both on an informational level that included gaps of literacy learning knowledge, and on an emotional level, that included concerns about their own efficacy, the students' abilities, and worries about the wider contextual impositions on their classrooms such as testing. The progression from beginning to the end of the inquiry shows how the practitioners and I evolved in our thinking as well.

The first thing I did as facilitator of the group was to interview each participant about their perceptions of enacting instructional conversations with their learners. Participants voiced their own impressions about themselves as teachers, beliefs that mediate understandings about their initial stances as teachers. Verbal sketches of the practitioners has already been accomplished in the description of the participants in Chapter Three when they were first interviewed. Table 4 adds to this information and summarizes the participants' demographic information. We see they are all female teachers of students who are in their teens or above and that they have varied preparation in terms of teaching oral skills and literacy learning.

Table 5

Participant Demographic Information

Pseudonyms	Age	Teaching Context	L2 Proficiencies	Classwork on Oral Skills	Classwork On Teaching Literacy
Anita	35-55	Higher Education	Thai	No	No
Daphne	55-65	Higher Education	Spanish	Yes	No
Debra	25-35	Middle School High School	None	No	Yes
Lucy	45-55	Community College	French, Urdu	No	Yes

Highlighting the participants' professional self-descriptions is congruent with the theme of a practitioner inquiry: to examine questions, topics, and ideas important to the participants. Practitioner narratives enact their perspectives. However, more is going on in the narrative.

Fairclough's orders of discourse (1992) allowed me to connect their language with social practices and positioning. There are multiple layers, at least three layers of meaning: genre or the local level, discourse, or the institutional level, and style or the societal level that can be interpreted. Considering these domains of analysis, I give examples from the interview and weave in explanations.

Practitioners Characterize Themselves as Teachers

In the interview, I asked questions to understand the practitioners teaching selves such as "How would you characterize yourself as a teacher?" What the practitioners said helped me learn what motivated them in teaching and how they interpreted their jobs personally.

Daphne. Daphne's concerns in higher education pre-matriculation programs centered on increasing the language proficiency levels of her students so that they can succeed at the university. In terms of Kelchtermans' (2005) framework, she expressed thoughts about teaching that can be interpreted as job motivating ideas and task perception; Daphne's self-perception as innovator and student motivator is represented in the narrative below.

Daphne drew on her knowledge of the importance of connecting to student interests as she expressed her concern in the interview, "How can I connect to their [the students'] interests?" She contrasted students' present and future challenges with an ESL text which she prefers not to use when she said, "instead of just a simple use of the ESL text." Here there was a sense of intertextuality between Daphne and me. Many ELL teachers feel that ESL textbooks cannot be used by themselves and that because of the multiple complexities in teaching ELLs, teachers need to supplement with many other types of texts. Texts at grade level can be difficult for ELLs for a number of reasons, depending on the first language literacy level of the student, the second language proficiency level, lack of cultural or content background knowledge, and the text difficulty in terms of syntax, concept density, and new vocabulary. Each one of these factors can provide a stumbling block for students, so a variety of resources are required

so that learner needs can be met. Concluding the narrative, Daphne tells that "I've

always been that kind of teacher; it's not like I'm gonna follow the book page for page."

This situated her in the following narrative as knowledgeable and creative with me, her

TESOL colleague.

Narrative One- Daphne's Initial Interview

It's not like I'm gonna follow the book page for page

Setting

      I'm the type of teacher that/

      starts with / the big picture of why

      are my students studying this particular/ class or program/

      and how can I connect it to their interests/

Catalyst

      in order to motivate them/ so/

      even if it's a very simple class like a TOEFL class/

      well there's a pretty obvious motivator there/ but

      /let's then go to grammar/

Crisis

      so what do they need to know about this /

      that will help them in their tasks

      that they're actually dealing with now

      and in the near future.

      Instead of just a simple use of the ESL text/

Evaluation

so I'd say from the very beginning

I've always been that type of a teacher/

it's not like I'm gonna follow the book page for page/

(DPC, initial interview, lines 22-28)

This is an appraisal of Daphne's own practice. She related that she enquires into the

students' purposes for studying at her institution. Then she shared her purpose "in order

to motivate them." This purposefulness was marked with "in order to" and the

conjunctions "so" expressing logic twice. The message comes across that she starts

where the students are and the job is to motivate the students.

Through both her words and her practices as she represented them, we learn how

Daphne understands teaching English language learners in her university setting. We

understand Daphne feels she must mention the TOEFL tests, that she also considers

teaching grammar as something worth mentioning, and that using an ESL text is "just a

simple use" which implied she uses many different kinds of texts.

Daphne's narrative expressed her agency as a teacher and at the same time

includes me as part of her world by use of informal grammatical structures, "let's" and

"gonna." Here I refer to agency as teacher agency as Rogers and Wetzel (2013) note,

"the will and ability to affect instructional conditions" (p. 63). In her figured world (Gee,

2011), a TOEFL class is a "pretty obvious motivator" and students "need to know" about

grammar; teachers can be classified according to whether they use the textbook "page for

page." Language-wise, Daphne signified the importance of her agency for the students as

she built her argument. Using the included questions of "how can I connect" and "what

do they need to know" she constructed the domains of her responsibility to me her listener, who understood and interpreted what she said, co-constructing her portrait.

In Daphne's account, the ideological work that made connections to me as her listener is the idea of a teacher connecting to the students' interests. For veteran EL teachers, it is common sense to try to connect to learners' interests. As Fairclough notes, "The text [her speech] succeeds in doing ideological work in constructing subjects for whom these connections are common sense" (1992, p. 173). I understood Daphne's focus as an ELL practitioner of not sticking to any particular text to help bring meaning to ELLs and to her personal pride in innovating to meet the learners' needs. While her mention of the students' motivation to get a good TOEFL score and study more grammar alerted me into the reality of the student tensions in a pre-matriculation university program, Daphne's display of personal pride in innovation made me aware of the positive energy she has towards participating in the inquiry.

Lucy. One of Lucy's main teaching focuses is to understand the worldview of the adult students she teaches in the community college. This relationship with students motivates her. She stated, "my teaching is more formed by interactions with my students/and the classroom community." Lucy noted with pride that understanding students formed a core of her task perception: "when students come back to me/ you know like they follow me from [English] 100 to 101/or they come back after they've finished/ or they stay in touch with me/or whatever/ I feel it's because of that/ not because of that assignment/hhh/." In the transcription of the interviews and sessions, /hh/ or /hhh/ indicate a small laugh or giggle.

Lucy teaches both English 100 and 101 and she alerted me to the fact that students after having her in English 100, request to have her in English 101. She situated herself as a caring teacher with me, one not bogged down with strict demands of a curriculum; she emphasized that her classroom community "evolves" in the following narrative:

Narrative Two: Lucy's Initial Interview

It's kind of personality based

Setting

> I don't exactly know what you/
>
> probably you don't know either/hhhh/
>
> what you want me to say/

Catalyst

> but// I would say that I/
>
> first of all/I think/ uhm/

Crisis

> my teaching is more formed
>
> by interactions with my students/
>
> and the classroom community/that I can let evolve//
>
> than any particular strategy/
>
> I might use in the classroom/

Evaluation

> it's kind of personality based/
>
> which can be a strength or weakness

when students come back to me/

you know like they follow me from 100 to 101/

or they come back after they've finished/

or they stay in touch with me/or whatever/

I feel it's because of that/

Coda

not because of that assignment/hhh/

do you know what I mean?/

(LW, initial interview, lines 76-82)

Lucy revealed herself to be less assertive than Daphne. She expressed an

uncertain sense, using two negative statements in the beginning, "I don't exactly know

what you want" and "you don't know either" which she countered with "but" and

ventured her opinion, "but//I would say" and then she added that her teaching at the

community college "is formed by interactions with my students and the classroom

community." This statement connects to what I call teacher discourse, the storylines in

society amongst teachers, their figured world (Gee, 2011).

In Lucy's narrative, the action of the students was emphasized. Lucy positions

the students as agents, "they come back," and "they stay in touch" and to finalize her

argument, she uses the connector "because" twice to show the logic of her assertion; I

understood her rationality. Lucy asserted herself saying, "I feel it's because of that/ [her

relationship with them] not because of that assignment." But she softened the assertions

with a little laugh, "hhh." For Lucy, the teaching figured world (Gee, 2011) is one where

there should be a personal relationship between student and teacher; she mentioned,

"when students come back to me, or they stay in touch with me" to reveal her closeness to students. This reveals an intertextuality of a caring ethos. It is commonly stated by ELL teachers that they care a lot about their students and often form relationships with them; that Lucy positioned her students as agents is also an intertextual reference to her being accomplished in what she does: building relationships with students.

Anita. In the following narrative, we learn that Anita has studied educational philosophy as she referenced Dewey in the interview, "I'm// more of a//I guess/ learning by doing/ like Dewey's uhm/ philosophy/." Imbuing her classes in pre-university and university programs with current theory and practices motivates Anita in her higher education setting. She perceived her task as facilitating her students to be as active as possible. She stressed the idea of activity by repeating some form of the word activity three times and then she contrasted it in, "I like to have worksheets that are interactive/so that they're more active/that they're actively reading/and not passively reading/."

Anita continued this theme in the stanzas that follow, and then completed her narrative with ideas which positioned her as a teacher who is willing to try new practices in, "I guess/ I try to bring in the research/as well as the methods into/ I'm always trying new things out/I guess/." Her enthusiasm to try new things were heartening to me but I also heard some resistance in her hedge, "I guess" which she used twice.

Narrative Three-Anita's Initial Interview

Learning by Doing

Setting

I'm not really a lecturer/I guess/

I'm// more of a//I guess/learning by doing/

like Dewey's uhm/ philosophy

Catalyst

I like to/ I think/they/ it's better/ especially with reading/

I'm like "you guys have to read/

my reading is OK/ you have to read"/

So it's more interactive/uhm/

Crisis

I like to have worksheets

that are interactive/

so that they're more active/

that they're actively reading/

and not passively reading/

Evaluation

and if I just talk/

it's not really a reading/

they need to be interactive/with the material/

And so I'm always stressing that/

that they need to be active learners and not passive//

learners/and so/

Resolution

and also/ I guess/ I try to bring in the research/

as well as the methods into/

I'm always trying new things out/I guess/

(AM, initial interview, lines 27-33).

Anita began showing her teacher agency, her identity, using "I" four times in the first two sentences, but it's an agency tempered by the tentativeness, of two "I guess" phrases and the negative phrase, "I'm not really a lecturer." Anita was calm and self-assured, but she was not strongly assertive.

In her discourse, Anita has specific criteria for her relationship to her class, "So it's more interactive" which she enacts with interactive worksheets. She clarified her logic using the conditional phrase, "if I just talk" emphasizing the lack of lesson coherence and ambiguity she feels with "just talk" and the conclusion that "It's not really a reading [class]" and she asserted her teacherly authority with the verb phrase, "need to" in the phrase, "They need to be interactive / with the material." Anita's figured world (Gee, 2011) is one where as the teacher she can create a learning environment which has certain requirements where "they need to be active learners not passive learners." Anita's language use revealed her self-construction as a purposeful teacher with her goal "learning by doing" which she signifies as the object of her teacherly being, "I'm …learning by doing." By asserting "learning by doing" Anita constructed an intertextuality between us as teachers who believe in this process, thus, as she speaks of her actions she is building our relational understanding. She asserted her narrative style with additional actions, "I try to bring in the research," and "I'm always trying new things" tempered again with hedging statements such as "I guess." Nevertheless, Anita's purposefulness implied her eagerness to find ways to foster more dialogical interactions.

Debra. From the interview we learn that Debra is motivated by the analytical challenges teaching can present in the middle school setting, "I like to be very thoughtful

about what I do." She sees her task as challenging students, yet remaining in control, "I just have certain expectations for myself and my students and so I try to be consistent with those despite/you know/things that arise that are challenging/ so I just try to continue to maintain those." After interviewing Debra, I wondered if her focus on control might hamper her acceptance of dialogic teaching, which necessitates a release of tight control on classroom discussion.

Narrative Four: Debra's Initial Interview

I like to be very thoughtful about what I do

Setting

I'm pretty controlling

/uhm and/I like to be very thoughtful about what I do/

and think about what I do /

Catalyst

and make changes all the time and/

Crisis

I like to enjoy my students/

and I'm very passionate about certain things

Evaluation

/and unwavering about the things I'm passionate about/

Rosa: because//

Debra: I just have certain expectations for myself/

and my students/

and so I try to be consistent with those despite/

you know/

Crisis

things that arise that are challenging/

so I just try to continue to maintain those/

Evaluation

and compartmentalize the things

that are out of my control/

to the best of my ability/uhm///

(DH, initial interview, lines 25-31).

Like Anita, Debra began by showing her teacher agency, her identity, using "I" four

times in the first sentence. She hedged the idea of control at first, with "pretty" in "I'm

pretty controlling" yet she was very consistent in her self-assessment, repeating the same

idea with a slight variation in the use of the parallel structure of "what I do" in, "I like to

be very thoughtful about what I do/ and think about what I do." Likewise, she repeated

the word "passionate" twice to emphasize the affect of her actions, in "I'm very

passionate about certain things, and unwavering about the thing I'm passionate about/."

Debra had a quick assertiveness and yet poised demeanor.

When I requested an elaboration of why she was so passionate, she was logically

explicit in her discourse about her consistency, using the connector "so" twice, "and so I

try to be consistent with those despite/ you know/ things that arise that are challenging/ so

I just try to continue to maintain those/." Debra's figured world (Gee, 2011) of teaching

involves a passionate devotion to principles, yet there are "things that are out of her

control" in the public school sixth grade setting where she was teaching.

Through her verb choices and style, Debra recreated the relational processes she has with her job, using the verb "be" in, "I'm pretty controlling," and "I'm very passionate." She also showed her affection for what she does, "I like to be very thoughtful," and "I like to enjoy my students." Likewise she called attention to her definite actions of thinking and making changes, connecting to teacher discourse of what is appropriate for teachers to do, "and [I] think about what I do/ and make changes all the time," and having certain expectations, "I just have certain expectations for myself and my students." To display her sincerity, she used the idiomatic expression "to the best of my ability" to finalize her statement. My sense was that her positive affect for thinking and change would be an asset as we tried to find out what to do to engage our students more dialogically.

As we saw, when asked to describe themselves as teachers, the participants present brief yet diverse, wide-ranging pictures of themselves (See a summary in Table 6). Using language to both participate in an interview and to construct their social realities at the same time, the practitioners thematically reveal their teacher identities.

Table 6

Practitioners' Orientations in Teaching

	Daphne	Lucy	Anita	Debra
Motivating ideas (Kelchtermans, 2009)	Teacher as innovator	Teacher as relationship builder	Teacher as theoretical alignment builder	Teacher as promoter of student thinking
Task perception (Kelchtermans, 2009)	Motivate students	Listen to students' stories	Provide active Learning	Control situation while challenging students

These beginning narratives allow us to interpret the teachers' view of what they do and why they do it, i.e. to see part of their personal interpretative framework, their figured worlds and creation of their social realities as work of the practitioner inquiry progresses. One aspect of that framework is their knowledge base of L2 teacher education. While a knowledge base is not static, it is grounded in certain epistemological perspectives. So there was a tension in the inquiry of practitioners referring back to foundational teaching concepts no matter how much they contradicted dialogical teaching principles. There was a dialectic between teaching compartmentalized skills and a more holistic emphasis on understanding. Teaching dialogically is more about talking to understand and positioning students to be successful than it is about grammatical correctness, for example. This dialectic is already seen in the inquiry with the practitioners' various orientations: Daphne talked about teaching grammar whereas Lucy focused on forming personal relationships to empower her students. Anita was concerned with aligning her classroom to activity whereas Debra expressed concern with student thinking.

The socio-historical threads in Daphne's discourse centered on grammar as a separate concern are worthy of remark. In our group there was a point of difference as to how much grammar we should teach. My field notes from April 7 show how discussions veered to our different backgrounds in this and other matters.   April 7: "We talked at some length of inconsistencies comparing our teaching settings and shared resources. We also noted similarities and differences of teaching grammar. Lucy expressed her empathy for students and I noted the vulnerability of students in our classrooms."

In later sessions, Daphne expressed her struggle with sociocultural theory and expressed resistance. My notes from July 18 show: "Daphne admits her resistance to the new knowledge and relates it to her own students." From the transcript, we hear her struggle, yet notice her realization that she was being resistant.

> I was just going to get out the fact/ that/ we were asked before to think about vulnerability of our students/ but I think/these types of teacher training and sessions/ and sharing/ make me feel very vulnerable/ and very resistant/which is good because it reminds me/ about how teachers around me feel when we put them through training things/ but nevertheless/it's an upsetting feeling/ because I just sit there going/ "Nah/ it wouldn't work in my context/Nah" Then I realized that "Ahh" I'm doing exactly what I tell people not to do/ but definitely feeling a kickback against all this social interaction/and I was trying to figure out why/ and I think it comes down to personally/ I don't trust swings/ you know/"Everything's social constructivism/ We work together/ language is developed through social interaction/ I'm like/ "Yeah but we're working with adults/ and I learned individually/ so I'm coming to terms with my initial/ sort of like/ "No/Naw."/ (Session 3, lines 32-41)

Daphne studied TESOL before sociocultural perspectives were being discussed, (see Table 4, p. 89-90) and her resistance was palapable in the beginning sessions, but the readings for the first session (Gee, 2004; Hammerberg, 2004; Resnitskaya, 2012) helped establish a baseline of knowledge about social constructivism for her to grapple with within the practitioner group activity.

The content of L2 teacher education has been largely drawn from theories and research in linguistics and second language acquisition that emphasize the formal properties of language, i.e. grammatical and phonological features, for example. Johnson (2009) describes this traditional focus, "Historically, the knowledge base of L2 teacher education has been grounded in the positivist epistemological perspective. It has been compartmentalized into isolated theoretical courses and separated from teaching..." (p. 11). As seen later on in the analysis of the practitioner inquiry sessions, for instance, thinking about the discrete points of language learning, grammar, and vocabulary trickles into the practitioners' discussion of teaching dialogically; there is also a dialectic undercurrent with mention of the TOEFL test and grammar because these refer to discrete items and imply teaching pedagogies which focus on test taking skills and vocabulary memory work instead of expression of meaning. Nevertheless, I focused on the positive ideational language the practitioners used and noticed their purposefulness and openness to thinking about dialogic teaching.

Practitioner Concerns about Teaching ELLs

As group facilitator of the practitioner inquiry, my challenge was to explore the practitioners' zones of proximal development (ZPDs) regarding dialogic teaching. From a Vygotskian socio-culturalperspective, there is a recognition that there will be "cognitive struggles" related to learning in the zone of proximal development. "…because the ZPD itself is comprised of unstable maturing cognitive functions, strategic mediation within learners' ZPD will not necessarily give rise to a smooth, even, or the inevitable process of conceptual development" (Johnson & Golombek, 2011, p. 7).

In fact, naming such points of contradictions for myself was one way I developed further elaborations of what we were to do as a group in the practitioners' inquiry. After our first session, my notes centered on how the group reacted: "March 31: Debra brought up the depressing reality of standardized testing and how it was refreshing to read research that offers an alternative...Daphne brought up the idea that effective teaching is not a term that is agreed upon." Later, it was through strategic mediation (Wertsch, 1985) that I was able to aid the practitioners to work through their contradictions and develop greater awareness of the learning. Below I examine more closely the experiential understandings of the practitioners in their initial interviews as interpretations of their experiences with students in their contexts because these externalizations about students are an additional window into the practitioners' ZPDs.

The tool of narrative analysis enabled a close examination of the discursive contours of the language. Furthermore, examination of the ideation of the discourse and further, critical discourse analysis allowed a microanalysis, which grounded the observations in the genre and discourse, allowing interpretations about the style and the social, ideological action, which the speech was enacting in the moment. Whereas grounded theory coding rendered practitioner concerns about their practices and about students, (see Appendix B, the Code Book) through narrative analysis, the language in relation to the themes remained intact and nuances could be more easily interpreted. For example, in each of the previous narratives, the practitioners elaborated on themes which they knew I could interpret immediately: Daphne told of the importance of connecting to students in order to motivate them, Lucy noted the importance of tending to student affect, Anita saw the task as facilitating student action, and Debra told of her focus on

student thinking. By examining the narrative language, I could also understand the practitioner's agency.

       Practitioners' ideas vis-a-vis dialogic teaching. The following narratives elucidate the practitioners' view of student needs when asked the question, "Do you feel like [the students] they're learning when they participate in discussions?" I focus on Daphne, Lucy, and Debra's response because there is a contrast in contexts and Anita did not directly address the question.

       Daphne. Daphne responded that some of the students in her pre-university ESL program felt they were learning in discussions, but others complained it wasn't what they were used to. Daphne foregrounds her suggestions, "You're gonna have to do this in your regular classes." She brings in complaints from professors in the higher education community "that people don't participate//" but she directly acknowledged the feelings of the students that "you know/ maybe you don't feel comfortable/ and your classmates are busy shouting out answers/." Her advice to students to raise their hands and explain that in their cultures, things are not the same and, "that's always an in/on what it is you're talking about" is a good first step in helping ELL international students navigate their participation in classroom discussions. However, Daphne understands the counter story of the classroom situations, that not all classrooms are equally welcoming to ELLs, "because then they will ask you questions/ they'll draw you out/well hopefully they will/and you can get something going there."

Narrative Five: Initial Interview

You're gonna have to do this in your regular classes

       Rosa: OK/so you feel like they're learning when they participate in discussions?

Setting

Daphne: Yeah/ oh yeah/well especially when I then point out/

though they never believe us that/

"You're gonna have to do this in your regular classes"

Catalyst

That's one of the biggest complaints //

that people don't participate//

and when I teach 'em these things/

and I keep pointing out/ uhm/OK /

Crisis

you know maybe you don't feel comfortable/

and your classmates are busy shouting out answers/

or there's a discussion/

and they all seem to know what they're talking about//

and their English is very// you know / great//

they're all talking a mile a minute/

Evaluation

but/ there's always the culture card/hh/

you can always say/ "excuse me" you know

and you can raise your hand or something

in the group to get your voice in there/

Crisis

"Try it the first time/

it breaks the ice"

and say you're very obviously

from another culture /

and you say/ well /uhm/ "I'm not very clear here/

but in my country/"

I said/ you know that's always an in/

on what it is you're talking about/

Evaluation

because then they will ask you questions/

they'll draw you out/

well hopefully they will/

and you can get something going there/

Resolution

and after that/ the participation gets much easier/

Rosa: Excellent/ yeah/ good/

(DPC, initial interview, lines 311-322)

Daphne emphasizes her agency as teacher/advisor to students in the beginning of the

narrative. She does not remain on the periphery of student's situations; she asserts her

opinions as their teacher. She is assertive yet causal. We note her using an action verb,

"point out" in "when I then point out the students' contradictions, though they never

believe me," referencing the students as "they" but then switching to the more familiar

"you" in her key advice that, "You're gonna have to do this [discuss] in your regular

classes." She also uses the contraction form of going to, "gonna" showing the

informality of the classes yet also revealing the seriousness of her suggestion with the

modal auxiliary of obligation "have to."

Daphne continued narrating for my benefit the details of international student

lives at the university, as she perceives them. She shared wider university discourse of

criticism, "that people don't participate" neutralizing the criticism with the word choice

of "people" instead of ELLs or international students. She softens the criticism with an

acknowledgement of the students' reasoning, "you don't feel comfortable" describing an

American classroom from an international student's point of view, and contrasting their

supposed feelings with "and your classmates are busy shouting out answers/ or there's a

discussion/ and they all seem to know what they're talking about//," to position herself as

an insider, one who knows about the problems international students have. Daphne

continued remarking what an ELL would notice, constructing for my benefit what she

believed the students feel, "and their English is very// you know/ great// they're talking a

mile a minute/," using the idiomatic expression, "talking a mile a minute" to express the

affect of international students' feelings. To counter the negative affect of their "talking

a mile a minute," Daphne reverted to discursively compose more advice. In the face of

no support from others, she suggested students advocate for themselves. She used "but"

to signal a contradiction, and she began to offer a positive way for the students to deal

with the situation, "there's always the culture card/hh/ you can always say 'excuse me'

you know and you can raise your hand or something in the group to get your voice in

there/." Here we see Daphne narrating a storyline, a discourse for the ELLs to use.

Daphne directly addressed the imagined students to "Try it [the culture card] the

first time/," revoicing her advice and she used another idiomatic expression "it breaks the

ice" to continue her positive advice. Daphne rehearsed her appeal to ELL students, continuing in a direct address, "and say you're very obviously from another culture," giving the students the exact words and intonation to break into the discussion, "and say you're very obviously from another culture/ and you say/well/uhm/ I'm not very clear here/ but in my country/."

Daphne thus positioned herself with me as a knowledgeable advisor to ELLs and a protagonist in relation to the students advocating for themselves. She not only described what the students should do, but she offered meta-language insights about how to intervene in a discussion, letting me know that she was aware of the deficit discourse on campus and that she has provided students with a positive alternative, ending on a positive note, constructing something positive to believe in, "and after that/ the participation gets much easier/."

Lucy. Lucy, in the community college context, talked in terms of student reactions to the task of contributing to classroom discussions. She attributed students' reticence to contribute to class as their lack of confidence when I asked her/, "What is your sense of student learning from discussions/conversations/."

Narrative Six: Initial Interview

They don't value their own knowledge

Setting

> Lucy: Well/ OK/ it depends/
>
> so I think/that they feel//
>
> that they learn more from teacher-generated discussion/
>
> than they do from student-generated discussions/

Is that a common thing?/

Rosa: Yeah/

Lucy: hhh/

Catalyst

I feel like they don't value their own knowledge///

and I always/ so like today//I pointed out to/

I had trouble/with them picking academic words//

in the beginning of class/you know/

Rosa: Uhhmm/

Crisis

Lucy: You know/I talk a lot about academic words/

and I post the Academic Word list/right/

but/ I pointed out to them/

that these words were all academic words/

and I said. "See gradually//

you have really/turned your eye toward//"

so then/they're kinda like/ Oh!//

Evaluation

and I said, "It didn't even hurt/"

but they wouldn't have noticed it/

and they probably don't think that they know what an

academic word is/

Resolution

but/gradually/they are as a group they are picking more

academic words/

Rosa: There you go/

Coda

Lucy: So/but they don't value/that they can do it/

Rosa: Hmm/

(LW, initial interview, lines 376-385).

In this narrative, Lucy asserted her agency interpreting the actions of the students, "that they feel that they learn more from teacher-generated discussion than they do from student-generated discussions/." She determined if I agreed with her appraisal by asking me if that was common behavior for ELLs. I agreed; thus co-constructing the discourse, a kind of deficit identity for her students. She continued in the deficit vein, using negative verbs to describe student behavior, "don't value, and "had trouble" when she opined, "I feel like they don't value their own knowledge///" and that the students had trouble picking out academic words in the beginning.

Lucy emphasized her knowledgeable position of showcasing academic words which is prevalent in the discourse of teaching ELLs; and she positioned her learners as successful, "so then they're kinda like/ Oh!//." Lucy highlighted the contradiction that even though the students suddenly realized what the academic words were, she doubted that they would've done so on their own by starting out with "but" and using the modal "would" which indicated her conditional hypothesis in "but they wouldn't have noticed it/ and they probably don't think that they know what an academic word is/."

Nonetheless, she ends with a positive note, highlighting their learning by saying, "but gradually /they are as a group they are picking more academic words/." However, she emphasized her deficit judgment with her final comment, "So/but they don't value /that they can do it/."

The implication here was that Lucy feels she was doing her best, and the students were responding to her teaching, but she suggested that there was a lingering student resistance to position themselves as confident students which she brought up for my consideration.

In my experience, ELL practitioners frequently talk among themselves, highlighting their student's accomplishments or disparaging their students' lack of immediate uptake of particular aspects of a lesson. Lucy positioned herself as an insider who knows the ELLs' ways and she makes efforts to help them, but they have their peculiarities and progress doesn't always measure up to expectations. Hers is not a mean-spirited denigration of her students, but a recounting of the reality that it takes time for ELLs to use the targeted language. Some learners pick the language up more quickly than others do; a multitude of variables affect student uptake. Contrary to teachers' hopes, just because something is pointed out in class, maybe even used in practice, students may not adjust their language.

Debra. Debra did not have any compunction about her ELLs participating in small group discussions with monolingual students in middle school. However, the monolingual students in her middle school groups did not seem to feel the same way if ELLs used their native language in class. When I asked, "What is your sense of student

learning from discussions/conversations," Debra revealed one of her worries about her middle school class.

Narrative Seven: Initial Interview

A Trust Issue

Setting

> You know it's an interesting dynamic/
>
> in my class this year in particular/
>
> because//there's such a large population of ELLs in one class/
>
> there are probably forty percent/
>
> thirty-five or forty percent in one of my classes/

Catalyst

> So they're a very dominant/presence//
>
> and it's almost unavoidable
>
> not to have them in groups/
>
> if I partner them/
>
> they could not all be together/
>
> but if I'm doing small groups/
>
> there are going to be multiple ELLs in one group/
>
> which isn't bad/but I'm just saying it's /
>
> there is a lot of easy reliance on one another/
>
> in their first language/in the class too/ so
>
> Rosa: Yeah/So how do you feel about that?

Crisis

Debra**:** Uhm/ I think/it can be helpful/

I don't have any problem with it/

but there are some students/

who don't speak Spanish who are self-conscious/

and I feel like sometimes

they think the kids are talking about them/

when they're talking in Spanish/

like/   "Tell them they can't speak Spanish in here/"

Evaluation

So it can create a trust issue/

but really I haven't had too many issues about that/

(DH, initial interview, lines 168-182).

Debra focused on the dynamics of her classroom in her appraisal of her situation where

ELLs make up "probably 40 percent." She related her situation in a logical way using

conditional "if" clauses in which she directly appraised student use of their first language

and explained the repercussions, expressing her insider knowledge, describing the

students as relying on one another, "which isn't bad/ but I'm just saying it's/there is a lot

of easy reliance on one another/ in their first language/ in the class too/ so." She

highlighted the reality of the slightly negative affect, which she counteracted with the

idiomatic "but I'm just saying."

When I questioned how she felt about this, she asserted her positive attitude,

using the modal of possibility "can" to express her openness to the students using their

native languages, which concurs with ESL teaching discourse. However, she contrasted

her position with her students who don't speak Spanish starting with "but" and she interpreted the other students' feelings of being talked about from their implied requests "Tell them they can't speak Spanish in here/," which represented a negative discourse, positioning monolingualism as the desired situation. Surprisingly, Debra concluded with the possibility of trust issues in, "So it can create a trust issue/" reflecting the monolingual students' attitude of a societal issue of mistrust for those who speak languages other than English. Debra countered this admission with reassurance using the contraction "but" to signal the contradiction. "I haven't had too many issues about that," keeping the topic vague by using "that" instead of directly naming the issue to maintain the storyline of a neutral teacher.

I did not say anything about the deficit discourse, but looking back, I wonder whether I should have named what she said the students did as bias and pressed her to address the issue of monolingualism versus bilingualism. In a way, because I didn't not counter her neutral stance, I feel that I co-constructed the neutrality. Advocating for bilingualism, at least by bringing up the benefits of speaking more than one language could have shown leadership for accepting other languages into the classroom on my part.

From these narratives, we glean the themes of the practitioners' mixed ethos of concern for their students and come to understand the tension points in their contexts more fully. The practitioners expressed a continuum of appraisal; from a positive appraisal of Daphne contrasting the university community's critique of international students' lack of class participation with her heartfelt advice to use their cultures as a way into a discussion to Lucy's lament of the student's lack of self-confidence in her

community college classes which was both negative and positive in parts of her assertion

that the students could learn academic words, just not as quickly as she would have liked.

Debra worried about trust issues between the bilingual and monolingual students, but

downplayed their occurrences and said nothing at the time to counter the underlying bias

toward monolingualism.

While there is nothing about these concerns about ELLs that is surprising, they

speak of the emotional connection each teacher has with her students, yet it also shows

how feelings of slight deficits can seep into conversations when the sometimes

languorous process of learning in two languages becomes evident. From a practical

standpoint, the practitioners positioned themselves as being knowledgeable about their

students. However, their discourse reveals some underlying tensions which were pushed

back by Daphne in her assertion for student self-advocacy, and allowed to emerge in

Lucy's and Debra's discourses, yet recanted and softened.

In addition to the practical aspects of the practitioners' understanding of students

and their affect, there is a link theoretically between affect and the ZPD of Vygotsky's

theory. Mahn and John-Steiner (2002) assert "By expanding the scope of the

examination of the ZPD to include affective variables we can both amplify its dynamic

character and deepen understanding of this Vygotskian concept" (p. 49). Their approach

to theorizing with the concept of the ZPD includes the ZPD as a holistic system including

"participants, artifacts, and environment/context, and the participants' experience of their

interactions within it" (Mahn & John-Steiner, 2002, p. 49). Daphne's concern with

student participation, Lucy's concern of student self-confidence, and Debra's concern

with how other students were reacting to the bilingual students' use of their native

language shows that the practitioners were in-tune with the students' environment, but I was not so sure that they were aware of the tinges of deficit present in their discourse and I wondered if I should point out the traces of deficit, or if I should focus only on the positives as we proceeded. How the emotional connection with students and the slight feelings of deficits played out as we encountered the readings and discussions in the inquiry group was of interest.

Beginning Group Discussions

As an example of our early discussions in the inquiry group about the contextual requirements for dialogical teaching, Lucy reiterated and refined her stance as a "personality based" teacher when she discussed Gee's (2011) article that we all had read prior to the following narrative. Gee (2011) asserted that language learning is couched in a sociocultural framework and that when learning discourse, with a capitol D, students learn language and "the other stuff" (p. 25) like situated meanings. Lucy asserted her position as advocate for the students and referred to teacher beliefs that ELLs cannot understand difficult texts without help, connecting that belief with teachers' need to understand their students' contexts.

Narrative Eight: Group Session One

We're not going to understand them

Setting

...I think he's [Gee's] saying/

it [sociocultural identity of students] matters so much

and we don't give it enough attention/

Catalyst

it structures everything/

every interaction

every/ understanding of the text/

Crisis

and we don't give it enough credit/

and if you don't/

and in the same way

that students don't understand a text/

Evaluation

if we don't give enough weight

to the learner's sociocultural identity/

then we're not going to understand them/

(Session 1,March 31, lines 313-317).

Lucy positioned herself as an advocate for recognizing the students' socio-cultural identities in this first group session. She began her interpretation of the Gee (2004) reading asserting, "it [the student's sociocultural identity] matters so much" emphasizing her point with "so much." She continued with "and" and leveled her negative appraisal, "and we don't give it enough attention." She highlighted her belief about how the sociocultural identity of learners encompasses "everything," in "it structures everything/ every interaction every/ understanding of the text/." She used a parallel construction to what she had just said about not giving enough attention with "and we don't give it enough credit/" again emphasizing her negative appraisal and including everyone in the group with her pronoun usage, "we."

Lucy continued with advice, a kind of appeal to teachers' discourse about student deficits, "and if you don't/ and in the same way that students don't understand a text/" as she linked the negative appraisal to students' incomprehension of a text to make a connection intertextually to the group. Then she switched to include herself in a broader appraisal by using the pronoun "we" in, "if we don't give enough weight to the learner's sociocultural identity/ then we're not going to understand them/."

Lucy called on the other teachers to recognize that students have their own cultural models (Gee, 2004) of how school works and how they need to act. It is ironic, however, that Lucy used the teachers' cultural model of ELLs to make a connection, comparing the students' lack of understanding a text to the teachers' lack of understanding of students' identities. We read about most ELLs being what Gee termed "authentic beginners" (p. 14), but we, the practitioners in the inquiry, myself included, were so immersed in our own Discourse (Gee, 2004), that we didn't recognize how ELLs are positioned as not having understanding in our inquiry discourse. In terms of understanding the Gee (2004) reading, I would say we were all "ritualized producers" (Gee, 2004, p. 30) of our new understandings; we could talk about authentic beginners, but we did not quite grasp the concepts well enough to apply them spontaneously to our own situation.

Gee (2004) wrote about what is called for in order for students to be able to acquire social languages in terms of situated meanings, cultural models, and identities, and he asserted that activities must allow social language use, not bits and pieces of the language, and students should be led to critically frame their own practices with the new language. Doing so, he suggested, can lead to transformed practice. At this point in the inquiry, none of us was able to realize the meaning of those concepts and how they applied to our own inquiry situation.

From our initial readings in the first session, we also discussed about how dialogical teaching could allow learners to become more immersed in the social language that they needed to learn. Our discussion of the classroom was undergirded by concepts such as building safe contexts, practicing exploratory talk, scaffolding the meta-level thinking needed in discussions, and building higher level thinking (Resnitskaya, 2012). We read how these concepts are bolstered by literacy teaching practices such as informally assessing what students know, leveling reading material so that difficult parts of readings can be highlighted, and how scaffolded and guided reading sessions can be enacted to help learners comprehend complex texts. (See Table 6.) The knowledge of the teaching practices of leveling texts and enacting guided reading sessions were lacking for three out of four practitioners.

Table 7

A Summary of the Inquiry Beginning

-Session # -Date -Duration -# pages in transcript	Topics	# of turns per person	Key points in session
Session 1 March 31 2hrs 30 Min 31 pages	Overview and Goals- I welcomed everyone to think of the inquiry as their opportunity to investigate issues in their teaching. Each of us told one of our own successful teaching episodes as an ice-breaker.. Gee (2004) We discussed primary and secondary discourses, authentic discourses, teaching appropriate discourses for ELLs, beginners, false beginners. Resnitskaya (2012), We examined what it meant to think about language use in literacy classes. Dialogic Teaching, was highlighted, what it is, what is required, how hard it is.	Anita 22 Daphne 40 Debra 32 Lucy 48 Rosa 74	Experiential learning is shown off, lines 307-311 Lucy's narrative about recognizing students' sociocultural identities, lines 313-318 Daphne's interpretation of Gee as teaching appropriate discourses. lines 510-572 Rosa's interpretation of discussion as having no one answer, lines 518-524 Debra's advocacy of using more discussion 542-546 Daphne's narrative about dialogic teaching, lines 575-584

| Session 2 (continued) April 7 2 hrs 30 Min 55 pages | What guided workshops are and how reading level are determined: : Avalos, M. , Plasencia, A. , Chavez, C., Rascon, J. (2007).

Adoniou, M. & Macken-Horarik, M. (2007). Scaffolding literacy meets ESL: Some insights from ACT classrooms.

Difference between fluency and comprehensions were examined.

Testing practices at the different institutions

Also the different levels of

materials were discussed.

Academic English was discussed: what it is and how dialogic teaching was a good medium for learning it.

Building background knowledge was affirmed as a cornerstone of teaching ELLS

The SOLOM assessment was considered. | Anita   40 Daphne 120 Debra   98 Lucy   132 Rosa   165 | Lucy talks about community college student reading levels, lines 470-473

Debra and group talk about testing information that is not useful, lines 484- 495

Daphne talks about frustration level for students and teachers and how students manage to get "Bs" later on , lines 619-637

Daphne wants to keep the TOEFL as the way to pass students to escape teachers having the onus of passing

students, line 673.

Lucy wants to focus on academic literacy, lines765-772

We went back to frustration level, lines 823-829

Anita's narrative, Students don't understand, lines 942-945 |
|---|---|---|---|

Naming our Practice: Dialogical Teaching

Our story for the inquiry eventually is one of transformation (both theirs and mine). My own learning is highlighted below when I reflect on my "insider" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993) reflections in the capstones of Chapters Four, Five, and Six. The discussion of the readings in the group sessions and the planning and enacting of what we began to call dialogical teaching, in reference to the multiple readings addressing that

topic mediated our transformation. This story of transformation has various sub-stories (Gee, 2011) connected to the narratives that are presented. Table 6 summarizes the beginning of the inquiry. I framed the beginning sessions by focusing on the agency of the participants, including my own, points of dialectical tensions in talking about dialogical teaching, and how we elaborated on the concept of dialogical teaching; in other words, what we understood a practitioner should do to make her teaching dialogic. The form and function of Lucy's narrative above (Narrative Eight) serves as a springboard to the other sub-stories in this first part of the inquiry.

In Lucy's narrative, (Narrative Eight) she advocated for our recognizing students' sociocultural identities; she positions herself as the protagonist arguing how important it is to recognize student agency. In doing so, she called on us, her fellow EL practitioners, to make a connection between students' not understanding texts, a deficit discourse concerning students' understanding difficult texts, and our own difficulty in understanding students. Besides the various practitioners' agency, including my own, that are highlighted in the following, there are two major sub-stories: student agency and our deficit discourses about our students. In addition, we ferret out what dialogic teaching means and we construct what the advantages and disadvantages of dialogic teaching are.

Practitioner and student agency. Practitioner agency and student agency are inextricably intertwined in the inquiry. Due to the focus of this study, I wasn't able to include interviews with these teacher's classes to find out their actual perceptions. Nevertheless, we learned a lot about the students and how their teachers appraised them

when the practitioners constructed their students' identities in the beginning of the inquiry.

In my experiences, EL practitioners mostly champion ELs in their stories about them outside of the classroom. In group session 1, lines 507-509, Daphne described what happened to a doctor who didn't know the social language she needed in a certain job-related incident that almost lost the doctor her job at a medical school hospital. Daphne interpreted what happened and explained the doctor's situation in relation to the Gee (2004) article we had read.

> but a lot of it came down to
>
> she didn't have/
>
> she did have the listening skills/
>
> but she wasn't indicating/
>
> in the way that her supervisor understood what it was/
>
> it was a very complicated situation.
>
> (Session 1, March 31, lines 509-510)

Here Daphne is showcasing her own knowledge of cross-cultural and linguistic aspects of an incident that paralleled a story Gee (2004) had told about a Korean student who had failed to interact appropriately with her graduate student adviser and who eventually had to go home without earning her degree. Daphne positions herself as the protagonist in resolving the doctor's dilemma by translating what really happened with her knowledge. Luckily in Daphne's story, the EL was not a victim of misunderstanding as the Korean student was in Gee's (2004) story.

Working with ELs gives seasoned practitioners insights into students' cultures, language, and behaviors. Personnel in schools at all levels can benefit from the practitioners' insights. Without the cross-cultural and linguistic insights Daphne employed in her explanation, the doctor might have been fired. The story also counters the idea that EL practitioners dwell on learner deficits. As discussed in relation to Lucy's narrative above, we have seen how the deficits of EL learners can surface in conversations and influence the way practitioners relate to them.

I countered negative affect about student errors in session 1, lines 542-544, when I responded to Lucy's story of a plenary talk she had gone to at a TESOL conference where the speaker, Diane Larson Freeman, a well- known author of ESL topics, had discussed the expectations of EL practitioners to find student errors and how it wasn't always necessary to be focused on the errors EL students make when trying to communicate in their new language.

> That's a great point
>
> the expectations/
>
> you know/that you're going to be talking to students about/
>
> errors/and corrections /
>
> maybe if we didn't/
>
> I mean the fact is
>
> that they're going to make errors/
>
> so maybe we should be focusing more
>
> on something else/.
>
> (Session 1, March 31, lines 542-544)

In my role as inquiry group facilitator, I gave Lucy positive feedback, and positioned myself as a thought provocateur in the session. Error correction is a frequent topic in ELL practitioner discussions and the idea that we should ignore student error, though not new, is something which can be controversial (Bitchner, Young, & Cameron, 2005; Harper & Jong, 2004). In our sessions, we did not emphasize possible student errors. Instead, we sought to shine a light on EL participation and encourage it. In an environment where there are both monolingual and bilingual learners, teachers need to highlight the advantages of knowing more than one language and encourage L2 learner participation as much as possible. Dialogic teaching is the perfect vehicle for this activity.

Conceptually, it is easy to understand that dialogic teaching can help ELL students. There is research to support the idea that theoretically dialogic teaching is a good tool to engage students (Mercer & Littleton, 2007; Wells, 1999). Moreover, there have been studies to show that it improves student learning (Mercer & Littleton, 2007; Reznitskaya et al., 2009; Sotar et al., 2008). From Reznitskaya (2012), we read that when teaching dialogically, there is a shared sense of authority; that is what students say can determine where a discussion goes, that questions should be open and divergent, which also makes the flow of ideas uncertain. In addition, the teacher is engaged *with* the learners by giving feedback and prompting students to go further in elaborating their ideas. In fact, the practitioners' role is to guide the discussion by making meta-linguistic comments about the discussion itself, which alerts students to what quality responses sound like and, by connecting student ideas, practitioners can also push the level of thinking to a higher level. Therefore, there is a collaboration of ideas between students and teachers, students contribute more lengthy ideas, and they can learn how to think aloud and increase the sophistication of their thinking through the process.

The teaching reality of such a stance, however, was not lost on the participants. In lines

610-614, in the first inquiry meeting transcription, Daphne expresses the crux of the matter and

I respond.

Daphne: Because essentially as you said/it[dialogic teaching] implies/trying to actually

putting the teacher's role down as equal to the students/which is extremely hard// to let

go/

Rosa: Uhhm/

Daphne: Which is extremely hard/

Rosa: Yes absolutely/but// it's very beneficial/

While Daphne resists the idea of dialogic teaching, citing the loss of authority, I rebut her and

elaborate further on the benefits for students in lines 614-620. Then in, lines 621-625 Lucy

picks up the thread of resistance and elaborates her concerns of asking open questions and

having to devote time to student responses.

Lucy: I think another reason we don't do it/

it can be uncomfortable because/like when it says you have to ask questions

you don't know the answer to/ that can put you in a strange place with

students/ who also have expectations of you being the authority/right/

Rosa: uhhum

Lucy: And you also have to remember to stop// I'm remembering a

particular moment/.

[Session 1, lines 621-625]

These moments of resistance and rebuttal continue throughout the inquiry; the

practitioners are not unique in their resistance. Studies show that dialogic teaching is not

common (Alexander, 2008; Nystrand, Gamoran, Kachur, & Prendergast, 1997). Nevertheless, essential learning outcomes cannot be ignored. Dialogic interactions have been shown to facilitate reasoning, allow for better understanding of concepts and increase learner inferences and augment the quality of their writing (Kuhn & Udell, 2001; Mercer & Littleton, 2007; Murphy, Soter, Wilkinson, Hennessey, & Alexander, 2009; Reznitskaya et al. , 2009).

Capstone: Initial Reflections

What has been reported thus far about the inquiry is a result of both my inside and outside position in the group. My role as the facilitator of the group was one of outsider of the practitioners' contexts. In that role, I planned the group readings, interactions, and led discussions, using intertextualities (Vygotsky, 1986) that had been established in the initial interviews. My written notes were about what I wanted to do to lead the group. drawing on the readings and other materials to help me shape the group community of practice (Rogoff, 1994). However, simultaneously, I was an insider to the group because our interactions were co-constructed. Therefore, I took notes that recorded the groups' affect for the day or my affect/ reaction to what happened. A brief summary of those reactions follow.

We were all engaged in the group discussion activity, but at first, I was very nervous about the direction the group might take. There were no guarantees that the practitioners would relish talking about dialogic teaching, but I was counting on who they were as teacher-leaders and what I knew of that work which could be described as an intertextuality (Vygotsky, 1986) among us. I had been a teacher leader for sixteen years, so I understood the needs of Daphne and Lucy very well. In most cases, I brought forth examples from my own classroom, which I knew would resonate with the group

members. For example, when it was time to enact an instructional conversation i.e. do

some dialogic teaching, I videotaped myself. It was not a stellar example. Before I

showed the example, I talked about what I was thinking when I made the videotape.

First, I presented myself as interpreter of the texts we were reading and I established how

I would model with the students, noting how I would address the students and what we

would do together to call attention to the student/teacher relationship of collaboration.

> Rosa: I envision this/ *Questioning the Author* as like/ right after I introduce the
>
> text/and we're just digging into like a certain piece of it/ and just helping them
>
> through and getting a start in the reading/and maybe let them do / like only three
>
> paragraphs/ and let them do the rest/or troubleshoot the piece and then say " I
>
> want us to look at the middle here because that's where I think you might not
>
> understand/" and have them read it with me and dig into it/[with questioning the
>
> author probes] that way/ (Session 5, June 27, lines 113-118).

Then I made clear the boundaries of the activity, in the following instance answering a

suggestion Debra had made regarding what the activity might entail which was a dialogic

move on my part in regards to input from Debra, and then I tried to emphasize how I

would extend the questioning the author strategy with the students several days to take up

the idea of reoccurring use of the strategy which would allow the practitioners to latch

onto the ideology and methodology of dialogic teaching:

> Rosa: but [I would not] not really talk about the author craft/ I guess I'm too/
>
> thinking that / OK I'm gonna use/ for example/ I'm gonna plan in the fall/this is
>
> my own plan/that I'm going to/ you know/first do something like this and then do
>
> other things the next day and other things the next day with the same piece/you

know/ because that is helpful for them/[the ELLs] that really helps them grab onto

the reading/and use that vocabulary and that's academic speech/you know/ talking

about a reading is academic speech/so// (Session 5,June 27, lines 118-123).

Next, we analyzed the video together and my point was that I could talk about dialogic

teaching much more easily than I could enact it, but that I did try it out. Eventually, I

showed them how the questions came more easily. In that way I felt I was diminishing

the practitioners' anxiety about having me observe their dialogic lessons, which would

happen in the following weeks.

Rosa: [Viewing the video of me enacting a discussion with my students] This is

the introduction/ I'm dominating/ but I guess it's OK because it's the

introduction/ //We did some vocabulary before this//

Daphne: They have nice pronunciation/

Rosa: They've been here three years/

Video plays for about a minute and then I stop it.

Lucy: She [Rosa] allows that silence to just stand there.

Daphne: They're comfortable with it/ we're the ones who aren't.

Rosa: There are a lot of things you could improve on/ I could've elicited more

examples/

Debra: I was wondering if you did this thing/ uhm [looking at the book] the

prepping students/about the different things/

Rosa: About the different what//

Debra: Like/ you know the author being fallible/ the/ I just thought this text was interesting/ like for things to say/to the students before you start this type of discussion/ not every time/

Rosa: Well you know/ this is/ there's cool stuff in here/[looking at the handout/the reading the class was discussing] but if they're not confident / I don't do it/ Maybe after the first time/ There [referring to the video] I'm having them look at a sentence that might be hard to understand/ "*This* is the reason-what is this?" (Session 5, June 27, lines 243-258).

Leading the group at first felt very demanding because I could not quickly intuit how the group session would go. The following memo shows an example of the variety of responses I encountered and my consternation. "Memo: 7/18, Session 3: The concept of book groups was discussed in the context of guided reading... Lucy couldn't see how a book group was part of the class if she wasn't controlling the small groups directly. Debra admitted that she did not do guided reading which was surprising to me because I would've thought that K-12 teachers would do guided reading." From the transcript we see Lucy making a point and my contradicting her:

Lucy: You know/say/ just for instance/ say that they read a book of poetry by Langston Hughes/

Rosa: Oh no/ you have to choose the book/because you choose it at an easy level/ so they'll take it home and they'll read it/ and you don't even deal with the book really/it's their book/ their discussion/you're just orchestrating/ and so while you're doing the guided reading/ the other students could be doing their book

group/ and then they have to report/ it seems very complicated/ but they really

loved it/." (Session 4, May 5, lines 1129-1134)

Like teaching a class, after the first few meetings I understood the practitioner's

better and I began to understand what I should highlight more. Establishing

understanding of a reading and then having the group look at what I did in the way of

questioning in the video gave them a model for them to emulate or critique.

As is seen in the following chapters, after several months of reading and

discussion, the practitioners readily accepted what we were studying. They were hungry

for a new understanding of how to engage their learners around difficult texts that had

been a persistent and perplexing problem in their classes. We were inching our ways

forward to turning the discussion leading over to them.

Chapter Five: Practitioners' Midpoint Shift of Expressions

In this chapter, I document the practitioners' shift in attitude about dialogic teaching. Our fifth session for the summer was a review of the book I was able to buy for the group with university funding: *Improving Comprehension with Questioning the author*: *A fresh and expanded view of a powerful approach* by Beck and McKeown, 2006. Below I represent when the group thought aloud about whether the knowledge in the reading was already known or was previously unknown to show a subtle change from negative appraisals to group member agreement and a synergy of cooperation.

The following segment represents the cooperation the group experienced discussing text complexity. The text complexity rubrics we used were from a Common Core website that is sponsored by the Council of Chief State School Officers, a not-for-profit organization. ("Navigating Text Complexity," n. d.). Although only Debra had been exposed to the concept of text complexity before, it was taken up easily by the group.

Synergy

Below the practitioners are looking at a segment from the text Lucy wanted to use in her dialogic lesson, *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration,* which is a historical fiction text about African American migration North in the 1960s, featuring a storyline of four different people who experienced the migration. The practitioners' task was to evaluate the texts, choosing among labels: "exceedingly complex," "moderately complex," or "not complex."

Lucy**:** Can I ask a question/ can any of these things [labels to indicate degree of text complexity] be in the middle/ I mean when I look at some of these

things/might/when I look at the whole book/ it might fall kinda on this line

between exceedingly complex and/ and as the students read it and they build

knowledge/ it should decrease in complexity/

Daphne: Right/As it [Lucy's text] goes into the little narratives/ as long as they

understand/the jumping back and forth in time//which you would set up

originally/

Rosa: and then the purpose/ where would you place it?/

Debra: I think/I skipped ahead a little bit/ I think/ the purpose is stated pretty

explicitly/

Rosa: Right/ So I would say// moderately/moderately complex/

Anita: Yeah/

Rosa: Because it doesn't start out with it right away/but it's there/

(Session 4, May 5, Lines 175-185)

Lucy begins with a clarifying question about how to interpret the information we

were looking at from the website ("Navigating Text Complexity," n.d.). She inserts

knowledge from her experience that as students read a text it can become easier for them,

"it should decrease in complexity," especially if there is discussion to scaffold

understanding.

Daphne affirms Lucy's assertion and adds her suggestion to prepare students for

the fact that the lives of the four main characters are woven together "jumping back and

forth." I question where to place the idea of purpose, Debra responds with what she

found out, and Anita and I agree. We see varying degrees of agency in the excerpt from

Lucy and Daphne's assertions to Debra's, Anita's, and my responses. Likewise, we

understand Lucy's move to clarify, Daphne's move to expand, Debra's to verify, and mine and Anita's to certify. Within the group, by session four, we were comfortable in the variations our interactions entailed. The above interaction with my questions showed me answering the questions. Later, I would not join in as the practitioners became more adept in discussing the text complexity factors.

In the following excerpt from session four, Daphne foreshadows a shift away from concerns to acceptance in her comments about the usefulness of the article we read on leveling textbooks. For her, leveling books was new knowledge and useful for her university level program. Actually, for all of the higher education practitioners, (Daphne, Anita, and Lucy) leveling books was new knowledge. Debra along with other middle school teachers had participated in leveling books recently with the advent of the Common Core standards coming to her state.

> Daphne: Can I ask where that tool is about the instructional/ frustration level is?/
> / is that something we've read already or is it/
>
> Rosa: I'll point it out/ It's in the/ here it's right here/[pointing to the article posted on the website]
>
> Daphne: Because that's been the most helpful concept so far/ I really appreciate this//even if I don't get them all read//.
>
> (4th Session, lines 864-868)

Daphne appreciated the new knowledge that would help her in teaching international students who are in her program. Various teaching practices important in literacy teaching in English were not familiar to the practitioners teaching in higher education who got MATESL degrees after getting an undergraduate degree in some

related field other than Education. Using informal assessments, for example, such as

running records (Johnston, 2000) when tutoring students struggling in reading is an

invaluable teaching tool no matter what age-level (Paulson & Mason-Egan, 2007).

While it is true that running records are not essential for older students because oral

reading fluency does not necessarily equate to comprehension, matching text to readers

and troubleshooting texts for problem areas are teaching practices which facilitate

student comprehension (Halladay, 2012).

Session five of the inquiry was the mid-point of the sessions. Four sessions

occurred on a regular basis in the Spring (2014) semester. Then, there was a break in our

meetings. This break was fruitful in that it gave the practitioners and me some time to

gain perspective about what we were learning together. After a one-and-a-half-month

hiatus, we met again. Practitioners were to review what we had read and to talk about

what they wanted to present as an example of dialogic teaching in their own classrooms.

Contextual concerns. Looking at the reading list, (see Table8 Reading List), one

might ask where are all the articles on dialogic teaching? Before focusing on how

dialogic teaching could be enacted, I felt a need to focus on the whole context of the

classroom. The issue I wanted to make sure that the practitioners understood was that

dialogic teaching was planned for and students needed to be primed to discuss, so to

speak, so both the discussion skills and scaffolding for the for the reading had to be

prepared. If the texts were indeed complex, then a discussion could help students

understand the meaning of the text if they were willing to engage and understood the

benefits. Moreover, students would need preparation in the form of multiple scaffolds to

help them gain the background knowledge and vocabulary they needed.

Table 8

Reading List

Date	Topic	Reading
Before Session 1	Sociocultural theory and literacy as social practice	Gee, P.(2004), Learning Languages as a matter of learning social languages within discourses. In M.R. Hawkins, *Language learning and teacher education: A sociocultural approach* (13-31). Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters. Hammerberg, D. (2004). Comprehension instruction for sociocultural diverse classrooms: A review of what we know. *The Reading Teacher, 57*(7), 648-658. Resnitskaya, A. (2012), Rethinking language use during literature discussions. *The Reading Teacher*, *65*(7), 446-456.
Session 1, March 23	Sociocultural theory and liter literacy as social practice	Wurr, A. , Theurer, J. , & Kim, K. (2009). Retrospective miscue analysis with proficient adult ESL readers. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, 52*(4), 324-333. Rodgers, C. (2009). Attending to student voice. *Curriculum Inquiry 36*(2), 209-237. Student Oral Language Observation Matrix http://www.cal.org/twi/evaltoolkit/appendix/solom.pdf
Session 2, April 2	Scaffolding and using the ethnographic tool of observation for classroom use	McKeown, M., Beck, I., & Blake, R. (2009). Rethinking reading comprehension instruction: A comparison of instruction for strategies and content approaches. *Reading Research Quarterly, 44*(3), 218-253. Moss, B. , Lapp,D. , & O'Shea, M. (2011). Tiered texts: Supporting knowledge and language learning for English learners and struggling readers. *English Journal, 100* (6), 54-60. Walqui , A. (2006). Scaffolding instruction for English language learners: A conceptual framework. *The International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, 9*(2), 159-180.
Session 3 April 7	Scaffolding continued and leveling texts	Adoniou, M. , & Macken-Horaik, M. (2007), Scaffolded literacy meets ESL: Some insights from ACT classrooms. *TESOL in Context, 17* (1) 2007. Avalos, M. , Plasencia, A. , Chavez, C. , & Rascon, J. (2007), Modified Guided Reading: Gateway to English as a Second Language and Literacy Learning,. *The Reading Teacher, 61*(4), 318- 329. Navigating text complexity, retrieved from http://www.ccsso.org/Navigating_Test_Complexity Pinnell, & Fountas (2010) retrieved from www.scholastic.com/guided reading
Session 4 May 5	Scaffold: Guided reading	Beck, I. & McKeown, M. (2006). Texts and the way students understand them. Queries and Planning, In L. Beck, & M. McKowen (Eds*.). Improving comprehension with questioning the author: A fresh and expanded view of a powerful approach* (pp.1-105). New York, NY: Scholastic.

An overview of the type of scaffolding that I felt was necessary to consider was developed to consolidate our learning (see Appendix D, Designed-in Macro Level Scaffolding Graphic). These scaffolding considerations were discussed in terms of what the students brought with them, what the texts offered the students, and how we could plan to enact dialogic discussion in the classroom to reach teaching goals of text comprehension and concept development. The graphic was used as one way to think about preparing for dialogic teaching practices in their classrooms.

Following Hammond and Gibbon's (2005) idea of macro and micro scaffolding, the consideration of text difficulties and student backgrounds was paramount. These considerations were eagerly received because the teachers had had difficulty in enacting discussions with their learners because the texts were beyond their capabilities. We also read Walqui's article, (2006), *Scaffolding instruction for English language learners: a conceptual framework*. Walqui builds on Hammond and Gibbon's (2005) idea of macro and micro scaffolding and elaborates three different levels of scaffolding: (1) the planned progression of learning over time, (2) the actual classroom procedures, and (3) the collaborative process of interaction.

All three levels of scaffolding are bolstered by certain features which van Lier (1996) has explained. Continuity of task is important so that it is repeated more than once. Contextual support is afforded so that learners have the means to reach the goals various times. There is an intersubjectivity established so that engagement is mutual and participation is non-threatening. There is a contingency in the procedures so that activities are adjusted to how the learners react and there is work towards a hand-over so that learners may take over more of the activity. Lastly, there is a flow in the activity in

that there is a balance of challenge along with skill use. To bring the idea of the second

level of scaffolding to light, another graphic was created so that we could visualize what

the choices during interaction might look like. (See Appendix E, Interactional Scaffolds.)

The Practitioners Appropriate a Dialogical Stance

As mentioned already, I felt Daphne expressed a change of attitude on her part

when she asked about the leveling text article more in detail in session four. Discussing

Beck and McKeown (2006), Debra's narrative in session five adds to the positive tone set

by Daphne.

Debra. In the beginning of the study, Debra expressed herself in the initial

interview as one who was motivated by thinking about how to promote students to think

in her middle school classroom. In the following excerpt, Debra retains her passionate

ardor and as in the beginning interview, she wants to understand things out of her control.

Debra's Midpoint Narrative

I'm buying into this

Setting

> Debra*: I'm buying into this.*
>
> I thought that the research
>
> that they did in the beginning
>
> was convincing

Catalyst

> that this is a pretty good strategy
>
> and I thought if this is true,
>
> "why do people not know this?"

Like I ask/

it's not like I don't ask these types of questions,

I do/

but I ask them amongst a variety of other questions/

Crisis

and if this is the best type of question to ask/

I feel like

someone should have told me that

before my tenth year of teaching!

Rosa: Yeah

Evaluation

Debra**:** If it has such an impact/

because literacy in the K-12 setting

is such a huge problem,

so it surprised me

that it isn't common knowledge

Resolution

which I feel very confident to say

it is not common knowledge

That this is the type of question to be asking.

Crisis

Anita: See I thought it was common knowledge in K through 12.

Debra: Not that this is a superior type of question/

As in superior/ it gives you more results

in understanding from students/

I do not think

that that is common knowledge/

Evaluation

And the other thing is

like we do have

before, during and after reading strategies/

but it's also not common knowledge

that you can gain more during/

You know that that is more bang for your buck/

That's not common knowledge either

I don't think/

Resolution

So those were things

that I felt were good in the beginning

that led me to buy in/

so that when I was reading/ I was more invested in trying this strategy///

Rosa: OK, yeah, good/// Yeah//

Coda

I thought it was common knowledge as well/

I didn't know.

Debra: It's not though.

(Session 5,June 27, lines 24-42)

Debra asserts her agency in this appraisal of practices, aligning herself with the

research reported in the beginning of the book. She asserts that the research was

"convincing," positioning herself as informed. However, she also expresses her shock

that what the reading was saying was something so basic she felt like she should have

known it.

As in her initial interview, Debra maintained a steady, relational stance with her

work. She used the present progressive idiomatic expression, "I'm buying into this" to

signal her acceptance of the authors' work for the group. Moreover, she used the verb "to

be" with positive adjectival complements "convincing" and "pretty good strategy" to

show her positive affect for the book, "the research that they did in the beginning was

convincing/that this is a pretty good strategy."

Debra tapped into her knowledge of teacher discourse about teaching literacy and

asks, "why do people not know this?" She equated her own knowledge level with that of

others in her position with her rhetorical question, "why do people not know this?"

however, she interjected a barb in her acceptance of the questioning the author protocol

and she asserted a criticism with two negatives, "not" and "don't" in, "it's not like I don't

ask these types of questions." In her system of beliefs prior to reading the book, she felt

like she knew how to teach literacy. She had been teaching for 10 years.

Debra wondered aloud about the information she had gained from the reading.

She reiterated her questioning of the impact of the strategy, referencing the discourse that

"literacy in K-12 is such a huge problem." She continued in a negative vein, but softened

the negative aspect somewhat by using the conditional "if" in, "if this is the best type of

question to ask/" and then she allows her feelings to show in, "I feel like someone should have told me that before my tenth year of teaching!" Although she used the vague pronoun "someone" to address her criticism, a sense of her disquiet is revealed in her use of the modal construction "should have" to show the sense of obligation she felt was neglected in, "someone should have told me."

Debra's style of teaching, her beliefs in her way of doing literacy is shaken and she expressed her surprise that questioning the author is not "common knowledge." Debra reiterated her emotion, repeating the same gist in other words beginning with another "if" clause, "If it has such an impact/" repeating the intensifier "such" in "such a huge problem." She finishes with her logic, "so it surprised me that it isn't common knowledge." She also reiterated her negative appraisal, "it is not common knowledge" foregrounding it with the intensifier "very" in, "I feel very confident to say it is not common knowledge that this is the type of question to be asking." She repeated this negative appraisal again in the following stanzas, "I do not think that that is common knowledge."

As if arguing with someone about the state of her knowledge of literacy practices, Debra continued, emphasizing with "do" and repeating her appraisal in other words in, "like we do have before, during, and after reading strategies/ but it's also not common knowledge that you can gain more during." To appeal to the group, she addressed us directly using an idiomatic expression "bang for your buck" and she repeats her appraisal one last time in, "You know that that is more bang for your buck/That's not common knowledge either." Debra ended her expressive description of her opinions about the lack of knowledge she encountered in her professional education, softening them with " I

don't think" and then she launched into a conclusion expressing once more her logic with

"so" repeating "so" twice and using two clauses beginning with "that" in, "So those were

things that I felt were good in the beginning that led me to buy in/so that when I was

reading/ I was more invested in trying this strategy/////." To align myself with her

emotions, I repeated almost as a refrain her major appraisal which Anita had taken up, "I

thought it was common knowledge as well, I didn't know."

     Debra's narrative is an example of how critical discourse analysis sheds different

light onto the data. While grounded theory techniques showed the categories of

appraisals and practitioner inquiry collaboration, the narrative analysis complements this

finding and allows me to see that the words Debra used to explain her approval of the

book. Her words also demonstrate her emotional state of exasperation at discovering that

her teacher education had not included research findings that had been published well

before she got her Masters degree in TESOL.

     Thus far, the narratives have shown how the practitioners have voiced their

agreement with the ideas presented in the readings at midpoint. Debra expressed her

acceptance directly; she felt she could use the strategy with her students. Next, Lucy told

how to lead a questioning the author session, probably imagining her community college

students.

     Lucy: I will say that because of things like this [pointing to the pages we just

     discussed]/   I do consider this a very practical book/it goes from theory to

     practice really in a very step-by-step way/very practical/

     Rosa: And the examples/ are very good I think/

     Ann: Dealing with problems

> Lucy: Yeah/ detailed examples/dealing with problems/
>
> (Session 5, June 27, lines 186-191)

Both narratives are positive with Lucy noticing the practicality of the book and Debra exhibiting more emotional characteristics because she was simultaneously criticizing aspects of her own education as she gave reasons for her acceptance of the questioning the author protocol.

Reflecting back on the process, I paid attention to the emotional appraisals of the practitioners because they indicated what kind of responses I should make to the group processes. In this case, I aligned myself with Debra's statements in the moment of her explanation of her approval of the book. While she was expressing approval of the book, she was also expressing her amazement that her MATESL work had not prepared her as thoroughly as she had maybe thought before. In any case, it was my job as facilitator, to seize that moment, if not immediately, but later on, to reiterate what Debra expressed and to build on it. This is part of dialogical teaching. Referencing what is said as important and connecting statements from one participant to another is likewise a marker of dialogic interaction. In the next narrative, we see Lucy in a dialogic move, naturally taking up what her colleague had said before and adding to it.

Lucy. In the following narrative**,** several minutes after Debra explained her reasons for accepting the protocols in the book under discussion; Lucy answered Debra's thoughtful questions about why her educational background might not have included information about the best questions to ask to aide student reading comprehension. True to the profile of relationship-builder extracted from her initial interview, Lucy seemed to respond to the tenor of Debra's questions, answering her questions in term of her

intuition about educational curricula as if to reassure Debra. Lucy displayed her

appropriation of the protocol in the book and simultaneously builds a rationale for why

the questioning the author protocol (Beck & McKeown, 2006) was not taught in Debra's

MATESL program.

Lucy's Midpoint Narrative

This Might be a Hard Method

Setting

       Lucy: I like how honest they were

       And how hard it is

       to plan for this kind of stuff/

Catalyst

       You kinda have to have

       some options in your head/

       and just be able to go from

       what the students say/

       once the discussion starts /

       rather than any specific thing

       that's gonna come out of their mouth/

Evaluation

       I think for an inexperienced teacher/

       this might be a hard method/

Resolution

       maybe that's why

they don't teach it

in Teacher Ed programs/

because maybe

they [new teachers] would be afraid to do it/

or feel unequipped to do it/.

(Session 5, June 27, lines 132-137)

Lucy declares her positive appraisal of the *Questioning the Author* book, asserting

her agency and understanding of how the protocol works. She reflected aloud about how

leading a discussion of this type is difficult. Lucy pointed out the teacher's moves and

articulated what was difficult. Summarizing the protocol, addressing the group with

"you," Lucy connected to teacher procedural discourse and softened the requirements

with "kinda" in "you kinda have to have some options in your head/" and then she

simplified the instructions with "just" in, "and just be able to go from what the students

say." She continued elaborating about contextual requirements stressing the contingency

requirement with "rather than any specific thing that's gonna come out of their mouth."

Lucy constructed her opinion with the verb "think" expressing her ideas in a less than

straightforward manner with the modal auxiliary "might" in, "I think for an

inexperienced teacher/ this might be a hard method." She extended her hypothesis with

two "maybes" in, "maybe that's why they don't teach it in Teacher Ed programs/ because

maybe they [novice teachers] would be afraid to do it," using the conditional "would" to

express the possibility rather than the certainty.

Lucy demonstrated her acceptance of the protocol and advised others, especially

Debra, how to enact a questioning the author session while simultaneously answering

Debra's questioning from the prior narrative. I heard Lucy's caring self and noticed how

her positive qualities helped the group tenor and built acceptance of dialogical teaching.

The following narrative likewise demonstrates that the practitioners are articulating

acceptance of ideas from our readings about dialogical teaching at midpoint.

> **Anita.** In the narrative below, we hear Anita narrate how she applied the idea of

having her pre-university class focus on the author's stance in a reading (Beck &

McKeown, 2006). Before Anita relates her classroom story, we discussed how ELLs

sometimes are reluctant to criticize a reading or an author's stance because criticism of

written work is foreign or at least not very well practiced in some of their cultures.

Because Debra was now teaching all "native speakers" in her new job at a high school,

Lucy began contrasting native speakers of English with non-native speakers' approaches

to discussion:

> Lucy: One last thing about non-native speakers/ maybe that's why they have
>
> trouble with analysis because it's taking apart something some author has put
>
> together and they think, "Who am I to do that?" It [the idea of the fallibility of
>
> the author from the *Questioning the Author* book] might help with that idea that//
>
> Debra: That's interesting because I would ask them/ "Well do you like it?" Do
>
> you like this book/ do you enjoy it and they did not feel comfortable critiquing
>
> even if they like it or not...I personally didn't pick the books/ and I'm just like
>
> curious/you know about your opinion/like one girl said/it wasn't as beautiful as
>
> other American writing/you know/like everyone else wouldn't say anything/
>
> Anita: Oh really/
>
> Debra: Yeah they didn't want to critique/ they didn't want to say anything/

[Session 5,June 27, lines 220-229]

This reticence to critique an author aligns with Confucianism, which is a philosophy undergirding education in many Asian countries (Schippers, 2008). In Confucianism, there is a strong ethic of respect for elders, emphasizing their authority (Schippers, 2008). However, one of the premises of this research was that discussion skills and attitudes that open up pathways to question and critique which undergirds Western school philosophies could be taught through a systematic application of dialogic principles. Some of these questioning principles are incorporated in the book *Questioning the Author (*Beck & McKeown, 2006).

One of the practices Anita incorporated in her lessons was the idea that the author's stance is not neutral and that there is a bias one way or the other in a reading and that students should learn to analyze that via some of the Questioning the Author techniques (Beck & McKeown, 2006). Anita described her students' reaction to this approach in the following narrative.

Anita's Midpoint Narrative

My Students Were More Open to Talking

Setting

Anita: Yesterday/ I was teaching a low level/

reading and writing class/

Catalyst

in the summer

our reading and writing classes are combined/

and by introducing the author's voice/

Crisis

> it seemed like my students were more open to
>
> talking/ and giving opinions about what the author
>
> is saying/

Evaluation

> I mean just by saying
>
> "Oh they're biased"
>
> I mean you know
>
> "Oh OK so we can"
>
> Lucy: Was this fiction or non-fiction/
>
> Anita: It's *Seeing the Big Picture*/
>
> Lucy: So non-fiction/

Resolution

> Anita: Yeah/ so it was just really funny
>
> by saying that/
>
> that all of a sudden
>
> I'd get a flood of comments/

Coda

> you know/ or they felt like////
>
> Rosa: Comfortable
>
> (Session 5, June 27 lines 579-588)

Anita set the context of her summer teaching and simultaneously set up a

connection between introducing the author's voice and her students being more open to

talking. This was a shift in her thinking if we look back at Anita's stance in the

beginning that discussion was too hard for internationals. Anita reported that the students

changed once she told them that the author had a bias. What she did not report is that she

had previously discussed what a bias was with her students and that she was giving the

students yet another example of author bias so that the students could begin to question

the author's position.

Anita asserted her agency in her appraisal with her comment, "by introducing the

author's voice," and she acknowledged her students' agency, "it seemed like my student

were more open to talking and giving opinions about what the author is saying." It was

especially important to Anita to position herself as successful in leading discussion in

light of the fact that her supervisor, Daphne, was also in the inquiry group. Her

testimony was hedged with "seemed like" but she positioned her students' relationship to

the activity as actively engaged by using the verb to be and a positive complement "open

to talking," and "giving opinions" in, "students were open to talking and giving

opinions," using the progressive form of the verbs "talking and giving opinions" to

express the continuous action of the students. This reminded me of Anita's stance in the

beginning of the inquiry where she emphasized her preference for active learning.

Anita described her teacher discourse with the causal, "I mean," in, "I mean just

by saying" to initiate her discourse, and she softened the action "saying" with "just." She

revoiced her teacher voice, "Oh they're biased" and she also revoiced the students'

reaction with a positive modal auxiliary "can" in "Oh OK so we can," implying that the

students then understood that they could comment on the reading. After a few questions

about the content of the action, Anita confirmed the logic of her reaction with "so" in, "so

it was just really funny by saying that/that all of a sudden/ I'd get a flood of comments."

She emphasized her reaction with "just really funny" using the intensifier "just really"

and showed her surprise with the idiom "all of a sudden." Anita used the lexical

expression, "flood of comments" to emphasize the number of responses she got in the

discussion, to construct the positive affect of her students' reactions, and to verify that her

class was active. She then related her perception of the students' feelings but lost the

words she wanted to say, "you know/ or they felt like////" so I finished her thought with

the adjective "comfortable."

Capstone: Midpoint Reflections

At this point, the inquiry took on a life of its own. I was delighted to have it

running smoothly and equally delighted to present a PowerPoint on dialogic teaching at

Daphne's in-service professional development for the summer faculty in the program she

led. Lucy also had me present to the teachers in her program as well. After working with

those groups, I brought the examples to the inquiry group:

> Rosa: So what I did/ so here on the second page/there are three phases/ it[the
>
> handout] explains what's in each phase/ let's just look at each phase/ Phase one
>
> is/ introducing a text/right so there's a brief vocabulary part/ a brief pair/share/
>
> then I took a short passage actually just two sentences/ from a text that Daphne is
>
> using/ which is very difficult/ then I read aloud the passage/ and then I gave an
>
> example discussion/ of the passage/ written out for the students to see/ so that we
>
> [the students and I] could discuss/so that they could discuss it/
>
> Daphne: That's what I liked/

Rosa: and then discussion questions of the discussion which we read/so it was

kind of like metacognition/ (Group Session 5, lines 277-285).

In the above discussion, I led the students in a close reading of the text. I established myself as the leader by saying, "Let's just look at each phase." Then I explained the lesson as it had evolved making a comment like "right" as I explained to relate to the group and I interpreted why I chose the passage for the group, "I took a short passage actually just two sentence/ from a text Daphne is using/ which is very difficult" so that they could understand the handout I had given them which had the example passage which was used. I anticipated their questions of how to find a passage for understanding which is part of the ideology of questioning the author.

Within the group, my biggest worries centered on reigning in the discussion when it veered off topic. I worked to present a synopsis of our last meeting in the beginning of the sessions and to focus the discussions around the readings. The quality of the readings helped to buoy everyone's interest, but there were comments about the inquiry being very demanding along with suggestions for a summer hiatus or something online to get a break because for the teachers in university programs, summer is when intensive programs are offered so there are more teaching hours required. As a result, we decided that I would put the transcriptions of our group meetings online and the practitioners were to reflect on those meetings instead of doing any additional readings. This was only attended to by two of the practitioners. The other practitioners begged off the tasks as they were consumed with summer teaching.

Chapter Six: Imagining and Implementing New Ways of Teaching

In this chapter, I report on the final phase of the practitioner inquiry where the practitioners implemented their new knowledge of dialogic teaching to plan and enact discussions using complex texts with their students. This encompassed the last part of session five and the last two sessions of the practitioner joint activity. In this phase, I also observed four classes: one class for each practitioner who had individual debriefing sessions with me after the class. Later as a group, we had a final focus-group learning recapitulation in our last session.

Analyses combined both analysis for learning and critical discourse analysis for investigating the social practices connected to the teachers' discourses, plus I added cross-inquiry techniques drawing on Juzwik and Ives (2010). The concepts of synthesis, complementarity, and transformation (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996) were used thematically to verify that the practitioners did learn and experience a change in attitude and/or practice. These concepts, synthesis, complementarity, and transformation aptly capture a sociocultural approach to learning and development and reflected the key roles of semiotic mediation, which explained the practitioners' internalization and transformation (Vygotsky, 1978). Next, the language properties of the texts' embedded appraisals were analyzed further; transformations in the practitioners' positioning (Davies & Harré, 1990) of the students in their classes were found by drawing on identity-in-interaction techniques (Juzwik & Ives, 2010).

The positioning of students is similar to the positioning of self as Davies and Harré (1990) defined it: "Position, as we will use it is the discursive process whereby selves are located in conversations as observably and subjectively coherent participants in

a jointly produced story line" (p. 7). In lieu of positioning of self, I refer to participants

jointly producing the positions of students in their discourses.

Below, I detail the change of the practitioners' thinking that was mediated by the

sustained co-constructed activity of the inquiry over eight months. I emphasized learning

as "an integral part of generative social practice in the lived-in world" (Lave & Wenger,

1991, p. 35) or the practitioners' legitimate peripheral participation in which they

"gain[ed] access to sources for understanding through growing involvement" (Lave &

Wenger, 1991, p.37). In answer to the research question, "What happens when a group

of ESL teachers collaborate in a dialogically-inspired professional development context

to learn about navigating discussion with complex texts and their ELL students?" I found

that when practitioners were given an opportunity to appraise their practices and students

in light of the new information about dialogic teaching, an interdependence emerged

among the practitioners and knowledge synthesis began.

Pulling it together: Practitioners plan lessons

To prepare for the sixth inquiry session, practitioners used a handout for preparing

for a dialogic teaching observation (see Appendix D). By selecting a text,

troubleshooting its difficult parts, and then imagining a flow of questions for a short

portion of the text, the practitioners prepared for a class observation by me in order to get

feedback (see 9). Also, practitioners got transcriptions of the class. In our group sessions

after I observed their classes, we looked at the transcriptions for evidence of dialogic

teaching. Moreover, I had videotaped an example of dialogic teaching from my own ESL

class and I had prepared an example protocol of what I might do to prepare ELLs who

were not acclimated to using discussion as a learning tool.

Table 9

The Final Phase

-Session # -Date- -Duration -# pages in transcript	Topics	# of turns per person	Key points in session
Session 5 Dinner meeting June 27 2hrs 30 min 22 pages	We discussed Beck, & McKeown (2006) (Eds.), *Improving comprehension with questioning the author: A fresh and expanded view of a powerful approach*	Anita 38 Daphne 56 Debra 42 Lucy 60 Rosa 92	Debra's narrative- I'm buying into this, lines 25-29 Daphne talks about how hard it is to shift paradigms, lines 44-58 Lucy's narrative about how hard it is, lines 129-134 Lucy's narrative of practicality, lines 187-202 Daphne and Anita's narrative about student transformation, lines 345-357
Session 8 Sept. 13 2 hrs. 30 min 54 pages	We discussed what we wanted on our rubric for self-evaluation and as a springboard for debriefing the lessons. Sharing of transcriptions of dialogic teaching observations	Anita 38 Daphne 56 Debra 42 Lucy 60 Rosa 92	Group rubric creation, lines 135-140 Debra's narrative of new protocol, lines 292-315 Questioning/ Sharing goals Debra's transformation, lines 442-449 Debra's sharing of student growth, lines 506-514 Lucy's narrative about grouping, lines 616-628 Debra's narrative of students using sentence starter prompts, lines 697-715 Positive critique of Lucy's reading together, guided reading, lines 733-742 Daphne applying what was learned to grammar, lines; lines 947-987
Session 9 Dinner meeting Focus group Oct 27 2hr. 22 pages	Text Complexity Summary of dialogic teaching Change in teaching? Reflections on group	Anita 39 Daphne 65 Debra 46 Lucy 53 Rosa 105	Sharing knowledge/ strategies for teaching students to pick appropriate individual reading material, lines 6-16 Summary of dialogic teaching as we have been discussing it, lines 115-130 Noticing change, lines 164-181 Anita and Daphne discussing student accomplishments, 213-233 Student attitude about talking to one another, lines 274-282 Voicing what they liked about the group, lines lines 593-616 Noticing accomplishments/surprised/ talking about student learning, lines 656-671 Students valued the learning, lines 685-693

Specific findings. For the question, "How does teacher learning, including my own, evolve and address the complexities of the teacher/learner discourse under discussion in the professional development inquiry?" I noted that the practitioners' interdependence was mediated by additional collaborative discussion and co-constructed as classroom plans, practices, and expectations. The practitioners' in-depth knowledge of their students' abilities and the constraints of their classrooms became apparent and my reflective decision-making about the group's functioning evolved over time.

The process unfolded as the practitioners collaborated, sharing their lesson expectations, and questioning each other's plans to understand thoroughly. Interdependence was evident especially in the last phase of the group inquiry sessions. John-Steiner and Meehan (2000) note the knowledge benefits of collaboration, "Increasingly, we view collaboration as central to learning, to knowledge construction and transformation" (p.43).

Coding Categories

Practitioners appraise inquiry interaction. Besides the concerns noted in Chapter Five, collaboration in the practitioners' interactions and verbal exchanges indicated a high degree of engagement with their own learning. *Collaboration* was a sub-category of the category: *practitioners appraise inquiry interaction*. (See Appendix B, Codebook, p. 270). The properties of this subcategory were: comparative reflections and concerned about wider contexts. *Collaboration* had the properties of comparative reflections and appreciation of digging deeper. Focusing on the comparative reflections because the practitioners verbalized their reflections very often, we can locate instances of their comparison of stances or activities and their learning from one another in the

data. Here is an example of verbalized reflections and comparisons in a discussion about how to help student incorporate sentence starters (transitional phrases) into their explanations in a discussion:

> Daphne: One of our teachers puts them [the sentence starter prompts] on little slips of paper/ because ...our groups ...are in little circles/ and they'd be right in the middle of the table/... but if the students weren't using the prompts/she'd walk over to the desks and say "Here use this."/
>
> Rosa: I did the same thing with my class only we were in a computer lab and so I flashed on the screen the starters and I said, "OK" What I did is I made a discussion group and they had to write on the computers and they could all read each others' reasons/ [Explains the activity more] And I said, "You must one of these starters/" and so if they write them a couple of times/ the same kind of starters/ they might start saying them/
>
> Daphne: That's my problem too/ even though we have starters all over the place/people still weren't using them/ until you explicitly say " and you must at least this one time/ try/"
>
> Rosa: And in this case/ writing is easier and some of them still didn't do it/so I have to go back and do it again/
>
> Daphne: It takes a while/then they'll do it for a while and then they'll forget to do it/ under stress/ and that's the name of the game// (Session 7, Sept 13, lines 714-728).

For another subcategory of Appraisal of inquiry intractions, *concern about the wider context*, the topic of standardized testing came up fequently in the data. For example when discussing Hammerberg's (2004) article, the relationship of power and testing came up:

> Debra: I just thought /It was just pointing out/ the deficit model/that is prevalent/ in Education/and I thought it applies/ to/ a lot of cultures/ not just our ELL students/like my African American students/ who fall into this category of not having this expected literacy/this one type on a test/they have all these other literacies/ which are not valued/ in the educational setting/ so I just/don't know I just thought there were lots of things in here that//
>
> Daphne: That's why I classified these structures of power/we're testing to a certain type of knowledge/ I mean/ instructing to a certain type of knowledge/ and structure/
>
> Debra: I just don't know how to resolve that/ you know/ all that hypocrisy between/what I know is right and what I'm supposed to be doing/ to help kids/
>
> (Session 3, April 21, lines 82-90).

The process of continuously comparing the sub-categories to one another allowed for a clarification in the naming of the properties and sub-categories. In addition, the dimensions of the properties could be discerned. For the sub-category concerned about the wider context, the properties of being valid or not were discerned.
The dimensions of these properties ranged from notation of hypocracy to not being helpful as the segments above demonstrate.

Dwelling a bit longer in the data for the sub-category collaboration, I noted that the dimensions ranged from practitioners making a point about a topic in the reading to asking for information. Besides the above example of Daphne making a point, Anita's narrative later on in this chapter, "An Aha Moment" shows her making a point about one of the Boyd (2012b) readings, reflecting and making connections for the group between what we were doing in the inquiry and what was happening in her class.

Practitioners appraise students. Another category revealed by the coding was *appraisal of students*. There were two subcategories for the category of appraising students: skills and engagement. For the sub-category of skills, there were two properties: appropriate level (of skills) and thinking (skills) (see Appendix B, Codebook, p. 269). Appraising students' language skills as appropriate or not for the level of work they are asked to do is germane to ELL practitioner jobs. In the inquiry, there were often spontaneous remarks about student language. For example, when discussing the percentage of vocabulary words learners knew in a particular reading, Daphne commented: "They know 92 percent/ hey/ we're happy if we think they know 80 percent" (Session 5, June 27, line 431).

Likewise, appraising and or assessing student thinking skills is often what teachers do throughout the day, so it is not surprising that "thinking" with the dimensions of "deep to superficial" was evident in the inquiry group data (see Appendix B, Codebook). For instance, when comparing two different classes, Debra quipped about her students' answers to the question, "What are the elements of a good discussion?" "They came up with quite a few things/" (Session 5, June 27, lines 341-342). Her observation established for the group that students in her program were capable students.

The Codebook (Appendix B, p. 269) also shows that the largest subcategory of the practitioners' appraisals of their students was "engagement." This subcategory had the property of "energized" that varied from barely accepting discussion as useful to (being) intensely engaged. When a topic of conversation was something everyone had experienced, for example, everyone in the group talked at once:

Rosa: I've noticed a lot that when my students talk together/ they don't use the connecting words/like because/

Lucy: It's true/

Rosa: They just say two sentences you know and they might be connected/ but they don't connect them/so that's what I wanted to get across there/

Daphne: They also write like that/ now that I think about it/

[everybody talks at once].

(Session 5, June 27, lines 375-380)

Appraisal of practices. The third category found in the data was practitioners *appraising practices.* There were two subcategories for this category: appraising specific literacy practices such as running records, for instance, and appraising discussion (Appendix B, Codebook, p. 268). In my field notes from April 7, I noted, for example that the understanding of what are tiered texts, the literacy practice, was not clear. "The interpretations were different depending on the practitioner's background. Debra who teaches mainstream students did not understand how the concept could be relevant for her in the high school because she did not get to choose her texts."

The properties of the subcategory appraising discussion were affective factors that ranged in dimensions from enthusiastic to conflicted. Daphne's narrative, "They Did

Construct Knowledge," is an example of the enthusiasm of the discovery of dialogic

occurrences. Anita's narrative later on, "I still feel like it's the beginning," is an example

of how the practitioners felt conflicted about dialogic teaching and reveal Anita's

struggle.

Discerning these subcategories, properties and dimensions allowed me to begin to

understand the processes of the practitioners' personal interpretive frameworks and how

fundamental being able to voice their judgments was for their teaching practices.

Practitioners Clarify their Dialogic Plans and Their Learning

In order to demonstrate appropriation of dialogic teaching, the practitioners

presented the group with a lesson plan showing how they were trying to implement some

form of dialogic teaching in their classes for at least 20 minutes. First, I modeled what I

thought could be a version of what we had discussed. In this model (see Appendix H)

and in the discourse which followed, I delineated three aspects of collaboration in the

inquiry data, using John-Steiner and Meehan's (2000) ideas of "themes central to a

sociocultural approach to the construction of the new… synthesis, complementarity, and

transformation" (p. 44).

I interpreted theme number one, "synthesis," as action unifying realistic thinking

of how to apply dialogic teaching with imaginative renditions in the classroom. Given

that synthesis was most often coded as sharing knowledge in the transcriptions, I retained

the term "sharing knowledge" instead of using synthesis. The second theme,

"complementarity, implies mutual internalization, a making into one's own some aspect

of one's partner's knowledge" (John-Steiner & Meehan, 2000, p. 45) or at least asking

about it; I called that "interdependence." The last theme is transformation in which a new

framework is either emerging or established and I retained the original language of the authors.

      Sharing of student success: Learning consolidation. Daphne summarized how students were transformed because of dialogic teaching. This is represented below. Daphne describes using a protocol I had modeled in group session five (see Appendix H). The protocol emphasized directly addressing the students about their uncomfortable feelings of participating in discussions. It implemented ideas about dialogic teaching we had examined in our first session from the Reznitskaya (2012) reading. Cultural meta-analysis in the form of reasons for having discussions were modeled and solicited from students in the protocol. That activity allowed ELLs to discuss why discussions are used in classes and how learning can be enhanced.

      Daphne. Daphne's narrative below depicts students building on each other's ideas. She exclaimed how she had witnessed the theory-in-action being realized in front of her. She recounts that her ELLs, after reading about discussing and talking about discussions, created knowledge together and they were pleased as well.

Daphne's Final Phase Narrative:

They did Construct Knowledge

Setting

      The idea was/

      the students read that little model/

      and then/they continued to talk

      about whatever it was

      we were discussing/

Catalyst

Anita: They enjoyed it/

Daphne: Interestingly enough

it came around to

whatever the student had said/

something wrong at the beginning/

and the other student had said something

Crisis

and a third student

brought the two ideas together/

and suddenly/

they did construct knowledge

in front of us/

suddenly it was something

I never thought about at the movies/

Oh wow!/

[Everyone laughs]

Evaluation

The students were actually very happy

with that though /

that everybody had been contributing/

it's like the elephant in the room/

everyone contributed a little piece/

and we all came away with something else/

[Session 5, June 27, lines 344-350]

Daphne dramatically recounted her students' transformation in this narrative. She articulated how the students constructed knowledge together and how she was surprised. Daphne explained the purpose of the activity, "the students read that little model/" naming the protocol as "that little model" which established the discourse as one of appraising student performance. She positioned herself as interpreter of what happened for the group's benefit and she elaborated on her main focus, the students' actions saying, "and then they continued to talk about whatever it was we were discussing." Anita interjected her positive appraisal about the student activity as well saying, "They enjoyed it." Daphne continued by adding her appraisal, "interestingly enough" and she described the sequence of events highlighted by "it came around to" and the listing of three clauses, "whatever the student had said/ something wrong at the beginning//and the other student had said something." She added, "and a third student brought the two ideas together" and remarked with an exclamation, "and suddenly" adding dramatic affect to the assertion, "they did construct knowledge in front of us," using the auxiliary "did" to emphasize the action and "in front of us" to highlight their proximity and visibility of transformation.

Daphne repeated the adverb "suddenly" to convey the affect of surprise that she had "never thought about [that] at the movies." She exclaimed "Oh wow" showing her astonishment. Daphne's evaluation that the "students were actually very happy" emphasized her positive appraisal with the adverbs, "actually" and, "very." Her expanded explanation, "that everybody had been contributing" extends the positive affect with the use of the past perfect continuous tense. Moreover, Daphne's use of the

expression, "it's like the elephant in the room/ everyone contributed a little piece"

prepared us for her assertion of the newly found collaborative benefit, "and we all came

away with something else/."

In this narrative, we hear Daphne negotiate the students' identities away from a

previous point of view of EL students as "silent" or not participating to students in a

situation where "everyone contributed a little." This narrative does identity-performing

work of the practitioner as dialogic teacher and student as engaged contributor and fulfills

Juzwik and Ive's (2010) criteria for a "dialogic narrative" of entextualizing a point of

view within a social practice. The appraisal of student behavior in classrooms regarding

participating orally in instructional conversations had previously been narrated in the

practitioner inquiry as "silent" or how students "close down." Daphne's ebullient

description of what she witnessed her students do functions to re-contextualize the

students as dialogic participants. Juzwik and Ives (2010) note, "By viewing the …

narrative...as one link in a speech chain and considering its relationship to other links in

that chain, we make visible a variety of identity performing functions" (p.48). In Figure

2, we see an example of change across the inquiry time span. We can look back at what

was a small story performed within the context of a group session which had begun with

a description of a classroom use of a protocol for engaging students in a discussion.

Daphne's narrative builds on her students' use of the protocol.

If we look at the narratives before and after Daphne's story, we see how Daphne's

narrative served dialogically. As a type of narrative of appreciation, or positive appraisal,

we can understand the function of the narrative in various ways. First, it affirmed that the

protocol worked in the classroom. Daphne's students take up "that little model" and she

explained how it worked. Next, it positioned Daphne as witness to the experience. Then

it sows positive affect, or judgment, (Martin & Rose, 2007, p. 32) with a tone of

excitement through the word choice of "suddenly" twice, "O wow!" and group laughter.

Daphne was not only performing in the moment with her colleagues in the inquiry group,

but she was positioning the students differently.

An example of the changes in the positioning of students:

Lucy: But they never talk/I had almost a silent class/ last semester/ in
101/ I couldn't get those people/ I mean they weren't just quiet/ they
were still/ (LW, initial interview, lines 164-165).

Daphne: a lot of students just close down (Session 1, line 571)

 Shifted to **Daphne:** everyone contributed a little piece/
                                        and we all came away with something else/
                                        (Session 5, June 27, lines 344-350)

Figure 2. Changes in Positioning.

Verifying Classroom Transcriptions

        Group session six and seven were done online. This had mixed results due to the

constraints of the practitioners' duties. Those practitioners who had the time read the

transcriptions of sessions one through five. Two practitioners did not have the time.

Lucy's comments about reviewing the transcriptions were: "When we did the text

complexity assessments, it was really eye opening to me," [Review from on-line learning,

lines 1310-1312] which reflects the deep interest she had when she was appraising the

texts in our joint session. However, she was still apprehensive about dialogic teaching, "I

feel slightly fearful and still underprepared to actually implement these ideas full scale"

[First review comment].

The delicate balance of my own realization of learning and growth regarding our group via the transcribing I was doing was counter balanced by the mixed responses of the group members the the final sessions. It was at this point where I had to just "*carry on*" with the hope that our continuing action and my reflecting with the group at the beginning of the sessions would help us realize the worth of the time we were spending on this endeavor.

In group session eight, we vetted everyone's dialogic teaching plans as a group. Next, I observed, digitally recorded, debriefed, and transcribed one class where practitioners implemented their dialogic teaching plans. In the final session of the inquiry group, each practitioner who was observed thought aloud about a portion of her own class transcription, which highlighted dialogic teaching. Then I provided additional feedback about what I noticed and other practitioners added their thoughts as well. The following summarizes the practitioners' application lessons in short descriptions of the practitioners' learning transformations.

Debra. Debra is a female Caucasian public high school teacher with 10 years of experience. Debra likes to innovate and as we saw in the previous chapters, she is passionate about teaching. Midway through the inquiry group, Debra switched from teaching middle school in a diverse urban school setting to teaching high school in a privileged suburban neighborhood where she teaches freshmen and junior and seniors. She did not have any ELLs in her classrooms, but because she had participated in the inquiry group up to the midpoint, I did not ask her to stop coming to our group sessions. Because she also taught ELLs at the community college several evenings a week, she could still find the work we were doing relevant.

As previously shown, Debra espoused a commitment to *Questioning the Author* (Beck & McKeown, 2006) because it gave insight to teaching a complex text with her now monolingual high school students. During our group session, Debra reported that she used the questioning protocol with her whole class various times. In the following narrative, after answering questions about her teaching procedures, we hear Debra extol the changes her students demonstrated in her class.

Debra's Final Phase Narrative

They're Helping Each Other Understand

Setting

>   Debra: I wanna see how they do
>
>   after the first quiz/
>
>   cause if I get something like 100% of the kids
>
>   knowing what's going on/

Catalyst

>   like then I'm going to keep on doing it
>
>   exactly how I'm doing it/

Crisis

>   like based on the observations
>
>   I've made of small groups/the text/
>
>   the conversations they're having are really good/

Evaluation

>   like/they're helping each other understand the text/
>
>   they're saying things like/

"Oh that was his mother/right/

but then the daughter's the one who got sick first/" yeah/

you know they're like//

Rosa: like reinforcing what they know/

Debra: Yeah/ they're building meaning/

they're doing what I wanted…

Resolution

Rosa: And you feel like this is a change

from what you would've experienced in the past

if you hadn't done like a questioning the author//

Debra: Yes/ I feel like this is a change.

[Session 7, Sept 13, lines 440-457]

Debra expressed her teacher agency in explaining how she allows student growth

or lack of it to determine her teaching moves; she notes she will see "how they do after

the first quiz." This positioned her as a responsive teacher who is keeping track of how

her students are doing. She responded to questions about her procedures with the logic

we have come to expect from her. She interjected her desire for real change in "I wanna

see how they do" following up with the conditional "cause if," "cause if I get something

like 100% of the kids knowing what's going on" with a result expressed by "then" in

"then I'm going to keep on doing it exactly how I'm doing it/." She showed how the

improvements would need to continue with the progressive tense and she used the adverb

"exactly" to punctuate her precision.

Debra articulated her observations and attributed her conclusion to what she had

witnessed, "the conversations they're having are really good/." She continued, "They're

helping each other, saying things, building meaning." Building meaning is the discourse

we had adopted to talk about discussions around complex texts. Debra assessed her

students informally saying, "They're doing what I wanted." To make sure she was

reporting new behavior, I asked her if this was a change from the past. She responded,

"Yes/ I feel like this is a change."

When Debra declared that her students were building meaning, there was a hush

in the room. I felt inspired. " I felt reassured that what we had been reading about had

actually happened and I confirmed to myself that the inquiry was worth it."(Field notes,

Sept 13.) I felt that sociocultural theory was validated as a worthwhile frame to help

guide our work. Wells (2000) asserts that Vygotskian theory is valuable "in suggesting

directions in which to proceed. Central to his theory, as I have already emphasized, is the

concept of artifact-mediated joint activity, which involves change, and transformation of

participants and settings over time" (p. 60).

In this narrative, we heard Debra tell of her students helping one another

understand the text. Previously, Debra had reservations about using discussion because

she was not sure of the outcome. "So you have to give up a lot of freedom and like be

open to what happens/ uhm when you do discussions/so I think that limits the amount

that I do/" (DH initial interview, lines 25-26). The narrative above does identity-

performing work of the practitioner as activity designer and student as focused learner

and fulfills Juzwik and Ive's (2010) criteria for a dialogic narrative of entextualizing a

point of view within a social practice. Debra's account of what she realized her students

were doing functions to recontextualize the students as focused learners in a story

performed within the context of a group session which had begun with a description of

Debra's adaptation of the questioning the author queries (Beck & McKeown, 2006).

Debra's narrative builds on her students' use of the protocol. If we look at the

narratives before and after Debra's story, we can understand the function of this narrative

in various ways. First, we understand that Debra felt her application protocol worked

with her students. The narrative also positioned Debra as a creative teacher. Next, the

narrative affirmed the students' purposeful activity, "They're helping each other

understand the text."

It was both purposeful action and surreptitious chance that Debra's classroom

trials and resulting protocol were so transformative for Debra and for our group. The

purposeful activity was of working towards dialogic teaching by reading, discussing, and

sharing our plans. Wells (2002) writes

> transformation of the participants occurs as a function of participation in
>
> activities that have real meaning and purpose; learning is not simply the
>
> acquisition of isolated skills or items of information, but involves the whole
>
> person and contributes to the formation of individual identity. (p. 61)

Debra co-constructed her identity with us as an innovative teacher while

simultaneously building on our integrative intellectual work of what dialogic teaching

meant to us, opening up our thinking about what was possible in the classroom. As we

will see, each practitioner's response was different. The purposeful action of creating a

lesson using some form of dialogic teaching conformed to requirements of their teaching

contexts.

Lucy. Lucy is a female African American/Caucasian ELL instructor of 24 years and coordinator of a community college English language program. She focuses on her relationship with ELLs in her teaching. In this narrative, Lucy chimed in to respond to Debra's assertion that her students' understood the book they were reading more by having discussions. I had asked Debra if she thought her students understood the function of academic discussions and Debra replied that she did not know about that, but that her students did understand the text better. Lucy then elaborated on her students' change.

Lucy's Final Phase Narrative

They have a better understanding of the text

Setting

Debra: So I don't know

if their concept of that[the function of academic discussions] is better/

but I think

Catalyst

they have a better understanding of the text/

because of what

I've been doing with discussion/

Rosa: Good.

Crisis

Debra: So I feel like that's where the benefit has been/

Rosa: Yeah/

Lucy: I would agree with Debra/

Rosa: OK

Evaluation

Lucy: OK I mean

I had a really strong

highly functional highly fluent class/

Rosa: Right

Lucy: and I think it just helped them/

Resolution

I mean I think they have learned some ways

to approach discussion about a book differently/

strategies and things/

that they probably can transfer

to another setting/

Rosa: Hopefully/

Coda

Lucy: … but I think they understand this book better/

they've made more connections to this book

than/ they thought they could/

[Session 8, Oct 27, lines 378-406]

Debra positioned herself as reflective and analytical which corresponds to her

original interview where she characterized herself as being analytical. She analyzed her

students' responses, "So I don't know if their concept of that [discussion] is better/ but I

think they have a better understanding of the text," using "so" and the negative "don't

know" to mark the logic of her thinking and offering a divergent thought, with "but I think" to mark her observations "that they have a better understanding of the text." Debra continued by positing that what she had been doing in discussion was the cause of her students' understanding, using the connector "because" in "because of what I've been doing with discussion" and also using the present progressive tense, "I've been doing" to show that it was an action that she started in the past and was continuing to the present.

Debra attributed her students' better understanding to the dialogic teaching she had been practicing with them. She clarified what she said with another "so" to indicate the continuation of the logic and she expressed her personal appraisal of the discussions her students had had using the positive lexis, "benefit" and the present perfect tense to show that it was something that was started in the past and continued up to the present in "So I feel like that's where the benefit has been."

Lucy chimed in with her agreement, opening up her comment to other possible insights with the conditional "would" in "I would agree with Debra." She noted that her ELLs were "highly functional highly fluent" which corresponds to ELL teacher discourse about their students, mentioning their language proficiency level. Lucy noted that her students were able to glean help in understanding the text from the discussions they had had. She began her assertion with the intensifier, "I mean" in "I mean I think they have learned some ways to approach discussion about a book differently/ strategies and things/ that they probably can transfer to another setting/," using the lexis "strategies" to relate to the other practitioners intertextually.

To soften the assertion Lucy used "probably" to show that she knew that what is intended does not always happen. "I mean I think they have learned some ways to

approach discussion about a book differently/strategies and things/ that they probably can transfer to another setting/." Lucy continued with "but" to contradict the idea that the discussions were not worthwhile which might follow. She asserted, "But I think they understand this book better/they've made more connections to this book than/ they thought they could/" using the positive comparison structures "better" and "more connections" twice to indicate that the understandings and connections were "more than they thought they could" emphasizing the expansion of possibilities the students experienced with the modal "could."

Thus, Lucy reported that she had done what she started out to do. She steadfastly gave her students multiple opportunities to discuss the book. She articulated that she realized her students were changed by what she had been doing in her classes. Her own transformation was subtle in that she did not overtly describe her own use of dialogic teaching that we had been discussing, such as modeling or contingent questioning, but she indicated that the discussions of parts of the text did position the students to interpret the text more, which led to their understanding of the text. This integration and transformation is continued later on when we revisit Lucy's classroom for a more in-depth look in Lucy's case study.

Anita. Anita is an Asian-American who has lived and worked in an Asian context for several years. She is the assistant to the director at a private midwestern university; her job is to lead the teaching and coordinate the reading curriculum with the numerous adjunct faculty employed at the English language program. In the following narrative, Anita revealed that her student's insight helped her learn as she simultaneously examined the class transcription and discussed her moments of transformation.

Anita's Final Phase Narrative

An "Aha Moment"

Setting

After you had pointed out

that I did have contingent questions/

Catalyst

I mean it [my response] was based on

what the student was saying/

Crisis

it was a discussion/ more than them [the students] just

answering/

it was more dialogic/uhm/ I did have like yes/no questions/

it seemed to be OK/ and Boyd says that/

Evaluation

[looking at the transcription of her class]

it's like/ and I liked how they were like saying

"Why is that good to keep reading/"

"You're gonna have better answers/"

Crisis

Anita: ...I did not get/ this is what I said...

when students said/...

"You get the bits/ you feel like Thomas"

Evaluation

that was actually like an "aha moment/"

I mean because I hadn't thought of that/

you know like I read the book twice/

Resolution

but even after reading

The Maze Runner twice I didn't even/

Coda

like "Oh yeah you do feel like Thomas."

[Session 8, Oct. 27, lines 198-216]

Here and later on in her case study, we see Anita defer to me as her elder, which

is a mannerism sometimes associated with Asian public speaking moves, "I mean after

you pointed out that I did have contingent questions." It seemed, subsequent to Anita

saying that, she felt she could assert her own analysis of her dialogic teaching. Anita

emphasized that she did have contingent questions by using the auxiliary "did" to add

emphasis, "I did have contingent questions/." She continued, "It was a discussion/ more

than them [the students] just answering/ it was more dialogic/uhm/ I did have like yes/no

questions/ it seemed to be OK/ and Boyd says that." She explained her discourse using

the pronoun "it" twice, "I mean it was based on what the student was saying/ it was a

discussion/ more than them [the students] just answering/." She used the adverb "just" to

contrast the discussion she had had previously with her students with "just answers."

When Anita referred to Boyd (2012b), she was intertextually asserting the

correctness of her moves. To me, this move reflected back to her assertion in the

beginning of the inquiry interview that she liked to be aware of theory and use it in her

classes. Then when Anita quoted her student's insight in an answer to her question about

why the book *Maze Runner* was written in such an abrupt, choppy style, the student's

answer catches her by surprise, "You get the bits/ you feel like Thomas [a character in the

book]." Anita emphasized that she realized as a result of the exchange with her student

that it was an "aha moment" where she was led to understand the text in a new way.

Anita noted the surprising thing about what had happened in her class. She had not

gotten the insight the students had gotten when they had read their chapters of *The Maze*

Runners. She revoiced what a student had said during the class, "You get the bit/ you

feel like Thomas" to emphasize the importance of what he said. Anita highlighted the

"aha moment" with the adverb "actually" in "that was actually like an 'aha moment'"

explaining it further, "I mean because I hadn't thought of that/you know like I read the

book twice/." Anita stressed the fact that she had read the book twice with the adverb

"even" two times after noting the contradiction with "but," in "but even after reading *The*

Maze Runner twice I didn't even/." She let that thought unfinished and then she summed

up the event by revoicing her thoughts, "Oh yeah you do feel like Thomas."

       In this narrative, we heard Anita describe how the students in her class revealed

their deeper understanding of the text. In some of her previous statements about student

discussions, Anita informed me that her students did not think an ESL reading class was

important. "// In the beginning/of the semester/ they're usually/they really don't take

reading seriously/their reading class/ the skill/seriously/ it's one of those/I mean I even

had a teacher from China say/ there's no point/ why teach reading/ why teach those skills/

it's not important/hhh/" (AM, initial interview, lines 76-79). In the narrative above,

Anita's notice of the students' insight is a change in her narrative and it does identity-

performing work of the practitioner as dialogic teacher and student as engaged reader. It

entextualized the point of view that the students can read deeply and share insights.

Within the context of a group session that had begun with Anita describing her realization

about the observed class, we hear a small story performed by Anita who is impressed

with her students. She remarked with some excitement in her voice that "Oh yeah, you

do feel like Thomas" (Last group session, line 216). As a narrative of appreciation, or

positive appraisal, we can understand the function of the narrative in various ways. First,

it affirmed that Anita's students were reading and understanding the texts. Because they

read the text and understood it, they could communicate an insight they had gotten which

positioned them as interpreters of the text. As a result, Anita expressed her positive

affect, or judgment (Martin & Rose, 2007, p. 32).

Anita continued to revel in her student's accomplishment and to remark on the

insight the students co-constructed with her. Below, Anita interpreted that her normal

activity of preparing for class sometimes precluded an "aha moment," but that the verbal

interaction had afforded her students an opportunity to create knowledge about the text. I

affirmed the transformation of the student's participation and Daphne highlighted Anita's

contingent question, which probed the student to elaborate further

> Anita: So you're like reading it [the book] and the questions you have to make up
>
> and all the activities/ but the students were like/ "Oh my gosh/we feel like
>
> Thomas/"
>
> Rosa: That's neat/
>
> Daphne: Good question to start off with "Why was it given in bits and pieces?
>
> [Session 8, Oct. 27, lines 239-242]

Anita discovered that the exchanges from her students could further her understanding as well as their understanding and she was elated. Her embodiment of transformation reflects the important aspect of linking teacher knowledge to student knowledge (Ball, 2009). Therefore, Anita moved through the metacognitive awareness of using language as a tool for knowledge building for her own and for her students' transformation. Anita's process of transformation is described further in the case study of her classroom, which follows in the next chapter.

Recapitulation of Chapter Six

Chapter Six explained in detail the practitioners' active reorganization of knowledge (John-Steiner & Meehan, 2000). We see how discourse facilitated joint understanding, idea clarification, and thought reorganization as they described how they appropriated the concepts of dialogic teaching in their practices. I noted an interdependence among us as knowledge was synthesized.

In the grounded theory coding, there were three categories: Appraisal of practices, students, and inquiry interactions. Collaboration was a sub-category of the category: *appraisal of inquiry interactions*. (See Appendix B, Codebook). The properties of this subcategory were: (1) comparative reflections and (2) commenting on student learning and (3) problem solving. The subcategories for the other two categories were delineated along with their dimensions. These sub-categories allowed further explication of the inquiry group data.

Each of us shared our plans for dialogic teaching. In my model for explaining discussion to students, we learned of the progression of my thinking in the planning: how learners sometimes didn't value discussion, how the queries from Beck & McKeown

(2006) provided a springboard for talking about text and how to use talking about texts with the students to teach language functions such as giving reasons and asking for clarification, for example. Daphne and Anita interpret what I said:

> Daphne: That's what struck me about the small mini-lesson you gave us/and what they do in here in some cases/it's/ by reading the examples and reflecting on what happened in the case studies/well that's what we're trying to do for the students when we model those texts/ have them read somebody else discussing some piece of the text they're going to be looking at and asking them what were they doing .../ as they were going through it/ that particular activity is the same activity that we're being asked to do as we look at this case study/and that's what brings it home/ all the theory in the world/ but it doesn't sink in until you actually see somebody doing it/and somebody else reflecting on it/ going "Do you see what happened here?"
>
> Anita: I need those models. But it's made me more aware of my questioning/
>
> Rosa: Oh yeah/
>
> [Session 5, June 27, lines 192-201]

I interpreted what I learned about the practitioners' lessons with Vygotsky's idea of transformation and John-Steiner & Meehan's (2000) concepts of synthesis, complementarity, and transformation, which I reinterpreted as sharing knowledge, internalization, and transformation. Because of the discursive resources that were uncovered from narrative analysis, I was able to ground the interpretations by noting verb tenses and other linguistic specifics such as word choices and adverbial intensifiers. Also, I examined the narratives in terms of identity-in-interaction (Juzwik & Ives, 2010)

because of a change in the practitioners' positioning of students (Davies & Harré, 1990)

in their discourse and we saw how the narratives functioned dialogically across the

inquiry.

In each of the narratives above, the practitioners articulated student

transformation, which for them was the key to their realization that dialogic teaching

could improve student understanding and position them as interpreters of text. Whether

the change of appraisal can be sustained is a question for further research. Chouliaraki &

Fairclough (1999) assert that

> We may textually construe the social world in particular ways, but whether our
>
> representations or construals have the effect of changing its construction depends
>
> on various contextual factors, including the way social reality already is, who is
>
> construing it and so forth. (p.129)

Capstone: Final Phase Reflections

My insider voice said, "Thank God, I made it through" when the class

observations were completed. I was relieved that the observations had gone smoothly

and that the group had responded positively in the group inquiry. I was not sure that the

dialogic teaching would be continued in the practitioners' respective settings, but Daphne

asserted that it would be the topic of her fall in-service professional development for ESL

faculty. Lucy's focus on dialogic teaching was less certain because as noted before, she

did not like to do whole group teaching, but rather relied on small group interactions with

the large post-it notes on the wall. Because she assented to more observations for the

case study, I was able to follow up with her, but I did not feel that her heart was in it as

she already had a strategy that worked for her. Anita also volunteered for the additional

case study observations and she was ready to try again until she could feel confident

about teaching more dialogically. I was awed by her determination and appreciative of

her commitment. Intellectually, I felt she was convinced of the benefits of dialogical

teaching. How easily she could let go of her past teaching habits was still in question.

       The next chapter reports on the case studies and replicates and deepens our

understanding of Lucy and Anita's transformations.

Chapter Seven: Case Studies

In this chapter, I present case studies (Dyson & Genesi, 2005; Merriam, 2009) of Lucy, who works with ELLs at a community college and Anita, who works with ELLs at a university. Both practitioners are of intrinsic interest to this study in light of their full participation in the eight-month practitioner inquiry group. They volunteered to allow me to observe their teaching further. It was not convenient for the other participants. The purpose of the case studies is to triangulate the findings already presented and provide additional detail.

I take the researcher stance as participant observer in Lucy and Anita's classrooms. I describe Lucy and Anita's educational settings, students and ESL class in more detail. Then I examine more in-depth the strategies the practitioners use to enact discussions with their students and investigate their progression of learning by answering the questions, what did the practitioners express about using discussion to teach difficult texts with ELLs at the end of the inquiry after additional observations? How dd practitioners' teaching change as a result of the Practitioner Inquiry?

To answer the questions, I dipped back into the initial interviews to examine more in detail what the practitioners presented to provide a context for their later responses. I drew on the transcriptions of the interviews, sessions, field notes, and classroom materials to examine the practitioners' progressions of learning, hypothesizing that what I learn would reflect what was already reported from the practitioner inquiry.

Case Study: Lucy

Lucy Wilson grew up in the Midwest and studied French in her undergraduate program of study. She speaks Urdu to her Pakistani husband and Urdu and English to her

three teenage children. Lucy received her MA in TESOL from a local university 22 years ago. Lucy is the coordinator for the English language program for Riverside Community College.

The educational setting. The community college where Lucy works describes their campus on their website:

The 78-acre campus of Riverside Community College is surrounded by residential communities, office parks, and small and large businesses. More than 40 percent of the district's students attend Riverside. Nearly 70 percent of its students are enrolled in college transfer curricula. (College website)

Lucy's ESL 100 class is the final ESL reading and writing class English language learners take. This integrated skills class uses authentic fiction and non-fiction along with a writing handbook for the class texts.

Eventually twelve students filled the classroomwehre I observed Lucy, four males and eight females chatting together in a friendly way. The males were comprised of one Chinese student, one Sri Lankan student, one Russian and a Lithuanian. One Mexican, one Columbian, and one Puerto Rican, two Brazilians, one Philippian, one Chinese, and one Vietnamese student made up the female group.

The semester of the observation, the class was studying *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration*, which is a historical study by Isabel Wilkerson. Lucy chose the book for her community college ESL program advanced level classes. Lucy chose this book because Wilkerson makes comparisons between the African Americans who migrated north and immigrants. Given that many of her students are immigrants, she felt the story would resonate with the students.

Lucy as facilitator. At the beginning of the eight month inquiry, Lucy

characterized having discussions as "tricky" because she had an urge to insert herself into

the discussion, but she realized if she did, the students didn't talk as much.

> Lucy : One reason/ I don't insert myself/even physically too close to them/is//I'm
>
> a talker/if I get in there/ they'll stop talking and listen to what I want to say/
>
> Rosa: hmmhmm.
>
> Lucy: So it's tricky/you know/
>
> Rosa: It is/
>
> [Lucy's initial interview, lines 158-163].

In the following narrative from Lucy's initial interview, we hear Lucy expressing

the irony she feels. When I asked Lucy what an ideal discussion would be like, she

confessed that her expectations were not realistic. Likewise, she noted that the time to

actually have discussions was hard to find. When her students did have discussions, she

felt that the comments students made were lacking in conceptual depth. She knew that

there had to be a lot of preparation so that students can be given the time to formulate

ideas, but she expressed her wish for automatic responses, in any case, in the following

narrative where she referred to the students talking about the main idea of a text they

teach, *Inman's War* by Jeffrey S. Copeland.

Lucy's Case Study: Narrative One

I Would Like it to Spring from Them

Setting

> Lucy: I'd like them to talk/ all the things I feel like
>
> I'm pushing on them//

I would like it to spring from them//

Catalyst

Lucy: I mean/Actually//

you know a lot of the stuff/that I do/

I think if we had the time/

you know how 100 [the class] is/

if we had the time/like in a perfect world/

so the next class/

so I make 'em write discussion questions/

and I make 'em post/discussion questions/

Crisis

But they never/ we hardly get to talk

/about them/hhh/

we never get to discuss the questions/

Rosa: Really?/

Evaluation

Lucy: We just get too//

Rosa: They do a pretty good job/with the questions?/

Lucy: I don't know if they talk about 'em in group/

and that's why they put 'em on here

(motioning to the big post-it from her class)

or if they just///

Rosa: come up with them/

Lucy: I know they come up with them for their journals/

but I don't hear them talk about it/

Resolution

I think the main/the main/ thing/ is//

the discussion would be longer/

and the time slot for that discussion

would be over in an hour/

Yeah/ I give 'em a half hour to talk

/and do all this stuff/

and really there's nothing they have to write

during that time/except make this poster/

Evaluation

so they are talking about what happened//

they're saying like/

what do you think is the main idea/

those are their// then they say things like/

"I think it's when Inman died[1]" /right/

Rosa: Whatever/

Resolution

Lucy: So they put "When Inman died" on there//[on the post-it paper]

for their main idea/ So they're not in discussion like

"Isn't racism a terrible thing/"

"Isn't it horrible that Inman had to sacrifice his life/"

Coda

I mean you know/ there's not that//depth/

you know what I mean?

Rosa: Yes/

[Lucy's initial interview, lines 206-235]

Lucy's appraisal of her own practices is apologetic. She knows her ideas are

unrealistic. She admitted in her appraisal that she would like the discussion, "to spring

from them." And that would be "in a perfect world." Also, there would be more time for

discussion, which refers to the teacher discourse of lack of time.

In regards to her pedagogy, Lucy asserted that she does have her students write

questions and post them on Blackboard. However, she noted that "they never" and then

she switched to "we hardly get to talk about them/hhh/." She repeated her assertion "we

never get to discuss the questions/" with different words. She laughed as if almost

embarrassed by the negative affect that she just displayed with the negative adverbs

"never" and "hardly."

Then she conveyed her preference for having students work in small groups with

large post-it papers, but she again mentioned the lack of time as "the main thing" which

she repeated twice. "I think the main/the main/thing/is//the discussion would be longer,"

continuing her theme of "in a perfect world" from what she previously said. But she also

admitted that the students had to do more than discuss, but she discounted that her actions

were any interference in the discussion process. Taking the idea of joint activity, minus

her own involvement, which she already excused as being too directive above, Lucy

positions the students as able to come up with the language and ideas she is looking for
without too much guidance.

Nevertheless, she expresses that the results are less than expected. Lucy
described that the students typically talk about the main idea of the story they are reading
when she reviewed the content of the discussion, "So they're not in discussion like "Isn't
racism a terrible thing/," indicating what she would hope could spring from them. She
appraised the students' discussion appealing to me with "I mean you know/ there's not
that///depth/you know what I mean?" I acquiesced and thus co-constructed the deficit
discourse she was constructing.

Using cooperative learning can be beneficial for ELLs (Kagan & McGoarty,
1993; Lee & Smargorinsky, 2000), but placing students in groups with one question
might not render deep insights without a more structured approach. Dialogical teaching
does hand over discussions to students, but the handover is after a scaffolded interaction
in joint activity. Lucy's reliance on the big post-it notes and small groups can and was,
according to Lucy, successful in getting students to discuss, but if the goal is insight into
a dilemma, for example, the students might not be at a point where they can extrapolate
on their own. Thus, there is a need for more scaffolded oral thinking aloud together.

Because there are many areas of instructional need in those cases of using texts
that are difficult for ELLs, especially with vocabulary learning, it is easy to conclude that
there is not enough time. Lucy recalled that she also realized her students needed help in
understanding spoken English, so since she had taught listening skills, she also decided
that the particular class she was talking about could also use listening practice, which she

presented with an excerpt from National Public Radio (NPR). In the following narrative,

Lucy shows her realization of her part in the issue of having discussions in class.

Lucy's Case Study: Narrative Two

I have avoided people talking/

Setting

> You know I teach listening too//
>
> so/but not this semester/
>
> and I probably miss it a little bit/
>
> so I let 'em listen to it/[an NPR excerpt]

Catalyst

> but I really feel like these are weak readers/
>
> and then / uhm/ then I model taking notes
>
> while the thing was playing
>
> and they all wanted them/
>
> [her notes] and I said
>
> "OK but do they match any of your notes?"//

Crisis

> Almost/ I mean/
>
> and I'm so focused on their writing/
>
> that I don't/ I don't know
>
> if I ever give them a chance to talk/hh/

Resolution

> also the challenge of talking

is that the discussion can go off/

topic/ and uh so/

Rosa: it's hard/

Crisis

Lucy: So an ideal conversation

would have more depth/

and would be more/

and they would be able

to get more critical thinking points

and/details and main ideas/

would rise more obviously/for them to the surface/

Evaluation

but the reality is because of vocabulary challenges/

time/and uh// poor note taking skills/

and poor reading ability/

this group especially//

those are challenges

for a meaningful discussion/or conversation/

Coda

Does that make sense??

Rosa: Yes absolutely

[Lucy's initial interview, lines 262-288]

After admitting that she did not give the students time for many discussions a few minutes before, Lucy began to explain herself by first establishing that she tried to help them improve their listening, which is another academic activity. Lucy relied on the intersubjectivity we shared as veteran ELL teachers again when she said, "you know/ you know all that happened" because it is a reality that when teaching a full class of ELLs there are many times when what you planned to do falls flat because the students lack background knowledge, vocabulary, an/or one or many skills you underestimated, depending on their educational backgrounds. Then Lucy exposed the elephant in the room articulating her belief about her students' conprehension, "They didn't understand it, so how can they discuss it/ right?" Next, she noted the time factor discourse again, "They probably needed a day or two to process that" which is the truth. ELLs need time to absorb new content, to make it their own. To reinforce this point Lucy asserted that they understood by the end of the unit, "they did by the end."

At the same time though, Lucy confessed a realization, "I see that there's really a piece of/ I have avoided people talking" and then she repeated it "You know the more you talk about it/ I see that there's really a piece of/ I have avoided people talking." As if in repeating it, she confirmed for herself a reality she wished were not true. I commiserated with her by affirming, "It's hard."

At the end of the exchange, Lucy asked for affirmation, "Does that make sense?" so I affirmed her ideas because it did all make sense, co-constructing a discourse of deficit. Orchestrating a discussion is hard work; there are many things to attend to: Have there been multiple scaffolds such as writing things out, discussing in pairs, and models to prepare students to do what you want them to do? Do you work alongside the students

to create meaning? Do you make contingent questions and comments to position students as interpreters? Do you make connections and guide students to discuss together? Are the processes of discussion elaborated in a meta-discussion of the discussion and is it debriefed? Avoiding something because it is hard does not help the students break through the silence barrier and become integrated into their classrooms. I knew that Lucy knew that as well.

However, I realized that our discussion was a type of teacher discourse which expressed deficits that impeded implementation of dialogic teaching. There was practitioner resistance to leading discussions with ELLs in the form of unrealistic expectations and avoidance; lack of time became a scapegoat and student deficits were presented as reasons for not enacting discussions with complex texts.

Classroom observation. In the following, we hear Lucy's pride in her students as she goes over the transcription of her class (Lucy's first observation, lines 56-133). Classroom activity centered at first brief announcements of classroom business, then Lucy established the focus of the class activity; she used humor to lighten the mood of the class. Lucy asked what the students were feeling about the book. A male student joked with Lucy. She joked back. Another student connected to the book by saying that she thought they could all relate to what was going on with the people in the story. Another student agreed with the first student and then said that outsiders can produce threats for insiders. Another student added that it was a sad situation because the insiders could really help the outsiders if there was not that tension. "Yan Li compared what he read with what had happened in China when people from rural areas migrated to his city, exploding the city's population by two-thirds. Then a student from India remarked that

with people from upper castes." (Field notes, Lucy's observation.) From the transcription,

we learn that Lucy remarked that these comments were interesting, perhaps not wanting

to discuss how cultural givens influence the way we interpret our worlds at that point in

the class, which is a topic for investigating at another time.

Next, Lucy probed the students about why they were discussing that part of the

book so intensively. Several students answered at once, and then Lucy took control of

the group, saying she heard lot of purposes [for discussing]. In the transcription of

Lucy's class, student 1 had said, "That this [the unequal treatment of African Americans]

Transcript of Lucy's Class [Observation]

Lucy: OK/OK I hear a lot of purposes/so what's a
purpose?
Student 1: So we can relate to the book/ So we can
understand what we are living.
Lucy: So we can understand reality better/Oh! OK
That's more than I had hoped for.
Student 1: That this [is] what happens has happened
many times in the U.S. That this situation is an antique
problem.
Lucy: Old
Student 1: It's an old problem/[laughter] OK I know I
shouldn't say antique/ like the racism that is happening
like what is happening in Ferguson/ people are shooting
guns/ so
Lucy: So we can understand / that's interesting/
Student 2: So we can relate to the book.
Lucy: So we can relate it to our lives/ You guys are so
much smarter than me/ I was hoping for a kind of low
hanging fruit kind of thing.
Student 3[male] Oh well that's kind of mean/ [laughter]
Lucy: No I mean you're smarter than I am/ but what
other purposes in the context of this class/could
understanding the book help.
Student 2: It's for us to know.

 [Lucy's Observation, lines 112-133]

Figure 3. An Excerpt from Lucy's Class Observation.

is what happens has happened many times in the U.S." Lucy repeats the gist of the

student's response, "So we can understand / that's interesting/." Then another student

remarked, "So we can relate to the book." Lucy rephrased the student's answer, "So we

can relate it to our lives/" and then she complements them, "You guys are so much

smarter than me/ I was hoping for a kind of low hanging fruit kind of thing." This

positioned the students as intelligent and Lucy expressed her positive affect, or judgment,

(Martin & Rose, 2007, p. 32) with a tone of sincerity by her repetition of the gist of her

compliment, "No I mean you're smarter than I am/." For Lucy, transformation was her

students going beyond the "low hanging fruit" kind of responses, but most importantly

she appreciated that they understood the book.

Thus, Lucy was successful in opening the discussion and guiding it without

dominating it and relating students' comments to their academic purpose by eliciting

from the students why they were discussing that portion of the book. The students asked

questions and related to what each other had said. True to the initial perceptions from the

interview at the beginning of the practitioner inquiry, Lucy endeavored to build

relationships with her students and bolster their self-esteem.

Conclusion. This case study illustrates the range of Lucy's teaching sensibilities

and capabilities. The trajectory of her narratives move from negative affect in regard to

enacting discussions to positive affect about the learning which is commensurate to the

trajectory of the findings in the group session narratives. My observations led me to

conclude that Lucy incorporated bits of what we read and discussed in the practitioner

inquiry, for example, the text leveling and the terminology of students building on each

other's comments. She deepened what she already knew and refined her way of talking

about student interactions. She already was an accomplished teacher when she started the

inquiry group and she did appreciate learning about using discussion to augment student

learning when their texts are complex.

Case Study: Anita

Anita Miller grew up in a rural area in the U.S. in a bilingual and bicultural

household. She speaks her mother tongue and English with her parents and her two

school-aged children, but mostly she speaks English.

Educational setting. Anita's class is in Des Freres Hall in a mid-sized private

university. The university has "more than 8,800 undergraduates and 5,100 graduate

students (including medical and law students from all 50 states and nearly 70 countries"

(university website).

Given that I was going to observe Anita's class multiple times, the students

introduced themselves to me and told me their majors. There were five males: one Saudi

Arabian, three Brazilians, and one Chinese. There were also six females, one Saudi

Arabian, two Chinese, one Taiwanese, one Brazilian, and one Pakistani. The English for

Academic Purposes classes have all their skill classes based on a content class. Anita

teaches a packet of readings centering on Global Issues to the highest level ESL class,

which is 101.

In her 101 reading class, Anita tries to help students understand the readings for

their content classes. The semester I observed them they were reading *The Maze Runner*

and using a college level reading book called *New World* besides the course pack of

academic journal articles on Global Issues.

Anita as facilitator. Anita was invested in understanding dialogic teaching so she asked that I observe her as often as possible. In her first classroom observation, Anita started out asking students about the concept of hierarchy embedded in the book *The Maze Runner*. She introduced a handout she created where students had to rank values for a make-believe society similar to the society in the book and then she had the students answer questions. The interactions were mainly monologic due to the nature of the questions that elicited specific information.

In our debriefing, Anita was apologetic that there was not much dialogic interaction until the end of class. She commented in the following narrative that she was just beginning to understand what she needed to do.

Anita's Case Study: Narrative One

I still feel like it's the beginning

Setting

> I think for me I feel like even though we're ending/
>
> I still feel like it's the beginning/ hh/

Catalyst

> *Rosa:* Ohh/ that's great/
>
> I feel the same way/
>
> Anita: Like I feel I haven't/
>
> like I'm still just learning how to/

Crisis

> and I do wanna incorporate more/
>
> questioning and building on meaning/

my thing is/

Evaluation

I guess the timing/it's like/

"Oh/ this is a teachable moment/

I wanna//" and then/

Resolution

Rosa: But/you allowed the students to go with things/

it wasn't totally question/answer/ question/ answer/

[Anita's first observation, lines 336-342]

Anita asserted her feelings in her self-appraisal, "I think for me I feel like even though we're ending/ I still feel like it's the beginning/hh/." She laughed at the end of her utterance in a bid for collegiality and maybe from a bit of embarrassment. I responded to her bid for collegiality with positive affect, "Ohh/ that's great/ I feel the same way/." Anita continued the thread of her self-appraisal, "Like I feel I haven't/like I'm still just learning how to/." Then, she connected to the teacher discourse of questioning, "and I do wanna incorporate more/ questioning and building on meaning/." Next she tried to articulate her issues with "my thing is/" but she left the thought unfinished for a second, but then she ventured her interpretation of her trial use of dialogic teaching, "I guess the timing/ it's like/ Oh / this is a teachable moment// I wanna//," using revoicing of her thoughts to emphasize the intensity of her desire to teach more dialogically.

Anita ended her utterance expressing her disappointment that she did not feel she responded well enough to engage the students more from the teachable moment. Sensing

her disappointment, I tried to reassure her, contradicting her disappointment with a positive appraisal, "but" in "but you allowed the students to go with things/ it wasn't totally questions answer/ questions answer."

Anita's disappointment of not having more dialogical exchanges was understandable because she wanted to demonstrate her best dialogic teaching. In addition, the nature of her questions and the number of activities she was trying to accomplish did not give the class the time and space they needed to discuss. In the following narrative, Anita came to the same conclusion as we examined the rubric which had been created for self-assessment in the inquiry group.

Anita's Case Study: Narrative Two

I'm not Going to Try to Do Everything

Setting

Anita: Yeah I'm/ Yeah I think I do that/

[positioning the student with interpretive authority]

outside the classroom too/

I always tend to/

I don't know I think it's a cultural thing/

"You have the authority you know/

Catalyst

You know more than I do"

You know what I mean/

Crisis

Anita: I think they did/ uhhum/ they were participatory/

Rosa: Yeah

Anita: [Reading from the rubric.] The teacher prompted the students to say more/

and to think more deeply/

Rosa: You did

Anita: I did but it's so hard/

you know/ cause it is an afternoon class/

and they just want to get it over with/

Evaluation

and this time I actually/

uhm/in the first class [Anita's morning section of the same class]

we went over the *New World* more/

Rosa: Oh/

Resolution

Anita: So I realized that uhm/ I'm just gonna have to briefly/

Rosa: Uhhm/

Anita: The timing was better/

Rosa: Oh I see

Anita: I realize from last time

that I'm not going to try to do everything

because it's just too much/

Rosa: Right

[Case Study Anita, 1a to 1 e with notes and codes, lines 575-593]

Anita began by agreeing with me about her positioning students as having authority. She asserted her agency in her self-appraisal. She explains her motivation by connecting her actions to the teacher discourse that students do not automatically assert themselves because "it's a cultural thing." Anita countered this discourse highlighting students' agency with a revoicing of her advice to students, "You have the authority. You know; you know more than I do." I noted that Anita "prompted the student to say more. And to think more deeply." (Class observation notes.) Anita agreed but added some negative affect, contrasting her success with the difficulty in achieving her teaching goals, "but it's so hard/ you know/." She connected this negative affect with teacher beliefs that afternoon classes can be hard, "cause it is an afternoon class/ and they just want to get it over with." Anita continued with her self-appraisal acknowledging that she needed to cut some things the second time she taught the class, "The timing was better." Moreover she aligned herself with not trying to do everything, "I'm not going to try to do everything because it's just too much."

Classroom observation. In Anita's third case study observation, we hear her probing a student's answer, asking another student to evaluate the importance of what another student had just said (see Figure 4). Later, in the debriefing, I called Anita's attention to several of her dialogic teaching moments and accommodations of student error; she tied her cultural heritage into her propensity to accommodate student responses despite grammatical inaccuracies (Golombek & Johnson, 2007).

Anita: [to a student] And why was that important? Explain the importance of
that event/
Ali: It's like the climate of the story/you can connect all the parts/ it was
difficult to understand what's going on/ until this point/
Anita: until this point/ right/right/
Berna: So it's the climax/
Ali: It was the most exciting part/
Anita: Did you understand? It's the climax/
Diago: Mainly after fifty chapters/ now we know what they are going to do/
Anita: Diago made a comment that after fifty chapters/ you finally understand/
Diago: That's the beauty in the fiction/in this story anyway/ to find out/ you are
reading
 just to find out the answer/
Anita: Right/
Diago: The problem/ how to fix it/
Anita: How to fix it/ so now they're going to fix it/right/
they found out how to fix it/ fifty chapters/

[Anita's 3rd observation, lines 262-276]

Figure 4. Class Observation of Anita.

Anita had asked an open question to facilitate the students' explanation of the

event from the book, *Glade Runner*. Ali answered with two errors, the word "climate"

was used instead of the word "climax" and he used the past tense and the present tense

non-sequentially when he was explaining, "it was difficult to understand what's going

on" where he used "what is going on" instead of "what was going on." Both errors did

not impede understanding, so Anita attended to the meaning, reiterating Ali's point that it

was difficult to understand what was going on "until this point." Berna inserted the

correct word "So it's the climax." And Ali confirmed his understanding that "it was the

most exciting part." Anita asked the rest of the class if they understood it was the climax

and Diago explained, "Mainly after fifty chapters/ now we know what they are going to

do." Anita again reiterated what was said, and then Diago assessed the affect of the

story, "That's the beauty in the fiction / in this story anyway/ to find out/ you are reading

just to find out the answer/." Anita affirmed his answer and she accommodated Ali's

errors so that the meaning, the sense of what they were talking about, would not be

interrupted. She confirmed what the students said. She made sure everyone understood,

and she and Diego built up the knowledge of the group by discussing what they had read.

(Class observation notes.) Anita recognized that error correction was an area of concern

for some, but in the final debriefing, she explained her thinking about the students'

investment in the language learning process (Norton, 2000).

Anita's Case Study: Narrative Three

If They Lose Face

Setting

  Yeah/ and that's a big thing/

  I don't know

  if it's because I am Asian/

Catalyst

  but I'm more aware

  of not having anybody lose face/

  and I really do not/

  because I really am /

  with the affective factors/

Crisis

  if they lose face/that's it/

  so they'll shut down/

  and they won't contribute anymore/

Evaluation

you know if it's a behavior issue/

yeah/ I'll call them on it/

but if it's something we're really trying hard to participate/

and to learn/ uhm/ no/ then that's/

Resolution

but yeah/ the other students will correct each other

and they'll laugh and that's fine

because they're all peers/

[Debrief of Anita's observation 2, 3, and 4, lines 242-247]

Anita was hesitant in the beginning, "I don't know if it's because I'm Asian."

She continued, "But I'm more aware of not having anybody lose face." The next two

statements were left unfinished, perhaps because she was a little bit embarrassed to name

a personal quality or perhaps because of our intertextuality. In the second statement, she

alluded to second language acquisition theory of affective factors (Krashen, 1982) which

is part of ELL teacher discourse "because I really am/ with the affective factors/." In the

next statements, she became more matter of fact to name her beliefs, "if they lose face/

that's it/ so they'll shut down/ and they won't contribute anymore/."

Anita called on me to recognize a common teaching situation, "you know if it's a

behavior issue/ yeah/ I'll call them on it/." Then she signaled the opposite case, "but if

it's something we're really trying hard to participate/ and to learn/ uhm / no/ then that's/,"

leaving her statement unfinished because of our shared knowledge that that would be a

situation where she allowed students to speak unhampered with error corrections.

Finally, Anita emphasized the collegial ambience of her classes, "but yeah/ the other students will correct each other and they'll laugh and that's fine because they're all peers." Anita understood that the learners could react negatively or positively according to their investment in learning English and their changing identities (Norton, 2000).

From the beginning of the inquiry, Anita had reservations about using discussion in her classes because students would get off task and some students would not participate. At the end of Anita's observations, however, I asked her what she felt about using discussions and she described a much different picture.

Anita's Case Study: Narrative Four

The Discussions have been More Valuable

Setting

Rosa: What do you feel about using discussion now?/

Anita: Oh I love it/ Actually now/

It's more purposeful for me/

I actually felt like

this semester the discussions have been more valuable/

to my students/

Catalyst

they learned more/

and it's because I think/

I feel like I'm asking the right questions

or trying to ask the right questions to probe/

you know/constructive questions/

Crisis

it's not just questioning for questioning/

it's actually trying to scaffold/

and you never know/

which questions to put

and what order or what to/

but this time we actually went into the semester/

with a plan/

Evaluation

Because of your poster/

The content teacher and I worked with that/

you know/ I went in there and we were able to/

OK this week we're gonna work on this/

and that way we'll also see it in their writing/

Rosa: OK

Resolution

Anita: So they can write down their responses first

and then they can talk/

Rosa: Yes/

Anita: So it's good to have the questions before hand/

and if we weren't able to discuss in class/

as much as we would like to/

we put our questions up on Blackboard

[the class web platform]

Crisis

and they would have to respond to each other/

in discussion/

and so I felt for me/

happy to have been in your group/

and working/ learning about dialogic teaching/

it's been great and then I like how it's //

Rosa: helping you build meaning/

Evaluation

Anita: Yes/ build meaning and

using contingent questioning/

has really given me the responsibility

as the authority/

not just direct teaching where I know all the answers/

and that way we build meaning

and it's given my students authority too/

Resolution

and also/you know I always said/

I was more of the facilitator/in my classes/but///

Rosa: it's more than facilitating/ you're handing it over/

Anita: Yes/

Coda

Rosa: and I noticed especially in the fourth session

where they were talking more to one another/

Anita: Yet/ still learning/

[Anita's Debriefing of Observations 2, 3, 4, lines 381-410]

Anita asserted that having discussions were more "more purposeful" in her positive appraisal. She affirmed, "They learned more" using "more" to compare how she felt at that moment to what she felt in the past. She connected her actions to the teacher discourse of asking questions, "and it's because I think/ I feel like I'm asking the right questions or trying to ask the right questions to probe/."

Clarifying the kind of questioning she now was trying to attain, Anita highlighted her use of questioning and its purpose "it's not just questioning for questioning/ it's actually trying to scaffold."

The practitioners each appropriated the concepts of dialogic teaching, transforming their previous stances of negatively appraising their opportunities for enacting discussions with their ELLs; this case study of Anita's work shows the uneven road of her transformation. At the end of the group sessions, she was just beginning to understand what she needed to do. Then she gradually took up the concepts of contingent questioning and handing the class over to her students.

Conclusion. Anita revealed that her appropriation of dialogic teaching was still tentative at the end of the group sessions. Nevertheless, she was very positive in her willingness to try dialogic teaching. In fact, I witnessed her skillfully guiding her student's participation and her student's elaborating on their ideas and utilizing new vocabulary.

To sum up what both case studies told me is that there are differences and similarities that highlight each practitioner's way of being an ELL professional in the moment because of the particularities of their settings, backgrounds, and personal practical knowledge. Lucy used small groups to enact discussions whereas Anita used whole group discussion. Both practitioners were faced with engaging English language learners with college level texts.

Lucy organized her teaching around modals, which is a type of scaffolding (Bruner, 1975) that helped the students understand what was expected. Whereas Lucy was accomplished in teaching with modals and setting up interactions, Anita focused on guiding whole group participation and responding to students, drawing them into the discussion. Both ELL teachers used humor with their students and were responsive to their learners in their own ways and both were working on being more dialogic.

In terms of triangulation of the findings thus far, the case studies showed that the learning trajectory of dialogic teaching for Lucy and Anita were idiosyncratic as is their teaching styles. However, as the next chapter will illuminate, there are certain findings that I take away from this experience of facilitating professional development for experienced teachers. Lucy and Anita's cases studies show that given enough time to appropriate new ways of doing things and blend it with what they already do, practitioners can begin to transform their teaching because they become more aware of aspects of their teaching that they had not focused on before. Moreover, if they see that their students improve, as both Lucy and Anita had, they will become convinced of the learning advantages dialogic teaching brings with it.

Chapter Eight: Discussion

Conclusions and Implications

This research is unique in that it has drawn on four domains of knowledge: sociocultural learning, language learning, literacy learning, and teacher education/professional development. Knowledge of language learning has served as the common denominator for the inquiry group. Literacy learning as social practice for ELL classrooms was the procedural knowledge target of the group, undergirded by the knowledge of sociocultural theory of learning and dialogic teaching. Also, knowledge of teacher education was a domain I used as a tool so that I could examine and understand the dimensions of our conceptual learning. By combining a focus on these domains, I could alternately investigate language use, process, and the meaning of practitioner work as interpreted by present day theories, which have been reviewed in Chapter Two.

As Suggested by Cobb et. al (2003), the group inquiry rendered a modest local instruction theory or "learning ecology." We devised the designed-in macro and micro learning scaffolds to represent what teachers need to think about when teaching ELLs. (See Appendix D and E). I believe as Brandt (2001) suggested that the scaffolds are generic enough to be applicable to many teaching and learning situations. Also, as Reinking and Bradley (2008) have advocated, this research has described the achievement of pedagogical goals, i.e. more orally engaged students speaking in classrooms with ELs and monolingual students.

Thus, this research contributes empirically to all four domains in an eclectic sociocultural approach to understanding and learning how to meet the needs of ELLs alternately from a language standpoint, a literacy learning standpoint, and from a teacher

learning standpoint. Theoretically, eclecticism serves EL practitioners well, given the complexity of both teaching language as well as content in classrooms, but as this research shows, dialogical teaching can enhance EL teaching and learning and so attention to literacy learnign practices deserve more emphasis in EL teacher learning, pre-service or in-service teacher professional development.

Dialogic teaching when used with complex texts brings together concern for language use and literacy learning, and is linked to EL teacher learning by the very nature of the topic itself. Practitioners are responsible for setting up the classroom contexs and making the content understandable. This research demonstrates that dialogic teaching can serve as a bridge connecting the language learning and literacy learning for which Grant and Wong (2003) advocated. Classroom language provides the context and content for learning. Also, this dissertation describes dialogic teaching for upper grade ELLs by reflexive strategic mediation (Wertsch, 1985), extending Mercer and Dawes' (2008) suggestions for establishing "an appropriate set of ground rules for talk in the class."(p. 70)

Moreover, methodologically, the combination of multiple methods and application of Juzwik and Ives' (2010) identity-in-interaction allowed me to witness practitioner change of appraisals from negative to positive appreciation of their students' learning. Use of Brandt and Clinton's (2002) concept of literacy objects mediating across time and space transtextualized standardized testing for college admissions. The following elaborates this learning gained from the across-the-inquiry approach.

Language/Narratives Across the Inquiry

The practitioners were transformed from a stance of reticence to more strategic awareness regarding enacting instructional conversations. To the question what happened when a group of ESL teachers collaborate in a dialogically inspired professional development inquiry, in general terms, I answer that the teachers told their stories, expressing their teacher identities, their fears about enacting discussions in their classrooms, and their frustrations. They also shone a light on their students for what they accomplished.

The practitioners told narratives of their lived realities and described their contexts. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) helped me understand the relationship between the language and the context. There were 29 transcribed, segmented, and analyzed narratives from the practitioner inquiry study of how literacy can be taught with ELLs who are reading complex texts (see Appendix G). The narratives were chosen to exemplify the process, learning, and stances taken by group members.

By digging deeper into the 29 narratives, we can see that the practitioners naturally expressed opinions about their own work, their students' work, and their work contexts. The categories derived from grounded theory coding described in Chapter Six showed us much of the same picture. (See the Code Book, Appendix B.) However, the narratives analyzed with critical discourse analysis gave me a fuller picture of the discourse because I was able to analyze how the practitioners' ways of interacting (genres), ways of representing (discourse), and ways of being (style) interacted within the inquiry group. Examined in narrative forms, the discourse included appraisals (Martin &

Rose, 2007) of the practitioners themselves, ten of them, appraisals of their students' work, eight of them, and eleven appraisals of school practices (see Appendix G).

Language/narrative themes. To find the overarching themes of the narratives in the inquiry, I discerned that a 'pattern' consisted of a language feature appearing at least twice in the discourse, and then I looked at how the language was related to the meaning being expressed in the appraisal. For example, if I noticed a word being repeated in an utterance, I would look more closely at the utterance to discern the meaning of the repetition so I could interpret it. In the following paragraph, I highlight the themes or patterns of language use supporting the function of what was said to show how the meaning of the discourse is a function of the language used in the moment.

Practitioners expressed agency. The declarations of being in charge of their classrooms and being knowledgeable about ELLs were occasionally softened by the practitioners, but this function was expressed nevertheless throughout the inquiry. The practitioners presented their teacher selves, their agency, with confidence. Looking at the language used in the appraisals in terms of agency, the practitioners expressed an active agency using "I" more than "they"; "we" was used rarely and "you" was included in several instances of "you know." Verbs of cognition softened the assertion of control: "I think," "I don't think" and "I thought" were used more than "I know." The emotives, "I feel" and "I like" were likewise used. Intensifiers "very" and "did" sometimes augmented the intensity of feelings or judgments. Contrasting conditions were presented with "but" and logic expressed with "so." Revoicing was used on occasion to emphasize points being made as well.

Teachers expressed care and frustration. The function of expressing care for students was present, but it was complicated by the contextual factors impinging on the practitioners in their contexts. For example, in Daphne's narrative where she gave advice to students about how to gain access to an academic discussion, she expresses her hope for the students: "because then they will ask you questions/ they'll draw you out/ well hopefully they will/and you can get something going there/" (DPC initial interview, lines 319-320) and we note Lucy's pride in her students' interaction as she goes over the transcription of her class (Lucy's first observation, lines 56-133).

In terms of affect, there were more positive appraisals than negative appraisals. Of the negative appraisals, four of the appraisals centered on contextual elements which were in opposition to the practitioner's sense of student learning. Debra's narrative "There are a lot of guests" and her narratives "A lot of inconsistencies" and "The vision is off" directly referred to how her school environment was affected by administrative practices, which were shared for colleague comment.

In addition to striving to help ELLs in her class, Debra had to manage monolingual students' reactions to the ELLs in her class; a topic that deserves much more attention in future work. Debra's "A Trust Issue" narrative implicitly allowed students to complain about second language use whereas her "Pure Behavior Management" voiced frustration of having to deal with misbehavior. Debra's narratives gave us an analysis of her situation with the underlying tensions of working in a middle school laid bare. Likewise, we understand some of the tensions of working with ELLs in higher education programs from Daphne's "We can't get rid of it." That narrative alluded to testing

policies that focus students on discrete parts of the language and impeded their

appreciation of learning from discussion.

Practitioners affirmed student uptake. While there are seven positive

appraisals of student academic performances, they all occurred after the practitioners

implemented dialogic teaching in their classes. These were appraisals of "more" and

"better" student participation in class discussions. Anita's narrative "My Students were

more open to talking" tells of her students opening up to discussion after she introduced

the idea of author bias. The narrative featured the phrase "you know," which expressed

Anita's appeal to her listeners to understand in a familiar way, and her use of "just"

amplified the affect of surprise that she experienced. Anita's narrative "An Aha

Moment" renders her student's insight into her insight. It showed Anita's tendency to

use amplifications such as "I mean" and "actually" to further highlight her positive affect.

Daphne's "They did construct knowledge" narrative showed Daphne repeating that

someone "said something" and then exclaiming, "suddenly" in her narrative which

showed her surprise. Daphne used a pattern of the modal "can" in the narrative "You're

gonna have to do this in your regular classes" besides a pattern of revoicing as well which

showed her surprise and positive affect.

Teachers expressed benefits of dialogic teaching. Debra's narrative "They

have a better understanding of text" articulates the benefit of using dialogic teaching.

Debra: "They have a better understanding of the text/because of what I've been

doing with discussion/

Rosa: Good.

Debra: So I feel like that's where the benefit has been/

(Last group session, Oct. 27, lines 382-387)

This benefit of understanding text is an important benefit that engenders the group to construct knowledge together and benefit from one another's understandings for further understanding. Debra is delighted with that result. In the narrative "They have a better understanding of text" Debra repeats the amplifying phrases" I mean" which likewise shows her positive affect. She also uses "I think" to express her opinion, but to also hedge her assertions. In keeping with her self-portrayal of someone who favors a thoughtful approach, she used the logical connector "so" and comparatives and superlatives were expressed as well as "actually" to amplify her positive affect. Lucy expressed her pride of the students' accomplishment as well. "Lucy's narrative of change in students," and "People pick up on what other people said," had patterns of "really" used as an intensifier, "so" used as a logical connector and "but" as a contradiction which conform to the patterns already expressed.

Teachers acknowledged student challenges/deficits. Some of the negative appraisals constructed deficit positions for students. How the deficits were expressed showed, though, that the practitioner, Lucy in this case, had an awareness of the deficit position she was expressing about ELL students. Lucy's narrative "We're not going to understand them" expressed an appeal to her colleagues to try to understand their ELL students, portraying the students as victims. This was not a portrayal of a stereotype, but an honest appeal to understand lack of background knowledge. In addition, Lucy's "I would like it to spring from them" narrative has a blaming theme underlying it, yet Lucy acknowledged her deficit thinking in a joking way showing her awareness of the paradox.

Also, Lucy's narrative "They don't value their own knowledge" infers a cultural deficit, but it was not an unmindful inference. Lucy's main point of concern was for the students' agency in that narrative. Anita's narrative "If they lose face" is similar. In that narrative, Anita appraises students with negative affect, yet the overall message of the narrative centered on explaining student behavior. Likewise, Anita's narrative "It's hard for them" expressed her concern of the students' lack of facility of thinking in English in her explanation of their classroom behavior, but an ethos of care was discernable. Anita said: "they've never thought about it [an academic topic] in their first language/ so having to think about it in their second language/is difficult/" (AM initial interview, lines 5-7).

The naming of the student's difficulties does not subordinate the students in a racist way; neither was there a propensity to espouse deficiency models like the ones described in Solorzano and Yosso's (2001) outline of racist, deficit positioning, but yet the naming of deficits has the potential to impact students if care to avoid stereotyping is not taken. Speaking of language deficits can infer cultural inadequacies. Habermas (2000) wrote, "Language is not an innocent reflection of how we think. The terms we use control our perceptions, shape our understanding, and led us to particular proposal for improvement" (p. 203). Thus, an awareness of language positioning is important.

If deficits were named by the practitioners, there was often an effort to locate and name other positive student attributes to counter any aura of deficit as noted above. This was done without comment on anyone's part. There was an ebb and flow of naming deficits, mixed with positive teacher talk. For example, when discussing one of the journal articles, "Extending the English language learners' classroom interactions using the response protocol," Lucy remarked:

> I remember/ It was very concrete. Like how to respond to students' responses
>
> that are correct/ incorrect/It was almost like a scripted dialogue/It gives you things
>
> to think about/ I like things in this article like/it goes over/ why discussion doesn't
>
> always happen/ you know/ because students don't understand the question / they
>
> don't have time to respond/ and they don't understand the cultural expectations/
>
> so I like the clarity of that point/. (Session 3, April 21, lines 510-516)

The practitioners are experienced professionals who understand the rhythms of the classroom and know that ELs face challenges, which can be named deficits depending on the intent of the speakers.

In the inquiry, we saw Anita, for example, working to present the students with dialogic teaching so that they can better understand complex readings, so I believe it is logical to conclude that she knows their deficits are not static and that they can be empowered to critically think and articulate complex ideas in English. The other practitioners are similarly positioned in the inquiry as desiring to better their students' lack of background knowledge, lack of agency, and lack of ability to think in English. Nevertheless, naming a deficit can lay blame on the students and so this is another aspect of what makes using discussion difficult for teachers. Instead of looking to the students and noticing what they did not do, remarks could be focused on what was accomplished, as it is known that language learning is not linear and it is idiosyncratic. There are numerous reasons why a student may unsuccessfully take up something in a lesson as Lucy remarked above.

The contradiction of Anita's narrative "It's hard for them" names the difficulty of thinking in English and she subtly positions the students as helpless. Anita said, "It's

hard/ because I don't think they have the background knowledge/" (Anita's initial

interview, line 6). This implicates her duty to teach the students the background

knowledge and, at the same time, infers that there is some kind of deficit. On analysis,

this narrative brought to light my position of not responding to and co-constructing the

negative positioning.

Yet upon further reflection, I realize I did not want to influence Anita's thinking

at that point in her initial interview, so her statements were left standing without too

much comment. I was trusting that dialogic teaching and emphasis on building

background knowledge would change her positioning. In fact, later on in the inquiry

group, Anita did extol a student's thinking (An Aha moment, Last Session, lines 198-

216). A pattern of at first expressing deficits and then, after experiencing success with

dialogic teaching, expressing positive affect was evident for all of the practitioners as has

already been discussed.

Types of Deficit Positioning

However, a narrative chunk of language might be both positive in intent but

negative in implication because of the danger of the language being interpreted as a

negative put down. Vološinov (1973) established that all utterances are ideological.

Solorzano and Yosso (2001) assert "It is important to note that unconscious and subtle

forms of racial stereotyping are pervasive in the public and private discourse and are

usually not socially condoned" (p. 6). The lexical ambiguity of "condone" in the quote

can be interpreted as "to give tacit approval," "ignored" or "forgiven." In this case, I

interpret the authors' meaning to be "ignored." I interpret the authors to mean that

instances of stereotyping are not socially ignored; that they matter. If the instances of

stereotyping were ignored in the inquiry, it was because the practitioners have all studied

multicultural theory to some extent and/or have lived the reality of working with students

from various cultures on a daily basis and are firm in their role as ELL advocates.

Nevertheless, as the previous chapters explicated, in the practitioner inquiry there

were instances of naming deficits. However, as the following analysis will show, there

was a balance struck between deficit expression in the moment and drawing on

discourses of stereotypes and then contradicting and softening of the appraisals, in either

word or actions. In any case, it was important to for me be on the lookout for negative

connotations of the language used to describe student behavior in the analysis. As a

result, a look at the language patterns in the negative appraisals is warranted.

When practitioners named deficits, they were somehow verbally neutralized.

Patterns in the negative appraisals showed use of the pronoun "they," and the verb "I

think," which hedged the negativity, and then sometimes in the same narrative there was

revoicing or contractions, which emphasized positive aspects of student behavior or a

self-blaming aspect in the discourse as we saw in Lucy's narrative, "I would like it to

spring from them." In other narratives, there was likewise a paradox of practitioners

hedging deficit expressions and at the same time contradicting them with positive affect,

such as in Anita's "My students were more open to talking" which implied, but did not

name the students' resistance to verbal engagement. Daphne's narrative, "You're gonna

have to do this in your regular classes" She named the students' deficits, yet emphasized

"a way in" when she said,

> You know maybe you don't feel comfortable/and your classmates are busy
>
> shouting out answers/or there's a discussion/and they all seem to know what

they're talking about//and their English is very// you know / great//they're all

talking a mile a minute/but/ there's always the culture card/hh/ you can always

say/ "excuse me" you know. (DPC, initial interview, lines 316-319)

From the analysis of the negative appraisals, I can say that, if there was an

expression of deficit within a narrative, the negative aspects of the students' behavior

were somehow hedged. For example, the use of the logical connector "because" and

conditionals gave us logical statements following the "because" which were hedged or

softened by use of conditionals, supporting again the idea of expressions of paradox.

Deficit constructions. Nevertheless, this analysis shows that there were deficit

constructions and that in the deficit constructions there was complicity in the group

discourse; I include myself in the complicity. However, as noted, there was a continuum

of discourse which "verged on" the negative as Anita's assertion of students losing face

in the narrative " If they Lose Face" to the overt expression of deficit as when Lucy

expressed her students' lack of critical thinking in the narrative "I have avoided people

talking."

Given the context of practitioners meeting together to understand dialogic

teaching without a grade or pay, it is reasonable to say that the practitioners' intentions

were to improve their teaching and, as a result, their learning in order to rectify the

deficits. Within the deficit constructions, it is useful to think about the types of student

issues that were highlighted by the practitioners; students were unaware, they lacked

depth in their responses, students were shutting down, not understanding, or complaining

or misbehaving. In sum, the students' thinking abilities or their behaviors were in

question.

        Mostly these issues are typical issues practitioners might casually talk about with

colleagues. However, I categorized them as a deficiency orientation (Gay, 1983) which

can be defined as emphasized notions of unspecified groups having difficulties so much

so that the difficulties become a common topic or reference in conversations especially

those exchanges that are not professional discussions related to student well-being. Gay

(1983) expressed deficit thinking as deficiency orientation, which focuses on what one

group lacks in comparison to values and advantages of another group. The notions can

be expressed overtly or be subtly referred to and can feed into justifications of certain

attitudes and behaviors towards students who speak language other than English at home.

        Here I want to refer to the discussions above about paradoxes expressed. In other

words, I am not implying that the narratives expressed in our practitioner inquiry were

focused on student deficits; to the contrary, I want to clarify that although some

expression of student deficits did come up in the narratives, they followed the pattern

elaborated above.

        There were five negative narratives concerning student behavior out of the

narratives about student behavior. These were examined to understand their nature and to

think about negative and positive implications, which can either be disrupted or

encouraged depending on the social meaning of the language. My own thinking is that it

was better to have the full range of expressions, both deficit and positive, so that a light

could be shone on the deficit expressions and they could be recognized as potential

justifications or excuses for engendering adversity for the students in the form of lowered

expectations or more subtly, for example, as an excuse in this study for not doing the hard

work it takes to teach dialogically so that students can better understand their texts.

Practitioner Change

Practitioners in the inquiry did change as noted already. Looking across the inquiry, the change was incremental, starting with an admission of a problem in their practice. Three of the practitioner's self-appraisals drew on teacher discourses of disparaging lack of time. Whereas in Lucy's narrative "I have avoided people talking," she admitted that she had not engaged her students in discussion enough; she referred to lack of time in terms of students needing more time. Anita's narrative of "I'm not going to try to do everything" is likewise a narrative where Anita admits a self-realization that she could not hang on to her old way of doing things of worksheets and monologic teaching and try enacting discussions at the same time, so hers was a realization that she needed to use her time wisely. Anita's narrative "The discussions have been more valuable" summarized her appraisal of using dialogic teaching and she referred to her own lack of time. Using "if" conditionals, explaining procedural moves using "I don't know," and "I think," Anita showed contrasts with "but" and she also used revoicing to emphasize her points. Lucy and Anita also indicated purposeful stances in their narratives just mentioned using "I" "they" and "you know." Moreover, the self-appraisals sometimes made use of the present continuous tense to show how the actions being described continued over a span of time.

Power differentials. Finally, the beliefs the practitioners expressed in all the appraisals showed that they were aware of their power to influence students. For example, Lucy in her initial interview noted "so I make 'em write discussion questions/and I make 'em post/discussion questions/." (Lucy's initial interview, lines 382-387.) The practitioner's use of the subjunctive, "I make'em," and her use of the

future as indicator, "I'm not gonna" or "we're not gonna" contrasted with "I guess," or "I try." But in any case, the practitioners used their teaching authority to guide learners into academic English discourse. In addition, they used a full compendium of modals to grade the affect and judgments in their stories in terms of possibility "can" or "can't," "might" or "maybe" or "probably." Also, "should" and "should have" were expressed to show obligation. "But" was consistently used to show contrast and revoicing was used for emphasis.

For example, when Lucy described how her students changed their minds about their reading being applicable to their situations, she revoiced the students' resistance, "no way/ not us/ you know this has nothing to do with us/we don't get that/" (Session 5, lines 446-448) to contrast their original positons with their changed attitudes. The use of the present perfect showed the speakers expressed some of the actions started in some indefinite time in the past and continued up to the moment. I interpreted this to mean that the practitioners understood the long-term approach of learning and that they appreciated the changes that they recognized. For example, Anita said, "This semester the discussions have been more valuable/ to my students/" (Anita's debriefing of observations 2, 3, 4, lines 385-386). I interpreted her use of the present perfect to show that she realized that dialogism does not happen quickly, but once academic discussions happened, benefits could be realized.

Positive attributes. Using dialogic teaching did give the practitioners reason to describe positive attributes of the students' engagement in class discussion. This is the most important fact. Without a vehicle for change, the practitioners could have remained mired in the deficit discourse of students not being able to discuss. The evidence from

across the inquiry group discussions showed that the practitioners were invested in

changing their practices and that they were pleased to be doing so. They noticed

differences in student classroom participation, for example. Lucy said,

> I like the way people picked up on what other people said/and built their ideas
>
> from one another/that was probably the most participation I'd had in a
>
> connections[activity]/ this is the third time we had done it/ so I like all that/ I liked
>
> that they were able/. [L.W. First Observation, lines 350-352]

> Daphne's narrative "They did construct knowledge," Anita's narrative, "My

students were more open to talking," Debra's narrative, "They're helping each other

understand," and Debra's and Lucy's co-constructed narrative highlighted positive

student behavior, learning, collaborating, and understanding. We noticed our own

learning progressions as well.

> Rosa: I'm not fluent at blocking out a lesson yet/ in terms of what they are
>
> suggesting/
>
> Lucy: But I did think that OK/ instead of just assigning the first hundred pages
>
> like I usually do/ I'd try to slow down this year/ and do the introduction and the
>
> first chapter together/
>
> Anita: Yeah/yeah
>
> Lucy: And then assign and double up later/so at least they'd have some kind of
>
> grounding/to do that when I'm actually working on my syllabus/
>
> Rosa: I know/
>
> [Session 5, June 27, lines 149-155]

Also, there was reciprocity within the inquiry group sessions, which showed a variety of social functions, expressed among the group members. Clarifications, comparisons, and contrasts as well as reflections and critiques were of the kind expected in a seminar environment. There were also challenges; for example, Anita and Daphne challenged my source of academic words. Anita said:

How did you chose the words last time/ Where were you coming

from? Were you choosing words from the AWL [Academic Word List] word list

or the first two thousand words/because there were words you selected that I

wouldn't have selected.

Daphne: When we were leveling/ right?

Rosa: Oh! Those wouldn't necessarily be words that I teach/ but they would be

potential words that would be difficult for the students/

Daphne: How do you determine which words/

Lucy: It's long time ESL instinct isn't it?

Daphne: Yes and no/ because remember we came up with different discussions of

what would be considered a difficult word/

[Everyone talking at once]

Lucy: There was a lot of overlap/

Rosa: Mostly the academic sounding words/the academic word list words/

I don't teach the academic word list but I know it/ [the list]

Daphne: Some of the words weren't academic/it's the next two thousand words

that are hard/

Lucy: I think sometimes it's the content-based words.

[Session 5, June 27, lines 441-456]

Dialogic Group Experience

The above is an example of our dialogic group experience in that we all expressed our ideas, building off what was said or done in the inquiry. In the exchange above, we can see differing positions with Daphne and Anita expressing an adherence to the academic word list, Rosa explicating her interpretation of vocabulary for her junior-level writing class, and Lucy taking up her mode of moderating the group by interpreting differences. As the inquiry evolved, I learned more deeply what it meant to teach dialogically. Our discussions and demonstrations allowed issues of identity, relationships, and ideology (Fairclough, 1992) to seamlessly emerge within the context of the discussion about the affordances and constraints of enacting instructional discussions.

I took on the position of leader with confidence that my experience afforded. However, because we were discovering something together that I was not quite sure of, I was self-conscious in my role. I gave full rein to the group members to interpret what we were doing and to frequently take over the discussion as I tried to listen deeply to the affect of their statements. I learned from my colleagues when to question more, what was fuzzy and what was clear. Dialogic teaching cannot be reduced to a recipe of which questions to ask; it needs to be understood and nurtured as a relationship among group members once the stance of being open to inquiry is established. Everyone needs to be positioned as having something to say and be allowed to say what it is they understand and think and feel.

Dialogic teaching and learning. Each of the participants demonstrated using dialogic teaching in their classrooms. The results of the class observations answer the

research question "In what ways will lesson development be relevant to the needs of those in the target settings?" Debra used dialogic teaching to create a response protocol for her whole group, which then was incorporated in student small group work for her monolingual students. Lucy used dialogic give and take in her design of small group work. And Anita incorporated dialogic teaching in her whole group questioning routines, which allowed her students to take over classroom discussions. This new learning for these veteran ELL practitioners was that after asking open questions for a discussion, they had to zero in on the students' responses and contingently draw more discussion out. Once a student responded and had gone further in his/her response after some prompting, the practitioner could relate what was said to another student to solicit even further comment, inviting others to consider their answers as well. The probing and connections gave the practitioners the tools to encourage still more student participation and to hand over the discussion to the students so that they were talking more to one another than to the teacher. Once that was accomplished in their classes, they were willing to try it again. And so they did and they were pleasantly surprised. They emphasized the positives, with "really" and "did" "do" or "I mean." For example when Lucy proudly noted the connections students were making she said, "They really do bring in their personal backgrounds into the/ I mean the way Ling-Yu talked about the immigration patterns in China/..." [L.W. first observation, line 347.]

Often ESL teachers are portrayed as having "people skills," which affects students more than teaching content well does. Abu- Rabia's (2004) work showed the role of ELL practitioner as nurturer. Ajayi (2011) highlighted how ELL practitioners can be cultural bridges for students. Moafian and Ghanizadeh (2009) explored how ESL teachers'

emotional intelligence facilitated EL student learning. I believe the roles the practitioners constructed in this study correspond to those roles as well. Lucy is a nurturer. Anita and Daphne strive to bridge the cultural differences for their students and Debra used her emotional intelligence to facilitate learning. And yet, they still sought to learn more about academic discussions because they realized it is important for ELL students to be able to participate in every way academically within the classroom. So by taking on dialogic teaching, the practitioners could use their skills of making the students feel valued by nurturing them, bridging cultures, and presenting students with emotional security and going further, moving the students to express their ideas in an academic discussion which is valued in many of our classrooms.

Thereby, the practitioners did position their EL students as interpreters of knowledge instead of just consumers of knowledge. Anita noted this when she described their academic discussions ". . . and that way we build meaning, and it's given my students authority too/" (Anita's Debriefing of Observations 2, 3, 4, lines 404-407). Table 10 summarizes the changes the practitioners experienced across the inquiry group sessions. For each practitioner, I have listed salient quotes from the transcriptions, which typify their attitudes and show how they changed their attitudes about enacting instructional conversations. The way practitioners expressed change is noteworthy. In most cases, the change was realized by what the practitioner observed about student behavior or by what they felt about their own behavior.

Table 10

Practitioner Change Over the Different Phases of the Inquiry

Participant	Phase 1-	Phase 2-	Phase 3-
Anita	Students need to be active learners./	Students will talk more/ if they realize authors have biases	Students described understandings I hadn't thought of./
Daphne	Students resist having discussion./	Leveling texts is a useful exercise./	Students did construct knowledge/[together]/
Debra	Students can discuss in their own languages/ but others may complain./	"I'm buying into this."/	The conversations they've been having are really good! / They're helping each other understand text/
Lucy	Students don't have confidence in themselves [in discussion]./	I don't know if I ever give them a chance to talk/hh/ also the challenge of talking is that the discussion can go off [topic] /	You kinda have to have some options in your head/ and just be able to go from what the students say/
Rosa	Leading the group at first felt very demanding because I could not quickly intuit how the group session would go.	However, like teaching a class/ after the first few meetings I understood the practitioner's better./	Taping your class and then showing your students/ I have never done it/ but I need to do that with my students/

Practitioner Learning/Change Across the Inquiry

While there were variances in the actual way their positions were expressed, most

of the practitioners showed some consistency in terms of their original orientations.

Daphne explained herself as an innovator with a task to motivate students in her

narrative, "Its' not like I'm gonna follow the book" and she maintained that stance in the

subsequent narrative, "You're gonna have to do this in your regular classes" where she

suggested that students self-advocate. Moreover, she was vocal in explaining a

transformation in her narrative "They did construct knowledge" where her students'

transformations again demonstrated the success of her innovation. Because Daphne had

more time constraints in her job than the other practitioners did, she only contributed four

narratives. Anita and Debra both contributed eight narratives and Lucy contributed nine.

Anita expressed her initial self-portrait in terms of aligning herself to theory and

focusing on active learning. In her narrative, "If they lose face" she shifted the discourse

to be more student-centered, but she still referred to theory. Anita said, "but I'm more

aware of not having anybody lose face/and I really do not/ because I really am / with the

affective factors/ if they lose face/that's it/so they'll shut down/and they won't contribute

anymore/" [Debrief of Anita's observation 2, 3, and 4, lines 243-244]. Her focus on

student learning remained constant. In her narrative "It's hard for them," however, her

expression of concern for the students, as noted above, verges on painting a picture of

student deficit, expressing a paradox.

Moreover, Anita's self-appraisal shows how she was struggling with adopting

dialogical teaching, maybe because it is not a theory, but a stance. Before Anita's

transformation, we saw more struggle with the dialogic stance in her "I feel like it's the

beginning" narrative. Also, sociocultural theory was new for Anita, and so there were

tension points at first of trying to teach using her "old" format of answering questions in a

monologic fashion and blending in the dialogical stance, which she realized in her

narrative "I'm not going to try to do everything." In her last three narratives, Anita noted

that her students became more open to talking in "My students were more open to

talking" as discussion became more valuable, (in "The discussions have been more

valuable") and students could express insights she hadn't thought of (in "An Aha Moment").

Debra varied a lot in terms of her change of stances. She positioned herself in terms of student thinking at first when she noted she liked to challenge students, but she also liked to have control of the situation. She expressed these stances in her first narrative, "I like to be very thoughtful in what I do." However, when monolingual students complained about their bilingual classmate's uses of Spanish in the classroom, Debra did not advocate for the bilingual students' use of Spanish in her narrative "Trust issue." In hindsight, I wish I had done this part of the inquiry differently. Had I mentioned something to Debra, she would have realized she was appeasing her monolingual students at the expense of her bilingual students when she did not assert the bilinguals rights to express themselves in their home language.

As the inquiry progressed, Debra became focused more on what was happening in her middle school setting as she expressed negative affect in "There are a lot of guests," and in "There are a lot of inconsistencies" and "The vision is off." With these negative realizations impinging on her sense of student learning in her context, Debra expressed her frustration with middle school students, in "Pure behavior management." After she changed schools, however, Debra had a more positive affect in her narrative, "I'm buying into this," and "They're helping each other understand," and finally in her narrative she articulates what the students were learning which she co-constructed with Lucy in "They have a better understanding of text."

Lucy's stance as a relationship builder and her task perception of listening to students' stories also varied throughout the inquiry. She sought to reassure Debra about

her education in questioning in the narrative "This might be a hard method." Also she agreed with Debra's assessment in the narrative "They have a better understanding of text," building a feeling of comradery for her colleague in both of these instances. However, as noted already, in her narrative "They don't value their own knowledge," her insights bordered on deficit positioning and her acknowledgment of her mild frustration with students' inability to discuss without coaching did as well. Nevertheless, we see in her narrative "I have avoided people talking" that her sensitivity towards student difficulties might have motivated her avoidance of discussions. Nonetheless, Lucy did recognize her students' change in engagement in two instances:"Lucy's narrative of change in students" and her "People picked up on what other people said." Lucy remarked, "but as I kept quiet/and the groups really did keep building on each other/and their ideas crossed groups/" [L.W. first observation, line 354.]

Implications

Discourse of change continuum

These trajectories of change teach us several things that are supported by the literature. First, there needs to be an awareness that deficit discourses can appear, and that the way we talk about ELLs builds generalizations about ELLs that can morph into "theories," or I would say stereotypes, if practices are not examined and the challenges that the learners may face, are not explained. This tendency for deficit discourse is not an isolated incident. Ninnes, Aitchison, and Kalos (1999) assert that there are two strands of discourse related to international students' learning in Australian universities, a cultural deficit perspective, and a more positive discourse, a cultural proficiency discourse, related to practical applications of differences. The authors acknowledge that the

prevailing cultural deficit strand "argues that many international students are committed rote, reproductive and surface learners who prefer learning environments referred to by Ashman and Conway (1997) as 'teaching centered' and which focus on the transmission of content and successful completion of exams" (p. 324). Burns (1991), however, contends that it is ill advised to assume that all students form a homogenous group. In fact, Ninnes et al. (1999) agree and note that other contextual factors can influence students' approach to learning.

In any case, an effort to counter deficit narratives in small ways was noted in the practitioner inquiry. Gutiérrez and Orellana (2006) recommend a self-reflective strategy to counter narratives, "One strategy for adopting a substantive self-reflective stance is to pay keen attention when we find ourselves naming something that students can't do or don't know" (p. 120). I would recommend speaking of challenges rather than problems. Second, Gutiérrez and Rogoff (2003) suggest that we move beyond our assumptions that there are "static regularities" in how individuals approach learning.

> We suggest that a cultural-historical approach can be used to help move beyond this assumption by focusing researchers' and practitioners' attention on variations in individuals and groups' histories of engagement in cultural practices because the variations reside not as traits of individuals or collections of individuals, but as proclivities of people with certain histories of engagement with specific cultural activities. (p.19)

In other words, instead of focusing on what is not present, focus on what is present which can change as well, depending on the instruction and modeling provided.

Moreover, it is true that "issues of power are enacted in classrooms" (Delpit, 1988, p. 282). As a result, what is spoken and how things are spoken matter. One important result of the collaboration was that I noticed a change in the practitioners' appraisal of their students. This change in practitioner appraisal of their students' capabilities was both cause and result of change in social practices due to implementing dialogic practices.

However, the changes would not have been so readily recognized if I had not been using critical discourse analysis. Breaking the speech apart and examining what was said in a minute way grounded my thinking in the data and helped me see the patterns of discourse and the way it built our identities, relationships, and what knowledge and beliefs we were drawing on in the minute. When the practitioners began reporting their use of dialogic practices, their appraisals of the students' abilities to participate in discussions changed to positive affect. This was the most important aspect of the practitioner inquiry. Empowered with new ways of doing discussion, reinforced with our inquiry group narrative performances, and transformed by their students' learning, as Anita remarked, "It [change to dialogism] is a work in progress." This sums up the work in the inquiry. Anita, like the others, was open to change and worked towards changing her teaching.

Dialogic teaching matters. There is ample research showing the advantages of dialogic teaching for student learning in literacy (Applebee, Langer, Nystrand, & Gamoran, 2003; Murphy, Wilkinson, Soter, Hennessy, & Alexander, 2009; Nystrand, 1997). This research is unique in its portrayal of teaching learners in upper grades. However, there is a need for more longitudinal fine-grained research of professional

development about how teachers incorporate dialogic teaching into their teaching repertoires in all classrooms. The results from this research show that that the process of change needed to embrace dialogic teaching takes time and that appropriation may or may not lead immediately to transformed teaching. Teachers need support over time to learn how to develop "sustained substantive dialogue" (Coughlan, Juzwick, Kelly, Borsheim-Black, & Goldering Fine, 2013, p. 213) with their students.

Benefits to dialogic teaching have been published as noted above, so I ask the same question I asked earlier in this dissertation, Why are we doing more of it? More work is needed to examine how pre-practice and practicing EL teachers could change their practices to include more dialogic repertoires. Besides the academic gains possible from dialogic teaching, dialogic teaching is a form of education that can foster "equity and a sense of belonging" (Dunn, 2011).

A sociocultural frame for literacy study can allow practitioners to understand the learner's zones of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978) and attend to emotional and knowledge gap issues besides providing learners with appropriate background knowledge and skills. In addition, readings at the appropriate learning level so that learners can feel agency in their learning is important (Halladay, 2012). Moreover, because language use in literacy brings with it many other variables such as cultural models, attitudes, values, and power (Gee 1999), it is important to not only view literacy learning as social practice, but to endeavor to see how power relationships shape literacy practices (Perry, 2012).

The change in how the practitioners talk about their learners, i.e. as engaged participants rather than silent students, is significant in that it changes how the students can be seen in future endeavors. If dialogic practices are continued, students can

continue to gain more facility in discussions. Therefore, as Wortham (2004) has noted, behaviors can count as signs of particular identities. Also, student identities both influence and are shaped by schooling (Varenne & McDermott, 1998). So by overtly acknowledging the students' new behavior, the students are positioned in a more advantageous way and any aura of deficit that might have been present can be dropped, especially if the practitioners are cognizant of how important it is to verbalize their new appreciations of student behavior. Nonetheless, whether the change of appraisal can be sustained is a question for further research.

      The power of literacy. Despite the promising practices of dialogic teaching, there are still power forces that impede international students from gaining full membership in U.S. classroom discussions. As Brandt and Clinton (2002) have remarked, "What appears to be a local event also can be understood as a far flung tendril in a much more elaborate vine" (p. 347). What can happen via dialogic teaching at the local level is generative for students at a particular site, especially if the EL practitioners recognize how they are disrupting the unwanted pall of deficit thinking about students' oral participation and are encouraging one another to provide more abundant scaffolded opportunities for engagement. EL practitioners play an important role in how students take up talking about reading and writing at the university. Nonetheless, the students and teachers are not the only agents in the literacy practices there as we saw in Daphne's comments about the TOEFL test.

      We can begin to understand the issues of power in literacy more concretely if we analyze how the local literacy of discussion around texts is linked to other things outside of the local using literacy-in-action (Brandt & Clinton, 2002). Brandt (2001) has

theorized the concept of the literacy sponsor, "the literacy sponsor bridge[s] the usual gaps between micro and macro levels of social structure as they relate to literacy and literacy learning" (Brandt & Clinton, 2002, p. 349). The sponsor at the university is the university itself and besides its agents, the practitioners teaching in its programs, it has standardized testing as its agent as well. Standardized tests such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or IELTS (International English Language Testing Systems) enact "localizing moves [which] encompass actions of humans and things in framing or partitioning particular interactions" (Brandt & Clinton, 2002, p. 351). They do this by allowing students to be accepted into a university for study (the human action) and by testing certain things such as grammar, vocabulary, reading comprehension, speaking and writing through multiple choice formats.

The test serves as a frame for further human action because students can augment their scores on the test by studying how to take the test and practicing how to answer the various types of questions. Conveniently, commercial programs and books are available to afford students this kind of practice. As a result, the test as a literacy object in action localizes the context of admission to a university that orients prospective students to that meaning of what it means to be prepared for university study. The localizing move of emphasizing test scores is also enhanced by universities posting the required scores for admission on their websites. Sometimes the test score is the only requirement listed for admission on a website. There is no mention of verbal abilities to participate in discussions or present an oral argument.

Never mind that many universities require students to be re-tested at the local level despite what has been determined by the university as a good score on one of those

tests. A good score on one of these tests is the students' foot in the door, so to speak.

Consequently, the tests "accomplish globalizing connects (Brandt & Clinton, 2002) as

they carry reading and writing actions in and out of local contexts or consolidate them in

one place, sometimes in transformed ways" (p. 352). Consequently, EL practitioners at

the university find themselves in a predicament. As agents of the university, they must

acknowledge that the test scores are important to the students, yet they realize that

students studying for those tests will only be prepared to pass the tests and not be ready to

participate as engaged students in many university classrooms in English speaking

countries.

The power of the globalized university to demand a certain score for admittance is

folded into the lives of the students. "Folding in" is a concept that expresses "the

relationships between people and things" (Brandt & Clinton, 2002, p. 353). The scores

on the test extend the relationship that the university has with students irrespective of the

local agents, the EL practitioners in English speaking countries.

Disrupting the power of tests. By mapping this network out, I see how

inequality in literacy can happen and "the processes by which diversity and inequality in

literacy are actually sustained" (Brandt & Clinton, 2002, p. 354). Unfortunately, "the

globalizing connect" (Brandt & Clinton, 2002, p. 354) that standardized tests have on EL

learners fits into the epistemological frame of reference in classrooms in many countries

in that local literacies on one end of the globalized connect might promote studying for

the test as well. That is to say because there is an emphasis on studying for a standardized

test in the local context, students are focused on passing the test. Consequently, the focus

of EL students studying for admission to a university in a non- English speaking

environment or an English-speaking environment can become studying for a multiple choice test because there is no affordance of dialogic practice necessary for classroom success in an English-speaking environment.

In Figure 5, using Brandt and Clinton's (2002) concept of literacy-in-action, I graphically show how the TOEFL or IELTS test comes between the interational student's admission to the university and the influence of the teaching contexts. Brandt and Clinton's idea of "literacy in action" can be interpreted as follows (2002, p. 348). If dialogic teaching is not practiced in one of the teaching contexts, and there is an emphasis on testing, it is easy to see how international students could come to an English speaking environment ill-prepared to discuss in class.
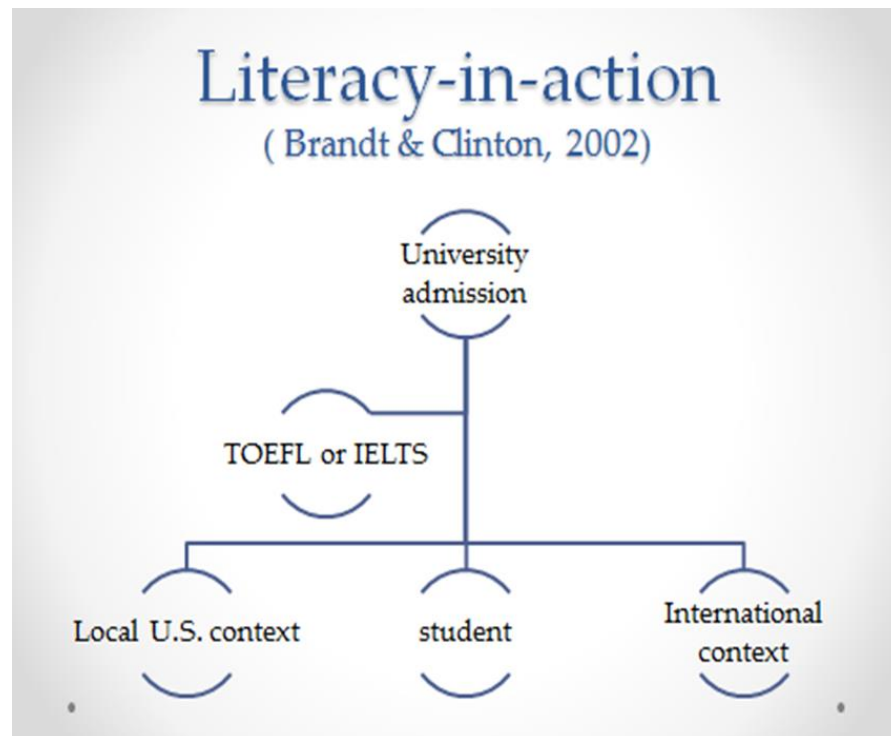

Figure 5. The Power of Standardized Tests for Pre-University EL Learners. Application of Brandt and Clinton's (2002) concept of "literacy in action" p. 354.

Some learnerscan learn how to engage in classroom conversations without prior experience; others struggle.

> That people manage to absorb or mollify these demands [of standardized testing] in different ways may be evidence of local ingenuity, diversity, agency…but it is just as much evidence of how powerfully literacy as a technology can insinuate itself into social relations anywhere. (Brandt & Clinton, 2002, p. 354)

EL practitioners on both sides of the global connect (Brandt & Clinton, 2002) can act to disrupt this globalized folding in of the standardized tests to enact local resistance in the form of dialogic teaching. That said, the need for collaboration and advocacy at the local and institutional levels for ELLs can be recognized. Staehr Fenner (2014) outlines the issues for collaboration needed so that learners can benefit within and outside the school.

Personally, I have heard many sad stories from EL students who were underprepared for active participation in English speaking classrooms where they have suffered personal humiliations, feelings of dissonance, and even depression. Moreover, I have seen the power of dialogic teaching to enact changes at the local level at least, and so I feel confident that students can be empowered even if the power of the standardized tests are not disrupted.

Nonetheless, it is also important for all stakeholders to be aware of stereotypes and to guard against them. When Daphne reported the wider university concerns about students not participating in discussions, I co-constructed that deficit discourse and I feel it is important in my future dealings to be aware of and counter any deficit discourse about student language deficits. My focus will be on language as a lens to view

multicultural educational endeavors and reports at the higher education level to help me

counter any tendency to linguicism (Nieto & Bode, 2008), a type of language

discrimination. Suggestions made by Cochran-Smith (2003) in a conceptual framework

for K-12 multicultural teacher education could be a good starting point for analysis of

how to make sure deficit thinking does not take hold in any interactions I may have with

insiders (fellow teachers) and outsiders (other university personnel).

Contributions to the field. Teacher educators can implement change by taking

many different routes, but this research indicates that it is incumbent upon teachers to

listen to student voices in a detailed way even in higher education. Dialogism (Nystrand

et al., 1997) can empower teachers and learners to better understand how comprehension

of difficult texts can be built. Careful attention to the many different facets of

understanding through dialogic teaching (Boyd & Maloof, 2000; Boyd & Markarian,

2011; Boyd & Rubin, 2002, 2006; Edwards & Mercer, 1987) should be an important

focus for teacher education programs for both monolingual and multilingual learners

because, if done well, it can empower EL students to orally engage in their classrooms

and transform any deficiency orientation.

However, I am not so fixated on the term dialogism itself. As Slavich and

Zimbardo (2012) have pointed out, "seemingly different strategies share important

underlying characteristics and can be viewed as complementary components of a broader

approach to classroom instruction" (p. 569). They call their version transformational

teaching. Others have different names such as inclusive pedagogy or effective pedagogy

or responsive teaching. Each one has its advantages. The important aspect from my

viewpoint is the dialogic qualities of valuing students in discussions and what they say in

joint endeavors. Also, for ELLs, a focus on language use is critical. Dialogism is a fundamental piece to all teaching for ELLs.

Longitudinal professional development in dialogism for established ELL practitioners is important so that regimented attitudes and practices can be shifted. Hammerness et. al (2005) have called for an inquiry stance in professional development so that practitioners can realize how culture affects their teaching. Care has to be taken to allow practitioners to narrate their concerns and time has to be set aside to nurture their vulnerabilities (Kelchtermans, 2009).

If additional professional development opportunities were created, I might ask the participants of the original inquiry to come to the PD and explain, with examples, how they have taken the concept of dialogic teaching further in their own contexts. In addition, I would decrease the number of readings participants would do. Focusing on just several readings: Gee (2004); Walqui (2006); and Resnitskaya (2012) could be good touchstone pieces for group study of dialogic teaching. Implementing mini-discussions in PD sessions after several models had been introduced and then implementing one in their own contexts using Resnitskaya's (2012) dialogic inquiry tool as a capstone for the PD could be useful for teachers wanting to implement more dialogic teaching in their classrooms. An extended assignment to implement two or three more dialogic discussions for self-reflection to be shared on a website for comments could likewise allow for a lengthier endeavor that could help participants to engage in long-term changes in their practices through peer dialogue.

I agree with Golombek and Johnson (2007) that narrative analysis is a worthwhile tool for language teachers, and Rogers and Schaenen (2013) that "an ever growing body

of research demonstrating how empowering teaching looks and sounds should… get

people thinking about how to make time to enable educationally equitable practices, the

kinds that lead to better learning outcomes" (p. 17).

Finally, my experience from this research tells me there are no fast ways to learn

how to teach dialogically and that work needs to be done to advocate for ELLs at all

levels of education, even at the higher education level. Efforts to support ELLs across

campus can be coordinated by the ones responsible for their acceptance. Departments

can be informed on how to become more language aware; practices can be implemented

to make international graduate students feel more integrated into the community. For

example, they can be given "buddies" or helped to form study groups. Above all, an

orientation toward ELLs, constructing them as an educational "problem," should be

avoided (Gutiérrez & Orellana, 2006).

When it comes to the teaching of English to language learners, knowing how to

engage learners around text and feeling competent to lead them to understanding and

agency usually requires practice with actual students. Online MATESL programs skirt

their obligations to provide hands-on teaching experiences with focused feedback. I

believe that professional development endeavors are hardly worth the time if they do not

involve application within classrooms. I agree with Fang, Fu, and Lamme (2004) that

"professional development efforts in education must recognize the complex, multifaceted

and lifelong nature of becoming and being an effective literacy teacher" (p. 64). Darling-

Hammond (1993) has delineated what quality professional development should look like.

Edwards, McMillon, and Turner (2010) highlight teacher reading groups and on-going

professional learning communities.

Moreover, higher education programs for teaching ELLs which focus on decontextualized skills and discrete aspects of language should be examined for more integrative curricula so that understanding of the social situatedness of teaching and learning can be focused on for those learners who struggle to perform their student roles in English (Gee, 2004; Verplaetse & Migloiacci, 2008).

My reflexivity in the process of creating and enacting the practitioner inquiry was self-conscious. I acknowledge that it was difficult to rise above my background in applied linguistics in higher education. Likewise, the various identities expressed by all of us in the inquiry included biases and concerns and excluded other aspects of teaching ELLs with difficult texts. In addition, the voices of the students were in the background in this study; in future research, the students' voices should be foregrounded. I believe the detailed description of discourse-in-action shows indeed the reflexivity of speech and action. Hopefully this dissertation can inspire more work towards extending research in that dimension of professional development endeavors. The affordances can be true transformations; the constraints involve the availability of a longitudinal focus on the practice of dialogism.

Rogers and Schaenen (2013) propose using CDA. They note that there are "four interrelated qualities of research design that are salient in literacy scholarship that draws on CDA" (p. 3). First, reflexivity is in regard to how visible the research process is. As a result, all along the way I have tried to call attention to the research process for this study. Second, context can entail the culturally, historically, and institutionally situated affordances and constraints on ways of speaking that shape speakers' meaning-making activity. In this study, I have noted the situations where narratives took place, but I left

implicit the constraints because I felt the considerations for focusing on the data to find

narratives has been explained; however, on further analysis, as with the analysis of

deficits, I realized local and global constraints. A local deficit, for example, would be the

lack of opportunities for instructional conversations in classrooms. An example of a global

contstraint is the global use of standardized tests for university admission. In terms of the

third quality, deconstructive-reconstructive orientations to power, I have endeavored to

show how the positioning of students affects them as well. This would be considered a

reconstructive orientation to power. Finally, the fourth item, social action/political

commitments of this study is its call for examining the communication of the

standardized testing requirements for ELLs in higher education.

In regard to Miles and Huberman's (1994) "four Rs" of research:

representativeness, reactivity, reliability, and replicability" (p. 263), I note that this

research is limited in its representativeness and has a bias, but in any case, it is

descriptive in the process of the practitioners' learning of dialogic teaching. In regards to

reliability, the strong point of this research has been the triangulation of the data because

of the multiple types of data and length of the data collection. Throughout the study, I

asked the practitioners to read the transcripts to verify the accuracy of what was said.

This along with the reporting of my reflections provides for some replicability of the

study. However, because design processes are predicated on inductive processes of who

the participants are and whom they teach, there could never be an exact replication of this

study. Nevertheless, the design aspects of viability including practicality, relevance, and

sustainability are attainable. The lessons we created can be said to be usable and

practical and the aspects we delineated for developing dialogic teaching for ELLs, I believe, are relevant.

This practitioner inquiry was focused on studying how practitioners, myself included, learn how to enact instructional conversations and more broadly, dialogic teaching. I feel that the work has been successful in helping me understand the nucances of enacting instructional conversations and that it has also helped make the practitioners more aware of how understanding can be accomplished through dialogic teaching. I believe that more oral work with students will be accomplished by the practitioners who participated in the inquiry. I know I will certainly bring more instructional conversations into my practice. I am confident that by attending to and expanding the practitioner knowledge base to include dialogic teaching, ELLs can be positioned as more successful, engaged learners. Nevertheless, concerns regarding the wider community persist. Advocacy for more inclusiveness at the classroom and institutional level is still very much needed and there are many socio-economic issues not even mentioned that need further inquiry to support ELLs effectively.

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Appendix A

Sample Transcription from the Pilot Study and Transcription Conventions

Jasmyn's Interview

RB So, can you tell me a little bit about how you use discussions in your classes?

JS: Um/ well, I vary it. So, sometimes, we, and it depends on the students, if I'm going to put them in little groups and they're not going to speak English even if I stand over them with a bell, which I've done, then I can't do small groups. If I put them in small groups if they're a varied group, // um, and I trust them to speak English I'll use small groups. I'll do a big group, I'll put students into language groups. Ah, if there are graduate students, I try to put the graduate students together so that they work on a higher level.

RB So/ what would be an ideal conversation in your class? How would it sound/ what would your students be producing?

JS: Well, it depends on the task. Some of the tasks are/like/ information based. So, on Thursday, my reading/writing groups are reading a novel and I would have a list of questions and have a discussion leader and give the questions to one person to discuss the novel. So/ their goal is to comprehend, make sure that they all understood the parts of the novel. So/ in a grammar or communication class or skill-oriented, like using the past tense, I had my grammar class in groups and they had to pick a year in the future and use the future tense and discuss how things will change. So/ in their groups, they had to think about how things like agriculture or transportation might change and how things might be in that year for transportation or agriculture. So/ that would be more skill-oriented, and

they are making future sentences. So/ some, like in a speaking class, they might just be talking about what they did last weekend.

RB O.K. So can you think of any successful or disastrous conversations that have occurred in your classes in the past?

JS: No// it just totally depends on the students, the class. If I use this one thing that has been successful for, like 10 years, then I'll get one group who refuses to speak English/ so it won't work. That future activity, that usually works pretty well, I've been using it for several years, they laugh, and yeah. It's totally dependent on the group/like whether they're just going to sit there and play with their phones or speak in their native language or just stare at their pencils, then they're not going to get anything out of it.

RB Yeah, the future activity sounds like it is really engaging.

JS: Yeah, it is. It is one of my favorite ones that I always pull out cause they enjoy it. Yeah, it is totally dependent on the students. The activity might work perfect if this group is willing to try it, but the next semester you might have a group that refuses to do it or they'll just sit there and not talk or whisper in their own language.

RB So, how do you handle that?

JS: Well, uh, I mean, it's, it's hard when you have one group. Well, like, Saudis would do it, speak English, they would do it because they're very vocal. But, if you have a group when the whole class speaks the same language, it's really, really tough. And, um, // you can take off points if they don't speak English. You know, I have a bell and I bring, ding-ding, if they can hear it, **NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING, DING DING DING** (laughs). I'll try with something silly, but, after that, there's just nothing you can do.

Appendix A

(Continued)

Transcription Conventions

Transcript notation	Meaning of Notation
( )	Transcriptionist Doubt
(inaud)	Inaudible
= =	Contiguous utterances
[ ] [ ]	Simultaneous utterances
[ ] [ ]	Overlapping utterances
/	1 second pause
LETTERS IN CAPS AND/OR IN BOLD	Speaker emphasis, stressed words or phrases
/hhh/ or /hh/	Indicates a little laugh or chuckle

Appendix B

Codebook

Codebook

Category	Sub category	Properties	Dimensions	Location in Data
APPRAISAL of PRACTICES	specific literacy practices	useful	appropriate to not worthwhile	session1,44122; session 2, 57963; Daphne, 8471; session 1,14263; session 1, 17363; session 4,71944; June 27,3207; June 27,4136, June 27, 10276; Session 3, 20265; session 4, 33455; session 2, 20531; session 1, 20805; session 2 ,69412; session 1, 15600; session 1, 15246,session 1, 17363; session 3, 21349; Debra 1883; Daphne, 2399; June 27, 5111; June 27 7009; Debra 7725
	discussion	worthy of effort	enthusiastic to conflicted	Debra, 8245; Daphne, 13181; Daphne, 20614; June 27, 1196; session 1, 44122; session 2, 57963; session 2, 78063; session 2, 371089; session 2, 57963; Daphne, 8471; session 1,14263; session 1, 17363; Daphne, 8471; Sept 13, line 35; session 1 44122-45999; session 2, 23717; session 4, 59972; session 4, 48617; session 4 , 54249; session 4, 67861; session 2, 2582; session 2, 25727, session 2, 31309; session 2, 75765; session 3, 37247; session 3, 38016; session 4, 48617; session 4, 6542; session 4, 60507; session 4, 51053; session 4, 47181; Daphne, 5911; session 1, 28191; session 4,54249;June 27, 40433; June 27, 41794; Sept 13,line 76; session 1 4617; session 2, 12828; session 3,10539; June 27 16032; June 27, 34829; session 3, 4486; session 4, 20781; session1, 30277; session 1, 26161; session 1, 25024; session 1, 31604; session 1, 3375; session 1, 33752; session 3, 27753; session 3, 38016; session 4, 47181; session 4, 51053; session 4, 60507;Daphne 1200,5122; Daphne, 5911; Sept 13, line 9,13,17, 101-104, 108; session 1 6438-6887; Session 2, 24454; Lucy, 36952. Lucy's Observation lines 323, 331;336,355,357; Anita's observations line 290; Debra's observation line 144,165; Sept 13, lines 269-271; Sept 13, lines 282-286; Sept 13, lines 299-313; lines 532-534;line 559; Debra, 5340; session 2, 51563-54539; session 4, 2136-62971, session 2, line 6. Lucy's Observation lines 323, 331;336,355,357; Anita's observations line 290; Debra's observation line 144,165; Sept 13, lines 269-271; Sept 13, lines 282-286; Sept 13, lines 299-313; lines 532-534;line 559; Debra, 5340; session 2, 51563-54539; session 4, 2136-62971, session 2, line 6.
		Prepared or not	making it flow to having disjunctions	June 27, 8623; June 27 14048, Debra 3491-3899; session 1, 6438-6887; session 2, 24454. This has three different memos linked sessions 2, 36100.

Category	Sub category	Properties	Dimensions	Location in Data
APPRAISAL of STUDENTS	Skills	appropriate language level	understands academic English to confused 7	session 1, 44122; session 1, 5959; Debra 8245; Daphne 13181; Daphne 20614; session 2, 43384; session 2, 48267; session 2, 56735; session 3, 30414; session 4, 52140.
		deep or superficial thinking	gaps in knowledge or amazed at understanding	Lisa W 37791; Debra, 4582-5318; session 2, 1124; session 1, 3317; session 4, 69895-71943; session 4, 69595; Daphne, 17271. session 1,6438-66887;session 2, 24454; session 4 69895-71942; Debra 4582-5318; session 4, 69595; session 4,69595; session 1,3317; June 27, 17408; session 4, 69595; session 3, 20265; session 4 33455; session 2, 20531; session 1, 20805; session 2 ,69412; session 1,15600; session 1 , 15246; session 1,7363. session 4, 37936; session 4, 41317; session 2, 64007, Debra's Observation line 151; Anita's observation line 257; Sept 13, lines 85-89; line 470-472; lines 504-511; line 641; lines 667-669; lines 695-709; lines 723-724; lines 749-752;
	Engagement	energized	accepts as useful to intensely engaged	session 1, 11692; session 1, 3317; session 1, 44122; session 1, 13455; session 1, 15246; session 1, 17363; session1, 31604;session 2, 1124; session 2, 17639; session 2, 24859; session 2, 25727; session 2, 31309; session 2, 57963; session 2, 75765; session 2, 2136; session 2, 2582; session 2, 6543; session 2, 23717; session 2, 64007; session 2, 68519; session 2, 7168; session 2, 72370; session 3,2539; session 3, 75107; session 4,71944; June 27, 3207; June 27, 4136; session 2, 78063; session 2, 371089; session 2, 57963; session 4, 59972; session 4, 48617; Daphne ,23594; Daphne, 8471; session 1,14263; session 1, 17363, Daphne, 8471; Sept 13, line 35. session 2, 2136, session 1 31604,session 1, 35418;session 3, 21349; Debra,1883; Daphne 2399; June 27, 40433; June 27, 41794 ; June 27, 16032; June 27,34829 ; session 1,44122; session 4, 71944; June 27,3207; June 12, 4136; session 1, 11692; session 1, 44122; session 1, 13455; session 1, 15246;; session 1, 17363; session 2, 17639; session 2, 24859; session 2, 25727; session 2, 31309; session 2, 75765; session 3,2539; session 3, 75107; session 4,71944; June 27, 3207; June 27, 36873; June 27, 4136; session 2, 57963; session 2, 78063; session 2, 371089; session 2, 57963; Daphne, 8471; session 1,14263; session 1, 17363, Daphne, 8471, Debra, 6198;Sept 13, line 35; ; session 1, 35418; session 1, 44122-45999; session 1, 4617; session 4, 37936; session 4, 41317; June 27, 10276; June 27, 44454; June 27, 11996; Lisa W 37936; Lucy's observation line 347; Lucy's observation line 366.

Category	Sub category	Properties	Dimensions	Location in Data
APPRAISAL of INQUIRY INTERAC-TION	Collabora-tion	comparative reflections	making a point to asking for information	Sept 13, lines 79-84; lines 749-764; lines 902-914; Sept 13, lines 322-329;lines 333-337; lines 388-391; lines 446- 453; lines 723-724; lines 735-738;lines 868-878. Sept 13, lines 101-104; lines 774-795; lines 806-815;lines 962-999; Sept 13, lines 103-108; lines 221-224; lines 313 -321; lines 833-848; 853-857; 923-961;
		appreciative of digging deeper	address it vigorously to lighly	Sept 13, line 215; Sept 13, lines 322-329;lines 333-337; lines 388-391; lines 446- 453; lines 723-724; lines 735-738; lines 868-878;
	concerned about wider context	assessments valid or not	hypocrisy to helpful	session 1, 18601; session 2, 17005; session 3, 13074; session 3,7269-10531, session 2,77185,

Appendix C

List of Data Sources

Data Sources	Data Collection
Researcher plans and notes for the group inquiry	1 per session written before the inquiry session takes place
Researcher field notes/	1 per session written after the inquiry takes place
Digital recordings of the group sessions and class observations	1 per lesson, using the researcher's digital recorder plus two other recorders when there are small group sessions. * Recordings were uploaded onto the researcher's password protected computer.
Transcriptions of the recordings	Most of the recordings were selected for transcription. * Transcripts used pseudonyms for practitioners' names.
Digital recording of the de-briefing after the class observation	There were ten de-brief recordings rolled into the transcriptions
Digital recordings and transcriptions of the interviews	There were four initial interviews and two case study interviews.
Practitioner written protocols and notes on revisions	There were four protocols.
Rubrics for protocols.	1 rubric was designed by the group

Appendix D

Scaffolding Considerations for ELL Classrooms-Macro Level

Handout for preparing for dialogic teaching
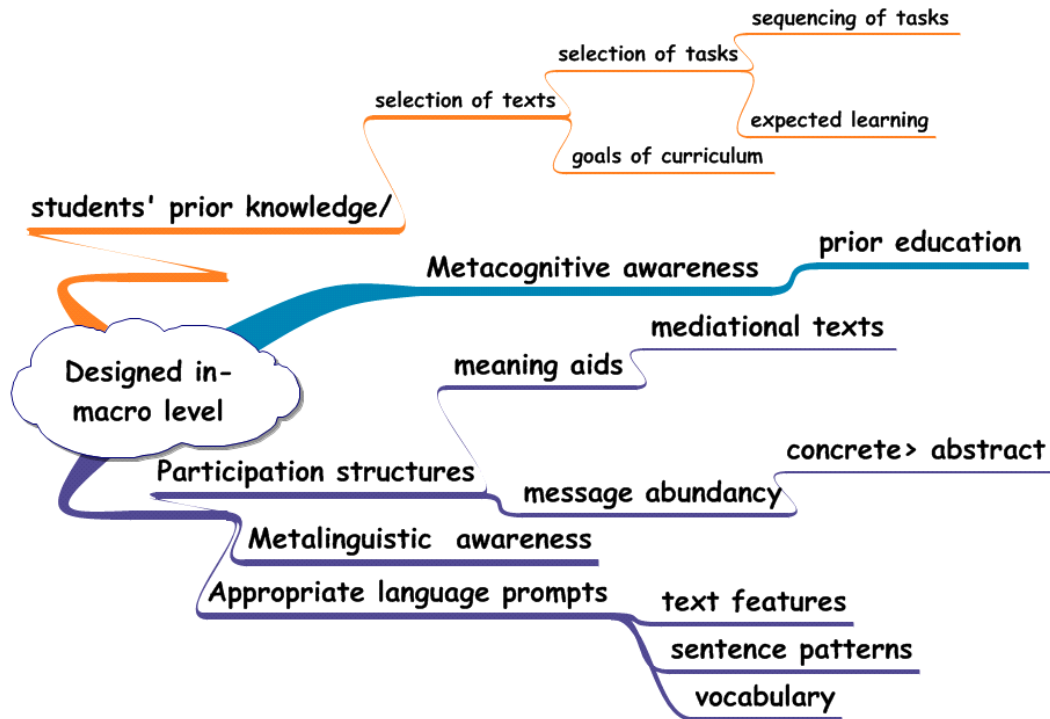
. **Knowledge of focus student**

    A. **Student's (WIDA) language proficiency level**

        1. **SOLOM of student**

(http://www.cal.org/twi/evaltoolkit/appendix/solom.pdf)

        2. **Other reading test scores if available**

        3. **Student writing sample**

    B. **Students' prior education and experience with texts**

    C. **Student writing sample if available**

    D. **Student's funds of knowledge at home, on a job, or in the community**

II. Goals of curriculum

        a. standards

        b. stakeholders expectations

  II. Dialogic Teaching set up

A. Selection of texts

    1. Leveled according to student ability

    http://www.ccsso.org/Navigating_Text_Complexity

    2. Knowledge of vocabulary load

    3. Text features

    4. Sentence structures

    5. Background gaps

B. Selection of tasks

    1. sequencing of tasks

      a. known>unknown

      b. message abundancy

      c. routines

      d. frequent reviews

    2. expected learning outcome

    3. formative feedback type

C. Participation structures

    1. Class Objectives

      a. whole group

      b. small group

      c. pair

D. Meaning aids

    1. graphic organizer

    2. mediational texts

    3. plan for discussion

Preparation for Dialogic Reading of Text

Text name_____

Qualitative Features

_____

_____
http://www.ccsso.org/Navigating_Text_Complexity

Vocabulary_____

_____

_____

Scaffolding for text structure, sentence structure, background gaps_____

_____
_____
_____

Selected passage to demonstrate for twenty minutes_____

_____

Type of dialogic teaching_____

Self-Assessment/Reflection Guide (p. 127, Beck & McKeown, Questioning the Author)

Appendix E

Scaffolding Considerations for ELL Classrooms-Micro Level
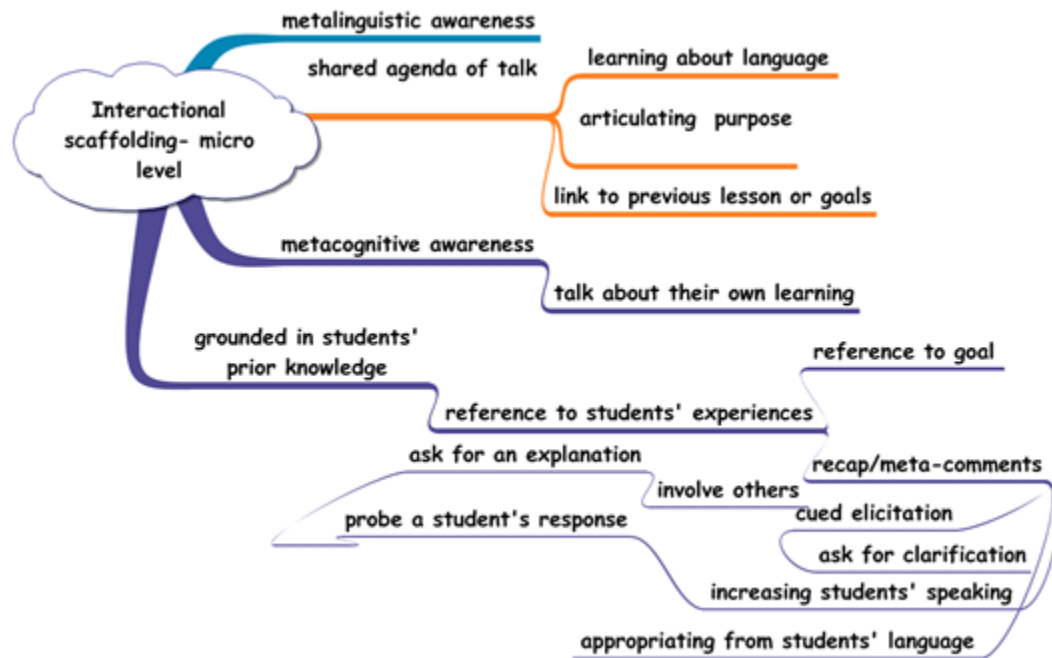
Interactional scaffolding- micro level

I.   Shared agenda of talk

      A.   Learning about language

      B.   Articulating purpose

      C.   link to previous lessons or broader goals

II.   Metacognitive awareness

      A.   talk about their own learning

III.   Metalinguistic awareness

IV.   Grounded in students'

prior knowledge

      A.   reference to students' out-of school,

      home, in school experiences

      1.   reference to curriculum goal

      2.   recap/meta- comments

       a. cued elicitation

                 i.   ask for clarification

           b.   probe a student's response

                i.   ask for an explanation

              ii.   involve others

     c.   increasing students' speaking

                i.   appropriating from students' language

Appendix F

Narratives with Negative Affect

Practitioner	Narratives	Voice**	Storyline
Anita-University programs	You Can't Even Discuss because they're Tied to their Dictionaries	Negative affect, school interdiscursivity	Text difficulty should be at grade level.
Daphne-University program	You're gonna have to do this in your regular classes	Negative affect, school interdiscursivity	Culture difference is a disadvantage
Debra-High school	A Trust Issue	Negative affect, school interdiscursivity	Other languages should be supported in the class.
Lucy-Community College	They don't value their own knowledge	Negative affect, school Interdiscursivity	Educational environments provide inclusive environments

Appendix G

Twenty-nine Narratives

Chart of Narratives: Beginning, Mid-Point, End

Phase of the Inquiry	Practitioner	Narratives	Discourses*
Beginning	Daphne-University programs	It's not like I'm gonna follow the book page for page, p. 141-142	Appraisal of self/practice+
	Lucy-Community College	It's kind of personality based p. 145-146	Appraisal of self/practice+
	Anita-University programs	Learning by doing p.148-150	Appraisal of self/practice+
	Debra-middle school	Debra : I like to be very thoughtful about what I do p.151-152	Appraisal of self/practice+
	Daphne-university programs	You're gonna have to do this in your regular classes p. 158-160	Appraisal of practice and student performance-
	Lucy-community college	They don't value their own knowledge p. 162-163.	Appraisal of student behavior-
	Debra-middle school	A Trust Issue p. 165-166	Appraisal of student behavior-
	Lucy – community college	We're not going to understand them p. 170	Appraisal of practices -
	Anita-University programs	They've never thought about it p. 190-191	Appraisal of student capacity +
Mid-Point	Debra – middle school	There are a lot of guests p. 192-193	Appraisal of context/ practices
	Debra-middle school	There are a lot of inconsistencies p. 196-197	Appraisal of context/ practices
	Daphne-University programs	We can't get rid of it p. 198-199	Appraisal of context/practices
	Debra-middle school	The vision is off p. 201	Appraisal of context/practices-

Phase of the Inquiry	Practitioner	Narratives	Discourses*
	Debra-middle school	Pure behavior management p. 205-206	Appraisal of student behavior-
	Debra-high school	I'm buying into this p. 217-219	Appraisal of self/practices+
	Lucy-community college	This might be a hard method p. 223-224	Appraisal of practices+
Final Phase	Anita-university programs	My students were more open to talking p. 227-228	Appraisal of student performance+
	Daphne-University programs	They did Construct Knowledge p. 237-238	Appraisal of student performance+
	Debra- high school	They're helping each other understand p. 242-244	Appraisal of student behavior +
	Debra-high school and Lucy community college	They have a better understanding of text p. 247-249	Appraisal of student performance+
	Anita – university programs	An aha moment p. 251-253	Appraisal of self/students/ practice+
Case Study	Lucy-community college	I would like it to spring form them p. 263-266	Appraisal of self and student performance-
		I have avoided people talking p. 268-270	Appraisal of self-
		Lucy's narrative of change in students p. 277-279	Appraisal of student performance and practices+
		People picked up on what other people said p. 281-283	Appraisal of student practices +

Phase of the Inquiry	Practitioner	Narratives	Discourses*
Case Study	**Anita-university programs**	I feel like it's the beginning p. 278-288	Appraisal of self/inquiry+
		I'm not going to try to do everything p.	Appraisal of self+
		If they lose face p. 294-295	Appraisal of student performance
		The discussions have been more valuable p. 297-301	Appraisal of practices/inquiry+

Appendix H

Sample of Teaching Protocol for Discussions

Academic Discussions
Example: Description of Exercises for Students

In each of the three exercises, you will find similar materials and routines:

Phase 1- focusing on <u>what a good discussion looks like</u>

- time for brief vocabulary reinforcement,

    think/write/pair-share/group share

- **the short passage from which to launch a discussion,**

- **a teacher read aloud of the short passage**

- **an example discussion on the short passage written out for the students which will be read,**

- **discussion questions about the discussion which was read**

- **a think aloud about the discussion which was read**

- **questions about the think- aloud**

- **a chart to fill in for group norms which can be extended as the class proceeds/**

Phase 2- focusing on answering <u>questions with opinions</u>

- **The same short passage**

- **Questions about the passage**
    think /write/share

- **A different example discussion on the same short passage written out for the students which will be read,**

- **discussion question(s) about the discussion which was read**

- **an opportunity for students to report what they wrote previously and to write and then read aloud as an extension of the discussion**

Phase 3: a focus on asking for clarifications

- **The same short passage**

- **Questions about the passage**
  think /write/share

- **an example discussion written out for the students which will be read,**

- **discussion question(s) about the discussion which was read**

- **an opportunity for students to report what they wrote previously and to write and then read aloud as an extension of the discussion**

You can use your own passage and use the routines or invent your own. Likewise, you
can use several different passages with the same routines depending on the student's reading abilities of the students.

Routines:
Students are given a handout with two sentences from a larger reading they've already read. And, they are asked to have their notebooks open ready to write in and then they are lead through short discussions focusing on different discussion skills: answering with opinions and giving reasons for the opinions, asking for clarification, comparing two thing, contrasting two things, recapping etc. Periodically after the routines have been introduced, you should evaluate their discussions with fishbowl presentations etc.

A possible teacher's script in bold

Phase 1: Focus on what a good discussion looks like.

I. We want to develop our discussion skill in English. What does a good discussion/ instructional conversation look like?   What do people do to make a good discussion?

What has to happen in a discussion? Write about this question: What are the elements of a good discussion?
Turn and tell your classmate what you wrote.

Whole Group Share
Write what the students say on the board.

***
II. First, let's look at the vocabulary. (This could be done on the second or third day of the unit after there has been some introduction to discussing and an initial reading of the topic.)

Words from the example from the 070 book.

1 the <u>patient</u> retelling of people's
2. <u>interior</u> lives
3. the <u>passing of</u> the earliest and succeeding generations

The teacher reads the sentences on the handout**:**

But it is the larger emotional truths, the **patient retelling** of people's **interior lives** and motivations, that that are the singular gift of the accounts in this book. With **the passing** of the earliest and succeeding generations of migrants, it is these stories that have become the least replaceable sources of any understanding of this great movement of people out of the South to the American North and West. (*The Warmth of Suns*, p. 13).

(Pointing to words) **Try to think about what the words mean in the sentences.**

Turn and tell your classmate the meaning of the words:

Whole Group Share vocabulary meanings:

▪▪

III. Discussion of a short passage from your book

Let's see if the discussion we read gives us any more ideas about discussions. The teacher hands out handout/ **Look at your handout**:

Teacher reads aloud:
But it is the larger emotional truths, the patient retelling of people's interior lives

and motivations, that that are the singular gift of the accounts in this book. With

the passing of the earliest and succeeding generations of migrants, it is these stories

that have become the least replaceable sources of any understanding of this great

movement of people out of the South to the American North and West. (*The Warmth*

of Suns*, p. 13).*

Now let's read a discussion about these sentences.

**The whole group read the discussion about the sentences with several students
getting assigned roles teacher, student 1, 2, 3.**

Teacher: What main point does the author want you to understand from this passage?

Student 1: A patient retells about the people's lives.

Teacher: That's true, the author does say something about a retelling, but we know from
the vocabulary words that patient here is a word describing the retelling. Does anybody
else have a different idea?

Student 2: I think it means that the stories are least replaceable.

Teacher: Hmn, let me read the first sentence again. Anybody else? What is the main
point of this sentence?

Student 3: That the emotional truths which are told in the stories are the most important.

Teacher: What does that mean?

Student 3:   The book tells us thing about the way people felt.
Teacher: Why do you say that?

Student 2: The book says, "The patient retelling of people's interior lives".

Teacher: What do you think? Why would the author say that the way people felt is
important?

Student 1: I think knowing how people felt is important.

Teacher: Why is that important?

Student 1: If you know how someone felt, you can understand them.

Teacher: Why is that important?

Student 1: If you understand people, then you understand some of the culture and
history.

Teacher : How do you know that?

Student 1: Our teacher told us yesterday.

Teacher: What did she tell you?

Student 1: That understanding history can help you understand people's culture..

Teacher: OK the author wants us to know that the stories tell us about how people felt and that this is important. What else is she saying in these sentences?

****

Questions after reading: **Is this a good conversation?   If not, why not? If it is, how do you know that?   What discussion moves did the students make? i.e. What did the students do in the conversation?   How can we change our ideas about discussions?** Look at what was written on the board and change it.

Let's look at the reading again. (The teacher thinks aloud using the review bubbles as prompts. The students do not have the bubbles on the side).

Teacher: What main point does the author want you to understand from this passage?

Student 1: A patient retells about the people's lives.

(Commentary)
The student tries to answer the question but did not get the right meaning of the word. But that's OK. Right. Everyone learns from mistakes made.

Teacher: That's true, the author does say something about a retelling, but we know from the vocabulary words that patient here is a word describing the retelling. Does anybody else have a different idea?

Student 2: I think it means that the stories are least replaceable.

(Commentary)
The student is trying to answer, but his/her reading is again not accurate. That happens. No big deal.

Teacher: Hmn, let me read the first sentence again. Anybody else? What is the main point of this sentence?

Student 3: That the emotional truths which are told in the stories are the most important.

(Commentary)
The student puts the ideas in his/her own words.

Teacher: What does that mean?

Student 3:   The book tells us things about the way people felt.

Teacher: Why do you say that?

(Commentary)
The student gets some direct words from the text to support his/her point.

Student 2: It says, "The retelling of people's interior lives".

Teacher: What do you think? Why would the author say that the way people felt is important?

Student 1: I think knowing how people felt is important.

(Commentary)
The student gives an opinion.

Teacher: Why is that important?

Student 1: If you know how someone felt, you can understand them.

(Commentary)
The student supports his/her opinion with a reason

Teacher : How do you know that?

Student 1: Our teacher told us yesterday.

(Commentary)
The student tells about her/his own experience to support the opinion. He/she makes a connection.

Teacher: What did she tell you?

Student 1: That understanding history can help you understand people's culture..

Teacher: OK the author wants us to know that the stories tell us about how people felt and that this is important. What else is he saying in these sentences?

****

Questions after the think aloud. So what else can we add to our lists. What makes a good discussion.

Guiding Expectations for our Conversations

1.
2.
3.
4.

Do you see how we built information together? This is why we have discussions to explore together the ideas in order to come up with new ideas.

■■■

Phase 2: Introduction and Practice: Focus on stating opinions

 I. **Let's look again at the sentences.**

The teacher reads the sentences:

 But it is the larger emotional truths, the patient retelling of people's interior lives

and motivations, that that are the singular gift of the accounts in this book. With

the passing of the earliest and succeeding generations of migrants, it is these stories

that have become the least replaceable sources of any understanding of this great

movements of people out of the South to the American North and West. (*The*

***Warmth of Suns*, p. 13).**

II. Let's look at the beginning of another in-class discussion where the teacher asks the students to try to give their own opinions and reasons for their opinion using the sentence starters:

 I think that it is true because/ I think it isn't true because /   (on the board)

Teacher and assigned students read aloud:

Teacher: What is the author saying in the second sentence?

Student 1: That the stories have become the least replaceable sources.

Teacher: Yes. The author does say that. Is that all she is saying?

Student 2: She's saying that stories are not replaceable and that the people who have stories are dying.

 Is that true?

Write down your answer: 1) Give a reason for your answers.

Yes, I think it's true because…/ or No I don't think it's true because…..
(Students write for 3 minutes then the teacher moves on, asking them to save their answers for later.) **Keep your answers for later.**
Let's read another example discussion.

III. Example Discussion**:** (Teacher reads aloud)

Teacher: The author's saying that stories are not replaceable and that the people who have stories are dying. Why is that true?

Student 1: People who have the stories are old now because the great migration took place a long time ago.

Teacher: Why wouldn't the people have told their stories before now?

Student 2: I think that the people would not have told their stories before now because they were too painful.

Teacher: Are there any other reasons?

Student 3: Maybe they don't think they're important?

Student 4: I think they could've been afraid.

IV. After reading sample discussion questions:

What do you notice about this discussion?

Can we add to our list about discussions?

Fishbowl Demonstration (After the second time you do something like this you could then give a grade for the demonstration, using a rubric you made with the students.) Put up a poster in class which has the sentence stems used throughout the course of the lesson. Explain how students should use the poster to help them think of responses. You can add to this poster throughout the semester.

Phase 3: Focusing on asking for elaborations and clarification.

I. **Let's look again at the sentences.**

The teacher reads the sentences:

But it is the larger emotional truths, the patient retelling of people's interior lives and motivations, that are the singular gift of the accounts in this book. With the passing of the earliest and succeeding generations of migrants, it is these stories that have become the least replaceable sources of any understanding of this great movement of people out of the South to the American North and West. (*The Warmth of Suns*, p. 13).

Teacher:

What does the author mean by
"the patient retelling of people's interior lives and motivation, that are the singular gifts of the accounts in this book?"

Write down what you think that means...... Tell your classmate what you wrote. Keep what you wrote for later.

II. Let's read another discussion about these sentences.

Teacher: Why does the author say "the patient retelling of people's interior lives that are the singular gifts of the account in this book."

Student 1: She wants us to know that the retelling is the best part of the book**.**

Teacher: Why would it be the best part of the book?

Student 2: She thinks it is the most valuable.

Teacher: What do you think? [Looking at a different student, student 3]

Student 3: I agree with [student 2].

Teacher : Tell me more. Why do you agree?

Student 3: She says the accounts are "gifts" so that is something special.

Teacher: Why does she use the word account?

Student 1: Accounts is another word for story.

Teacher: So when you talk to your friends, do you say 'She told me an account"

Student 2: No.

Teacher: Why not?

Student 3: Because the author is using special language for the book.

Teacher: Why?

Student 1: She want to appeal to an educated audience.

Teacher: OK WOW How did you know that?

Student 2: Our teacher told us.

A:

B:

A:

B:

Write what you would say with your partner to extend the conversation.

 What can you say to ask for elaboration and clarification with your classmate?

Practice giving your ideas which you wrote and asking for clarification.
(write on board: Why?/ Can you give me an example? Tell me more)

Put the sentence frames up on the poster in class.