8-2017

Look Who's Talking: A Multi-Case Study of In-service English Language Arts Teachers' Conceptions and Uses of Discussion in the Secondary Classroom

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LOOK WHO'S TALKING: A MULTI-CASE STUDY OF IN-SERVICE ENGLISH
LANGUAGE ARTS TEACHERS' CONCEPTIONS AND USES OF DISCUSSION IN
THE SECONDARY CLASSROOM

A Dissertation
Presented to
the Graduate School of
Clemson University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy
Curriculum and Instruction

by
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August 2017

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ABSTRACT

Educational scholars and practitioners recognize that classroom discussion offers great promise for helping students develop content knowledge, critical thinking skills, and a variety of meta-cognitive and process skills associated with learning content knowledge and disciplinary processes.

Despite this research-based and anecdotal consensus regarding the value of discussion, an equally extensive body of research shows that discussion is not used in U.S. classrooms as consistently or effectively as it might be. This study sought to examine this issue by exploring the relationship between in-service English language arts teachers' beliefs about discussion, their goals for the use of discussion, and their actual use of discussion in the secondary English language arts classroom.

The present qualitative multi-case study examined how three experienced English language arts teachers in a large southeastern school district defined and used discussion. Findings suggest that English language arts teachers recognize the value of discussion, associating it with a variety of pedagogical outcomes; however, they use it with varying degrees of effectiveness. .

This study has potential to make a substantial contribution to both the fields of teacher education and English education by providing scholars in both fields with a better understanding of how teachers conceptualize discussion as a pedagogical approach and the extent to which they can connect the practice with theories of literacy education.

DEDICATION

This investigation is dedicated to those who supported me during the process.

Every accomplishment comes as we stand on the shoulders of others.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank and acknowledge the contribution of the members of my committee: Dr. Mindy Spearman, Dr. Phillip Wilder, Dr. Lienne Medford, and Dr. Jamie Colwell. Without your support and encouragement, I would not have been able to complete this dissertation. Each of you has been a supportive mentor and a great encouragement.

Dr. Spearman, thank you for your patient and tireless editing and encouragement. Dr. Wilder, you have helped me see and understand literacy in new ways, and you generously shared your own research projects. Dr. Medford, you provided that grounded and practical perspective that brings research back down to earth and back into the classroom where it belongs. Dr. Colwell, you have given patient and encouraging feedback for which I am grateful.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

"The integration of language and content should relate language learning, content learning, and the development of
thinking, and should aim to find systematic connections among them."
- Bernard A. Mohan (1990, p. 113)

A Personal Perspective

My interest in classroom discussion as a dissertation topic grew out of my

teaching experience. As a new teacher, I observed that my classroom discussions were

very often lackluster and teacher-centered, meaning I did all the cognitive "heavy lifting,"

and my students expended their efforts trying to guess the "right" answer or at least the

answer they thought was in my head. After two or three years of teaching and reflecting,

I realized that my students were satisfied with low expectations for classroom discussion

because I was. I also realized that I needed to change how I viewed and used discussion; I

needed to find a means of fostering interactions that invited more complex thinking,

student-led inquiry, and a greater opportunity for the development of voice.

I decided to try an experiment. I began by asking my high school students for

their honest opinion on topics and `novels that we discussed in class. Then, I asked them

to revisit and further develop an idea or respond and critique another student's idea.

Their initial response was surprise, discomfort, and uncertainty, as if to ask, "Does this

man really want and value my opinion?"

As I began challenging my students with more complex questions, I watched as

their surprise and temporary discomfort turned into increased engagement, motivation,

and critical thinking. Perhaps their responses were couched in typical teenage grammar

and vocabulary, but I observed a complexity and integrity in their answers that made me

1

curious about the potential learning outcomes. I found that not only did these early efforts affect learning outcomes, but they also affected the social dynamic of the classroom. Student voice, confidence, and participation increased as whole and small group discussion helped individual students and groups of students develop or scaffold their own thinking and facilitated the development of their individual ideas in a less threatening way as each student was bolstered by the safety of the large group. Students appeared to experience more freedom, trust, and a willingness to develop their ideas in public view, to "think on their feet."

Classroom discussion also helped to differentiate instruction. The "more capable" students were able to prepare and refine their ideas for an audience and share their ideas in a setting that challenged them to think more deeply as peers pointed out weak reasoning or faulty premises while "struggling" students listened and used others' voices to surrogate their own developing ideas. This process helped them build confidence in forming and sharing these new ideas. What began as a tentative experiment in inquiry quickly developed and gained momentum as both student and teacher confidence grew.

From these experiences, I learned the potential of well-managed and intentional use of classroom discussion not only to foster students' learning of content knowledge, but also to build students' confidence, their discussion skills, and their critical thinking skills. I came to appreciate the distinction between discussion as pedagogy practice and discussion as a curricular outcome. Discussion as pedagogy focuses on using discussion to build content knowledge and cognitive processing skills in pursuit of curricular goals. Discussion as an outcome focuses on teaching students how to discuss as a skill separate from content goals that may be utilized across content subject areas. My students became

participants in inquiry and their involvement directed the course of that inquiry in ways that I could not anticipate.

These experiences also shaped the thinking that leads me to this study. Ten years in the classroom, teaching either social studies or English language arts, solidified my confidence in the efficacy of a socially interactive approach to classroom discussion. Both intuitively and experientially, I knew that classroom discussion could be a dynamic form of inquiry and a promising pedagogical practice. In short, I developed a passion for a certain type of discussion. While there is always a need for teacher-directed and highly structured models often used by teachers for formative assessment, there is a greater need for less structured, more student-centered models that engage student thinking and foster the social construction of knowledge.

I also saw that my colleagues did not share the same perspective. I began asking why my own pre-service experiences didn't include something about using classroom discussion as inquiry, and why wasn't this form of discussion a more common practice in other classrooms? Could the reasons be systemic and organizational, related to the structure of this thing we call "school," or could the reasons be more local and individual, related to teacher knowledge and teacher attitudes? Finally, I wanted to gain a practical understanding of how teachers identified the value and purpose of discussion and how they attempted to implement it in their classrooms? These are the questions for which I wanted answers. The latter question became the central question of my research.

As a point of clarification, this is not to say that a socially interactive approach to discussion is always the best or the only approach. Each classroom is a unique culture and even participants may have different interpretations. The complexity of classroom

culture requires that the classroom teacher choose between a variety of pedagogical choices. The task of effective pre-service preparation programs and in-service professional development is to equip teachers with both a variety of choices and the experiences that develop their professional judgement in choosing between options. Those options may range from direct instructional models of discussion to more interactive models.

Background for the Study

Of course, past research on literacy reform and integration efforts would form a context for this study. Despite a century of trying, efforts to integrate a set of general literacy strategies (primarily under the banner of content area reading) into content area classrooms have been less than successful; content area teachers continue to resist. Both theoretical and practical research has identified the roots of secondary teacher resistance in teacher beliefs, school culture, and pedagogical barriers (Stewart & O'Brien, 1989; Stewart, 1990; O'Brien & Stewart, 1990; Alvermann & Moore, 1991; O'Brien & Stewart, 1992; O'Brien, Stewart, & Moje, 1995). O'Brien & Stewart (1992) discuss four components of teacher resistance including the organizational structure of schools, curricular fragmentation, the distinction between explicit and implicit curricula, and sub-cultural values. Classroom discussion is one of those literacy practices that content area teachers resist.

Changing and expanding ideas about literacy also provide relevant background as both practitioners and researchers attempt to improve literacy practice. Literacy research in the past 25 years has questioned a number of assumptions and continued expanding

definitions of literacy and literate practice. An assumption that has been questioned is the idea that literacy is one monolithic skill that remains unchanging throughout the school years. According to this view, once a child has learned to read, he or she has the skill set that may be applied to any reading purpose or subject and at any age. Recent scholarship criticizes this view suggesting that it places too much emphasis on literacy as a solitary, cognitive activity, giving less attention to the social aspects of literacy and learning and failing to recognize developmental differences between elementary-age and adolescent learners as well as the increasing complexity and diversification of subject area content and learning tasks and processes.

Research has also discussed the importance of defining a socially just pedagogy and pedagogy for social justice (Moje 2007) that recognizes the diverse background of students' beliefs and values and their need for a pedagogy that responds to diverse ways of knowing (e.g. "in-school" versus "out-of-school" literacy). Efforts to recognize social justice issues related to literacy have sought to identify social and class inequities in our definitions of literacy and therefore expand definitions to include those cultural and non-academic, "outside-school" literacies that foster individual identity, leading to social conscience, and social justice.

Developing technology has fostered expanding definitions for what constitutes a literary text as access to digital media increases. The text understood as pages have been expanded to include web pages, a variety of additional multimedia, and online gaming platforms. These changing and expanding ideas about literacy and literacy reform form a context for further investigation into classroom practice related to forms of discussion.

Statement of the Problem

For the purpose of this dissertation, discussion is any teacher-student or student-student verbal interaction that the teacher purposefully fosters as students interact with literary and informational texts. That purpose may range from formative assessment to the development of meta-cognitive awareness as students work in small or whole-group settings to interpret a text in the classroom environment. According to this definition, discussion may be teacher-directed or student-led; it may be highly structured or minimally structured. It may be reflective of a transmission model of learning or a social constructive model of learning. This definition may be said to be centering on teacher practice to the degree that the purpose of the dissertation is to better understand teacher practice as it relates to this use of discussion for the purpose of building content knowledge and critical thinking.

The value of discussion is well supported in the research literature (Nystrand & Gamoran, 1991; Mercer, 1995; Splitter & Sharp, 1995; Wells, 1999; Mercer, 2000; Nystrand, Gamoran, & Carbonaro, 2001; Alexander, 2003; Splitter, 2003; Applebee, Langer, Nystrand, & Gamoran, 2003; Parker, 2006; Alexander, 2008; Reznitskaya, 2012) as a promising pedagogical practice for teaching content knowledge and critical thinking skills. However, discussion is not practiced as often or as effectively as it might be (Nystrand et al., 1997; Myhill & Fisher, 2005; Mehan, 1978; Cazden, 1988). It is an under-utilized practice and, when it is utilized, it is not done so in a manner that fulfills its potential. Nystrand's (2006) review highlights this limited use of discussion. He reports that only a small fraction of classroom time in U.S. high schools is spent in classroom discussion (Barber, 1989; Boler, 2004; Haroutunian-Gordon, 1991; Larson &

6

Parker, 1996; Oakes, 2005). For example, discussions of literature occur as infrequently as 15 seconds per class period in 9th-grade English classrooms (Nystrand, 1997).

The distinction can be made between monologic and dialogic models of discussion. Monologic discussion is akin to lecture. It is teacher-directed and it reflects cognitive learning theory and a transmission model of knowledge acquisition. Dialogic discussion reflects social learning theory and is characterized by more give-and-take and by a greater student role in determining the course of the discussion. Dialogic discussion is used less frequently than lecture or monologic discussion (Cazden, 1988; Mehan, 1979), and this is unfortunate because dialogic discussion offers great promise for developing students' literary knowledge and critical thinking skills.

The exclusive use or overuse of monologic discussion robs students of voice and participation. Paulo Freire uses a banking metaphor to suggest a troubling feature of modern education, one which reduces students to containers into which teachers deposit knowledge. According to this model, teachers present information and students memorize and then regurgitate it for a summative exam. This teacher-centered approach robs students of their sense of voice and teaches them that divergent views are not welcome; only those of the teacher matter. The frequent choice of teachers to use monologic discussion means that dialogic discussion is under-utilized and therefore the potential of dialogic discussion for fostering critical thinking skills is unrealized. What begs further study is a better understanding of teacher practice in order to help teachers integrate more dialogic discussion into the classroom.

Purpose of the Study

The research represents an intention to add to the literature in English language arts education by providing a new perspective on how in-service English language arts teachers conceptualize and use models of discussion as a matter of teacher practice as they help students interact with text. For example, what knowledge, skills, and beliefs regarding discussion are reflected in their practice? What literacy skills they are attempting to develop?

If we are informed by a social constructive learning theory and believe that dialogic discussion holds untapped potential for building students' literary understanding and critical thinking, it is our responsibility to find the means to help teachers bring balance and include more dialogic models into the classroom.

The classroom is a lived environment and, while every classroom, school and community possesses a unique culture, this study assumes that general principles exist. Understanding how particular teachers understand and use discussion will help all teachers bring balance to their use of discussion, and this balance will benefit teacher preparation and in-service professional development programs by helping classroom teachers integrate more dialogic discussion models into the lived culture of the classroom.

This research may inform pre-service teacher education programs and in-service professional development programs by providing insight into how teacher use discussion (O'Brien & Stewart, 1990; O'Brien, Stewart, & Moje, 1995). Further, the research is conducted in hopes that it will inform teacher educators' understanding of teacher conceptualizations and uses for discussion as well as how often it is used and for what

goals. A further potential benefit of the study is to inform pre-service and in-service

teacher education programs and teacher educator's decision-making related to the

development of programs that expand teachers' knowledge and use of discussion. This

benefit includes access to the discipline specific knowledge structures, grammars (Fang

& Schleppegrell, 2008, 2010) and ways of thinking.

Research Question

This study proposes to investigate this question:

How do in-service English language arts teachers understand and use discussion in their
classrooms?

Arguably, the goal of adolescent literacy instruction is to help students improve

their ability to create meaning from a variety of increasingly complex texts. A basic

knowledge of facts and literal meaning is beneficial but students also need to make

deeper interpretations, generalizations, and conclusions. Social interaction plays a key

role (Vygotsky, 1978; Wells, 1999).

The questions assume that all English language arts teachers use some form of

discussion. The point of the question is to focus the research on understanding the

relationship between teacher beliefs and teacher practice by looking at how they use

discussion in the classroom. This study seeks to understand existing teacher knowledge

and beliefs about the use of discussion around text as a teacher practice. For example,

how do they define classroom discussion? Do they value discussion as a curricular

outcome or a pedagogical methodology? What knowledge do they have about the

purpose and value of discussion?

Importance of the Study

        This is an important study for a number of reasons. A better understanding of what teachers know and believe about discussion hopefully will lead to gains in teacher knowledge and more effective use of discussion in the classroom. More effective use of discussion includes more use of dialogic models of discussion.

        The three teachers who participated in this study acknowledged that neither teacher training nor professional development opportunities provided any meaningful information on models of discussion in the English language arts classroom, so it is safe to assume that further attention to discussion models will help improve pre-service and in-service professional development programs.

        The challenge facing educators is to move beyond the typical teacher-centered initiate-respond-evaluate (IRE) approach and adopt a more generative approach to discussion that not only allows students to develop a voice, but also one that builds content knowledge and critical thinking. The shortcomings and limitations of the teacher-centered and teacher-directed approach are evident. It discounts constructivist and inquiry learning models and promotes knowledge development at a basic cognitive level, often presuming that only one "right" answer exists and that knowledge acquisition rests solely on knowledge transmission, in a finished form, from teacher to student.

        This IRE model invites students to enter into an academic game in which they attempt to guess what the teacher is thinking and mine the answer buried in the teachers' mind. As a result, some students merely check out and stop trying because they recognize the futility of the game. This model of classroom discussion does not lead to the kind of

critical thinking, inquiry, and knowledge construction that a social learning theory suggests is possible and that various national and state standards are requiring.

The literacy tasks of adolescence require more than rote memorization and recitation that is commonly reproduced with traditional models of discussion. The highly complex knowledge structures that typify high school subject areas require students to build content knowledge through inquiry and develop their understanding of the distinctive literacy practices within secondary content areas. For example, secondary text structures become increasingly complex; vocabulary becomes increasingly specialized. Students must learn the specific knowledge structures, ways of thinking, appropriate use of evidence, text structures, language patterns, and practices for each of the disciplines. Adolescent students also benefit from increased opportunity for social interaction in their classrooms, so an effective model of discussion recognizes the important role of social interaction in the learning of content knowledge and critical thinking and inquiry skills (Moje, 2008).

An answer to this question will inform additional questions related to understanding what knowledge, skills, and dispositions are necessary for pre-service and in-service teachers to be able to implement a dialogic model of discussion in the classroom as well as what pedagogies, curriculum, and experiences will build the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that teachers need to implement dialogic discussion. It will aid decision-making related to scheduling professional development coursework and curriculum for these pedagogies, curriculum, or experiences.

An answer to the research question will also help teacher educators better understand the role of a teacher's background experiences in their conceptualization of

11

discussion. In other words, how much influence does the approach of a mentor have on a teacher's classroom practice. What is the relationship between structured, formal opportunities for reflection and the development of teacher's ability and use of dialogic model of discussion?

Scope of the Study

This study is looking how teachers understand and use discussion and how see the alignment of teacher goals and practice by focusing on how teachers identify their goals and then implement their practice in literacy instruction. The study also provides an opportunity for participating teachers to reflect on their own teacher attitudes and practices and how those practices relate to their learning objectives.

This study will contribute to an understanding of what teacher knowledge is beneficial to help teacher educators make better decisions about how to train new teachers, help in service teachers improve teacher knowledge of discussion and identify intentional use of discussion in the high school and middle school classroom by fostering dialogue within disciplines and across disciplines over what constitutes literate practice in each of the subject areas as well as what constitutes appropriate pedagogical use of classroom dialogue for all teachers.

Organization of the Study

The study employs a holistic, multiple-case study design (type 3) (Yin, 2009, p. 50) to explore how in-service English language arts teachers conceive of and use discussion. Chapter two provides a theoretical framework derived from sociocultural and

social constructivist foundations Chapter three presents an analysis of the methods and research design. The research questions, design (including context, setting, participants, and methods), and research paradigm are described. The chapter describes the units of analysis and the means for analyzing the data. The chapter also addresses ethical concerns related to trustworthiness, transferability, and recognition of researcher biases.

Chapters four through six describes each of the three participants, detailing individual case reports for each participant. Chapter seven describes the cross-case analyses and the study findings. The chapter presents key themes that arose during data collection and data analysis phases.

Chapter seven describes individual participants' conceptions of discussion as well as broad themes common to all participants. Chapter seven presents a discussion of the study's findings and provides implications for the fields of teacher education and English language arts education. This chapter reviews results in light of the original research questions. Chapter seven, therefore, provides explicit answers and descriptions regarding in-service English language arts teachers' conceptions of discussion.

Chapter Summation

Efforts to reform literacy through the integration of general content area reading strategies date back to the early 1900s. Historically, however, teachers have resisted these efforts for a number of reasons. In the past 20 years, new directions in research have developed that endeavor to fine tune definitions of literacy in ways that may foster their integration. One direction has been an effort to differentiate between primary and adolescent literacy and identify those literacy practices, like dialogic discussion, that

foster learning and meet the needs of adolescent learners. In an increasingly dynamic and technology mediated environment in which students inhabit multiple and diverse literacy "lives" at the same time, they will benefit from opportunities for social interaction that permit them to "try on" new intellectual and social identities. Adolescent cognitive, intellectual, and social development may be fostered by increased opportunities for open and interactive discussion in the English language arts classroom.

CHAPTER TWO:
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter provides a theoretical framework for the study. The context is organized to provide a review of: (a) historic and traditional definitions of literacy, (b) historic and traditional definitions of discussion, (c) definitions and attributes of a dialogic model of discussion as a promising classroom pedagogy, (d) literature discussing the unique literacy needs of adolescents, and (e) a review of content teachers' long-standing resistance to the integration of literacy instruction. This study naturally rests within the context of a long history of both theoretical and practical research that demonstrates the value and importance of integrating teacher practices like discussion into secondary content classrooms. However, these efforts, for a variety of reasons, continue to meet with resistance, and dialogic approaches to discussion are seldom practiced in secondary classrooms (Nystrand, 1997). Consequently, the purpose of this literature review is to provide context for a case study investigating how secondary English language arts teachers define and use discussion as a pedagogical tool.

A Theoretical Foundation

This study may be placed within a larger context of literacy research in general, and content area reading research in particular. Unrau and Alvermann (2013) identify no less than 10 theoretical perspectives that have influenced literacy research over the past 60 years including constructivism, social constructivism, transactional theory, information / cognitive processing theories, sociocultural perspectives, sociocognitive theory, structuralism, post-structuralism, pragmatism, and reading motivation. Content

area reading research is informed by four major paradigms: the cognitive, the sociocultural, the critical, and the linguistic (Fang et al., 2014; Fang, 2012). This study will utilize three of these theories as a framework: social constructivism, socio-culturalism, and transaction theory. These three highlight the social and cultural aspects of literacy, learning, and cognitive development.

Sociocultural and social constructivist learning theories provide a good starting point; however, there is some distinction between the two. Social constructivism emphasizes learning from the perspective of the individual within a social and cultural context, and sociocultural theory emphasizes the social aspects of learning and the effects and influences of the social and cultural environment on the individual learner. Sociocultural theory views literacy practice as an act of enculturation (Scott & Palincsar, 2013) in which social and cultural definitions of literacy and literate behavior shape identity. Socio-culturalism may ask and provide answers to questions like what is a text, what is literacy, and what is discussion within a particular social and cultural context. On the other hand, social constructivist theories, represented in the writing of Lev Vygotsky, suggest that students make their own meaning while they participate in a social context.

Both perspectives address the issue of knowledge construction. From a social constructivist perspective, knowledge is constructed as individuals participate in social interaction. That social interaction scaffolds individual cognitive development. From a sociocultural perspective, the cultural context informs what it means to be literate.

As Palincsar (1998) points out, all cognitive science theories of learning have an element of constructivism within them; individuals construct knowledge as they interact with their environment. Palincsar (1998) also suggests that constructivism exists on a

16

continuum "… anchored by trivial constructivism [extremely subjective] on one end… to radical constructivism which rejects the notion of objective truth and argues that knowledge develops as one engages in dialogue with others" (Palincsar, 1998, p. 347). From a sociocultural perspective (Rosenblatt, 1978; Bakhtin, 1975; Bourdieu, 1986; Bruner, 1990; Gee, 1996, 2000, 2001), literacy and learning are culturally mediated processes. Our individual identities, knowledge structures, and our understandings of what it means to be "literate" are shaped as we interact with our social and cultural contexts. Bruner (1996) adds to a description of socio-cultural learning theory by highlighting the necessity of educators to consider their own pedagogy in the process. According to Bruner, "a choice of pedagogy inevitably communicates a conception of the learning process and the learner. Pedagogy is never innocent. It is a medium that carries its own message" (Bruner, p. 63).

These socio-cultural and social constructivist learning theories stand in contrast to behaviorist and cognitive learning theories that view knowledge as "fixed and transmittable" (Applebee, 1994, p. 2; Fisher & Frey, 2005), reading as a solitary, cognitive process (Alvermann and Moje, 2013), and literate behavior as the use background knowledge and metacognitive skills to draw fixed and finite knowledge from a text. From a socio-cultural and social constructivist perspective, knowledge is situational, language and literate behavior is a social activity.

Taken together, these theories highlight the integral relationship between individuals and their social and cultural environment, and the primacy of the social environment in both learning and development. They also suggest that language use is the fundamental cultural and social tool for cognitive and language development.

17

Vygotsky and Learning Theory.

Social constructivist learning theory owes much to the work of Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky, and argues for interdependence of social and individual processes in the co-construction of knowledge (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996). A student's language, intellectual development, and reasoning ability are developed in social and cultural contexts. As individuals interact with the social environment, their individual cognitive abilities are developed through language use. Accordingly, learners make meaning and gain increases in language fluency and individual comprehension as they participate in socially challenging conversations with peers and adults. Stated even more succinctly, meaning is socially constructed and individual language development is socially mediated (Vygotsky, 1978; Bruner, 1990; Bakhtin, 1981).

According to Vygotsky (1978), "… [T]he true direction of the development of thinking is not from the individual to some state of socialization, but from the social to the individual" (p. 76). Therefore, the social dimension of learning is the primary one and the individual dimension is secondary (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 30). The students' intellect and language facility develop as they use language to interact with others.

A criticism of behaviorist and cognitive learning theories is that they cannot provide a complete description of the mechanism for learning; social constructivist theory suggests two: the sociocognitive conflict theory of Piaget and the constructivist theory of Vygotsky (Palincsar, 1998). According to Piaget's sociocognitive conflict theory, learners experience disequilibrium and are forced to question beliefs when new experiences contradict existing understanding: "disequilibrium forces the subject to go

beyond his current state and strike out in new directions" (Piaget, 1985, p. 10). Learners' efforts to reconcile their understanding are the mechanism for learning.

On the other hand, Vygotsky (1978) highlights social processes as a mechanism for learning. He describes what he terms the zone of proximal development (ZPD). That zone is the difference between two developmental levels: the actual and the potential levels of development. It is the difference between what a student may be able to achieve through independent effort and what a student may potentially achieve with adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers (p. 86).

It is that dynamic social interaction that fosters individual cognitive and language development. Learning occurs as students interact with their social environment, and that learning drives intellectual and language development. However, in order for learning to occur, students must be presented with tasks slightly beyond their present abilities. Tasks within the range of present independent abilities do not foster learning and tasks that far exceed present abilities lead to frustration (Vygotsky, 1978). Our facility for language and internal thought become recursive as we interact with an external social community. We use language to learn, and our language proficiency is developed, and we learn as we develop our language ability. New learning is then internalized and reflected as inner speech (Vygotsky, 1978). That inner speech is refined as the student interacts with his or her social environment and leads to further learning.

Therefore, classroom discussion mediates that gap between what students may be able to accomplish independently and what they may be able to accomplish with another's support and interaction. "We propose that an essential feature of learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when

the child is interacting with adults in his environment and in cooperation with his peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 90). That interaction between adult and student or between peers is the subject of this study – classroom discussion.

The concept of guided participation broadens the lens of Vygotsky's theory beyond language based dialogue. Individual cognitive development also occurs in social contexts through social activity and apprenticeship: "Children's cognitive development is an apprenticeship – it occurs through guided participation in social activity with companions who support and stretch children's understanding of and skill in using the tools of the culture" (Rogoff, 1990, p. vii).

Wertsch (1991) identifies three major themes in Vygotsky's writing to explain the interdependence of individual and social processes in learning and development: 1.) individual development has its origin in social sources; 2.) social action is mediated by tools and signs – semiotics; 3.) and Genetic (developmental) analysis. The genetic or developmental analysis occurs on four levels related to periods of time: the phylogenetic, cultural/ historical, ontogenetic, and microgenetic. (Wertsch, 1991; John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996). Phylogenetic analysis examines development from an evolutionary perspective; cultural / historical analysis examines the influence of culture on development; ontogenetic analysis examines individual history; microgenetic analysis examines individual experience. A clearer understanding of Vygotsky's ideas may be gained by contrasting them with the work of British linguist Michael Halliday, as Wells (1999) does.

Halliday.

Both Halliday and Vygotsky articulate a language based theory of learning but they approach it from different directions. For both men, language is either a psychological tool or a cultural tool developed for particular social and cultural purposes and actions; however, Vygotsky emphasize the psychological aspects and Halliday emphasizes the social and cultural aspects. Each has a distinct approach for understanding the role that language plays in the development of the individual within society (Wells, 1999). For Halliday, language is a socially mediated behavior; for Vygotsky, language is an individual behavior that has implications for individual intellectual development. For Halliday, language is a social behavior that develops as a social and cultural artifact that both determines and reflects social and cultural behavior in a particular context. Halliday's theory is "inherently social and functional in orientation (Wells, 1999, p. 6); for Vygotsky, language develops as part of the process of intellectual development. Vygotsky's target is the explanation of individual mental functioning and Halliday's the nature and organization of language as a resource for social interaction (Wells, 1999, p. 6). For Vygotsky, what is the role that participation in social interactions and culturally organized activities play in influencing psychological development. "… [W]here Vygotsky, as a psychologist, focused on the role of language in the construction of the "higher mental functions," Halliday has been concerned with language in its social uses and with the relationships between spoken and written texts and the situations in which they are created and interpreted" (Wells, 1999, p. viii). Each of these theoretical perspectives lays groundwork for this study as they illustrate the relationship between individual cognitive development and social interaction.

21

Transactional Theory.

The Transactional Theory of reading developed by Louise Rosenblatt suggests "reading is a transaction, a two-way process, involving a reader and a text at a particular time" (Rosenblatt, 2001, p. 268). According to Rosenblatt's theory, rather than decoding meaning as a static and fixed commodity from the text, readers are constructing meaning as they conduct what she describes as transactions with the text. These transactions connect background knowledge and cultural context, the imagined world of the text, and reading purpose. As students read, they develop transactional relationships with not only the texts they read, but also with the environments they read about. Because texts have the ability to both stimulate and cultivate intense personal, moral, and ethical experiences for readers, Transactional Theory is a constructivist theory.

Rosenblatt's Transactional theory is primarily a literary theory applied to works of fiction; however, it does represent the idea that literacy is not solely a private, cognitive activity. Reading, as an active and engaged process, is an interaction between a reader, the text, and the reader's social and cultural context. Rosenblatt (1938) discusses this transaction created between reader and text:

> The special meaning, and more particularly, the submerged associations that these words and images have for the individual reader will largely determine what the work communicates to him. The reader brings to the work personality traits, memories of past events, present needs and preoccupations, a particular mood of the moment, and a particular physical condition. These and many other elements in a never-to-be-duplicated combination determine his response to the peculiar

contribution of the text. (pp. 30-31)

Cognitive and meta-cognitive aspects of literacy and learning are tied in here as students bring background knowledge and prior learning to the task of responding to a literary text, but it is that interaction between the reader, text, and context that creates a new meaning.

According to Transactional Theory, readers experience texts on two levels: the efferent and the aesthetic; an "efferent" response reflects a connection with the facts and details in a text; an "aesthetic" response reflects a connection with the subjective aspects of a literary text, for example an appreciation for the beauty of a story or an appreciation for the artful way that the author brings the reader into the text's imagined world.

Fostering these responses in adolescents helps them make connections between their lives and the text (Tracey & Morrow, 2012). Rosenblatt (2001) describes this herself: "… the reader, bringing past experience of language and of the world to the task, sets up tentative notions of a subject, of some framework into which to fit the ideas as the words unfurl" (p. 268).

Readers interact with a text based on their past experience and expectations. Echoing this idea, Rosenblatt (2001) suggests, "reading…is not an encapsulated skill that can be added on like a splint to an arm. [I]t…draws on the whole person's past transactions with the environment" (p. 273). In fact, Fisher et al. (2011) describe comprehension as an emerging and gradual process where readers utilize their transactions with texts to construct meaning. "When these transactions with environments and texts are lived through for their own sake, they will probably have as by-products the

educational, informative, social, and moral values for which literature is often praised" (p. 275). Language use in the classroom is a recursive process in which discussion facilitates learning that in turn facilitates further language development. The next section discusses traditional perspectives and definitions of literacy and discussion. While Transactional theory is primarily a cognitive developmental theory that focuses on the reading of a text, it is relevant to this study to the extent that it highlights the interaction between a reader and the reading environment in much the same way that a learner builds knowledge through the interaction with the environment.

Historical and Traditional Definitions of Literacy

A sociocultural perspective recognizes that definitions of literacy, both teachers and those cultural definitions beyond the classroom, affect the use discussion as a teacher practice in the classroom. I define literacy as the ability to participate in a community, or as the ability to operate as an active agent in one's own learning through access to information and social participation. However, a review of the literature reveals a more complicated and nuanced picture. For a number of reasons, defining literacy is complicated by definitions of English arts as a content area. For example, a definition of literacy as possessing knowledge of the literary canon leads to a definition of literacy as effectively interpreting a canonical work according to the accepted interpretation.

Literacy research, in the last 20 or 30 years, has expanded in several directions. These directions include expanding definitions of text (e.g. digital literacy), expanding definitions of what is considered literate practice, both within and across disciplines and contexts, and expanding definitions of literate behavior related to cultural, ethnic, and

social responsiveness Issues of social justice and equal access to opportunity have been addressed, recognizing that literacy is not one thing to all people but many things to many people, depending on context, culture, and purpose.

The history of the subject of English makes defining literacy difficult. Since its development as a modern subject in the late 19th century, English has been an amalgamation of subjects. As Applebee (1994) notes, "The English curriculum as we know it dates to the late nineteenth century, when a variety of separate studies (reading, literary history, composition, grammar, spelling, and oratory, among others) were collected together into the school subject called English" (p. 1). Since the initial delimiting of content area curriculums in the late 1800s, (Kliebard, 2004) the subject has been pressed into the service of many masters including moral education, cultural heritage transmission and social cohesion, democratic participation, critical thinking, literary criticism, and personal development (Wilhelm & Novak, 2011; Applebee, 1974; Peters & Wixson, 2003; IRA/NCTE, 2009). As Grierson and Nokes (2010) point out, these goals have been combined in the contemporary English language arts classroom. Each of these perspectives affects definitions of literate behavior in the English language arts classroom.

To complicate the task, the meaning of literacy changes over time. In the eighteenth century, literacy was defined as the ability to sign your name; in the 19th century, it was defined as minimal reading ability and penmanship; in the mid 20th century, it was defined as the familiarization with classical and canonical works of literature (Beers, Probst, & Rief, 2007), or any body of knowledge, so we may speak of geographic literacy or cultural literacy. However, "Literacy is not a static body of

predetermined knowledge; rather, literacy becomes manifest in the moment of knowledge deployment, in engaging with language to gather, generate, or convey meaning" (Meltzer & Hamann, 2005, p. 7). A further demonstration of the dynamic nature of literacy, as identified in the above quote, comes from an understanding of the cultural, ethnic, and social implications of definitions of literate behavior.

To further complicate the difficulty of defining literacy is a consideration of the social component of literacy. A dissertation of discussion must acknowledge that more generally language is social activity and a reflection of identify.

Gee's conception of New Literacy Studies is more than pervasive ideas of reading and writing. It also involves other visual or digital literacy. The field of New Literacy Studies looks at the expanding of the text (Gee, 2008). The assigning of the term literacy to academic literacy privileges those traditional literacy practices and practices unique to the classroom over other types of literacy (digital, visual, computer, graphic), ignoring the fact that different subjects require different approaches to reading, writing, investigating and communicating.

 literacy is more than the ability to read and write; it is also reflective of the need recognize students who come from diverse backgrounds and the value of their "historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being" their "funds of knowledge" (Gonzalez, Moll, & Amanti, 2005, p. 72). These may include "in-school" and "out-of-school" literacy.

Street (1984) emphasizes language as a social practice and as a reflection of the "broader cultural conception of particular ways of thinking about and doing reading and

26

writing in cultural contexts" (Street, 2000, p. 17). This is a process of enculturation (Scott & Palincsar, 2013), but not always for the best. There is no such thing as a neutral education process or the neutral use of language. Language use carries with it meaning that is socially constructed and context specific. Gee (1990) distinguishes between discourse and Discourse. We may engage in "language-in-use," as discourse, but the combination of language with behavior, customs, clothing, and values makes each of us part of a Discourse. Language is socially constructed within these Discourse communities.

Texts and definitions of literate behavior do instantiate, and perpetuate power and privilege through power structures and institutionalized social class inequities (Freire, 1970) and in the inequitable distribution of social, economic, and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986). Freire (1970) describes what he characterizes as a banking model of education in which the learner is viewed as an empty account into which a teacher deposits knowledge. Freire's (1970) typifies conversation in the classroom as fundamentally "narrative" (p. 70). The teacher transmits a fully formed narrative that may or may not recognize and value an individual student's lived experience. The teacher is an active agent and the student is a passive recipient.

Unfortunately, as Freire asserts, this education model perpetuates social class inequities. The criticism inherent in Freire's banking model is that education may either humanize by recognizing their unique individuality or dehumanize students by failing to recognize their unique cultural and social identities. "… [D]ialogue is a way of knowing and should never be viewed as a mere tactic to involve students in a particular task… I engage in dialogue not necessarily because I like the other person. I engage in dialogue

27

because I recognize the social and not merely the individualistic character of the process of knowing" (Freire & Macedo, 1995). It is not a teaching practice implemented for its own sake as the answer to every problem. In the words of Burbules (1993), "we engage in dialogical approaches not because they are methods guaranteed to succeed, but fundamentally because we are drawn to the spirit of equality, mutuality, and cooperation that animates them" (p. 143).

When implemented unethically, language practices foster and promote the development of dominant social and cultural identities and culturally dominant models of literacy. Language use becomes the vehicle for shaping individual identity and for impressing upon students the dominant social and cultural norms of society, including norms about what it means to be a literate person. Both of these results can be positive to the degree that they provide students with a sense of participation within a democratic society, but they may also be detrimental to the degree that enculturation favors one group of students' cultural identities and use of language over another. For example, literacy behavior that fails to recognize the "funds of knowledge" of students from non-European cultural backgrounds separates those students from successful participation in the educational process (Gonzalez, Moll, & Amanti, 2005, p. 72).

Why is it important to look at the effects of social and cultural expectations on literacy practice in a dissertation that examines teacher's use of discussion? Any examination of discussion must acknowledge that every definition of literate behavior and worthwhile texts reflects (privileges) one group's values over another. Language use and definitions of what constitute literate behavior does one of two or both things: it works as a means of enculturalization in which one culture's ideas about literacy are

propagated and it acknowledges or fails to acknowledge the importance of non-school literacies and non dominant cultural definitions of literacy.

Arriving at a monolithic definition of literacy is impossible. Traditionally, learning theory related to literacy has focused on reading and writing from a cognitive perspective. More recently, theorists have looked at literacy from a socio-cultural perspective (Vygotsky, 1978; Rosenblatt, 1978; Bakhtin, 1975; Bourdieu, 1986; Bruner, 1990; Gee, 1996, 2000, 2001) in which literacy is a socially constructive and culturally mediated process. This distinction may be better understood by juxtaposing disciplinary literacy with content area reading. Historically, the field of literacy research has been dominated by a view of pedagogy that has been termed content area reading or content area literacy in which reading is viewed as a solitary, cognitive process (Alvermann and Moje, 2013), knowledge is viewed as "fixed and transmittable" (Applebee, 1994, p. 2; Fisher & Frey, 2005), and literate behavior is identified as the ability to use background knowledge and metacognitive skills to draw fixed and finite knowledge from the text; pedagogy focuses on building skill upon skill (Applebee, 1994).

However, from a disciplinary perspective, literacy is grounded in socio-cognitive, socio-cultural and socio-constructivist learning theory (Vygotsky, 1978; Rosenblatt, 1938; Bakhtin, 1975; Bruner, 1990; Gee, 1990, 2012). From this perspective, academic disciplines possess distinctive and characteristic literacy practices and methods of inquiry (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008; Moje, 2007, 2008). "Disciplinary literacy emphasizes the unique tools that the experts in a discipline use to engage in the work of that discipline" (Shanahan, 2012, p. 8). Disciplines are distinguished by what is accepted for evidence. In writing and speaking, English language arts students warrant their interpretations with

29

textual evidence (Petrosky, McConachie, & Mihalahis, 2010, p. 139). To be literate in English language arts, students are able to conduct inquiry in literary analysis, literacy criticism and personal response to texts.

Literacy may refer to a person's ability to read a variety of informational and literary texts in a variety of genres, and for a variety of purposes; it may refer to the use of written and spoken language to acquire content knowledge and practice critical thinking and inquiry skills. We read, write, speak, listen, and investigate for a variety of purposes. For example, New York State school curriculum identifies four purposes for literacy practice: information and understanding; literary response; critical analysis, and social interaction. (New York State Education Department, 1996). These various purposes shift definitions of literacy.

A number of traditional views of literacy are also reflected in the literature that have bearing on the definition of literacy (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008; Shanahan & Barr, 1995; Spratley, 2010; McConachie & Petrosky, 2010). One traditional view is that literacy practice does not change through the school years. Rather, according to this view, it is one skill, a single, primarily cognitive, skill practiced by students in isolation. According to this view, once acquired in the primary grades, proficiency in the skill is sufficient for subsequent literacy tasks. No distinction is made between primary and secondary reading and writing. Shanahan & Shanahan (2008) talk about a generalist notion literacy: …. "the idea that if we just provide adequate basic skills, from that point forward kids with adequate background knowledge will be able to read anything successfully" (p. 41). This has been termed a "vaccination approach" to literacy instruction (Shanahan & Barr, 1995). Once inoculated with basic reading skills, no

further instruction is needed. Therefore, according to this view, formal classroom instruction in literacy practices like reading and writing ends with primary education because the assumption is that all a student's literacy needs can be satisfied by primary school instruction (Spratley, 2010; McConachie & Petrosky, 2010).

The emphasis on reading as a simple skill thoroughly acquired in the primary grades reflects an emphasis on the solitary, cognitive processes of reading and writing and neglects an social constructivist processes of literacy and important developmental difference between primary and secondary education. However, literacy research indicates that the tasks of adolescent literacy do change, becoming increasingly complex, and the needs of secondary students also change. As students enter middle school and high school the social context of schooling becomes increasingly consequential. Therefore, social constructivist and socio-cultural developmental models become particularly critical. As students mature, they increasingly build knowledge through social interaction and discussion. An adolescent's peer group becomes of primary importance and, as constructivist and socio-cultural learning theories indicate, discussion plays a large role in cognitive and linguistic development of adolescents (Mercer, Wegeriff, & Dawes, 1999; Applebee, Langer, Nystrand, & Gamoran, 2003; Almasi, 1996; Mercer, 1995; Nystrand, 2006). By the time students reach middle and high school, they have acquired a large amount of background knowledge and high school tasks ask students to use that background knowledge to think critically, gather and evaluate evidence, and make judgments. Each of these tasks requires a more sophisticated use of literacy practices. Therefore, this adolescent stage of literacy development requires

specific and targeted instruction that prepares secondary students to meet the social and cognitive demands of high school literacy practices.

Although not stated directly, this traditional view of literacy development rests on an assumption that all learners are alike and that everyone possesses the same background knowledge and acquires literacy in the same way and at the same developmental pace. However, increasingly, classrooms are filled with diverse learners from diverse cultural, ethnic, racial, and economic backgrounds. Using discussion in the classroom addresses the needs of these diverse learners by helping teachers differentiate instruction and by encouraging students to engage with a diversity of individual and cultural differences. According to Applebee, Langer, Nystrand, & Gamoran (2003), "non mainstream students – low achievers, children of the poor, and second language learners fare poorly with traditional instructional approaches" (p. 688-89). Those students do not benefit from traditional literacy instruction that does not recognize their diversity in the way that dialogic discussion permits. An approach to instruction that incorporates discussion allows accommodation to students' unique literacy backgrounds and allows them to use those individual literacy strengths.

Historical and Traditional Definitions of Discussion

Although the use of discussion around a text is a well-recognized teacher practice with a long tradition of service in English and social studies classrooms (Resnick, 1993; Lee, 2001; Cazden, 2001; Wertsch, 1991; Dolz, 1996; Shipman, 1983; Sprod, 1998), it is not practiced as often or as effectively as it might be even though scholars and policymakers call for the integration of literacy practices like discussion to be

32

implemented across all content areas (Nystrand, Gamoran, & Carbonaro, 1998). The

Common Core of State Standards (CCSS, 2010) reflects this call improved literacy

integration.

Only a small fraction of classroom time is spent in meaningful classroom

discussion. Classroom instruction more frequently relies on more traditional pedagogies

including teacher-centered lecture, use of textbooks, or completion of standard-based

worksheets (Cornbleth, 2002; Kahne, Rodriguez, Smith, & Thiede, 2000; Knowles &

Theobald, 2013; Russell, 2010). If class time is devoted to discussion it a type of

discussion characterized as an IRE (initiate-respond- evaluate) model (Mehan, 1979,

1998; Cazden, 1988). According to this model, the teacher initiates a question, the

student responds with what he or she hopes is the "right" answer, and the teacher

evaluates a student's response. This type of discussion has also been described as

monologic or recitation (Nystrand, 1996; Almasi, 1996).

This IRE model is criticized for being teacher centered, promoting knowledge

development at a basic cognitive level, and disregarding socio-cultural and social

constructivist learning theories, presuming that only one "right" answer exists. The IRE

model invites students to enter into an academic game in which they attempt to guess

what the teacher is thinking and mine the answer buried in the teachers' mind. As a

result, some students merely check-out and stop trying because they recognize the futility

of the game. Monologic discussion does not lead to the kind of critical thinking that

nurtures inquiry; nor does it foster the kind of learning that social learning theory

suggests is possible.

Traditionally, literacy instruction for students in all grades have been grouped together under the term content area reading strategies, but the use of these generalized strategies for literacy instruction across all grade levels has been criticized as representative of a narrow view of literacy (Draper, 2010). Draper (2010) argues for an expanded view of literacy that prioritizes a constructivist and inquiry approach. Fisher and Ivey (2005) agree; content area reading supports a transmission model of knowledge and the development of teacher-centered, curriculum-driven instruction that discounts students' use of language to manufacture and organize knowledge in personally meaningful ways and for personally relevant and socially authentic purposes.

In addition to preparing students for the literacy demands of high school, a distinct definition of adolescent literacy may help educators overcome objections to integrating literacy into content area classrooms (Moje, 2008). Defining adolescent literacy may help address the literacy needs of a diverse student population by helping both native and second language learners understand the challenging and content specific vocabulary of high school subjects. Also, as Moje (2007) points out, defining adolescent literacy, as a social justice issue, provides all students with access to the content and discussion within a discipline. Whatever their "out of school" literacy practices and proficiencies, students within a democratic society need the knowledge and skills to access "in-school" literacies. Distinguishing adolescent literacy may help teachers equip students with the resources to help them more effectively connect with specific prior knowledge, master more difficult text material, and develop discipline specific vocabulary (Lee & Spratley, 2010).

Distinguishing adolescent literacy aligns with the Common Core State Standard's emphasis on preparing students to be college and career ready by the time they graduate from high school (Council on Advancing Adolescent Literacy, 2010; (CCSS; National Governors Association & Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010) by providing them with an understanding of the knowledge structures, discipline-specific vocabulary, and methods of inquiry that they may encounter within specific disciplines in a college or career context.

Definitions and Attributes of a Dialogic Discussion

Scholars and policymakers recognize the need for a more interactive approach to discussion in the secondary classroom. The research represents a variety of terms for often synonymous practices. For example, this type of discussion has been described as dialogic teaching (Alexander, 2008a, 2008b; Reznitskaya & Gregory, 2013), exploratory talk (Mercer, Wegeriff, & Dawes, 1999), deliberative discussion (Drake & Nelson, 2009), and dialogic inquiry (Wells, 1999). Higham, Brindley, & Van de Pol (2014) use dialogic education as an umbrella term.

The definitions are as plentiful as the terms. Discussion may be defined as the purposeful use of classroom talk between student and teacher and between students to accomplish specific pedagogical and curricular goals. Alexander (2010) defines dialogic teaching as an approach that "harnesses the power of talk to stimulate and extend students' thinking and advance their learning and understanding" (np). Almasi (1996) defines discussion as "… a forum for collaboratively constructing meaning and for sharing responses" (p. 2). Reznitskaya & Gregory (2013) define dialogic teaching as "a pedagogical approach that involves students in the collaborative construction of meaning

35

and is characterized by shared control over the key aspects of classroom discourse"
(Alexander, 2008; Burbules, 1993; Freire, 1993; Webb et al., 2007). Burbules (1993)
characterizes dialogic discussion as open, divergent, and uncertain; students operate as
co-inquirers (Reznitskaya, 2012). Mercer (2000) uses the term "interthinking" to describe
talk as a reciprocal process of joint intellectual activity in which new ideas are generated
through interaction. Higham, Brindley, and Van de Pol (2014) suggest two propositions
at the heart of what they term dialogic teaching. First, that dialogue is instrumental to
student learning. Second, that language is used differently in each discipline. The first
proposition acknowledges the uniqueness of adolescent literacy; the second proposition
recognizes discipline-dependent characteristics of literacy and talk.

According to Reznitskaya (2012), "in a dialogic classroom, teacher and students
act as co-inquirers" (p. 440) as they interact with each other. Students may also work in
dyadic pairs. Dyadic peers are two, paired students in the same class who engage in a
face-to-face, in-school academic task with each other after reading a shared text. Dyadic
peer talk is defined as the use of dialogue for a "situationally-specific nature" (Fisher,
1993, p. 159) where each peer within the dyad may "reformulate and express their ideas"
(Fisher, 1993, p. 159) as each "assigns meaning to her [or his] own and the other's cues"
(Wilmot, 1980, p. 8).

Parker (2006) describes three aspects of research on classroom discussion:
facilitation, participation and purpose. According the Parker (2006), "a sizable and varied
literature has grown up around these three aspects [of classroom discussion] … some
centering on technique, some on discourse, some on student governance, some on teacher
preparation, and some on the social development of understanding" (p. 11). First,

36

facilitation of dialogic discussion implies appropriate teacher knowledge. Teachers must be able to lead, guide and effectively facilitate a discussion in a highly dynamic context; they must possess the pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1986) and the knowledge-of-practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999) that is a fusion of formal knowledge gained in a teacher education program with the practical knowledge of teaching that informs specific classroom context; Alexander (2006) identifies two important questions related to evaluating our teaching and our effective use of classroom discussion: first, do we as teachers "promote the right kind of talk;" Second, "… how can we strengthen its [discussion] power to help children think and learn even more effectively than they do?" (p. 10); The first question highlights the difference between monologic and dialogic discussion; the second question refers to a dynamic quality of dialogic discussion in which students test and receive immediate feedback on their ideas. Teachers must be able to motivate, engage, and manage student responses and student inquiry in that dynamic process. Engendering student engagement, "buy-in," and participation is a function of choosing a topic worthy of discussion.

Effective use of dialogic discussion in the classroom is also defined and guided by a clear purpose. In fact, discussion may be defined as the purposeful use of classroom talk between student and teacher and between students to accomplish specific pedagogical and curricular goals. The purposeful use of dialogic discussion includes students listening and responding to each other and teachers following up on students answers, what Collins (1982) terms uptake.

Teachers and students participate in classroom discussions for multiple purposes, ranging from a simple conversation to highly structured debate. A dialogic model of

discussion must be distinguished from simple conversation or debate. It is worthwhile to note that this academic conceptualization of discussion is not the same as other forms of classroom talk like dialogue, conversation, debate, or seminar. Simple conversation lacks purpose or direction and a debate lacks the interactive "give and take" of discussion (Parker and Hess, 2001). Dialogic discussion has both purpose and the "give and take."

Mercer (2000) identifies five common purposes related to teacher talk used to respond and build student's new understanding of past activity: recapitulation, elicitation, repetition, reformulation, and exhortation. Recapitulation involves summarizing previously discussed material; elicitation involves teacher directed questioning to foster recall; repetition involves repeating elements of a student's answer to highlight its significance; reformulation involves paraphrasing information; exhortation involves encouraging students to recall previous learning.

Parker (2006) distinguishes between two purposes: interpretive discussion, what he terms seminar, and deliberative discussion. The purpose of interpretive discussion is to expand individual understanding of a subject by considering many viewpoints; the goal of interpretive discussion is understanding; the purpose of deliberation is decision making and action; the goal of deliberation is to make a decision. Deliberative discussion is a "focused and organized method for establishing the credibility" of sources and "logically interpreting that evidence" through interactions between students and teachers and between students (Drake & Nelson, 2009, p. 25-26). There are at least four basic designs for discussion, two whole class and two small group. These are dynamic and fluid categories: whole class teacher to students; whole class student to student and teacher; small group student to student; small group in which students and teacher talk.

Discussion as a classroom practice may be viewed as either a pedagogical method or as a curricular goal, what Parker and Hess (2001) refer to as teaching with discussion and teaching for discussion. "Teaching with discussion is to use discussion as an instructional strategy to help students more richly understand the text at hand or to make a decision about the issue at hand. Teaching for discussion has discussion itself as the subject matter" (p. 274). The latter purpose distinguishes the value of both the language skill and the social process. As students participate in authentic discussions, they increase their own language ability as well as their ability to interact with their peers and co-construct knowledge.

Attributes of Dialogic Discussion.

A number of researchers have identified critical attributes of discussion (Reznitskaya, 2012; Alexander, 2008; Cazden, 2001; Edwards & Westgate, 1994; Heyman, 1983; Lemke, 1990; O'Connor & Michaels, 1993; Tharp & Gallimore; 1991), and, more specifically, key attributes of dialogic discussion (Reznitskaya, 2012; Alexander, 2008; Parker, 2006). Reznitskaya (2012) describes six features or characteristics of effective classroom discussion: According to the Dialogue Inquiry Tool (DIT) she developed as an observational scale intended to analyze teacher-student interactions, effective classroom discussion may be described by authority relationships, types of questions, occurrence of feedback, meta-level reflection, explanation, and collaboration. The DIT model ranks these features on a six point scale. On the high end of the scale, power relations are flexible and authority over content and form of discourse is shared among group members; questions are open and divergent; teachers provide meaningful and specific feedback; Students engage in meta-level reflection; students

provide elaborate explanations of their thinking; students engage in collaborative construction of knowledge. (See DIT scale.)

Alexander (2008b) describes dialogic teaching as collective, reciprocal, supportive, cumulative, and purposeful. In a dialogic classroom, according to Alexander, participants address learning tasks together; they listen to each other, share ideas and consider alternative viewpoints; they express ideas without concern for embarrassment and they help each other to reach common understandings; participants build on answers and create a chain of thought that represents a growing understanding and thinking; Lastly, this kind of dialogue is structured in pursuit of specific learning goals.

Alexander (2008b), breaks classroom dialogue into four categories or what he calls "repertoires:" 1.) talk for everyday life, 2.) learning talk, 3.) teaching talk, and 4.) classroom organization. Each of these categories are then subdivided. Talk for everyday life includes transactional talk, expository talk, interrogatory talk, exploratory talk, expressive talk, and evaluative talk. Learning talk expands and extends beyond expressing factual information to include narrating, explaining, analyzing, speculating, imagining, exploring, evaluating, discussing, arguing, and justifying; Teaching talk includes the rote drilling of facts and ideas through repetition, recitation or the accumulation of knowledge through questions designed to stimulate recall, instruction, whole class, small group and student to student discussion, and dialogue. Each of these five categories of classroom dialogue may be used as pedagogical practices. The quality of the interaction is the key. He identifies five ways of organizing the interaction: teacher and class, teacher led, pupil led, teacher and pupil, and pupil pairs. He further divides classroom dialogue into larger contextual factors and specific characteristics.

The Institute for Learning at the University of Pittsburgh (2013) identifies nine principles for learning, one of which is what they label as Accountable Talk. According to this taxonomy, for classroom talk to be most effective, it must be possess three features including accountability to knowledge, accountability to a learning community, and accountability to rigorous thinking. Accountable talk is faithful to a knowledge base, the means of thinking and creating knowledge within a learning community, and characterized by rigorous and critical thinking practices. These principles of accountable talk line up with other's descriptions of rigorous discussion practices in the secondary classroom.

Discussion is "reciprocity and movement, exchange and inquiry, cooperation and collaboration, formality and informality" (Brookfield & Preskill, 1999, p. 5). A "…concern with the development of knowledge, understanding or judgment, among those taking part" is a distinguishing feature of discussion (Bridges, 1998, p. 17). Parker and Hess (2001) similarly note that discussion is "a form of group inquiry - a consciously shared form, a listening and talking form" (p. 282).

Unique Literacy Needs of Adolescent Learners

Adolescent literacy and language learning possess features that distinguish it from elementary literacy and learning. For example, secondary text structures become increasingly complex; vocabulary becomes increasingly specialized (Schleppegrell and Fang, 2008). Students must learn the specific knowledge structures, ways of thinking, appropriate use of evidence, text structures, language patterns, and practices for each of the disciplines. The complex knowledge structures that typify high school subject areas require that students have practice with building content knowledge through inquiry;

41

social interaction is an important aspect in developing content knowledge, critical thinking, and inquiry skills (Moje, 2008). Direct instruction may be an effective means of teaching factual information; however, there is less evidence to conclude that direct instruction results in development of higher order thinking and problem solving abilities (Palincsar, 1998; Applebee, Langer, Nystrand, & Gamoran, 1990; McConachie & Petrosky, 2010). Dialogic discussion may be a more effective approach to fostering higher order thinking or problem solving skills.

Lee and Spratley (2010) conclude that "adolescents need more sophisticated and specific kinds of literacy support for reading in content areas, or academic disciplines. This approach of "disciplinary literacy" suggests that each academic discipline or content area presupposes specific kinds of background knowledge… a particular type of reading" (p. 2). Shanahan and Shanahan (2008) and Moje (2008) advocate a disciplinary perspective that suggests that each subject area possesses unique literacy approaches, practices, or characteristics. "Disciplinary literacy emphasizes the unique tools that the experts in a discipline use to engage in the work of that discipline" (Shanahan, 2012, p. 8).

According to a disciplinary perspective, adolescent literacy may be improved by teaching the literacy practices, text patterns, language patterns, and discipline-specific ways of creating and sharing knowledge as well as the discipline-specific ways that evidence is used and inquiry is conducted. In addition to helping students master the increased complexity of advanced literacy, there are additional benefits to expanding the definition of literacy. The key to understanding and learning from more difficult texts requires that students are given at least a preliminary introduction into the ways of

42

thinking that distinguish academic disciplines. Academic disciplines are really communities of discussion or what Moje (2008) calls discourse communities and Gee (2009) would call Discourse communities with a capital D, indicating the unique ways that people communicate in different settings and different purposes. Within an academic setting those disciplinary communities are characterized by unique concepts, unique patterns and systems for organizing knowledge, and unique methods of inquiry; literacy is a fundamental aspect of those discipline-specific conversations and practices. Schleppegrell and Fang (2008) identify language patterns and grammars for each academic subject area. In their review of the research on secondary school reading, Alvermann and Moore (1991), state that "subject-matter specialization is the central difference between elementary and secondary schooling" (p. 951).

Fostering a love for literature helping adolescents make those personal, social, and cultural connections is a familiar goal of secondary English classrooms. Wilhelm and Novak (2011) identify three dimensions of response or transactions with a literary text that lead to student development and engagement. They discuss the evocative, the connective, and the reflective dimensions of literary response. The evocative dimension is the "immediate imaginative call of the story world" (70). This response is the experience of becoming caught up in the imaginative quality of the author's story world. The connective dimension is the recognition of historical and cultural symbols that reside in text and define us has individuals and as part of larger historical and cultural community. The third dimension discussed by Wilhelm and Novak (2011) is the reflective dimension that in which a reader gains an understanding of the relevance of these cultural connections to personal lived experience in way that informs that lived

experience. A classroom approach to discussion that allows students to engage in discussion on these three levels would be more likely to lead to literacy achievement.

Resistance to Literacy Integration

Efforts to integrate general literacy instruction across all grade levels and content areas are not new, but have been on-going since the early 1900s (Moje, 2008). These efforts have met with limited success and only isolated changes in individual teacher practice (Alvermann & Moore, 1991; Langer & Applebee, 1987). It may be safe to say that the typical integration model has fallen short of its goal (O'Brien, Stewart, & Moje, 1995). Teachers do not enact the strategies in their classroom. This resistance by teachers to implement any literacy strategies, including dialogic discussion, into the classroom there may be described as a general resistance to the incorporation of general and content-specific literacy strategies. Vacca & Vacca (2005) group these general strategies under five broad categories: development of vocabulary knowledge and concepts; activation of prior knowledge before, during, and after reading; comprehension and critical analysis of text through reader–text interactions; use of various writing activities to facilitate learning; and development of study strategies based on a search for text structure. This attempt to improve literacy achievement by preparing every content teacher with a basic knowledge in literacy instruction, often characterized as "every teacher a teacher of reading," has not resulted in significant changes in content area instruction (Fisher & Ivey, 2005; O'Brien, Stewart, Moje, 1995; Stewart & O'Brien, 1989; Burbules, 1993).

Research over the past two or three decades has identified a number of reasons for the resistance including reasons related to teacher and student attitudes and beliefs,

curriculum, pedagogy, and school culture (Alvermann & Moore, 1991; Moore, 1996; O'Brien, Stewart, & Moje, 1995; O'Brien & Stewart, 1992), or too great an emphasis on literacy as separate from content knowledge (Moje, 2008). An important aspect within a developing literacy initiative described as disciplinary literacy is an argument that the distinction between content knowledge and the literacy strategies necessary to acquire that knowledge is a false distinction. "… [T]he key challenge [is] … that of re-conceptualizing how we think of disciplinary learning and literacy instruction" (Moje, 2008, p. 98). The next sections review those areas cited as causes for resistance.

Attitudes and beliefs.

From her research on teacher attitudes toward literacy integration, Hall (2004) concludes that teacher beliefs have a greater impact than pedagogy on what happens in the classroom, and these beliefs drive classroom instruction. She indicates that teachers may not feel qualified or responsible for explicit literacy instruction. Hall (2005) concludes that there is little reliable research on how both pre-service and in-service content areas teachers feel about teaching reading; however, she offers a tentative conclusion: both groups may believe that teaching reading is worthwhile even if they do not make any effort to teach reading skills. One difference between these two groups is that pre-service teachers may believe that teaching explicit literacy strategies is a non-traditional approach that is not modeled or accepted by experienced classroom teachers. Both groups feel they should focus on course content, indicating a belief that content and literacy are distinct and can be separated. These strategies are viewed as time consuming, and not a good fit with often positivist and technical instructional goals, or inappropriate

45

for learning in their disciplines (O'Brien & Stewart, 1992; Stewart, 1990; Vacca & Vacca, 1993).

Teacher beliefs about the nature of literacy learning in general and adolescent literacy in particular may also play into their resistance. In the past decades, literacy scholars have described two misconceptions about literacy learning that limit efforts to prepare adolescent learners for the literacy demands of the 21st century. The first misconception is that literacy is a solitary, one-size-fits-all, cognitive skill that may be mastered in elementary classrooms, negating any need for further reading instruction as students enter secondary school, and the second misconception is that primary and secondary literacy are identical, also negating any need for further explicit literacy instruction. Spratley (2010) describes what he terms a simple distinction between *learning to read* and *reading to learn*. The distinction assumes that reading is the same for children and adolescents, a simple task of decoding, vocabulary development, and fluency, and that adolescent literacy is simply applying those skills to increasingly complex texts. Therefore, adolescent students who experience difficulty reading beyond their elementary grades are viewed as having a deficit in a specific skill. As a result, much literacy instruction in primary and secondary schooling is an attempt to fill the gaps or deficiencies. McConachie & Petrosky (2010) identify what they characterize as "catch up" literacy instruction, or an attempt to identify and remediate discrete, perceived deficits in word attack skills or reading comprehension strategies, or any of a number of general content area reading strategies. In their study on the effectiveness of Reading Recovery, Shanahan and Barr (1995) discuss what they term the "vaccination approach." According to this approach, literacy is understood as a simple, universal process

46

associated with decoding, fluency, and comprehension, and that teaching these basic skills in the early primary grades will effectively prepare adolescent readers for the increased literacy demands of high school texts and contexts. Alvermann and Moje (2013) describe a view of reading and writing as simple processes, engaged in by the solitary reader and irrespective of context. In this view, literacy is simply the working of universal cognitive skills that, when properly taught, can help individual students increase their literacy and learning irrespective of age or cognitive development. Shanahan and Shanahan (2008) state it well: "We have spent a century beholden to this generalist notion of literacy learning - the idea that if we just provide adequate basic skills, from that point forward kids with adequate background knowledge will be able to read anything successfully" (p. 41). As each of these examples reflect, literacy is viewed a simple process that remains unchanged throughout a child's school years. This view limits teachers' sense of urgency in implementing reform in their classrooms.

Shanahan & Shanahan (2008) describe attitudes related to perceptions of content expertise as a barrier. Content area teachers see literacy educators as people who don't understand the demands of the discipline and therefore cannot speak to the best approaches for literacy integration. Recognizing this criticism, Draper et al. (2010) also identifies the same need to introduce literacy into the content area by beginning with an understanding that content area teachers are the best experts in their disciplines and using disciplinary experts' knowledge to guide integration because these are the people who truly understand how knowledge is constructed within a discipline. Teachers pointed to the pressure to cover content in preparation for state standardized tests as barriers to providing reading instruction. (Ness, 2009).

Lesley (2011) approaches the idea that teachers have negative attitudes toward teaching literacy and she sets out to question the part that pre-service teachers' literacy identities play in the developing beliefs about the relevance of content area literacy instruction. According to Lesley (2011) pre-service teachers negative attitudes toward teaching literacy are caused by dominant discourse models (Gee, 2005). She identified these five models: school definitions of literacy overshadow home literacy experiences; pre-service teachers perceive literacy ability as a fixed commodity that does not change from elementary school; school expectations are based on narrow definitions and evaluations of literacy performance; reading is a forced and mundane school task; school writing is seldom used as tool for exploration, creativity, or thinking. Teachers arrive in schools and attempt to replicate the models in their heads to their practice in the classroom.

Teacher educator beliefs also affect literacy integration as Draper (2008) indicates. Literacy instructors attempting to help in-service teachers implement literacy strategies who fail to recognize the value of collaboration may alienate in-service teachers. Collaboration recognizes that the content area teachers possess a knowledge and discourse of the content possibly not possessed by the literacy expert. Hall (2004) suggests that teacher educators may not be helping teachers understand the discipline specific attributes of literacy, instead treating content literacy as a collection of general strategies.

Student attitudes and beliefs also affect literacy integration. According to O'Brien, Stewart, & Moje (1995), students' school lives and expectations also affect literacy integration. "Further, student centered instruction runs counter to teachers' and

students expectations" (p. 451). Students' disengagement from schooling forces teachers to use instructional approaches like recitation and product oriented assessment and reinforces the explicit curriculum contained in texts. Students find the easiest way to memorize the material and resist change if teachers attempt to introduce new approaches.

An important aspect of the discussion over literacy integration is a discussion of what teachers need to know and how teacher educators may reform pre-service and professional development programs to better prepare teachers for the classroom. Research suggests the importance of teacher knowledge related to literacy in four areas. These areas are related to teacher beliefs and attitudes. Many other issues are outside individual teacher control. An individual teacher may not be able to affect changes in school culture or a larger school system's pedagogical and epistemological assumptions. However, personal attitudes and beliefs about literacy and content knowledge may be something teachers can change.   Teachers are more likely to be open to using teacher practices like dialogic discussion if they have opportunity to reflect on their own practice as it relates to their learning objectives. This personal reflection includes their view of the distinction between elementary and secondary literacy and unique attributes of secondary literacy. Teachers are more likely to be open to the topic if they have opportunity to build their own understanding of the practices and habits of mind that are native to their discipline (Draper, 2010). Once they understand the distinctive characteristics of literacy in their own disciplines and gain a better understanding of the instrumental and foundational connection between literacy and content knowledge, they may be more open to new ideas. Discussion is a teacher practice that fosters the development of content knowledge. In recent scholarly research literature, this description of discipline-specific

literacy is described by the term 'disciplinary literacy.' Lastly, secondary teachers need to be able to connect literacy to curricular goals. For example, dialogic discussion may be viewed a vehicle for knowledge construction in the disciplines, but participating in effective dialogue may also be viewed as a worthy curricular outcome highlighted in Common Core State standards and individual state standards. Reflection is an important aspect of teacher training and professional development, and the reflection on the value and purpose of the teacher practice of dialogic discussion will help foster a theory of knowledge and learning that balances cognitive, meta-cognitive, and social constructivist learning theories. Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) distinguish knowledge in three categories. They distinguish "knowledge of practice," "knowledge in practice," and "knowledge for practice." "knowledge for practice" is the formal knowledge that comes through formal classroom instruction. However, teachers also need practical experience with integrating a teacher practice like discussion into daily instruction or what Cochran-Smith and Lytle call "knowledge in practice."

Resistance related to curriculum.

According to O'Brien, Stewart, and Moje (1995), the goals, philosophy, and the epistemology of schooling do not support literacy integration. "Each day, teachers are faced with contradictory objectives: to teach an increasingly diverse group of students while attending to students' individual needs" (O'Brien, Stewart, & Moje, 1995). They identify several curricular issues that affect integration of explicit literacy instruction:

- A transmission model of knowledge construction and a mass production model of secondary education that emphasizes the cognitive aspects of learning and in

50

information processing efficiency reduce literacy practices to tools for meeting instructional goals, not fostering learning.

- This view of educational efficiency favors lecture and sees content literacy as a burden.

- Subject matter divisions are embedded in the curriculum, and literacy is seen as a threat these divisions.

- Subject divisions result in power struggles within the disciplines and definitions of the approved curriculum that resist efforts to introduce innovation.

- The view that subjects are discourse communities builds walls around subjects.

- Students act according to beliefs and expectations associated with each subject area.

O'Brien, Stewart, & Moje (1995) summarize their observations: "Content literacy may not be a popular commodity because it threatens to blur subject area divisions deeply imbedded in curriculum" (p. 450). Teaches are forced to focus on reading as cognitive information processing. The goal becomes helping students increase their reading efficiency. A mass production model of education is built on a social efficiency model that favors efficient ways of transmitting knowledge.

Resistance related to pedagogy and school culture.

O'Brien, Stewart, & Moje, (1995) describe a number of attributes of school culture that lead to a resistance to innovation, in general, and to the integration of literacy strategies, more specifically. Reform efforts related to the integration of literacy

strategies into content classrooms must recognize that an educational institution is a culturally and socially structured institution with unique goals and systems frequently aligned with what O'Brien, Stewart and Moje (1995) characterize as a positivist and technical rationalism modeled after 19th century social efficiency goals and epistemology (Kliebard, 2010). Efforts to integrate literacy confront deeply embedded values, beliefs, and practices held by teachers, students, and other stakeholders. Pedagogical choices are strongly influenced by what O'Brien, Stewart and Moje (1995) describe as a culture of control and telling that reflects a concern for the efficient coverage of content over process. Literacy advocates may be viewed as outsiders attempting to impose strategies perceived as irrelevant to the teaching of content knowledge; further, literacy strategies may be perceived as an extra demand on teachers' time; literacy strategies that recognize the social dimension of learning and the importance of dialogue in the classroom run contrary to perspectives geared more to a view of students as cognitive processors. These factors lead to a general resistance to innovation challenging the status quo, and to a particular resistance to strategies that run counter to dominate goals of the institution. For example, state mandated curriculum and an emphasis on large scale standardized testing that fails to recognize students' lived histories also fosters a culture aligned with content coverage, classroom control, and a transmission model of knowledge acquisition. Time constraints of a public school day forces teachers and students to favor lecture over other more flexible, time consuming pedagogical approaches. The subjects-driven organization of the school promotes isolation and competition for scarce resources. Further, a reward structure connected with professional development works against a willingness to implement innovative literacy practices. Each subject area may have its

own unique curriculums and accepted pedagogical content knowledge and pedagogical practice; these standardized practices and approaches are ingrained and they define what is possible and what is considered unacceptable.

Teacher beliefs and practice.

In the past 20 or 30 years, research on teacher beliefs and practices has highlighted the relationship between teacher knowledge and beliefs, and the effectiveness of teacher practice (Ashton, 1990; Fang, 1995). Clark and Peterson (1986) distinguish between two processes within teaching. These two processes are teacher thought processes and teacher actions and their observable effects. Shulman (1986) describes three domains of teacher knowledge including subject matter content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and curriculum knowledge. Subject matter content knowledge is knowledge of content within a subject area; pedagogical content knowledge

According to Fang (1996), research in this area has also revealed two contradictory conclusions. While some research indicates that teacher knowledge and beliefs affect teacher practice, he cites other studies indicating that teacher beliefs may not correlate with teacher practice, thus indicating that some teachers may espouse a theory or belief that does not match their classroom decision-making. He describes this contradiction as consistency versus inconsistency. Towers (2013) identifies the tendency of teachers who have recently graduated from a teacher education program to abandon research-based approaches in favor of practices they see in the schools.

Either conclusion argues for the importance of focusing on teacher beliefs and teacher knowledge in developing teacher practice. Whether or not teacher practice is

firmly guided by a theoretical framework of knowledge and beliefs about content or pedagogy, it remains certain that pre-service and in-service teachers will benefit from experiences that help them more fully integrate their own ideas in their teaching.

Inquiry-based learning.

Another area of research important to the teacher practice of discussion is inquiry-based learning (IBL) or student-driven inquiry (SDI). IBL is identified by the following characteristics: 1) a driving question 2) authentic, situated inquiry 3) learner ownership of the problem 4) teacher-support, not teacher-direction, and 5) artifact creation (Barron & Hammond, 2008; Callison, 2015).

Under the label of student-driven inquiry, Buchanan et al. (2016) identifies three research areas within SDI that include student motivation, skills and knowledge building, and instructional design. The first component is the literature on Inquiry Based Learning (IBL). The second research area is student motivation. The third is Information Literacy (IL) in education.

Within science education, five features of inquiry are identified: (1) the learner poses a question, (2) the learner gives priority to evidence in responding to questions, (3) the learner formulates explanations from evidence, (4) the learner connects explanations to scientific knowledge, and (5) the learner communicates and justifies explanations (Inquiry and the National Science Education Standards, 2000). Banchi and Bell (2008) identify four levels of inquiry. Level one is confirmation Inquiry. After teaching a topic, the teacher develops questions and a procedure that guides students through an activity where the results are already known. Level two is structured Inquiry in which the teacher

provides the initial question and an outline of the procedure. Students formulate

explanations of their findings through data analysis. Level three is guided inquiry. For

this level, only the research question is provided. The students design their own

procedures to test that question and then communicate their results and findings. Level

four inquiry is open or true inquiry. In open inquiry, students formulate their own

research question(s), design and developed procedures, and communicate their findings

and results.

In social studies inquiry, Wineburg (2001) describes what he terms historical

thinking to identify how historians conduct inquiry and, therefore, how students may

conduct inquiry in history. These habits of mind include problematizing history inquiry

as an authentic question, interrogating the author (sourcing), corroborating a source with

other contemporary sources, and investigating the historical context for a document, the

question.

Chapter Summation

Given the consensus regarding the anemic quality of contemporary classroom

practice related to a vigorous and intentional use of discussion and the research-based

recognition of the value of a dialogic model of discussion to effect content knowledge

and critical thinking, one might well ask why it is not a more common practice in our

secondary content classrooms. The reasons may be diverse, but it all comes down to

understanding how teachers view the relationship between their learning outcomes and

the role of teacher practices like dialogic discussion. This conversation and an

accompanying opportunity for teachers to reflect on their own beliefs and practices will

go a long way to helping them reach those goals.

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

"The man who does not read has no advantage over the man who cannot read."
- Mark Twain

This chapter explains the choice of case study design as a research methodology and articulates the methodological decisions of the study. More specifically, the chapter situates the study within a qualitative research paradigm and justifies its use for the study. The chapter also addresses the role of the researcher, including rapport, ethics, and perspective. Finally, the chapter describes and explains the choice of holistic, multi-case study as a research design and explains the process and methods of participant selection, data collection, and analysis. The clear description of the role of researcher and the process of inquiry establishes trustworthiness of the study and its results.

Qualitative Research Paradigm

This study is conducted within a qualitative research paradigm. Qualitative and quantitative research designs reflect very different epistemological assumptions. In his article, "Paradigm and Research Programs in the study of Teaching: A Contemporary Perspective," Shulman (1986) refers to quantitative and qualitative approaches as both research programs and paradigms. He characterizes paradigms as ways of thinking that lead to the development of theories. He refers to Kuhn's (1996) three criteria for describing research paradigms: 1) clear, unvoiced & pervasive commitment by a community of scholars to a conceptual framework; 2) source of a method for asking questions; and 3) a network of shared assumptions and conceptions.

While quantitative methods seek to control variables and establish causal relationships, Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln describe qualitative research as "…

a multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2004, p. 2). The choice of case study for this research reflects the intent to describe the naturalistic setting of the contemporary secondary English language arts classroom.

Merriam (1998) lists three research paradigms including the positivist, interpretivist, and critical (p. 4). Each of these represents a different view of knowledge and knowledge construction. The critical paradigm asserts that knowledge is inherently ideological, situational, and contested (Fang et al., 2014), and representational of social and cultural power inequalities; the positivist paradigm, common to quantitative research, views knowledge as objective and quantifiable; the interpretivist paradigm, common to qualitative research, views knowledge as contextual and socially constructed through human interactions within cultural contexts and social worlds (Vygotsky, 1978; Merriam, 1998). Guba & Lincoln's (1994) four paradigms (positivist, post-positivist, critical theory, and constructivist) generally match up with Merriam's categories (Geertz, 1973; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Therefore, following an interpretivist paradigm, assuming that knowledge is contextual and socially constructed, the research questions that this study addresses (how teachers conceive of and use discussion) may best be investigated through the choice of case study. An assumption that grows out of an interpretivist paradigm is that the secondary English language arts classroom is a dynamic environment that can best be understood, not by isolating variables and eliminating bias, but by observing how all the variables operate together

as a system in which teachers and students, operating within a cultural and social context, affect outcomes through their individual interpretations and responses.

Case Study Design

The choice of case study design to investigate phenomena within educational settings is appropriate to understand "how all the parts work together to form a whole…." (Merriam, 1998, p.6) and how schooling can be better understood as a "lived experience" (Merriam, 1998, p. 4). Stake (1995) defines case study as the "study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances" (p xi). In this case, the circumstances and lived experience is that of a secondary English language arts classroom. As opposed to quantitative methodologies that attempt to isolate and examine particular variables within a context, the distinctiveness of qualitative methodologies like case study design is in its attempt to understand all the variables in the entirety of their interaction within a larger context, seeking to understand and describe how these variables affect the case. Restated, the case is the entirety of the interaction of these variables. Further, while quantitative methodologies attempt to control for bias, qualitative methodologies like case study embrace bias as a key component. Merriam (2000) defines case study as "an in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system" (p. 40). That "bounded system" is the case. For the purpose of this study, the case is a practicing secondary English language arts teacher in the "lived experience" of the classroom, understanding that what happens in a classroom is also affected by many outside influences including the larger school culture and the community culture. For the same reason, the choice of case study as a

methodology within a social constructive and socio-cultural framework makes sense. Both case study and socio-cultural and constructive views of learning rest on the situated, subjective, and contextual realities of meaning-making.

Types of case study.

Yin (1994) uses the chart (Table 1) below to identify the types of case study design.

Figure 6. Basic Types of Designs for Case Studies

(Source: Yin, 1994)

This study uses a holistic, multiple-case study (type 3) (Yin, 2009, p. 50). It is a holistic study because the teacher is the unit of analysis. There are no sub-units or multiple layers of analysis. For example, this study is not looking at individual students in each of the classrooms. The unit of analysis is the entire classroom, and teacher, as a unit, including the many variables that may affect that unit. It is a multi-case study because data will be gathered from between two and four teachers and each teacher will be considered a unit of analysis. Data for each teacher will be collected and analyzed to identify emergent themes and then analyzed across cases to identify common themes.

Strengths of case study.

According to Yin (2009), case studies are chosen in the following three situations: 1.) when how or why questions are being asked; 2.) when the researcher has little control over events; 3.) When the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon "… when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (p. 18).

According to Yin (2009), case study is an appropriate method to answer "how" and "why" questions in an attempt to understand and explain how or why a present circumstance or phenomena operates in a naturalistic setting. This study focuses on the "how" within the social context of the classroom. The purpose of the study is not to describe teaching practices or processes, or to gather statistical information about the percentage of teachers who use dialogic discussion or the percentage of class time devoted to discussion. The purpose is to understand how teachers conceive of and use discussion in their classrooms.

Case study design is also chosen when dealing with research into contemporary issues (Yin, 2009, p. 11) when individual factors cannot be separated. Yin (2009) states that case study is used "to contribute to our knowledge of individual, group, organizational, social, political… phenomena (p. 4). While experimental design methods attempt to separate or limit the effects of multiple variables or phenomena within a context, case study recognizes that the secondary classroom is a highly complex social and organizational system that defies the separation and isolation of variables in order to theorize a causal relationship among any of its parts. To be informative, observations must be conducted on the whole system. This system is comprised of the phenomenon within its context. In a secondary English language arts classroom, the boundaries between what happens outside the classroom and what happens inside the classroom are

not clearly defined. What happens inside a classroom may be affected by many factors beyond the four walls of the classroom including teacher and student beliefs about what should be taught and how it should be taught, expectations of each professional academic department, school administration, parents, and the larger school culture and community.

This study is focused on understanding teachers' contemporary decision making within the classroom by examining the phenomenon within the context, believing that phenomenon and context are closely connected. Manipulating what teachers know or do, or limiting other variables will not inform an understanding of how in-service teachers encounter and overcome resistance to literacy integration. The goal of this study is an understanding of how the whole system functions to affect the use of the teacher practice of dialogic discussion, and case study will facilitate a description of the whole system and provide insight into the complexity of that system.

Yin (2009) also describes a case study inquiry as something that "copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result it relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion; as another result it benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis" (p. 18).

Limitations of case study.

The use of case study as a research design has been criticized for a lack of rigor and trustworthiness. "The case study has long been (and continues to be) stereotyped as a weak sibling among social science methods" (Yin, 2003, p. xiii). Therefore, it is important to demonstrate that this study is "following a rigorous methodological

62

path…[that] openly acknowledge[s] the strengths and limitations of case study research" (Yin, 2009, p. 3), by addressing both theoretical concerns related to trustworthiness (credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability) and practical concerns related to time and saturation in the school context.

For example, critics of case study argue that gathering and analyzing data from a small number of cases cannot provide solid ground for establishing reliability, validity, or generalizability of findings, all the hallmarks of experimental design. However, qualitative researchers question the applicability of evaluative criteria like validity and reliability to qualitative research designs, suggesting a re-conceptualization of those evaluative criteria as they are applied to qualitative research. Rather than reliability, validity and generalizability, researchers have suggested evaluative criteria that promote transferability, credibility, dependability and confirmability (Creswell, 1998; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Another criticism of the case study is its inability to establish a causal relationship between a treatment and an effect. For quantitative and experimental methodologies, establishing causal relationships is of prime importance; qualitative methodologies like case studies do not place a high value on the importance of establishing causal relationships. Case study seeks to describe a naturalistic phenomenon in a specific context (Yin, 2009), and from this make analytic generalizations and build theoretical propositions.

Another criticism of case study is limited generalizability or transferability. Yin (2009) argues that generalizability is misunderstood or too narrowly defined; case studies are generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to populations: "… in doing a case

study, [the goal] is to expand and generalize theories (analytic generalization) and not to enumerate frequencies (statistical generalization)" (p. 15). Educational research may benefit more from enumerating theories about why and how teachers behave in certain ways rather than enumerating frequencies of behavior. Becker (1990) agrees that generalizability is misunderstood: "Another complication of generalizing arises from the notion that we do not have a valid generalization unless we get the same result in every organization that fits our definition" (p. 239). He defines generalizability as a description of the general process that is the same across contexts. Variability does not diminish the value of the generalization.

The risk of researcher bias or a lack of objectivity is another criticism of case study design. While experimental design attempts to decrease or eliminate bias and distance the researcher from processes and findings in the service of objectivity, case study promotes trustworthiness by acknowledging and embracing bias as an inherent aspect of research design, seeking to understand how bias affects results.

Herriott and Firestone (1983) also identify time spent at each site collecting data as an issue that must be addressed. Too much time at any one site can cause the researcher to give too much weight to any one case to the detriment of cross-case analysis. They identify the importance of finding a balance between rich, site-specific description and cross-case comparison in order to capture similarities and differences. Yin (2009) discusses the amount of time required for case study research. Being able to make conclusions from observation within a natural setting requires a large amount of observation followed by thick description.

Trustworthiness

Firestone's (2010) comment on trustworthiness is a fitting introduction to this section: "… I argue that qualitative methods are not at any great disadvantage although there are things researchers in this tradition can do to strengthen their case" (p. 16). "Strengthening the case" means that efforts have been made to clearly define the role of the researcher (detailed in the following section) and the methods and processes of data collection and analysis. Within quantitative research, evaluative criteria are identified as validity, objectivity, reliability and generalizability. Within qualitative research, trustworthiness is demonstrated through credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability (Lincoln Guba, 1985; Guba, 1981).

Therefore, credibility is a measure of the confidence that a reader or participant may have in the findings; this study will include triangulation and engage in member checking. Merriam (1998) identifies the importance of triangulation or the use of three sources of data as they aid transferability, confirmability, and dependability: The three data sources that this study will use are interviews, observations, and document analysis of teacher reflections. Wolcott (1992) describes these as "watching," "asking," and "reviewing" (p. 19). The use of multiple data sources "prevents the investigator from accepting too readily the validity of initial impressions; it enhances the scope, density, and clarity of constructs [themes] developed during the course of the investigation" (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, p. 48). Member checking will confirm findings with the participants. Carlson (2010) describes a number of the challenges involved in member checking and suggests that member checking give appropriate time and attention to building rapport with the participants and giving them a voice, and not focus solely on

data collection and analysis (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Member checking will be conducted following data collection and then again following data analysis. Taken together, these measures increase the level of confidence that a reader or participant may have in the findings.

Transferability is a measure of applicability or generalizability; this study will provide thick description of the case within its context and structure data collection. Yin (1994) suggests that a case description is an important aspect of data collection and analysis. Firestone (2010) agrees and connects case description with transferability: "Therefore, one must describe a broad range of background features, aspects of the processes studied, and outcome so readers have enough information to assess the match between the situation and their own" (p. 18). In their survey of 25 multisite studies, Herriott and Firestone (1983) identify design features they found that foster transferability/ generalizability and indicate that transferability can be aided by structuring and standardizing data collection across cases and sites: "Cross-site comparison and generalization require researchers at all sites to use shared definitions of concepts and common data collection procedures to ensure that cross-site similarities and differences are characteristics of the sites and not the result of measurement procedures or researcher bias" (p. 16). Methods like including the use of a standard interview protocol with all participants aids transferability and decreases researcher bias. This study may achieve some level of structuring through the use of specific, pre-designed interview questions in a semi-structured interview format so that each teacher is receiving and responding to identical questions or prompts.

Confirmability is a measure of objectivity or freedom from researcher bias; this study will use triangulation of data sources to minimize bias and provide a transparent description of the researcher's role in the study as well as the admission of researcher beliefs and assumptions. This study will use multiple cases. The use of multiple cases increases trustworthiness. "By looking at a range of similar and contrasting cases, we can understand single-case finding, grounding it by specifying *how* and *where* and, if possible, *why* it carries on as it does, we can strengthen the precision, the validity, and the stability of the findings" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 29). According to Herriott & Firestone (1983), the use of multiple cases increases transferability, creditability and dependability. Miles and Huberman (1994) point out that the use of multiple cases increases rigor, facilitates the comparison across the cases, and has the potential to inform and contribute to experimental design. Visiting multiple sites also aids transferability by helping to balance rich description of each case with cross-case comparison. This study will describe the case, identify emergent themes from that rich, site-specific description and analyze these themes across cases.

The Role of the Researcher and Researcher Bias

Establishing trustworthiness in a case study like this requires giving due attention to the assumptions, perspectives, beliefs of the researcher. Because "…meaning is mediated through the investigator's own perceptions" (Merriam, 1998, p. 6), the appropriate role for the researcher is that of an observer and interpreter. The researcher is an observer of the social world within each teacher's classroom, and, as such, is the primary interpretative instrument (Merriam, 1998, p. 7). Therefore, the perspective of

the researcher must be taken into account as an integral part of the interpretive process and the researcher must be aware of the potential affect of personal bias on the interpretive process. As the researcher, I approach this study with a particular perspective informed by my own beliefs, assumptions, biases, and experiences. My theoretical perspective is interpretivist and I place a high value on the social and cultural construction of knowledge. In my own teaching I observed the effectiveness of a dialogic form of classroom discussion. Therefore, it would be natural for me to see dialogic discussion as the best approach for any and every pedagogical goal and classroom activity. However, I must also remind myself to be objective and cautious of viewing dialogic discussion as the only viable approach. Dialogic discussion is a valuable tool that merits greater applicability in the secondary English language arts classroom, but teachers make many decisions on a daily basis about the best instructional approach in any given situation, informed by their knowledge of the students and the context. Dialogic discussion is one of several effective tools. The purpose of my study is best served by focusing on the classroom teacher's decision making within the unique classroom context, and not on the assumption that dialogic discussion is the best approach in every situation.

Setting of the Study

The setting for the study is a rural high school within a county-wide school system in a southeastern state. In this study, the setting will be identified as Upstate High School. Upstate High School is in a district comprised of 16 elementary schools, five middle schools, four high schools, and a career and technology center. According to the

district's website, it is the 12th largest in the state, covering an area of 504 miles and with an annual enrollment of approximately 16,600 students. According to the 2014 estimate by the U.S. Census Bureau, the county population is 120,368 and the median household income for the county (2009-2013) is $41,788.00 with 18.9% (2009-2013) living below the poverty level. According to the district website, the 2013 enrollment at Upstate One was 1,018 in grades 9-12. The ethnic diversity of the school is 83% white, 7% African American, 5% Hispanic or Latino, and 5% other groups. 31.43% of students receive free or reduced lunch.

It is important to note that the three teachers who participated in this study acknowledged that neither teacher training nor professional development opportunities provided any meaningful information on models of discussion in the English language arts classroom.

Participant Selection

The English department at Upstate High School is comprised of 10 teachers, three men and seven women. This area of research has implications for all high school subject areas. Every academic subject has the potential to benefit from discovering ways of integrating a teacher practice like dialogic discussion into classroom instruction. Therefore, a study of how all content teachers wrestle with the integration of this teacher practice into their classrooms is an important research direction. A secondary English language arts classroom is a good place to begin this investigation because of the frequent use of discussion. My choice to begin with secondary English teachers is largely attributable to my own familiarity with both the content of English language arts and the

culture of high school English departments (McConachie & Petrosky, 2010; Moje, 2008). However, it may be safe to say that, given the contested and disparate nature of high school English curricular content and goals described in chapter one, literacy may be described as the only thread that ties all the others together.

Participants were selected through snowball or chain sampling (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996). The advantage of this method is that one participant refers the researcher to another. In doing research in the classroom, the primary obstacle is access. Classroom teachers may not want a visitor in their classroom who may be seen as a threat or as a distraction for the students or themselves. Teachers are already being asked to meet many additional tasks and expectations. One more expectation of working with a researcher in the classroom may not be welcomed. In the past three years, I have often visited these schools and worked with these English language arts teachers. They have expressed both an understanding of the role of literacy in building content knowledge as well as an interest in exploring the research questions in their classrooms. They participated in a pilot study and they expressed an interest in continuing the collaboration.

Initial participant selection was based on the identification of three teacher dispositions: an interest in participating in the study, an openness to self-reflection, and a willingness to try new classroom practices. Teachers who wanted to participate, who were comfortable with self-reflection, and who were open to trying new classroom approaches will yield the most trustworthy data. These dispositions are of primary importance. Teachers who were uncomfortable with self-reflection or with trying new classroom approaches will be hesitant to engage effectively in the study.

The choice was made not to initially limit participants according to demographic qualifications like gender, age, race, ethnicity, education, experience, or professional qualifications like National Board Certification because of the importance placed on the dispositions and a desire to not rule out participants who met the criteria simply because they did not match a demographic profile. My goal was is to enlist between two and four participants. Three participants met the three criteria of interest, self-reflection, and openness to experimentation, Had the need arisen, I would have used demographic information to limit participants in order to have an equal number of men and women with a variety of educational and professional backgrounds, range of experience, and racial and ethnic backgrounds.

For the initial participant selection, I did not consider teachers' knowledge of literacy. For the sake of generalizability/ transferability, I wanted to work with teachers at every stage of development in their understanding of literacy and the role of literacy building content knowledge. If more than four participants did choose to participate, I would have used literacy knowledge as a factor in selection by selecting a variety of participants at all stages of professional development.

Data Collection

Data sources from this study included semi-structured interviews, teacher reflections, and classroom observations. Individual semi-structured interviews were conducted with each of the participants. One 60-minute interview was conducted at the beginning of the fall 2015 school semester and a subsequent interview was conducted at the end of the study. The use of an interview protocol of prescribed questions helped to

standardize interviews across all participants and thereby increase the structure of the data collection process. This protocol aided reliability and validity. (See Appendix B). I gathered data from interviews, observations, and teacher reflections. The interviews were triangulated with field notes gathered from classroom observations and teacher reflections of a teacher self-videotaped lesson. Eight observations were conducted over several month and the Dialogic Inquiry Tool (Reznitskaya, 2012; Reznitskaya, Glina, & Oyler, 2012) was used to describe the quality of classroom discussion and. In addition to observations, I requested that participants create one 30-minute videotape (Sherin & Van Es, 2005; Goldman, Pea, Barron, & Derry, 2006) of their use of discussion during the course of the study and use the videos to write a reflection on their teaching practice as it relates to efforts to integrate a dialogic model of classroom discussion. I provided participants with pre-arranged prompts to guide and standardize their reflections. (See Appendix C). These videos were only viewed by the classroom and not seen by the researcher. They were only be used for teacher reflection and presumably erased by the participating teacher after the reflection was completed . These video reflections added to data by providing an opportunity for participants to reflect independently and synthesize their own experiences.

I used classroom observations and an observation rubric developed by Reznitskaya (2012) to identify the type of classroom discussion. A validation study indicates the effectiveness of the Dialogue Inquiry Tool (Reznitskaya, Glina, & Oyler, 2012). Reznitskaya (2012) describes six features or characteristics of effective classroom discussion. According to the Dialogue Inquiry Tool (DIT) she developed as an observational scale intended to analyze teacher-student interactions, effective classroom

discussion may be described by authority relationships, types of questions, occurrence of feedback, meta-level reflection, explanation, and collaboration. The DIT model ranks these features on a six point scale. On the high end of the scale, power relations are flexible and authority over content and form of discourse is shared among group members; questions are open and divergent; teachers provide meaningful and specific feedback; students engage in meta-level reflection; students provide elaborate explanations of their thinking; students engage in collaborative construction of knowledge. (See Appendix A).

Data Analysis

Data from teacher reflections (video), data from interviews, and data from the DIT (classroom observations) were analyzed using the constant comparative method (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Merriam 2000) and then coded. The DIT tool was used to code levels of awareness of dialogic discussion that participants demonstrate during observations and interviews. Holton (2010) identifies two types of coding: substantive coding which includes open and selective coding procedures, and theoretical coding methods.

Open coding is used initially to analyze data, looking for the emergence of core categories. Strauss and Corbin (1990) define open coding as a stage in data analysis when "the data are broken into discrete parts, closely examined, compared for similarities and differences, and then questions are asked about the phenomena as reflected in the data" (p. 62). Selective coding reinforces or "saturates" those core categories. Next, the researcher engages in a constant comparison of data points to further develop the codes.

This constant comparison continues until no new categories suggest themselves. Holton (2010) calls this theoretical saturation.

Merriam (2000) identifies the steps of data analysis and coding as category construction, category sorting, and category naming. Category construction is open coding or the initial assigning of themes to interview notes. Category sorting involves narrowing and refining categories; last, category naming involves the selection and focus on a fewer number of specific categories or themes. Member checking helped define these categories and improve reliability and validity. The effective implementation of each of these methods improved rigor.

A cross-case analysis of these categories or themes provided helpful generalizations about teacher conceptualizations and uses of discussion. affect the implementation of dialogic discussion. Cross-case analysis also fostered increased trustworthiness.

Chapter Summation

Case study has its limitations, but its strengths rest in its applicability to this type of naturalistic investigation as a research design method that recognizes the social and interpretive aspects of research in education. At its heart education, and therefore educational research, is a social process that revolves around human relationships and dynamic contexts. Reinking (2007) makes this point in his discussion of educational reform in which he questions the trend toward seeking best practice. Best practice is difficult to define and is highly contextual. What may be best practice in one classroom setting may be terrible practice in another. Perhaps what we can aspire to is to make

practice a little better in each specific context.

CHAPTER FOUR: KATHY
DISCUSSION FOR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

"Once you learn to read, you will be forever free."
― Frederick Douglass

This chapter, along with the following two, will discuss each case study individually. Each chapter will follow the same format: a.) a brief vignette representative of the participant's teaching, b.) a brief, professional biography, c.) the participant's vision for discussion, d.) an analysis of classroom observations, and e.) an analysis of the participant's beliefs and practices.

Teaching Vignette

It's a late fall day. Kathy is standing at the front of the classroom, leaning on her podium, one foot propped on the base. She is leading a whole-class discussion on the 14th-century Middle English poem "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight" with her English III American Studies Honors class. The school district identifies four high-school English Classes from English I to English IV, each with a particular emphasis. The emphasis for English III which would most likely be taken by juniors is American literature. This is a large class, perhaps as many as 30 students. They are obviously at ease in Kathy's classroom. Conversation between students is informal and friendly, if occasionally off-topic.

As I arrive, students are already working individually or in small groups to answer questions. In one corner of the room, a group of five boys are talking. In another corner, two girls are working together. Another five students are working independently. After 10 minutes, Kathy begins a discussion of the poem:

T: Alright, let's talk about these questions. Tell me about the narrator's warning.

S. He can't be seduced by this chick.

T. Why not?

S. He's supposed to be righteous and this chick's married.

T. Does this have anything to do with code of chivalry?

S. Yes.

T. What is the code of chivalry?

S. He has to be nice.

S. I know it is a test.

T. What is the test?

Kathy displays the Chivalric Code on a projection screen.

T. How do these govern a knight's behavior?

T. How is Gawain following this code, so far?

S. He is truthful.

S2. The only thing with that lady…

S1. He must honorable in a host's house…. I am lost….

T. IS she the noble lady?

S. no…

The room is cacophony of student voices. Many are talking at the same time; Kathy leads

the discussion, but she neither responds to individual students nor engages in any

dialogue with them.

T. What does the chapel look like?

S. Multiple students call out brief answers.

T. So, Gawain arrives and he is waiting around and what happens? What does he

hear?

S. He hears the sharpening of the axe.

T. So, somebody tell me about the encounter with the Green Knight… why

doesn't the green knight cut his head off?

The questioning continues for another 10 minutes before the period ends, but it is possible to arrive at some conclusions about her classroom. Her class is large, and these students are comfortable in their surroundings. They freely engage in side conversations and joke with each other and Kathy. While she is accepting of these distractions, and her students are generally polite and attentive, the classroom climate is relaxed and informal. The students' comments and behavior are more reminiscent of informal conversation at a social event than a rigorous intellectual analysis of literature. She does not ask students to defend an interpretation. There is only one interpretation and she and the students understand that she possesses it.

Brief Professional Biography

Kathy has been teaching for 21 years. She has been at Upstate High School for 17 years. Prior to joining the faculty of Upstate, she was an ESOL teacher for four years. She has a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from Clemson University, a Master of Education degree from Southern Wesleyan University, and she is currently completing her doctorate in educational leadership at Clemson University. She teaches English 3 and 4 honors. She has also taught English I, English II, Creative Writing I & II, Drama, and Film Criticism. English I and English II are genre study courses. English III is American Literature and English IV is British Literature.

She has National Board Certification, and endorsements for teaching Gifted and Talented and Advanced Placement Literature and Composition courses. She reports no prior pre-service or in-service professional development in using discussion in the

classroom. **"**I honestly cannot remember any PD on using discussion in the classroom, maybe a little bit on types of questions, but not anything about how to use it effectively in a classroom" (Kathy, personal communication, November 5, 2015). Her lack of professional development in this area speaks to the importance of identifying discussion as an area of research.

A Vision for Discussion

Kathy defines discussion and just as quickly identifies her purpose for using it. She defines discussion as "an informal conversation between teacher and student or student to student that is formally assessed by the teacher" (Kathy, personal communication, October 30, 2015). Discussion as assessment is a reoccurring theme. For example, she describes the purpose for using discussion as "checking for comprehension," assessing how well students understand a text (Kathy, personal communication, October 30, 2105). She begins her unit on Arthur Miller's play *The Crucible* with a discussion of the influence of the Great Awakening on Puritan writers in order to assess how well students recognize and understand the conventions and elements of Puritan sermons as a literary genre. "The purpose of using discussion in this lesson was to check for comprehension. Did the students understand what the Great Awakening was and how it influenced Puritan writers? Did [they] understand typical elements, or conventions, of Puritan sermons…" (Kathy, personal communication, October 30, 2105). If Kathy uses discussion as formative assessment, she also hopes it will foster those affective dimensions of literary appreciation.

She sees discussion as a tool for developing a love for literature and reading. She very confidently identifies her love for literature and her interest in passing on that love to her students. "I think I want to try and develop their love of literature, a love for reading" (Kathy, personal communication, November 5, 2015). She also sees literature and discussion as a means of helping her students make those personal, social, and cultural connections that foster personal growth and social conscience. "[Discussion is] talking about elements that we've read, pieces that we've read, trying to discern what the students were thinking about it, connections that they make to it, things like that" (Kathy, personal communication, January 19, 2016). She reiterates this idea again. "I think it is important for the kids to make connections to what they're reading. Otherwise, I think they don't see the benefit in reading it. Like, '"Why do I have to read this?"' If they can make a connection, I think that helps them" (Kathy, personal communication, November, 2015). Another part of her vision is the development of social conscience. "Discussion [is] sharing of ideas, comprehension, [pause] keeping an open mind to others' opinions" (Kathy, personal communication, November 5, 2015). She hopes that literary study and discussion will help her students be more open minded about other's ideas. Kathy places a strong emphasis on the role of literature in the personal development of students.

She also sees discussion as a tool for developing students' critical thinking. "Maybe critically thinking more about things… Rather than just repeating back something that they think I want to hear, critically thinking about ideas and themes, and where they fit to that, how that affects them or how that can allow them to grow as readers and writers for the betterment of society as they get out into the world and interact." (Kathy, personal communication, November 5, 2015). Discussion fosters

critical thinking which, in turn, fosters students' development of self-reflection, social conscience, and civic responsibility.

Kathy's definition of critical thinking also matches her identification of those target literacy skills highlights related to develop critical thinking:

> [Students are] missing easy and more difficult questions that rely on critical thinking or deeper thinking to answer. I want them to think about and make connections between historical moments/events and literature- how societal concerns influence literature. I want them thinking about how literary elements help to convey meaning. I want their vocabulary to increase- we are writing opinion pieces so that they can incorporate opinion into essays or support points into essays which they pull from the literature (Kathy, personal communication, October 30, 2015).

Understanding that the choice of curriculum is commonly a district-level decision and standardized across multiple buildings, it is still worthwhile to point out that her choice of curriculum is reflective of her vision for discussion in the classroom. While acknowledging that the literary canon is important, she expresses her interest in exposing students to a wide range of genres beyond the traditional canon, helping them make personal connections to the text, and helping them appreciate ideals and values that cut across cultures. "… The canon is important, but there are other writers that are important that get overlooked. I try to pull in some of these people too" (Kathy, personal communication, November, 5, 2015). She describes the importance of helping students make global connections. Kathy defines global connections as "keeping an open mind, trying to think beyond just this world or beyond their experiences. Thinking about what

other people experience and how that affects society, and all that" (Kathy, personal communication, November 5, 2015).

The relative importance of the canon is a reoccurring theme. "They have to be exposed to some of the canon, but remember that it is not just the canon. There are other great pieces too. I try to do some of the canon, but I try to pull in other pieces too… Every culture experiences things that you write about in literature. Of course, you want to try and make those cultural connections… being open to what other people think… I hope those things happen when we discuss things" (Kathy, personal communication, date). Kathy's vision for discussion is to foster a love for literature in her students and to guide them in making connections between self, text, and world. This love for literature and understanding of issues raised in literature will make them better people able to positively contribute to society.

Analysis of Classroom Observations

Reznitskaya's (2012) Dialogic Inquiry Tool (Appendix A) assesses the dialogic quality of discussion occurring in the classroom. The terms on the left are taken directly from the DIT.

Community								
Move	Obs. 1	Obs. 2	Obs. 3	Obs. 4	Obs. 5	Obs. 6	Obs. 7	Obs. 8
Sharing the Floor	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2
Dividing Responsibilities	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2
Collaboratively Following a line of Inquiry	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2

Inquiry								
Move	Obs. 1	Obs. 2	Obs. 3	Obs. 4	Obs. 5	Obs. 6	Obs. 7	Obs. 8
Discussing Contestable Questions	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2
Tracking and Labeling Discussion Processes	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2
Requesting/	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2

82

Providing Justification								
Prompting for/ Considering Alternatives	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2
Clarifying Meaning/ Summarizing	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2
Connecting Ideas	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2
Connecting to/ Across Relevant Contexts	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2
Checking for/ Maintaining Accuracy	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2

Adapted from ***Dialogic Inquiry Tool***. Reznitskaya, A., Glina, M., & Oyler, J. (2012). *Dialogic Inquiry Tool*. Montclair, NJ: The Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children

As the above chart reflects, according to Reznitskaya's DIT instrument, Kathy's use of discussion certainly falls into the category of traditional recitation. The role of student voice is minimized and teacher voice is prominent. Since hers is the only voice, it naturally becomes the voice of authority and consequence in terms of knowledge construction and knowledge transmission. I provide two examples from classroom observations and draw some conclusions.

Example #1 -- It is the day before Halloween. Kathy introduces a literary unit on American Rationalism. Students have a handout on Rationalism to which they refer.

Teacher –Student Exchange	Researcher Notes
1. T. What is Reason? 2. T. Logical thinking? 3. T. What are some of the rationalist beliefs? 4. S. The universe is orderly and good 5. T. What does it mean if the universe is orderly and good? 6. S. Student responses are too numerous and chaotic to record. 7. T. What else? [prompting students to respond from printed handout]. 8. T. I want you to be thinking about these ideas as we look at these documents. 9. T. Tell me a little about what you know about Ben Franklin? 10. S. He created the light bulb… [too many voices] 11. T. Let's raise our hands and share… 12. T. What does it mean to ratify? [Franklin's speech on the Constitution]. 13. S. Make it official. 14. T. yes; make it official. 15. T. Why does he think that unanimity so important? 16. S. We will not have despotism. 17. T. Why does he think that this document is faulty? 18. S. Brief student answers 19. T. So, can you carry that to a comment on human nature? 20. S. Human nature is not perfect. 21. T. Why does he agree to accept Constitution? He gives you 3 reasons.	1. Recall of information 2. She gives the answer 3. Recall of information 4. St repeating from handout 5. An opportunity for critical thinking; however, student responses were too diverse for her to respond or foster a dialogue. 9. Recall background knowledge 10. Loudest student is heard. 11. Management of discussion. 12. Simple vocabulary knowledge 13. One right answer 14. Assessment of vocabulary knowledge 15. Requires students to make inference 16. An opportunity for student to elaborate 17. Recall of information; Kathy assesses comprehension

22. S. There could be no better 23. T. We couldn't come up with any better. 24. S. Any government depends on opinion. It is essential to have opinion to have government 25. T. How could constitution reflect this new American society 26. S. It encourages different opinions. 27. T. What is the persuasive message in this speech? 28. S. Go ahead and sign the constitution. 29. T. Were their people who didn't think it was a good speech? 30. S. When he says that this is not a perfect document. 31. T. Why is his allusion to builders of tower of Babel effective? 32. S. Student summarizes the story of tower of Babel. 33. T. One of the most important things is unity and compromise. 34. T. What are arguments toward friendly audience? 35. S. This is best document you can get. It's not a perfect document. 36. T. Why does he say, "I do not approve of this document?" 37. S. I am not really for it but I am not really against it. 38. T. Anything else about this speech? Any rhetorical devices? 39. S. The French [reference in text]. 40. T. What is the purpose of using the French? 41. T. Is he reminding them of something by using French, reminding them that he is a successful diplomat? 42. T. What is the point of the story and French quote? 43. S. Everyone thinks that he is always right.	19. Asks for analytic thinking and presents opportunity for meaningful discussion. <u>Potential</u> <u>Response</u>: Raise your hand if you agree with [#20], then discuss. 21. Assessing recall and comprehension of information. She provides the structure. 22. St. demonstrates comprehension. 23. Kathy repeats student's answer. 24. Student states thoughtful opinion. Kathy could have asked for elaboration. 25. The question suggests that Kathy has an agenda; not following st. responses. 26. Kathy might have asked for elaboration. 27. Asks for understanding of rhetorical purpose. 29. Recall of information 30. Evidence of rhetorical purpose 31. Opportunity for discussion of purpose 32. Recall; background knowledge. 33. Kathy is summarizing. 34. Recall of factual information 35. Reflects understanding of rhetoric. 36. Assessing comprehension. 40. Opportunity to discuss how the use of reference to his French background contributed to Franklin's rhetorical purpose. 43. Opportunity to discuss Aristotelian rhetorical appeal to Ethos.

84

Example #2 – In mid-December, Kathy begins a unit on Edgar Allan Poe.

Transcript of Teacher –Student Exchange	Researcher Notes
1. T. We will spend next couple of days on Edgar Alan Poe	
2. T. What do we know about Poe?	2. Recalling background knowledge
3. S. Student responses are concurrent and she does not respond to individual students. She ignores their responses often, but does occasionally query a student's answer.	3. Assessment becomes difficult with whole class answer.
Brief lecture/ exposition on Poe's life: "sad life"	
4. T. What are some things that he likes to write about	4-6. Recalling background knowledge
5. S. Death, ravens.	
6. T. Revenge is a frequent theme, lost love, insanity, terror	
7. Playing audio of reading of Poe's "Raven."	
8. T. What are some of words that contribute to atmosphere?	8-12. The questions assume that students understand and can identify words that contribute to a poem's atmosphere. Her questions do not ask students to explain how or why specific words contribute to rhetorical purpose.
9. S. bleak. Other students call out words….	
10. T. [bleak] what does that mean?	
11. T. What about the embers?	
12. S. dying	
13. T. what is the person doing in the poem?	13-14. Simple recall of story detail.
14. s. sleeping, pondering,	
15. T. What happens… how does person greet the tapping?	15. Simple recall of story detail.
16. T. Is there an air of gothic literature revealed by raven speaking?	16. Students must know elements of gothic literature and apply that knowledge to poem.
17. T. the bird speaking introduces supernatural element.	17-18. The teacher is providing interpretation and explication.
18. T. He is wondering, where do you come from? To whom do you belong?	
19. T. Bird says, nevermore… now he is intrigued .	19-22. Kathy is characterizing and interpreting.
20. T. so he is a little bit charmed by the bird	
21. T. we have these references to Greek things.	
22. T. what do ravens represent in Greek literature?.	
23. S. Prophecy.	
24. T. Look at lines …. What is he doing?	24. Recall of factual information
25. S. studying	25-26. Within a dialogic model, teacher response might be to ask student to clarify and expand what is meant by the word "studying." Follow-up might include asking what the narrator notices about the bird or what the reader may notice about the bird.
26. T. yes, he is studying the bird. Appearance of the bird seems to change.	
27. T. now he calls birds grim, gamely, ominous. He is not so charmed anymore.	
28. T. he is thinking about bird and his mind drifts to Lenore	
29. S. Lenore	
30. T as soon as he thinks about Lenore what happens?	
31. T. What happens to his mind?	
32. T. he thinks he smells…?	
33. S. Lenore's perfume.	
34. T. he decides that the bird has come from …	
35. S. the devil.	
36. T. so then he says if my suffering and sorrow is never coming to an end at least you can tell me this. Is my Lenore in heaven?	36-37. She is interpreting for the students.
37. T. Get out of my house. Don't even leave me a feather to remind me that you were here.	
38. T. what about final stanza?	
39. S. Raven hasn't even changed. Keeps looking at him	
40. T. Was it (the raven) ever there?	
41. T. through the poem we see his emotional state deteriorate…	41-44. In dialogic model, teacher could ask students what changes they detect in narrator's emotional state; what evidence do they base that on; what is this poem about?
42. S. death of wife is catalyst.	
43. T. do you think because he is fixated on his wife?	
44. T. is this a poem about his wife or something else?	
45. T. Is he crazy?	
46. T. what about poetical elements: alliteration, internal rhyme, assonance, consonance, repetition?	46. Asks for demonstration of student's knowledge of these literary elements.
47. T. How do these things impact the poem?	

In both examples, the exchanges are representative of discussion as formative assessment of students' knowledge and comprehension. Her questions and responses indicate that she has a right answer in mind and a list of questions that guide her questioning. Opportunities for dialogue are allowed to pass. In the first example, in line 3, she gives the answer to her question and in line 4, she asks for and gets a response that students may take from the handout. The discussion, which she leads, is very concrete and contains little in the way of opportunity for abstract thinking, critical thinking, or literary interpretation by the students – all goals that she says that she values. In the second example, a number of her questions ask students for simple recall of narrative details in order assess student understanding of narrative.

Summary of Beliefs and Practices

Kathy describes a number of goals for the use of discussion in her classroom including personal development, social development, critical thinking, and assessment. Kathy has an expansive view of the role of discussion in an English language arts classroom. She sees discussion as a means to meet the needs of the whole person within society. Her view touches on the difficulties with defining discussion and the value of further investigation into classroom use of discussion. Society expects the English language arts classroom teacher to accomplish many and diverse goals including some very lofty ideals related to personal development and the development of civic virtue and civic participation.

Contrary to her lofty goals, however, her classroom practice reflects a more traditional pedagogical use of discussion related to simple formative assessment and knowledge transmission. Her use of a recitation model of discussion will not likely lead to the attainment of the lofty goals she espouses. For example, her desire to help students make a literary connection and engage in the imaginative, literary world is confounded by a transmission model of learning. Much of her class time is devoted to whole class discussion in which she leads the discussion. The emphasis on assessing student understanding of a reading passage ("You want to make sure that they're comprehending the material, of course…"), but the understanding that she wants to encourage is her literary interpretation (Kathy, November 5, 2015). Her questions focus on her literary knowledge and on traditional, consensus interpretations.

This traditional approach to discussion as assessment is reflected in her choice of curriculum. She indicates that she wants to integrate non-canonical texts into her teaching in order to help students make those personal and cultural connections, but she predominantly uses canonical texts: Arthur Miller's *the Crucible*, Edgar Allan Poe's "Raven," William Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, Ben Franklin's diary.

Kathy uses discussion to assess students' understanding of character development and as scaffolding or pre-writing activity to prepare students for writing. In her classroom discussion of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, students are given a key word from the play and asked to work in groups to generate three more related words that describe the five characters. These words are used to generate a sentence for each of the characters. Students complete this task in groups and then Kathy uses those generated sentences as a foundation for whole class discussion. Her emphasis on a single literary interpretation

promotes an authoritative, teacher-centered view of knowledge as transmitted fact that diminishes student voice to the point of irrelevance.

Her use of discussion is teacher-focused and not interactive with students' ideas, or reflective of any attempt to draw out these ideas in what might be personally meaningful ways. In fact, individual student responses are largely unrecognized, unacknowledged, and unexplored. She pays so little attention to individual student responses that their answers become inconsequential and Student voice is completely undervalued. Classroom observation necessarily turns to a focus on her questions and not on the dialogue in her classroom.

If active participation of all students, as a function of student voice, is an important quality of discussion, Kathy's questioning does not encourage active participation. Only those students willing or capable of engaging in deeper conceptualization are participating in whole class discussion. The majority of students either do not engage in a discussion or their answers are neither acknowledged nor addressed. In one example, I observed a girl sitting in the back of the room. She kept calling out with her opinion, trying to be heard, but she remained unheard and eventually gave up.

During a class discussion on the role of parents in a child's life, a student asserted that parents should fill the role of God in our lives. The other students reacted strongly and caustically, and Kathy needed to rein them in. Later, she referred to this incident as an example of her efforts to help her students develop the ability to listen to other's opinions with an open mind.

This morning, when my student was talking about parents as being sort of God, and the other kids jumped on him a little bit. I thought, "Well that's not exact...Just keep an open mind of his idea and what he's thinking about that." But [laughs] they went, "Wait a second!" [indecipherable 07:49.17]. Part of being an adult and part of being a human is understanding other people, being open to what they have to say, and not being so close-minded with your own opinions that you don't see the value in what other people say or think (Kathy, personal communication, November 5, 2015).

Kathy's response demonstrates that she wants to foster this kind of dialogue in her classroom, but her lack of knowledge prevents her from seizing this opportunity. **"**Maybe it just goes back to the fact that I never got any professional development on how to develop those deep thinking questions… I probably need to do a better job of having them share vocally, rather than writing" (Kathy, personal communication, January 19, 2016).

Developing a global perspective would require that students have opportunity to share their values and beliefs in an environment that promotes and protects the free exchange of ideas. In the above exchange, encouraging the kind of dialogue she intends would have meant encouraging a conversation to develop, permitting other students opportunity to respond, and allowing the student to clarify, defend, and explain his position. However, this didn't happen. The student was not given an opportunity for elaboration and the other students did not have the opportunity to engage in a dialogue. This exchange demonstrates the incongruity between her goals and her practice. She says

that she wants to help students make connections with literature, but she does encourage discussion in the direction of students' personal beliefs.

Students are not encouraged to overtly make those connections; they are not asked to craft a personally meaningful interpretation or a critical explanation for their conclusions. Her approach suggests that there is only one interpretation, and she and the students understand that she has the right answer. In her practice, discussion becomes a tool for explicating that predetermined answer. Classroom discussion paired with the three dimensions of response to literature that Wilhelm and Novak (2011) identify, the evocative, the connective, and the reflective, is more likely to facilitate the kinds of outcomes which she describes.

Observations of Kathy's classroom lead to two conclusions. First that there is an incongruity between Kathy's stated purposes and her actual practice, an incongruity that may actually hinder her efforts and keep her from achieving her own pedagogical goals. She describes her own love for literature and her desire to pass this love along to her students. She also says that she wants to encourage students' personal growth through literature and help them make connections to their own lives and to a larger social and cultural context; in practice, however, her teaching reflects a teacher-focused view of meaning making and an emphasis on discussion, not as the kind of collaborative thinking and shared meaning-making that would engender connections between student, text, and context, but as a means of knowledge transmission and formative assessment. Her practice is unlikely to lead to the outcomes she espouses and it may hinder the achievement of what she identifies as worthwhile goals for the use of discussion in a secondary English classroom. The lack of opportunity for students to develop a sense of

voice and explore the personal relevance of canonical or non-canonical literature to their own lived experience can only lead to disengagement, a lack of motivation, and limited understanding of deeper aspects of textual interpretation.

A second conclusion is that Kathy's interest in helping her students make personal connections to a text and develop their critical thinking skills is actually a vague ambition more associated with her teaching philosophy than her specific teacher practice as it relates to discussion. Although, in our conversations, she describes a clear purpose for using discussion in her classroom, the observation of her classroom leads to the conclusion that she really does not have goals for using discussion. Goals that do not translate into intentional plans that affects her classroom practice are not really goals; they are aspirations.

 The alternative possible conclusion is that she sees discussion as a general approach, an unsharpened, multi-use tool that may be used without a specific purpose. Whatever the reason, to achieve the outcomes that she describes requires an intentional use of dialogic discussion.

Research will not support a claim that a recitation model of discussion will not lead to critical thinking. Perhaps, it would be more accurate to say that a solely monologic approach, without any other literacy opportunities for students to process and create knowledge (e.g. writing), will not allow students to sharpen their dialogue skills. In the classes I observed, it is clear that students are not invited or encouraged to engage as equal partners in a dialogue; Kathy's questions and response to students' efforts will not allow students to engage in any of the aspects of dialogic discussion that lead to increased critical thinking or meaningful literary connections between self, text, and context, as her

goals indicate. These traditional approaches to teaching, knowledge construction, and discussion will likely not lead to the goals she describes.

In this specific cultural context, discussion is the students' demonstration of their articulated understanding of an accepted interpretation of a literary text. This interpretation is the one held by the teacher and literate behavior is the identification and recitation of that accepted understanding of the text. Discussion is the means by which the teacher judges student understanding. It is formative assessment.

The application of Vygotsky's theory focuses attention on the recitation aspect of her teacher practice. Because she is not using discussion for knowledge construction, Kathy's teacher practice does not help students enter the zone of proximal development. Students remain isolated learners. Their thinking is not supported by social interaction except to the limited degree that individuals may gain a residual effect from hearing the expression of other's ideas.

CHAPTER 5: TOM
THE TEACHABLE MOMENT

"It is not enough to simply teach children to read; we have to give them something worth reading. Something that will stretch their imaginations--something that will help them make sense of their own lives and encourage them to reach out toward people whose lives are quite different from their own."
- Katherine Patterson

Chapter 5 follows the same organizational pattern as the previous chapter: a.) a brief vignette representative of the participant's teaching, b.) a brief, professional biography, c.) his vision for discussion as articulated in interviews and teacher reflection, d.) an analysis of classroom observations, and e.) a summary of the participant's beliefs and practices.

Teaching Vignette

It is early October in Tom's third-block A.P. literature class. The controlled clutter of the room reflects a man who less concerned with organization and more concerned with results. His desk is stacked with books, leaving the impression that it is seldom used. The bookcases behind the desk are overflowing with books, primarily class sets of novels. The seats are arranged in a semi-circle or half-moon shape facing the front of the room. Although his classes generally have about 10 students, this class has about 15 students. They are slightly more reticent to respond to questions. Responses are frequently non-verbal or single-word responses. He teaches from a podium at the front of the room beside a small upraised table where his laptop connects easily to the promethean board. These are serious students. Conversation is light hearted, friendly, and reflective of thoughtful and intelligent people. They are relatively quick to end conversations when Tom begins.

He is continuing a discussion of Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God.*

T. Pull out your text. Let's pull out concept words, look for motifs, and practice preparing for prompts.

T. How many people see the climax?

S. Is this where she shoots him?

T. Yes. Is anybody disturbed by the length of the trial?

T. Who was the victim?

S. Student responses are non-verbal or single word assents.

T. I want to talk about the moment when she shoots him. Look at page 184. Pinpoint the sentence where [it occurs].

T. Is Janie the narrator: "She saw the quick motion."

T. What is the narrator telling us?

T. Look at page 192 and 193. See full paragraph "Now please…"

T. Listening to gossip is like… opening your mouth and letting the moon shine down your throat. What does it mean? How many of you read it and kept going?

S. what is moon shine?

T. [Reads a section]. Let's talk, transform into meaning, without going too far & making up stuff.

T. What is important about the netting? [How does this] speak to her development as a character?

T. I don't think we need to argue over the protagonist… Who is it?

S. Janie

T. Who are the characters in the text that give [most evidence] moments [that make for ease of analysis?]

You need one to four moments [Students and teacher note textual evidence that could be cited for thematic motifs.]

T. What is another one? [motif]

Tom's use of discussion reflects intentionality, but he does not require students to do all the cognitive heavy lifting. Tom is mentoring his students and it shows itself in the classroom. His approach is more prescriptive than collaborative. For example, he often does not wait for responses, use wait time, structure student responses, or encourage expanded student discussion. He often asks questions for which he knows the answer. He is modeling the right questions.

Brief Professional Biography

Tom has been an English teacher at Upstate High School for 10 years. His degrees include a Master of Architecture and an Educational Specialist in building-level and district-level supervision. He has National Board Certification and endorsements for teaching Gifted and Talented and Advanced Placement Literature and Composition courses. He does not have administrative experience other than internships completed as part of his Educational Specialist degree. He has taught English I (Genre Studies), English I Honors, English III (American Literature), English III Honors, Advanced Placement Literature and Composition, and Yearbook Production. He currently teaches speech, young adult literature, English III Honors, and AP literature and composition. He has also mentored five student teachers. Tom indicates that he does not have any formal pre-service or in-service professional development in discussion.

Vision for Discussion

It only takes a few moments in Tom's classroom to recognize that he is very deliberate and intentional in his use of discussion; he is able to describe exactly how he views the role of discussion, the purposes for which he uses discussion. These include

assessment, guided practice, modeling and teaching critical thinking, and fostering

students' personal and social development. Additionally, he identifies flexibility as an

essential component of effective classroom discussion.

Tom sees the classroom as a dynamic place. Therefore, discussion must be

responsive and flexible "in the moment" (Tom, personal conversation, November 5,

2015). It must balance structure and flexibility or order to be adaptable to the dynamic

needs of the classroom. Too much structure may invite more classroom participation, but

it also makes discussion cumbersome, inflexible, and unresponsive when a new direction

presents itself; too little structure engenders less participation, but it allows the flexibility

to respond in that teachable moment.

Finding balance for the teachable moment.

For Tom, the effective use of discussion must involve an appropriate degree of

structure to permit flexibility. Structure would be defined as scripted questions or a

specific pattern or protocol for responding. A flexible model allows the teacher the

freedom to capitalize on the teachable moment and respond to a student's question by

following whatever promising direction it may suggest. "[D]iscussion needs to be a little

more organic and not too structured… Of course, the more relaxed you are in structure,

the less likely you are going get involvement from everybody…" (Tom, personal

communication, January 26, 2016). An appropriate balance between too much and too

little structure maximizes student participation and flexibility. A flexible model provides

the structure that students need to feel comfortable in the classroom and the structure that

the teacher needs to enlist participation; it provides the freedom everyone needs to pursue

a discussion along a natural course.

Balance of another sort is also an important component of Tom's approach.

Effective use of discussion must also achieve "… a balance between speed and content.

Some [discussion] techniques are slower. Some… are faster. You want to strike a balance

and make sure that you're including enough people…" while maintaining academic rigor

(Tom, personal communication, November 5, 2015). An effective strategy balances ease

of implementation with effectiveness.

Assessment in the teachable moment.

This theme of flexibility appears again in Tom's definition of discussion and

assessment.

> What I've learned over the years is some kids are getting things and they
>
> just don't talk. What I try to tell them is, "It's hard for me to know that
>
> you're getting it, and I want to make sure you're getting it before a big
>
> assessment. So it's only going to behoove you to communicate with me,
>
> because if there's an issue, we can deal with it in the here and now, versus
>
> at the very end" (Tom, personal communication, date).

A flexible, less structured approach allows Tom to assess students' understanding. At

another time, he phrased it this way: "I think discussion is that chance to assess

immediately, in the moment, what's making sense to the student… Are certain ideas…

starting to sink in… [it is] informal, quick assessment and feedback" (Tom, personal

communication, November 5, 2015).

While this focus on discussion as assessment is traditional, authoritative, and reflective of a transmission model of knowledge reproduction, it is also intentional. Tom knows the outcome he wants and he knows how to get students to that point. His model of discussion reflects that goal. He may be more prescriptive than a dialogic model would indicate, allowing students less time to find their own way, but from a traditional model of mentoring, he uses discussion to assess their progress towards a discrete goal. Thus, discussion is a lens through which to view, monitor, and understand student progress.

Mentoring in the teachable moment.

This theme of mentoring is a recognizable one in Tom's teaching. Just as discussion serves as a lens for assessing student progress, it is also the instrument for guiding student progress, a tool for mentoring students in the mental processes of literary interpretation and in their structuring of a defensible literary argument. While Tom's mentoring stance may be more prescriptive than collaborative, it is appropriate and effective in this context. Whether adopting Tom's approach or generating their own, students use discussion to articulate and increase their self-awareness of those mental processes engaged in responding to a text, what he refers to as "that metacognitive piece" (Tom, personal communication, November 5, 2015). Tom's goal is to help students gain metacognitive awareness, bringing those subconscious and intuitive processes of interpretation to the level of conscious awareness where they can be practiced, reflected on, and refined, and where Tom is able to assess.

> "… It's trying to do a little more real-time thinking and analyzing…
>
> [asking] how can I use a discussion as a way to model out loud the way I

process things, as an example to them. If I'm holding them accountable for certain levels of thinking, they do have to get into the way I process literature. Then I've got to figure out where they are in processing it, so we can meet somewhere that's fair in evaluation" (Tom, personal communication, November 5, 2015).

This statement highlights his own work with finding the balance between prescriptive and collaborative mentoring. The statement also highlights the role of discussion as assessment and as instruction. Discussion is a means of assessment and a means of modeling and mentoring the process of analysis, but it is also a teacher practice that recognizes the value of the social dynamic of the classroom.

Tom practices a prescriptive mentoring approach, but he also recognizes that students have an important role to play; this role lies in social dynamic of the classroom; discussion provides opportunity and a mechanism for the social construction of knowledge, what Tom refers to as the give-and-take of the classroom setting. "Discussion is where people are… expressing their reactions to… ideas that have been [raised] by somebody else. … you're bringing in that oral element where there's a give and take, where ideas are expressed or questions are asked, and people are responding … processing in the moment" (Tom, personal communication, January 26, 2016). Tom's mention of give-and-take reflects his understanding that discussion allows students the opportunity for cross-examination and refutation of their ideas by their peers. A three-fold cognitive process is at work. First, the speaker composes and structures the ideas; next, the speaker hears the expression of those ideas aloud; finally, the student receives the benefit of hearing either immediate confirmation or immediate admonishment from

others. Each student's cognitive processing has the potential to create a synergistic and recursive effect. Tom describes that recursive process: "For me it's really, real-time more organic feedback. My hope is that it creates that social dynamic where, if someone else chimes in with an idea, someone else can piggyback on it" (Tom, personal communication, November 5, 2015).   This recursive process has the potential to build complex, conceptual understanding, not only as students think-aloud and hear other's thinking, but also as they receive immediate, critical feedback.

Critical thinking in the teachable moment.

These cognitive and social processes, and the synergy created between teacher, student, and environment facilitates critical thinking. Tom explains that "the English classroom is that chance to worry less about concrete knowledge and to explore critical thinking, and thinking about thinking in a way that promotes all those other aspects" (Tom, personal communication, November 5, 2015). These critical thinking competencies hold relevance beyond the high school classroom: "I think those are skills that transferable wherever they go in college and career. Whether or not they read every single page of *The Great Gatsby*, or they love *The Scarlet Letter*, that's not as important to me" (Tom, personal communication, November 5, 2015).

As part of his effort to improve students' critical thinking, Tom talks about giving students frameworks by which he means heuristics that guide inquiry and interpretation. 'He wants to know if students can use applied frameworks and make meaning that's authentic to them within a framework. "…[T]he critical thinking comes in [when] I set up a framework and then we look at how the literature fits that framework" (Tom, personal

100

communication, November 5, 201). His emphasis on critical thinking connects those frameworks with student motivation. Those students who naturally understand the subjectivity of literary study will succeed in any English classroom; it is the student who does not understand that subjectivity who needs what Tom describes as a framework to help them build knowledge.

> Kids who already get the subjectivity of it are going to bloom…, but the kids who struggle with the subjectivity need that kind of grounding…I find my job is to help [that] kid…I definitely like to ground it… [so] there is some type of framework that they can latch on to. I don't want them saying, "Why are we reading this?" I want that to be apparent… it's not about this specific text. It's about what we were doing in the text that's important. Discussion is about modeling thinking and giving them a confidence in a more concrete approach. (Tom, personal communication, November 5, 2015).

Personal development in the teachable moment.

Tom also believes that literary discussion should help students think about the human condition and engage with the culture. Therefore, classroom discussion becomes a tool for personal development as students develop their individual funds of knowledge through discussion; discussion is a tool for social development as students gain cultural capital through participation in the social and intellectual activities of a variety of groups. "In my opinion, the English classroom should be less about exposing them to a canon and [more about] overtly developing the person. I see the literature that we use as the text…

to explore thinking -- about the human condition" (Tom, personal communication,

November 5, 2015).

Analysis of Classroom Observations

Reznitskaya's (2012) Dialogic Inquiry Tool (Appendix A) assesses the dialogic

quality of discussion occurring in classroom.

Community								
Move	Obs. 1	Obs. 2	Obs. 3	Obs. 4	Obs. 5	Obs. 6	Obs. 7	Obs. 8
Sharing the Floor	3-4	1-2	3	1-2	4	4	4	4
Dividing Responsibilities	3-4	3-4	3	1-2	3	4	4	3
Collaboratively Following a line of Inquiry	3	2	3-4	1-2	3	3	3	3
Inquiry								
Move	Obs. 1	Obs. 2	Obs. 3	Obs. 4	Obs. 5	Obs. 6	Obs. 7	Obs. 8
Discussing Contestable Questions	3-4	1-2	3	2	5	5	5	5
Tracking and Labeling Discussion Processes	5	3	3	2	5	5	5	5
Requesting/ Providing Justification	4	4	4	1-2	5	5	5	1-2
Prompting for/ Considering Alternatives	4	4	3	2	4	4	4	4
Clarifying Meaning/ Summarizing	3-4	4	4	1-2	4	4	4	4
Connecting Ideas	3-4	4	4	2	3	3	3	3
Connecting to/ Across Relevant Contexts	5	4	4	2	4	4	4	4
Checking for/ Maintaining Accuracy	3-4	4	4	2	4	4	5	5

Adapted from ***Dialogic Inquiry Tool***. Reznitskaya, A., Glina, M., & Oyler, J. (2012). *Dialogic Inquiry Tool*. Montclair, NJ: The Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children

As the above chart indicates, Tom's use of discussion falls between monologic

and dialogic. Much what Tom does is identified in the DIT. His practice is inconsistent

but intentionally so. It's not for lack of understanding. Tom's mentoring stance is

deliberately less collaborative and more prescriptive. For example, he connects

discussion to relevant contexts, shares the floor, and asks for textual evidence to maintain

accuracy. Yet, he maintains much control over the course of discussion. He is less

consistent in considering alternatives, or collaboratively following a line of inquiry.

However, Tom's use of discussion demonstrates his recognition that student voice has an

important role to play in student participation and critical thinking; He regularly references what students need to know to do well on the AP composition; he is preparing students for the very specific skill of writing a text dependent essay. I will provide two examples of classroom dialogue and draw conclusions.

Example #1 – The class is comparing John Keats' poem "When I Have Fears That I May Cease to Be" and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem "Mezzo Cammin." Tom has just finished reading Keats' "When I have Fears."

Teacher-Student Exchange	Researcher Notes
1. T. So, [our discussion is] wide open. The big lens is what is this guy's situation…? We could start there or we could start with a moment that stood out in terms of making meaning from the diction, tone, detail, syntax; wherever you want to go with it.	1. T is sharing the floor and dividing responsibilities, allowing students to determine direction of discussion
2. S: When I was reading this, I interpreted the first few lines as he was saying he didn't want to die before he learned what he wanted to learn.	2. Missed opportunity for T to ask student for specific justification. However, student has a voice.
3. T: There's definitely a sense of he doesn't want to die before he does something, right?	3. T rephrasing of answer leads to impression that T needs to validate
4. S: I thought it was, he didn't want to die before he had written all that he wanted to write. This is before the pen gleaned his brain.	4. Student offers interpretation.
5. T: Let's look at this, how do we know that what he's fearful of is that he would die before he gets down on paper what he wants to get down? What's happening here when he talks about gleaning my teeming brain, and he talks about rich garners full of ripened grain? What would you say is happening there technically in reference to...How do you know he's talking about his writing?	5. Teacher requests textual justification and/ or explanation of how text "works."
6. S: Because it's before the pen has taken the information from his brain and gets gathered in books.	6. Interpretation, but it reflects surface level of meaning.
7. T: The pen, which functions at some level that we can say maybe an [inaudible 4:59] is writing.	7. Teacher restates student's answer. (monologic).
8. T: Full of, overflowing, right. So," before my pen has gleaned my teeming brain, before high piled books in charact'ry. Hold like rich garners the full-ripened grain" Before the books that I compose. What would be the full ripened grain?	8. Teacher models interpretation and asks a surface level question? (monologic).
9. T: His work. How many people feel good about the idea that he's starting out with this fear of, he doesn't want to die before he gets something nice down on paper?	9. The request for an opinion hints at Tom's interest in a dialogue.
10. T. It helps to know that the writer is the speaker. It's that metaphorical language of the gleaning, and the ripened grain, and the garners, that's all metaphorical for the writing. The same thing happens in the second piece. It helps to know that we're dealing with a writer. What's something else that we notice about this first piece, When I Have Fears?	10. T is modeling interpretation. The question shares the floor and invites students to choose the direction.
11. S. It says high-piled.	11. Student answer is undeveloped.
12. T. We get the first person, point of view.	12. Neither student nor T response are connected. T directs discussion.
13. S. It definitely looks more towards to the future, as opposed, to the second one.	13. Student changes the topic. (dialogic).
14. T. You believe that this first piece has a forward looking focus versus retrospective?	14. Teacher restates and frames student response. (monologic).
15. S. They are both dealing with how those [inaudible 6:18] coming to them, but this one's more dealing with things that he wants to do before he dies. The other one is dealing with things that he wishes may be what he did.	15. The recognition of differences between the two poems is representative of analysis and the social construction of knowledge.
16. T. So how can that be tied into tone?	16. The teacher directs discussion toward explaining how words work to develop tone. This is the use of discussion for individual cognitive understanding.

Example #2 – The class is identifying satire in the poem "A Satirical Elegy on the Death of a Late Famous General" by Jonathan Swift.

Teacher-Student Exchange	Researcher Notes
1. T. What are some things that he says that are… not something you would say about your dead grandfather at a funeral?	1. Teacher is modeling.
2. T. [reading line 12ff] It was right for him to die now. Like he needed to die and look at the next line says…[Reading line 12] "This world he cumber'd long enough."	2. The teacher is modeling interpretation by rephrasing text. (monologic).
3. T. What are some other clues?	3. Checking for understanding and modeling the right questions. The question about clues is abandoned.
4. T. What does it mean to encumber? [vocabulary]	
5. S. over bare	
6. S. [inaudible].	
7. T. Yeh, burden. Yeh grandfather needed to die he was burdening our family…. Yeh. I am glad she died. It was trouble to deal with. Right, so the idea of calling him a burden. In conscience he should die.	7. Teacher is interpreting text for students. (monologic).
8. T. What does he leave behind? [recall of story detail]	
9. S. Stink	
10. T. A stink?	
11. T. There are some more obvious things that occur later that point that out… Here is the question… What is the target of his criticism?	11-18 He is asking questions for which he knows the answer. He is asking the question to engage students in the cognitive process of interpretation. (monologic).
12. S. No response	
13. T. Is it just the general [who is the target of criticism]?	
14. S. No.	
15. T. or does it go beyond the general.	
16. S. It's kind of all… inaudible	
17. T. He says come hither all you empty things. So, the general is one of those empty things. Okay and then he uses this metaphorical expression that will come up in a book later on that we read. Ye bubbles rais'd by breath of kings; Why would you describe a duke or a general or a duchess or whatever person of stature under the king Why would you compare that person to a bubble raised by the breath of the king?	
18. S. It is only momentary.	
19. T. It is only momentary? Where do they get their authority or power from?	19-42. Teacher is directing the course of discussion; He is modeling questions and providing interpretation to build students' understanding and interpretive skill. (monologic).
20. S. inaudible	
21. T. From the king. The king is the only one … you're nothing special. And he says "who float on the tide of state, almost like . Anybody heard the term mooch. I don't know if they use that term anymore…	
22. T. think about it … a bubble that floats upon the tide of state … he gets by .. doesn't have to do much… Starting to realize… where should this general have died?	
23. S. In battle	
24. T. In battle, at a young age. Because he was a superior officer… protected by the king, guess who died instead of him?	
25. S. his troops.	
26. T. Yeh his soldiers that he sent out..He was the one that got to go home after the war and sleep in the comfort of his bed.	
27. T. Now think about it.. puts it context his shock because in actually he knows how generals operate.. It would be like me saying… the king died of old age in a fancy bed with a lot of food around him.	
28. T. Is he really shocked that the general died in comfort at an old age?	
29. S. no	
30. T. He would actually have been shocked if he died at a young age on the battlefield.	
31. T. Look at the last stanza or right before the last stanza..	

32. T. [Reading] the procession of the funeral is coming… and he says the widow is not crying now. They cried a long time ago. Why bring up widows and orphans? 33. S. Their husbands… 34. T. Their husbands were the ones that died… not him! 35. T. So he is bringing up the idea that is not fair… these people in high positions send out these lower people… 36. T. how many read Johnny got his Gun? This pairs with it perfectly. Sending the little guys out to fight and the big guys talk about the big words like democracy and independence. 37. T. What could we say, if he brings up the duke, and other things that are the breaths of king, and the general is one of them… what becomes the target of his criticism? Not just the general but…? 38. S. People in power…. 39. T. People in power… 40. S. Power? 41. T. What is his problem with these people, these agents of the king? **42.** T. In the next line, ill got honors… honors they shouldn't have received.	

Tom's teaching has both monologic and dialogic components. He occasionally enters into the area of dialogic discussion, but more frequently he manages the direction and depth of discussion and analysis without seeking or structuring collaboration. Much of the teacher talk is explaining and explicating, and responses to students are a re-statement of student interpretation. He asks questions for which he knows the answer, so questions appear to take on the traditional role of being rhetorical questions that are only intended to foster cognitive engagement and assess some basic level of story comprehension. This is reflective of a transmission model of knowledge.

Similarly, student responses are regularly non-verbal or single-word assents, but he fosters this response because he does not wait for responses, use wait time, structure multiple student responses, or encourage expanded student discussion. Students and teacher are involved in the traditional practice of a think aloud – out loud interpretation of a text that permits the teacher to model, instruct, and assess students' ability to interpret. However, it is evident that his approach is deliberate. He accomplishes exactly what he intends; however, his intention is to teach and mentor students in writing literary analysis and interpretation. Tom takes greater responsibility and allows students less

responsibility because he recognizes the difficulty of the tasks and how much students struggle with the cognitive heavy lifting required for the task. What he is not teaching, nor intending to teach, to any large degree, is knowledge construction through dialogue. It may happen to limited degrees, but dialogue and the social construction of knowledge is not his purpose. His approach is a more prescriptive than collaborative. His provides strong guidance in interpretation that is meant to help students mimic the task of analysis at this level. His emphasis on finding the right balance between speed and content is an effort to not allow too much of his own interpretation and strict delivery of textual and interpretative knowledge confound the efficiency or responsiveness of discussion to follow changes in direction sparked by students' questions. These two ideas of speed and content become emblematic of the middle road that Tom chooses between monologic and dialogic discussion. A responsive model allows discussion to follow student voice and his recognition of task difficulty leads him to take a more prescriptive stance.

Analysis of Teacher's Beliefs and Practices

Tom's pedagogical choices and classroom exchanges reflect a variety of purposes. For Tom, discussion is a means of classroom instruction (through modeling) and formative assessment, but it is primarily a tool for mentoring students toward greater awareness of their own intuitive processes of literary interpretation and knowledge construction. He uses discussion to assess students' progress toward that goal. As noted previously, Tom's use of discussion falls somewhere between a monologic and a dialogic model. There is much about Tom's approach that wants to be dialogic. For example, his questioning of students reflects that he intends to invite student voice, what the DIT refers to as *sharing the floor*. His teaching indicates that he understands that knowledge

107

construction is both an individual cognitive process and a social process. It would be expected that this understanding would lead to a more strongly dialogic model. His teaching does not give the impression that his practice is accidental or unintentional. On the contrary, the impression is that he is very intentional, so why, given his evident competence and experience, isn't the character of discussion in his teaching not more dialogic? Is it because he chooses to take a more authoritative teacher stance? Data suggests that Tom chooses to be more present in his mentoring approach because he views the process of mentoring students as one that requires a much stronger, prescriptive role than a student-centered, dialogic model may allow. In his judgment, students require a more prescriptive approach in order for them to achieve what he wants them to in this particular content and context. His strategy is prescriptive mentoring. He uses discussion to model and superintend the cognitive work of interpretation. He understands the social dimensions of knowledge construction and the value of student voice, but he also recognizes that this kind of interpretative practice is a challenging task, it is one that requires a more prescriptive, monologic approach.

Despite the implications and assumptions behind the research question that dialogic discussion is always the best approach, Tom's practice challenges that assumption. Tom's approach shows that the effective use of discussion is one which meets the intentional purposes of the teacher whose pedagogical judgment leads to best practices in that context. As Tom points out, the effective use of discussion is one which has the flexibility to be changed according to classroom context, needs of the students, and goals of the teacher. Research shows that dialogic discussion is an effective pedagogy, but this does not mean that it is always the best practice. As Reinking (2007)

points out, the construct of best practice is situational and contextual. What is best in one setting, may not be best in another. In Tom's judgment, best practice is an authoritative approach that limits students' unguided practice so that, as the vignette states, it keeps them from "going too far and making up stuff" (Tom, classroom observation, October 9, 2015).

The collected data reflects a theory of learning as a socially mediated activity in which cognitive development is fostered through social interaction. For Tom, discussion is a tool for mentoring and shaping student's interpretative process as they engage with a literary text. In this specific cultural context, discussion is literary interpretation. The right answer involves some negotiation and flexibility, but it is generally the one that Tom approves and guides students toward.

According to Vygotsky's theory, the mentor plays a key role in the process. According to this theory, the most effective instruction presents learning tasks that in what Vygotsky terms the zone of proximal development (ZPD). The zone where maximum learning occurs resides between the student's ability to complete a task without assistance and the student's ability to complete the task with the assistance of a more competent mentor. Tom's use of discussion is that assistance. He places his students in the ZPD by giving his students a challenging task of interpreting a text and uses discussion to help his students accomplish the task.

CHAPTER SIX
BILL: DISCUSSION MEDIATES MENTORING

Children must be taught how to think, not what to think."
― Margaret Mead

This chapter follows the same format as the two previous chapters: a.) a brief vignette representative of Bill's teaching, b.) a brief, professional biography, c.) his vision for discussion as articulated in interviews and teacher reflection, d.) an analysis of classroom observations, and e.) a summary of his beliefs and practices.

Teaching Vignette

It's mid-December. Bill's fourth-block, Advanced Placement Language and Composition class, are discussing Shakespeare's *Macbeth* 3.2. Approximately 25 students sit in desks arranged in a horseshoe-shaped pattern. They are an attentive group, and Bill's sarcastic and razor-sharp sense of humor keeps their attention. Bill wants his students to think like writers and consider the writer's rhetorical purpose, so he asks his students to consider what emotions an actor playing Macbeth would want to convey.

> T. If you are the actress playing Lady Macbeth, what emotions do you want to convey as you hear that speech from Macbeth, lines 45-56? If you are playing Lady Macbeth, or if you are the director, what emotions do you want conveyed as she listens?

Bill is not hesitant to use wait time. After asking the question, he waits at least 45 seconds, seemingly an eternity in this context, for students to respond and then he tries again, this time breaking down the question by pointing students to a specific portion of text.

T. Let's look at second half of the statement: "Innocent of knowledge." What is the second part of the statement that runs over onto the next line?

T. Is she always going to be innocent of the knowledge of what was done?

S. Yeh

T. When is she going to know...[pause of a few seconds....] Not what is she going to know but when is she going to know it, according to Macbeth?

S. [inaudible]

T. [Paraphrasing Macbeth] Don't worry about it until you applaud me for doing it

T. What emotions, if you are Lady Macbeth or the director, what emotions do you want conveyed by her?

S. She may be upset or frustrated. She isn't kind of person to do things herself and isn't necessarily trusting her husband

S. Surprise. He is doing something on his own after she said wait.

S. She may be smug because he [Macbeth] wouldn't listen to me and do what I wanted.

T. Okay, would you call that good surprise or bad surprise because grimace and surprise are…

S. I think it would be good surprise.

S. He is finally being a man.

T. What do you think, Melissa? I can see by your facial expression that you have something on your mind?

S. I don't know if it would be good surprise; I think that she would be concerned about what he is doing, and maybe not afraid, but like…. Just a little concerned.

T. If she is concerned, why is she be concerned?

S. She would assume that he would "screw it up."

T. [laughs] Why would she be concerned that he would screw it up?

S. Because he is kinda being weak about it

111

T. Who is the supervisor and who is the employee here?

S. Lady Macbeth is the supervisor.

T. If you were the supervisor and considering this employee's previous track record, how comfortable would you now be about this employee using his own initiative?

S. He killed the guards last time and… [inaudible - laughter]

T. So his last performance evaluation wasn't so strong! [laughter]

T. So to continue on with Melissa's point, if she is concerned why else would she be concerned?

S. [inaudible]

T. Why would it be concern rather than pride? I mean earlier people said that she would be proud of him because she doesn't have to handle this. Why are you contending that no, that might worry her?

S. She knows things, like how they killed the king. They might get her out of the way

S. They might see her as a threat.

T. Mmmm. He might see her as a threat. What have we seen that he does with threats?

S. He gets rid of them.

T. He takes care of them.

Bill continues the discussion for another 10 or 15 minutes by asking the class to delve a little deeper into Lady Macbeth's motivations, before moving on to a writing assignment.

Brief Professional Biography

Bill has been teaching at Upstate High School for five years. He has been teaching high school students for 15 years. He has a doctorate in Eighteenth-Century

British literature and a Master of Arts degree in American literature. He teaches

Advanced Placement English Language and Composition, Creative Writing, and college

preparatory English II (genre studies). Other courses that he has taught before coming to

Upstate High School include Advanced Placement Literature and Composition, English

IV (British Literature) Honors, college preparatory English III and IV, and English II

Honors. He is a published poet. He freely admits that he did not go through an extensive

teacher education program. As he describes it, he only took sufficient professional

education courses to obtain his teaching certificate and has had little or no pre-service or

in-service professional development in using discussion in the classroom.

Vision for Discussion

Bill defines discussion as exploration and interrogation, referring to the value of

unplanned and unscripted discussion. His distinction between scaffolding, which he sees

as intentional, and processing, which he sees as organic, illustrates:

> [S]caffolding is scripted… processing is organic [and] recursive…
>
> processing is an exploration; scaffolding is a journey with a very clear
>
> itinerary. When I do use scaffolding in discussion, I see it primarily as a
>
> means to get to exploration. I think where the most learning happens,
>
> although maybe the most frustrating for students, is in this exploration
>
> level. (Bill, personal communication, October 15, 2015).

Bill's idea of the value of unplanned exploration highlights the importance of flexibility

in a class discussion that allows the discussion to proceed in unplanned directions.

Responsiveness and flexibility are also what Bill is hinting at when he defines discussion

as "interrogation" and interrogation as "following a path to see where it leads." (Bill, personal communication, October 15, 2015). It is in the flexible moment and in following the unplanned direction that the real work of inventing knowledge through open discussion is done. Bill also wants his students to understand that the process of creating knowledge is not a closed system; there is more than one right answer, although students may want it to be so:

> I must've [heard] a hundred times… someone saying, "This has a connotation of blank." I say, "Well, when these words are in front of it and behind it, yeah." I said, "But it's not always going to be that." If you answered that [student's] question, "Yes, it does," that just became a dead-end conversation about how that meaning is made in that sentence, in that text. (Bill, personal communication, February 1, 2016).

Bill characterizes the type of knowledge discussion leads to:

> "[discussion is] …the invention of knowledge…, [but] it's not content knowledge… it's process knowledge, to make you more aware of how you're arriving at your end… can you articulate your process for making meaning?" (Bill, personal communication, February 1, 2016).

 Bill wants his students to not only arrive at a literary interpretation, but also to be able to explain how they arrived at that interpretation. He sees discussion as a teaching practice for guiding and mentoring his students through these two processes: a.) learning how to interpret a literary text, and b.) gaining a greater self-awareness of the cognitive processes involved. Therefore, discussion becomes a way for students to practice explaining a particular interpretation; it also forces students to develop their individual meta-cognitive

114

awareness and understanding as they publically develop their own interpretation and listen to others' interpretations.

> One role of discussion, especially in a small group, is to try to make processes overt, rather than intuitive. [It's] a process of... [asking] what's the technique? What's the big meaning that we can make? … We start increasing their verb toolkit. Is it conveying? Is it evoking? Is it mocking? [We are] beginning to build more of a cognitive awareness about the process. (Bill, personal communication, February 1, 2016)).

Discussion, therefore, accomplishes several purposes: it models the cognitive processes and becomes the means for instruction and assessment as Bill models the process and assesses how well students are able to use the vocabulary, identify the types of devices, and explain an interpretation.

Bill also identifies stages in the mentoring process. "… [There are some] activities where in the first steps that we script for students [are] where they're working together, clarifying a knowledge base, working together to fill in gaps in comprehension…" In terms of assessment, discussion allows him to assess students' reading comprehension, provides a window into how they understand literary content knowledge and how well they understand and can practice literary analysis and interpretation.   He is not dogmatic in this: "… [O]ften, it's good pedagogy to take students from lower to higher levels of [inaudible 14:15] , but sometimes, it's also good pedagogy… to simply throw them in with the big question and see how they figure their own way out" (Bill, personal communication, February 1, 2016). Of course, there may also be content-specific goals:

"How are they drawing inferences? How are they selecting evidence to

support their inference... the act of discussion is going to incorporate one

of those skills at some point if you've created an activity worth doing. For

instance, next Tuesday… the purpose of that discussion is going to be

sensitivity to connotative diction, sensitivity to writer's selection of the

tale, sensitivity to grammar and structure of sentences, sensitivity to

idiom. (Bill, personal communication, October 15, 2015).

Another aspect of "clarifying a knowledge base" is helping students interact with

and make personal connections with a text as part of a process of internalization. "If it's

just something that you hear… and you don't write it down… or you don't say it to

someone else… you haven't authenticated the knowledge" (Bill, personal

communication, October 15, 2015). He explains authentication in further detail:

When [students are] able to connect their answer… to their lived

experience, then to be able to think cognitively about their answer… I

think at that point they've turned the [question] into a chunk of their life-

world…they've made an authentic learning world... they've owned it and

they've turned a heuristic… into some form of authentic experience. For

me, that would be the production of knowledge. (Bill, personal

communication, October 15, 2015).

Providing his own scripted questions is a next step in guided practice.

I'm going to have scripted questions… about each of those literary

elements, so… you're isolating some skills to guide them into the larger

result, which is "What's the writer's persuasive point in that passage about

116

the topic?" and "What strategies they are using to get there?" (Bill, personal communication, February 1, 2016).

Moving between small groups and modeling the thought processes and the terminology of interpretation is the next step.

>I think you have to model the process of how you talk about doing the work together in the group to begin to build that [awareness of the process of interpretation]. I haven't tried to plan or scaffold that. I think that's taken shape when I go in between groups and to repeat the language of modeling… I ask them, "What are you doing at this stage right here right now?"… groups begin to adopt that language and how they are talking about the process…That's what you are teaching, is the strategy, is the process. Whatever you are modeling when you go back and interact with small groups it shouldn't be, "This is the answer." It's, "I see this here. How do we get here? Let's take a different route. How can we get to somewhere else?" (Bill, personal communication, February 1, 2016).

This is an individual process but it is also a social process. One informs the other. The social construction of knowledge through discussion informs the individual's knowledge development (Vygotsky, 1978). Students develop a metacognitive awareness of the processes as they articulate an interpretation in a group discussion, and group members identify what is missing from a group member's interpretation. Bill describes his thinking on this process.

>When you can articulate that [the error in interpretation] to them [other group members], I think that helps your own reading process. You learn

from failures… and you learn from the failures of others. When you're

discussing…, I think that's the process that cements it. (Bill, personal

communication, February 1, 2016).

Group discussion also allows to students to cross examine each other's ideas and receive

public refutation, what he refers to as "inter-subjective critique and cross-examination of

ideas" (Bill, personal communication, October 15, 2015). It becomes a recursive process

when the student's newly developed self-awareness sharpens the reflection.

[N]ow you're more able to go back and look at something that you've

written, on an analysis of a cold read or an analysis of something you

spent the last few weeks on, and begin to understand… Why and how you

made the thinking error that you did? (Bill, personal communication,

February 1, 2016).

Bill reiterates the importance of that reflective dimension of the group dynamic: "Without

the small group or class discussion developing that awareness of meaning making

process, then I don't think it's as easy to go back and look at your own work, and reflect

upon it, and ask, 'How would I do this differently?'" (Bill, personal communication,

February 1, 2016).

Analysis of Classroom Observation

Reznitskaya's (2012) Dialogic Inquiry Tool (Appendix A) assesses the dialogic quality of discussion in the classroom. The terms on the left are taken directly from the DIT instrument.

Community								
Move	Obs. 1	Obs. 2	Obs. 3	Obs. 4	Obs. 5	Obs. 6	Obs. 7	Obs. 8
Sharing the Floor	5-6	5-6	5	5	5	5	5	5
Dividing Responsibilities	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5
Collaboratively Following a line of Inquiry	3-4	3-4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Inquiry								
Move	Obs. 1	Obs. 2	Obs. 3	Obs. 4	Obs. 5	Obs. 6	Obs. 7	Obs. 8
Discussing Contestable Questions	5-6	4-5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Tracking and Labeling Discussion Processes	3-4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Requesting/ Providing Justification	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Prompting for/ Considering Alternatives	5	4	4	5	5	5	4	4
Clarifying Meaning/ Summarizing	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Connecting Ideas	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	5
Connecting to/ Across Relevant Contexts	5-6	3-4	5	5	5	5	5	5
Checking for/ Maintaining Accuracy	3-4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5

Adapted from ***Dialogic Inquiry Tool***. Reznitskaya, A., Glina, M., & Oyler, J. (2012). *Dialogic Inquiry Tool*. Montclair, NJ: *The Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children*

As the chart above reflects, according to Reznitskaya's DIT instrument, Bill's use of discussion falls is dialogic. Bill encourages the development of student voice. Students think through their ideas in a group context; they receive spontaneous feedback; they have the opportunity to reflect on their ideas. His classroom discussion demonstrates that he is not looking for a single right answer. He is helping students think independently. As Bill indicates, his approach is what he terms exploration in which discussion follows a natural, albeit unplanned, course and knowledge construction

occurs. I provide two examples from classroom observations and draw some conclusions.

Example #1. Bill is using Christopher Marlow's poem, "The Passionate Shepherd to His Love" in his discussion of the stages of reading and analyzing a poem.

Teacher-Student Exchange	Researcher Notes
1. T. Stages of reading; without reading a word… just eyeballing it on the page, what do we need to identify? And you can identify it by eyeballing it. Not reading a word. 2. S. Stanzas. 3. T. Sounds good to me. 4. T. We may not know what it is, but what is it definitely not? 5. S. Sonnet? 6. T. It's definitely not a sonnet. 7. T. Now we have to ask how is this thing structured? What do you see? 8. S. Six quatrains. 9. T. What we have are four line stanzas.. quatrains… two line stanza… couplet.. 3- line stanza tercet? … 5- line stanza cinquain 10. T. Now we should bother to read words. If it's a fixed form, like this one is… let your eyes go to end of line to look for what element? 11. S. Rhyme 12. T. Is there a rhyme scheme to this? 13. S. I don't know the fancy word for it… first two lines rhyme and second two lines rhyme 14. T. Our quatrains consist of two rhymed couplets…. AA BB CC DD 15. T. Simply that and say that each quatrain is two line couplets. 16. T. So in terms of overall structure… 6 quatrains which consist of 2 rhymed couplets. 17. T. Now, if you have six quatrains? If you have six stanzas… four stanzas…. eight stanzas? Mmm… All numbers tend to be divisible by …? 18. S. Two 19. T. What might you look for? The poem may have [inaudible], may not, but if it seems to neatly divide into two halves, what might you anticipate? 20. S. Tone shift 21. T. It might be a tone shift. Might be shift in address, but if you see an even number of stanzas, you may start looking for a shift around the middle; if it's not around the middle, will see if it might happen in the second half of the poem. 22. T.Okay, we have done the first level of reading which you can accomplish just by doing a quick eyeball. Let's look for structure, any organizing scheme… in this case, the end rhymed couplets. Now, let's just read this one time through to get rough idea of speaker, audience, occasion, and purpose. Then our next step will be scansion and then the last level of reading will look for DIDLS and rhetorical strategies. How is the poem persuading the internal audience? 23. T. Teacher reads….. "The Passionate Shepherd to His Love" by Christopher Marlowe	1. Dividing responsibilities; Sharing the floor 7. He is guiding the discussion, but he still shares the floor. 10. Again, he generally guides discussion, but he shares the floor. 13. This student comment portrays a great deal of trust for her to be openly vulnerable. 16. Bill is modeling the process, showing students the right questions to ask, and what to think about as they look at an unfamiliar poem 19 Modeling the right questions. 22.He explains to the students and makes overt the process through which he just walked them. He is sharing the task with them, giving them to tools analyze independently.

Example #2. Bill uses a Gary Larsen cartoon (Appendix D) to practice the interpretation of a visual medium, something which may show up on the AP exam.

Teacher-Student Exchange	Researcher Notes
1. T. We will deal with the caption last. What rhetorical devices do you see at work in the problem itself? 2. S. juxtaposition. 3. T. Sell me on why there is juxtaposition just in the word problem. 4. S. you expect a dumb problem and its funny 5. T. Agree, disagree, or qualify with [student's] response. When we look at a cartoon, we expect the problem to be dumber. 6. S. The exam is called Cats 7. T. They don't seem to have your back here [student]. 8. S. I can see what you are saying 9. T. I think you are on the right track, that we expect something funny. Why is this problem funny? 10. S. Because its worded like we might see on a test. 11. T. Okay. It's familiar to us. What rhetorical device. 12. S. I don't know about rhetorical device, but I thought the humor came from fact it is something that the dog would naturally do, like naturally chase a cat; but it's asking him to like put into numbers and a test question when. I don't know. It would be more natural for him to do. 13. T. We might be able to call that grab bag irony. Testing a dog on something a dog would do instinctively. 14. S. I think it's funny how Rex is spelled really funny and its asking a complex question. 15. T. You have given us two pieces of gold there. 16. T. First, in [student's] words, is this a really complex question? 17. S. several students talking at same time 18. T. Look don't mock my D in algebra. Math is a conspiracy. 19. T. However, would that be a simple math problem for a high school student? 20. T. You are factoring the angle of the hypotenuse but you are also factoring rate and acceleration 21. T. In [student's] words, It's a very difficult problem. 22. T. What rhetorical device would that be? The complexity of this problem seems to have been? Does the hyperbole… does the exaggerated, overly complex nature of the problem create humor? 23. T. Because as [student] said, it is something that a dog does naturally. 24. T Aha. Let's go to the second piece of gold that [student] gave us. This is a complex word problem . What is funny about the relationship 25. What rhetorical device would this be? The backwards E, yet he appears to be thoughtfully reading the problem. 26. S. Juxtaposition. 27. T. [Student], why do you say this is juxtaposition? 28. S. He's able to work on problem and yet barely able to spell his name. 29. T. If you can read his problem, surely you can write a proper capital E. 30. T. So the juxtaposition creates what effect? It would be blank if you could write your E backwards and understand this? 31. S. incongruous 32. T. incongruity, preposterous. [Student] you said 33. S. absurd 34. We have just gone through the steps of analyzing humorous effect. Rhetorical technique, in this case juxtaposition, it creates absurdity. Therefore, we laugh because it's absurd.	1. discussing contestable questions; sharing the floor; dividing responsibilities 3. Requesting justification/ elaboration 5. Considering Alternatives. Connecting Ideas by asking other students to comment. 7-9. Tracking/ Labeling Discussion Processes. 15. Tracking discussion processes. 16. Considering Alternatives 27. Requesting Justification. 32. Sharing the floor. 34.Labeling Discussion Processes; Discussing Contestable Questions; sharing the floor.

Both of these examples show that Bill implements a dialogic model of classroom

discussion that gives more responsibility to the student. He asks students to provide

evidence and justification for an interpretation and encourages students to critique other's

ideas. There is opportunity for critical thinking and student's individual and independent

interpretation.

Analysis of Teacher Beliefs and Practices

Bill's beliefs about discussion are evident. He believes that discussion is primarily

a tool for mentoring students to become effective and self-aware readers capable of

proficiently interpreting a literary text and composing a defensible and well supported

response. He talks about discussion as a pedagogy for constructing "… process

knowledge, to make you more aware of how you're arriving at your end… can you

articulate your process for making meaning?" (Bill, personal communication, February

1, 2016). This is representative of a dialogic model of discussion. In one of several

definitions for dialogic discussion identified in chapter two, one definition is a "…

pedagogical approach that involves students in the collaborative construction of

meaning… characterized by shared control over the key aspects of classroom discourse"

(Reznitskaya & Gregory, 2013).

Bill's question about Shakespeare's rhetorical purpose in the first line of the

vignette seems very unusual at first glance. After class, Bill explained that publishing his

own writing gave him an insight into the writing process that he did not previously have.

He gained an appreciation for how understanding a writer's rhetorical purpose helps the

interpretive process. This is what he says he wants to teach his students: the ability to

understand a writer's rhetorical purpose. In the above example, he is attempting to place his students inside Shakespeare's mind in order to help them understand the rhetorical purpose behind Lady Macbeth's characterization. These ideas are evident in his classroom.

His classroom practice also reflects a dialogic model of discussion. Examples of the collaborative construction of meaning and shared control are easily found. For example, in example 2, line 3, He asks a student to "sell me on why there is juxtaposition just in the word problem." This is a request for justification, one of the characteristics of dialogic discussion identified in the DIT, and it would reflect a collaborative construction of meaning. In example 1, line 22, the dialogue reflects shared control. Bill is sharing the entire process with the class in order to help them internalize it (see table 2).

Bill's use of discussion includes those routine purposes like instruction, assessment, and critical thinking. However, those purposes are subsumed under a larger one. Bill sees discussion as a teacher practice that builds students' personal knowledge and experience with the process of interpretation. Teacher-centered approaches place students in a very passive role; Bill's intention is that students play an active role. This perspective is reflected in questions like this one: "What are you doing at this stage, right here, right now" (Bill, personal communication, February 1, 2016)). He places less emphasis on scaffolding students through what he thinks is the best way to interpret a text and more emphasis on helping students find their own way. Bill chooses a stance that is more facilitating of students' independence and autonomy.

An important aspect, as Bill identifies it, is the role whole and small-group discussion plays in knowledge construction. Students' individual cognitive development

(both content and process) are forced to stretch as students work to articulate their ideas and respond to cross examination n and critique. Perhaps the greatest benefit he identifies is the opportunity discussion affords for self-reflection as a means of knowledge construction.

Although Bill's pedagogy does not maximize every element of the qualities of dialogic discussion identified in the DIT, his use of discussion is intentionally and effectively dialogic, and his use of discussion accomplishes his objectives. His pedagogy invites students to participate in the learning process and to intellectually engage and participate in the process in a way that promotes students' knowledge construction.

In this specific cultural context, discussion is a tool used by students for exploring and investigating possible interpretations of a literary text. The right answer is what is articulated and what is defensible through textual evidence and socially justifiable explanation. Literate behavior in this context is participation in the discussion and the ability to provide that textual evidence and supportive reasoning and textual support.

Bill's use of discussion reflects a Vygotskian theory of learning. His use of discussion as tool for thinking aloud and for a public audience places students on the higher end of the zone of proximal development. The whole class and small group discussion in his classes is the site where students are mentored and scaffolded as they use discussion to investigate, understand and justify a literary interpretation of a text.

CHAPTER SEVEN
CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter synthesizes the findings of individual case studies through cross-case analysis. Individual case data were gathered through observations, reflections, and interviews. That data was analyzed by comparing teacher comments with classroom practice. The data clustered under several themes including teacher knowledge, teacher intent, and classroom implementation. These categories were compared across cases to arrive at findings, reported in this chapter, and conclusions, reported in the next chapter. Figure 1 below summarizes findings.
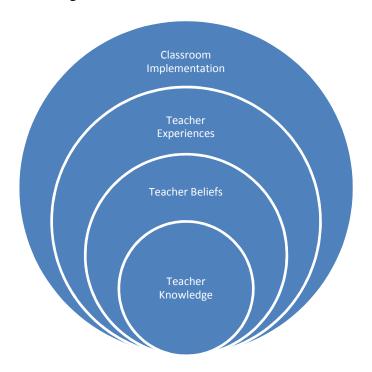

Figure 1

Summary of Findings

From the beginning of the study, teachers spoke confidently about the role of discussion in their pedagogy and practice. It quickly became clear from the time spent in these classes and in talking with these teachers that discussion in some form, monologic or dialogic, was a central feature of their pedagogy and classroom practice. They each used discussion frequently in those familiar, traditional ways, to transmit information, model processes, and assess student understanding, and they also used it for more sophisticated practices, to model the cognitive practices for literary interpretation and to allow students to use discussion to develop their own understanding of the interpretive process. Their use of discussion reflects their recognition of the intrinsic value of social interaction in knowledge development. It reflects the variety of purposes for which discussion is and may be employed, and it reflects the importance of continued professional development of teachers' understanding of the use of discussion.

This study is grounded in a Vygotskian theory of cognitive development through social interaction. That is to say, it is a foundational belief that, although discussion as a teacher practice may occur in a variety of approaches and for a variety of purposes in every individual classroom, the practice of discussion has the potential for helping students enter a zone of proximal development that allows them to maximize learning through social interaction. Vygotsky's theory highlights the role of a more competent mentor, but that mentoring may come through peers or the teacher. The data from each case shows varying degrees of use from monologic to dialogic discussion. Analysis of data focuses on the teacher practice as a reflection of the unique culture within that classroom. In keeping with a Vygotskian framework, as teacher implement a more

dialogic model of discussion, it is a foundational belief that teacher practice will become more effective as teachers observe the classroom social interaction and use that experience to refine their own teacher beliefs and teacher practice to meet the needs and goals of their unique classroom culture.

Finding One: Teachers Use Discussion

As chapter one discusses, research supports the value of discussion (in any form) (Nystrand & Gamoran, 1991; Mercer, 1995; Splitter & Sharp, 1995; Wells, 1999; Mercer, 2000; Nystrand, Gamoran, & Carbonaro, 2001; Alexander, 2003; Splitter, 2003; Applebee, Langer, Nystrand, & Gamoran, 2003; Parker, 2006; Alexander, 2008). That same research, however, also supports the conclusion that discussion is seldom practiced (Barber, 1989; Boler, 2004; Haroutunian-Gordon, 1991; Larson & Parker, 1996; Oakes, 2005), and, when it is practiced, it is not used as effectively as it might be (Nystrand et al., 1997; Myhill & Fisher, 2005; Mehan, 1978; Cazden, 1988). For example, findings of Cazden (1988) and Mehan (1979) indicate that dialogic discussion is used less frequently than lecture or monologic discussion (Cazden, 1988; Mehan, 1979). "…[A] large study of 8th and 9th grade English language arts classrooms [reported] that 85% of the instruction observed was some combination of lecture, recitation and seatwork" (Nystrand, 2006, p. 395).

The findings of this research contradict that conclusion. As has been previously noted, the participants in this study consistently and frequently used discussion in some form, and the majority of participants made effective use of discussion, and the quality of that discussion often possessed dialogic aspects. Using Reznitkaya & Gregory's (2013)

Dialogic Inquiry Tool as a measure of dialogic inquiry, Tom's scores were mid-way between dialogic and monologic, and Bill's scores were on the dialogic end of the monologic-dialogic continuum, and although Kathy's scores were on the monologic side, discussion was a consistent part of her classroom activity. Each teacher's confident definition and identification of the important role of discussion is only further support of the conclusion that discussion, however it may be defined, is a common feature in the classroom. The teachers who participated in this study used discussion for formative assessment, guided practice, and for the development of students' greater awareness of the often unconscious and intuitive processes of literary interpretation. Literary interpretation was the primary task in each of the observed classroom settings.

Finding Two: Teachers Identify Multiple Definitions and Purpose

The second finding is that teachers do not have a single definition for discussion or a single purpose for using it. Their statements and teaching reflect multiple definitions and purposes. In our initial interview, Kathy defined discussion as a tool for helping students make connections between text and their personal lives. Subsequently, Kathy defined discussion as "an informal conversation between teacher and student or student to student that is formally assessed by the teacher" (Kathy, personal communication, October 30, 2015).

Tom defined discussion by identifying the importance of flexibility as a key feature. Bill defined discussion as a tool for investigating a problem, in his case the meaning of a literary text and the task of describing how a writer used rhetorical and figurative devices to create the text's intended effect. This variety of definitions is

indicated in the research described in chapter two (Alexander, 2010; Almasi, 1996; Reznitskaya and Gregory, 2013). (See table 8).

Participant	Initial Definition of Discussion
Kathy	I certainly want to try to develop their love of literature. I think it's important for the kids to make [personal] connections to what they're reading.
Tom	Discussion needs to be a little more organic and not too structured … [I]f it's too structured, the structure can get in the way.
Bill	[Discussion] … is two or more people investigating a problem

Table 8.

Although each teacher identified a clear purpose for using discussion, their comments and teaching represented a variety of purposes. Kathy identified assessment as a primary purpose; she described the role of discussion in the social and moral development of her students. Her stated intent was to use discussion to develop what Bruce Novak and Jeff Wilhelm (2011) termed the evocative dimension of literacy and what Rosenblatt (1978) termed the aesthetic dimension.

Tom and Bill described similar purposes, although their approaches were distinct. For both men, discussion was an instrumental aspect of classroom pedagogy and instruction. They saw discussion not only as a pedagogy for modeling literary analysis and formative assessment, but also as a focused tool for scaffolding and developing students' cognitive processes of literary interpretation, mentoring students toward greater awareness of their own intuitive processes of literary interpretation and knowledge construction.

Participant	Purpose of Discussion
Kathy	"I think I want to try and develop their love of literature, a love for reading."
Tom	"Discussion is where people are… expressing their reactions to… ideas that have been [raised] by somebody else. … you're bringing in that oral element where there's a give and take,

	where ideas are expressed or questions are asked, and people are responding … processing in the moment"
Bill	"[discussion is] …the invention of knowledge…, [but] it's not content knowledge… it's process knowledge, to make you more aware of how you're arriving at your end… can you articulate your process for making meaning?"

Table 9.

These differences in definitions and uses for discussion may have been anticipated. Discussion is an abstract concept (Parker & Hess, 2001; Preskill, 1997); the same term may be used with different meanings. These differences highlighted the need for an instrument that normalizes a definition of discussion. When teacher responses were placed on the DIT scale (Reznitskaya & Gregory, 2013), each participant's use of discussion landed along a continuum, ranging from monologic on one end of a continuum, to dialogic on the other. Kathy's use of discussion is monologic; Bill's use is much more dialogic; Tom's use of discussion centered between Kathy and Bill. The variety of definitions, purposes, and functions of discussion indicates that teachers have many concepts and purposes for using discussion, and these concepts shape their classroom use.

In Kathy's case, her understanding and use of discussion became specifically relevant to the extent that it represents her developing knowledge and use of discussion. Her classroom practice varied greatly from her stated definition and purpose. As Chapter 4 discusses, Kathy described a number of goals for the use of discussion in her classroom including personal development, social development, critical thinking, and assessment. She described her desire to expose students a variety of non-canonical literary texts and to use those texts, and classroom discussion, to build students' openness to divergent opinions and foster their critical thinking skills related to diverse opinions. Kathy's

expansive view sees discussion as a means to meet the needs of the whole person within society. However, her classroom practice was very much more traditional, teacher-centered, and focused on formative assessment. Observations of Kathy's classroom revealed a wide disparity and incongruity between her stated purposes and her actual practice, an incongruity that affects the likelihood that she will achieve those lofty and expansive pedagogical goals.

However, the variety of teachers' definitions and uses of discussion need not be viewed negatively. On the contrary, it reflects "gaps" in teacher's present knowledge and the opportunity for further development of their knowledge and experience through professional development.

Finding Three: Teachers Need Further Professional Development

A third finding is that teachers would benefit from further professional development that expands teacher knowledge and experience related to the use of discussion in the classroom. This finding is supported by the following observations. First, participants all agreed that they lacked any formal training or professional development in the use of discussion. Second, their comments reflect little reflection or change in thinking about discussion, as might be expected given the attention brought to the subject by their participation. This lack of change reflects a lack of reflection and a lack of understanding regarding the value of discussion. During the initial interview, teachers were asked to define discussion. They were asked the same question during the exit interview. With the exception of Bill, their answers did not change.

Participation in a study on discussion, it would be expected, would to lead to some level of reflection as a natural course of events, even without prompting from the investigator. Bill's case is the exception that proves the case. Bill adjusted his perspective to focus more on the process of thinking about literature, and the insight he gained through his personally-motivated reflection demonstrates the efficacy of reflection to improve discussion. Kathy's and Tom's definition remained unchanged. While Bill's comments suggest reflection and change, and Tom's existing practice reflected intentional and sophisticated use, Kathy and Tom's cases do not reflect change. Taken together, their comments and practices reflect the potential value of providing educators with structured opportunities for reflection. Third, at no time or our conversations did teachers distinguish between categories of discussion (seminar, deliberation, debate, conversation). Fourth, none of the teachers brought up discussion as a worthwhile curricular outcome, in which students are taught about discussion as an independent skill, separate from content, what Parker & Hess (2001) distinguish as *teaching with* and *teaching for* discussion. Conceived of as a pedagogical practice, discussion facilitates the achievement of content or skill outcomes; as a curricular outcome, discussion becomes the content and the learning objective becomes how to participate in a discussion. It could be argued that learning how to discuss, as a curricular outcome, is an implicit part of students learning the value of processes and outcomes of social interaction in their own writing about literature, but the topic was never discussed. Teachers agreed that formal instruction on the effective use of discussion would be valuable and welcome.

Bill's case demonstrates the benefit of a formal structured opportunity for reflection. Although it would be expected that by participating in a this study and

focusing attention on the topic, asked to articulate their own thinking on the subject, that teacher's thinking would develop, if only in meta-cognitive awareness of their practice and purpose as they work to articulate personal beliefs and practices. Bill's final interview was a clear example of the value of his own reflective process, apart from any formal process or structured opportunity for reflection.

During our initial interview, Bill described his use of discussion as a means of fostering student thinking. In that last interview he described his own changing insight regarding his use of discussion. "[Discussion is] …the invention of knowledge…, [but] it's not content knowledge… it's process knowledge, to make you more aware of how you're arriving at your end… can you articulate your process for making meaning?" (Bill, personal communication, February 1, 2016). For Bill, the process of participating in the research, and without any prompting from me, lead him to a reflective moment in which he gained greater insight into his own current practice.

Beyond this example, it would be accurate to say that no other evidence of profound changes in teachers' thinking about discussion was observed. Although teachers were not asked to redefine discussion; nor were they asked if their ideas about discussion had changed through the course of the study, there did not appear to be any evidence to the contrary. Definitions and purposes remained consistent for each teacher through the course of the investigation. Teachers do not know what they do not know and they lack the time or structured opportunity for reflection that permits professional development.

Finding Four: Teacher Disposition Plays an Important Role.

A fourth finding supports previous research indicating that teacher disposition does play an important role. Disposition reflects a teacher's belief that discussion is a

valuable and effective pedagogy. Research indicates that teacher beliefs do affect a teacher's willingness to integrate a teaching practice like discussion (Stewart & O'Brien, 1989; Stewart, 1990; O'Brien & Stewart, 1990; Alvermann & Moore, 1991; O'Brien & Stewart, 1992; O'Brien, Stewart, & Moje, 1995). However, this pedagogical commitment that comes from a belief plays as important a role as training and experience in fostering the effective use of discussion. In other words, teacher may receive training and yet still not choose to implement discussion if their training does not change their beliefs and overcome what Lortis (1975) characterized as apprenticeship by observation. His study highlighted the strong influence that past models from our own high school experiences exert an influence over present classroom decision-making. The other side of the propostion is equally true. Teachers without formal training may work their way to effective use of discussion simply because of their belief in its effectiveness.

Teachers in this study made a daily pedagogical decision to implement discussion. These decisions reflect a clear purpose reflective of the value they place on discussion as well as their knowledge, confidence, and willingness to adapt pedagogy to achieve that goal. In this study, teachers adapted the use of discussion in unique ways to fit their unique styles and goals. Kathy adapted her practice to line up with her beliefs. She believed that discussion could function as a tool for formative assessment and help her students' personal and social development, and critical thinking. She described her hope that discussion contributed to students' engagement with the imaginary literary world and led to an appreciation for literature on an evocative level. Her practice demonstrates the effect of her beliefs on her practice. She believed that discussion would help her achieve her goals, and so she used discussion frequently. The fact that her intent did not line up

134

with her practices is a secondary point that leads to a natural question about the potential benefit of a formal, structured opportunity for reflection. Kathy's case reflects her lack of a knowledge base, the value of reflection, and the result when opportunity for reflection is missed.

Tom clearly defines his goals too, and his pursuit of those goals is much more nuanced and intentional. He wants to mentor these students and prepare them to write effective essays for the AP exam; he does however tend to do much of the heavy lifting in classroom discussions. He has much to cover and sometimes it is easier to just show and tell, to take students by the hand and lead them to what you want them to know. Letting them discover on their own may lead to longer lasting and deeper conceptual understanding, but it also takes much more time.

Although Tom's use of discussion possesses many dialogic qualities, there were times when I saw him lean on a more authoritative, transmission of knowledge; on these occasions, I wondered if there are times when the teacher needs to be a mentor who metaphorically takes the student's hand and leads him or her along the path that the teacher has himself walked many times, being familiar with the landscape as well as a few shortcuts.

Bill described the conceptual difficulty and the challenge of teaching students to do the kind of literary interpretation that he and Tom were attempting to mentor. Bill indicated his opinion that this work is a two-year process, and that it cannot be rushed. In the year one, students may gain proficiency in recognizing and explaining a rhetorical element, but it is not until the second year that they may be able to clearly articulate how that rhetorical device works to have the author's intended effect. Therefore, his teaching

stance and patience with students engaging in a self-discovery process may be born of his recognition of cognitive demands of the interpretive task as much as it is born of his dispositions.

Each of these teachers described clear purposes for use of discussion; however, each teacher works out those purposes in distinct ways. Kathy wants to use discussion to help her students' social and personal development; she used discussion as formative assessment. Tom and Bill are both pursuing the same end, to prepare students for a very discrete goal, the passing of an AP exam. However, Bill is able to involve students in more dialogic discussion than Tom. The length of student responses in Bill's class discussion reflect his commitment. Student responses for Bill are much longer than either Kathy or Tom's.

Considered together, Tom and Bill's case reflect the result of a willingness to reflect and adapt practice to fit pedagogical purpose. I gained the impression (from observations, but occasionally from direct comments) that for Tom and Bill "necessity was the mother of invention." I gathered from my observations that their effective use of discussion was not the result of consciously applying theory to practice. It was driven much more by their recognition of its value and their determination to make it work. Tom and Bill identified discussion as a tool for helping students develop not only the skill of literary interpretation but also, through the processes of modeling and mentoring, as a tool for helping students gain a greater self-awareness, control, and proficiency with the use of those intellectual processes of literary interpretation.

Tom's and Bill's practice demonstrated their intention that their students recognize that discussion is a key component of inquiry, one that fosters the development

of their literary interpretive skills on several levels: first, that discussion forces students to organize their thinking for others to hear and understand; second, that it allows them to receive immediate feedback; third, that it allows them to benefit from the more sophisticated ideas of others and to change their ideas in light of more compelling evidence and reasoning. For both Tom and Bill, their purposes and uses for discussion reflect and were driven by these goals, and their practice demonstrates the result when intentionality is matched with reflection.

There are some noteworthy difference between Tom and Bill's styles. While Bill's approach was more permissive and developmental, allowing opportunity for students to discover the process at their own rate, Tom's was consciously more prescriptive. Bill's approach places greater emphasis on the process while Tom's approach emphasizes the product. Bill would agree with the assertion that, from his perspective, self-discovery and intellectual struggle improve the quality of the outcome. Contrasted with Tom and Bill's practice, Kathy's case lacked that intentionality in mentoring; hers was a traditional and teacher-centered approach.

Tom's comments argued for an approach that recognized the importance of finding the right balance between structure and flexibility. According to Tom, for classroom discussion to be effective, it must be both structured and flexible. Discussion must have some organization in order to meet the needs of the curriculum and invite the most student participation. However, it must also be flexible and responsive. It must be able to go where an unexpected student question may attempt to take it.

Tom discusses the importance of finding that right balance between structure and flexibility: "[Discussion] needs to be a little more organic and not too structured… of

137

course, the more relaxed you are in structure, the less likely you are going to get involvement from everybody… " (Tom, personal communication, January 26, 2016). He is identifying the drawback of too much structure. It prevents those students with more quiet dispositions and less confidence from participating in an open whole class discussion. A highly planned and structured approach included more students in the discussion but limited the ability of discussion to permit the give-and-take of the natural progression. Too little structure allowed a natural progression, but did not foster participation. A degree of structure makes plans for including everyone in the discussion, but too much structure prevents the discussion from proceeding in response to student interests and queries. His approach strove to find the right balance between a structure and flexibility that would maximize student participation and permit a vibrant, engaged, and responsive dialogue. This same theme of flexibility shows up again in Tom's statements about discussion and assessment. "… if there's an issue, we can deal with it now, versus at the very end." A flexible, less structured approach allows Tom to assess student understanding, but it is predicated on student participation. In practice, however, Tom's inclination seemed to be towards more guiding students and less toward allowing opportunity for students for the discussion in proceed along uncharted garden paths.

If Tom's prescriptive mentoring approach highlights the value of helping students find the right balance in planning and implementing discussion, Bill's more hands-off mentoring approach certainly values a more unplanned discussion. This idea is evident in his definition of discussion as an investigation and it is equally evident in his distinction between scaffolding, which he defines as intentional, and processing, which he describes as organic: "Scaffolding is scripted… processing is organic [and] recursive… processing

[discussion] is an exploration. [Exploration is] where the most learning happens…" Bill's commitment to an unplanned approach to discussion, like Tom's, highlights the value of the freedom to proceed in unplanned directions.

Bill's case also contains some very distinctive elements. Bill's beliefs and teaching style seem to be the primary determiner in his more relaxed and flexible approach to questioning and fostering student discussion. He described his lack of planned question scripts and his practice of just responding to student answers as he guides the discussion in the direction that knows it should go. This approach reflects a great degree of comfort with the unpredictable and dynamic nature of discussion in this context. However, this approach, as he describes it, did not grow out of professional preparation as a part of teacher training. Bill explained that he had the minimum of professional educator training and that his efforts with using discussion grew out of his work as a writer and from a desire to help students gain a stronger grasp over their understanding of the text and the interpretive process from a writer's perspective. His view was that the experience as a writer equipped him to better understand and communicate the rhetorical purpose that a writer brings to the construction of his or her text.

This personal commitment and investment in using discussion to develop students' thinking was evident during our final interview. From what only may be characterized as the result of his sustained personal reflections, Bill described how his thinking changed. He modified his definition of discussion to reflect a greater emphasis on the process of interpretation rather than its product. These examples show the

important and effective (I may even say powerful) combination of reflection and teacher investment.

All teachers in the study acknowledged a lack of professional development in this area, but Bill acknowledged that he had the very least of formal academic preparation, only the minimal required for a teaching license, and yet data from his case shows that his use of discussion is the most dialogic; further, despite his limited formal academic preparation, this study became the formal, albeit entirely unprompted, occasion for his sustained personal reflection that lead to personal and significant reflection and new insight. His case demonstrates the value of the effective combination of personal investment with the opportunity for reflection. On the opposite end of the spectrum and operating as a non-example that proves the point is Kathy's case. Her use of discussion represents the least degree of self-awareness and what may be the result when a teacher lacks an opportunity for reflection; she thought she was using an effective model of discussion, but her practice more likely did not accomplish her goals.

Each of these teachers possess advance degrees and many years of experience. A small case study like this cannot undermine the value of those experiences. This case study can, however, recognize the value of other factors related to discussion and pedagogy that do lead to effective use of discussion. Clearly, it may be concluded from the results of this study that education and experience are not the only determiners of either comfort or proficiency with the implementation of discussion, monologic or dialogic. Findings of this study suggest that teacher dispositions and beliefs about discussion and the opportunity for reflection play as important a role as professional training and experience.

CHAPTER EIGHT
CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

This chapter presents conclusions and implications for the study. The intent of the study was to describe the use of discussion in a secondary English language arts classroom in hopes of gaining a better understanding of both teacher beliefs about discussion and how those beliefs affect classroom practice. The results of the study have implications for future research as well as for the development of curriculum within teacher education and professional development programs.

The results of this research suggest that teachers do recognize the value of social interaction in the learning process. Teachers in this study made expansive and extensive use of discussion. They used it for formative assessment. They used it to build their student's content knowledge and process thinking. They used it to encourage literary interpretation and to foster critical reading and social critique, leading to better thinking and increased literary understanding. For teachers in this study, discussion, whether it was monologic or dialogic, occupied a central place in classroom activities. Classroom observations and teacher comments reflect that teachers used discussion for a significant amount of instructional time. What is less consistent is the character of discussion.

Teachers in this study used discussion with consistency, but they used it with great variety. Their use fell neatly along a continuum ranging from monologic to dialogic. Kathy's use was monologic. Tom's use possessed both monologic and dialogic aspects. (See Appendix A). Bill's use was dialogic;. Kathy's use was teacher-centered;

Bill's use was student-centered. Tom's use was both. This conclusion is supported by the variety of purposes for use evident in each teacher's practice. Kathy used discussion as a means of "checking for comprehension (Kathy, personal communication, October 30, 2015); Tom used discussion "… as a way to model out loud the way I process things, as an example to them [students] (Tom, personal communication, November 5, 2015). Bill used discussion as a form of exploration or investigation, to "follow a path to see where it leads" (Bill, personal communication, October 15, 2015). The prevalence and variety of classroom implementation and teachers' decisions to make discussion a centerpiece of pedagogy clearly reflects the value teachers assign to it.

Conclusions

This research both supports and extends past research on literacy integration. Previous research has focused on the identification of teacher beliefs and other barriers that limit the integration of teacher practices like discussion into the classroom. These barriers include resistance related to teacher and student attitudes and beliefs, curriculum, pedagogy, and school culture (Alvermann & Moore, 1991; Moore, 1996; O'Brien, Stewart, & Moje, 1995; O'Brien & Stewart, 1992; Moje, 2008).

This study builds on that previous research to the extent that it focuses specifically on the influence of one of those factors, teacher beliefs, in teacher decision-making. The results of this study suggest that gains in literacy integration may be achieved by shifting focus away from factors that may limit the use of teacher practices and, instead, toward those teacher beliefs that inspire the use of teacher practices like discussion.

143

This study points to the conclusion that a teacher's personal commitment to inquiry learning and a confidence in the use of discussion changes use and the effectiveness of that use. The emphasis on these teacher beliefs offers promise for overcoming a variety of obstacles to literacy integration.

The teachers in this study demonstrated the value of a personal commitment to inquiry learning and a confidence in discussion as a worthwhile pedagogy of inquiry. Their belief in the value of discussion motivated them to adopt its consistent use, and, in Bill's case to engage in professional reflection leading to new insights. Their experiences suggest that helping novice teachers develop that same confidence and commitment may be the key to overcoming teacher resistance and more fully integrating a teacher practice like discussion into the secondary classroom. For example, past research has indicated that teachers may tend to repeat their own past models of classroom instruction (Lortie, 1975). These models may be traditional teacher-centered models of instruction that leave little room for student-centered inquiry. Changing teacher beliefs begins with giving them a new model.

The comments and decisions made by teachers who participated in this study make clear that each teacher's personal commitment to the use of discussion determined how each used it. Teachers used discussion with intentionality and deliberation, but their use reflects individual teacher beliefs and sense of purpose. Kathy's use reflects her teacher-centered pedagogy; Tom's use reflects his heavy emphasis on mentoring; Bill's use reflects his focus on developing students' independent literary analysis. Kathy's beliefs limited her use while Tom's and Bill's beliefs motivated their practice.

It is possible to identify component parts of the relationship between teacher beliefs and their decisions to pursue discussion as a pedagogy of inquiry. One of those components is teacher knowledge. Teachers who understand the meaning of dialogic discussion, and its distinction from monologic and IRE models, are more likely to pursue it as a classroom. A part of knowing about dialogic discussion is a research-based understanding of what attributes constitutes effective classroom talk. An effective use of discussion may be characterized as teacher-student and student-student interactions that possess a dialogic quality leading to the kind of cognitive and social development that research indicates is possible when students participate in effective classroom discussions with each other and with a more knowledgeable mentor.

Another component is a model of effective use. Teachers who have seen it work in the classroom, perhaps implemented by a more knowledgeable colleague, are more likely to embrace it as trusted pedagogical practice. This is teacher knowledge connected with experience, what may be termed pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1987). Teachers who know what dialogic discussion is and who have seen it used well in the classroom are much more likely to implement it in their own classrooms to achieve their curricular goals. Knowledge combined with a model of its effective use leads naturally to reflection. Teachers who are given the opportunity for reflection on their own practice may be more likely to change their beliefs and more strongly embrace the use of discussion.

Teachers also need to recognize discussion as a worthwhile pedagogy with potential as a valuable tool for inquiry learning. Bill's and Tom's case demonstrate the potential of discussion for inquiry. Just because discussion is a common feature of the

145

classroom, does not mean that it is used effectively, or as an inquiry tool. Effective and research-based implementation will develop as teacher beliefs are informed by experiences that develop their knowledge base and help them meet the challenges of classroom implementation.

This introduces a fourth component and one that highlights the important relationship between teacher beliefs and teacher experiences. Teachers need experiences that will lead to changes in teacher beliefs, and teacher educators need to be mindful of the best means of designing those experiences in either pre-service teacher preparation programs or in-service professional development experiences. The right kinds of experiences will help teachers overcome limiting beliefs and help them to choose discussion as a trusted pedagogy for inquiry.

The right kinds of experiences will develop a teacher's beliefs and their knowledge base for the classroom use of discussion. Teachers need experiences that will develop their research-based understanding of dialogic discussion as a teacher practice. They need experiences that increase their confidence in its effectiveness to meet instructional goals within an inquiry model; they need experiences that help them meet the practical challenges of implementation; they need experiences that provide effective models and structured opportunities for professional reflection leading to increased professional competence in the teacher practice.

Bill's case demonstrates the important relationship between these component parts. His experience as a writer provided insight into the cognitive processes behind the writing task, and his commitment to getting that kind of thinking out of his students brought him to discussion as a tool that he felt could get from students what he

146

envisioned. It also brought him to the kinds of insights gained through reflection. During our final interview, he explained his recent insight into what he described as a better understanding of what he was doing with discussion. Bill's case suggests that teacher beliefs and the opportunity for reflection may play a more important role than professional coursework in guiding practice. The experiences and backgrounds of every teacher in this study demonstrates the value of disposition relevant to professional preparation. Each teacher possessed advanced degrees and extensive classroom experience, and yet there is a difference between how Kathy used discussion and how Bill used discussion. The conclusion is that neither education nor experience is an absolute determiner of either confidence or expertise with using discussion. This fact is most especially compelling given that Bill, the participant with the least amount of professional coursework, only what meets state minimum licensure requirements, has the highest scores on the DIT measure for the use of dialogic instruction. His use of discussion is the most dialogic and his use of reflection is effective, yet he has the least amount of professional preparation. His initial definition of discussion was dialogic in nature. This fact reflects his present knowledge and confidence in discussion as a pedagogy of inquiry. His comments reflect his intentionality and professional reflection.

Driven by his reflection, his practice transcended his professional preparation. This is in contrast with the efficacy of Kathy's practice. Her practice is confounded by her lack of knowledge about discussion and the effective use of discussion and by her lack of awareness and inability to monitor her own use. Kathy thinks she is using discussion effectively to achieve her goals, but she is not. Given an opportunity for reflection, her practice may have been transformed. Bill's case demonstrates the

147

importance of individual beliefs and the value of reflection just as much as Kathy's case demonstrates the importance of teacher knowledge. Taken together, their experiences demonstrate the value of reflection and connection between teacher knowledge, teacher beliefs, and effective classroom practice. The same is true for Tom. Tom's use of discussion is effective, but it is not as dialogic and receptive to inquiry learning as it might be. Given access to a knowledge base and an opportunity for reflection, even his focused intentionality may have shifted toward a more dialogic approach.

Bill's example demonstrates that teacher knowledge and beliefs are at least as important as other factors in leading to increased and effective use of discussion and may be the key to overcoming a variety of other barriers identified in previous research. Bill's example also raises questions about the role of pre-service teacher training and in-service professional development programs in preparing students to implement discussion, suggesting that professional developments initiated during initial teaching experiences may be more successful. A pedagogy as complex and dynamic as classroom discussion may be developed most effectively within the context of an experience base that comes from a year or more of teaching.

Programs of professional development during initial, first-year experiences may be the best vehicle for providing teachers with these types of experiences. These experiences, introduced once teachers have some authentic classroom experience, will help foster the development of the knowledge base and belief structures that will lead to increased frequency of use of the teacher practice of discussion as a means of inquiry.

His experience suggests that teachers would benefit from a having an opportunity to observe a more knowledgeable colleague implement discussion. Structuring

148

opportunities for a mentoring relationship would allow teachers to observe effective classroom implementation. These kinds of mentoring experiences could more conveniently be facilitated in the daily activities of a first year teacher as opposed to the clinical field experience of education students. Practicing teachers with a modicum of background experience who see how challenges are overcome and how inquiry and literacy are developed, will develop both the knowledge and the confidence to implement discussion around a text.

From this study, it is evident from teacher comments, teacher reflections, and classroom observations that there exists an opportunity improve teacher knowledge, provide an opportunity for reflection, and change teacher beliefs by providing valuable and relevant experiences during their initial years of teaching experience. Therefore, teacher education programs and first-year programs need to include curriculum related to a research-based understanding of discussion as well as an opportunity for modeling and reflection.

Implications for Teacher Education

The results of this study suggest the kinds of experiences that will lead to important changes in teacher knowledge and teacher beliefs. Teachers need to see dialogic models in action; they need to have a window into a more knowledgeable teacher's decision-making and they need to have a structured opportunity to reflect on their own practice. The question for teacher educators and stakeholders within

professional development communities is about the best setting for introducing these kinds of experiences.

The experiences of teachers in this study suggest that their understanding of discussion was forged in the furnace of the classroom by the heat of intentionality and philosophical commitment, not as an impartial translation of theory into practice. For example, Bill's dialogic approach, Kathy's teacher-centered use of monologic discussion, and Tom's prescriptive mentoring approach reflect the importance of disposition and personality applied in the dynamics of a classroom setting.

This intentionality, or its concomitant reflection, is something for which not all teachers may have time or interest. Secondary classroom teachers are frequently tasked with an increasing number of ancillary duties, the demands of high stakes testing, accountability initiatives, and additional classroom duties and commitments that distract, prohibit, or interfere with sober reflective practice of the quality reflected in this study. These kinds of changes in teacher beliefs more likely will be accomplished through sustained, practical experiences that demonstrate the efficacy of discussion.

The results of this study suggest that the best direction for further professional development lies in first-year programs. There are two concerns with implementing these professional development opportunities during pre-service programs. First, pre-service programs are already tasked with communicating a large body of knowledge in a short time frame. Additional coursework may not be a positive step; second, implementing and managing classroom discussion is a practical task that would be better introduced within the context of a practical experience base.

Pre-service teacher preparation programs involve the transmission of an already-large body of knowledge that must be communicated in a very short time period. Pre-service teacher candidates have only the final two years of a four-year degree program to gain mastery of a knowledge base that includes developmental psychology, learning theory, classroom management, curriculum, planning, pedagogy, and numerous issues related to the sociology of education. Prior to entering into a teacher education program, candidates are completing general education requirements and content-related courses.

Upon admission to a program of teacher preparation, pre-service teachers are expected to gain mastery of a broad range of skills, knowledge, and professional dispositions related to teaching in addition to mastering the content knowledge for which they are responsible. Pre-service teachers are expected to master vocabulary and comprehension strategies in required content literacy courses and to choose from among the variety of strategies those that are appropriate for their diverse classrooms and learning situations. Teacher educators also have the difficult task of delivering a wealth of professional knowledge and practice including teaching methods, critical theories, principles of education, and multiple field experiences. In a short time frame, the teacher educator must communicate a large amount of information and the pre-service teacher has the equally challenging task of synthesizing a large amount of information that affects not only what they know but what they do with that information related to decision-making. Teacher educators recognize the challenge for pre-service teachers who struggle with synthesizing so much information and arriving at complex decision-making with limited classroom experience.

151

A similar set of challenges apply to in-service teachers. They must master a wide variety of both theoretical and practical knowledge. As with pre-service teachers, these knowledge structures run the gamut from critical theories, learning theories, legal requirements, professional standards for conduct to more practical content related to teaching methods, literacy and learning strategies, classroom management, and time management techniques. Those who have newly entered the profession must struggle with many time consuming and intellectually possessing demands.

The effective use of discussion as a means of inquiry is a dynamic and practical pedagogy. Some skills, practices, and strategies may be more effectively fostered if paired with a degree of professional experience. The development of those skills associated with the use of classroom discussion is one of those skills.

More personal dispositions and teaching styles must be playing a larger role. These dispositions can be modeled but they are less likely to be quantifiable for a course syllabus. It would seem reasonable to conclude that teachers with enough experience to recognize the need and the practical considerations inherent in classroom dynamics be given access to professional development opportunities that allow them to develop these teacher dispositions. It would equally reasonable to conclude that an first-year approach in which first-year teachers would also include an opportunity over several months for teachers to both reflect on their own teaching through videotaping and have the opportunity to see discussion used by a master teacher in a practical setting over an extended period of time. Under these conditions, first-year teachers would have the opportunity to learn to recognize the practical value if discussion and integrate discussion in a gradual manner. Given the number of challenges faced by pre-service teachers,

adding this protocol to pre-service teacher education would seem to be adding a too-heavy burden that would work against effective integration.

Would first-year teachers be more willing to embrace the "risk" of more student-centered models if they videotaped and reflected their instruction in conjunction with the integration of these dialogic discussion models? Further, would they be more open to these models if they participated in mentoring relationships in which they had opportunity to watch another teacher effectively implement these approaches in a classroom setting?

These questions could form the basis for future, more applied research questions, as well as provide direction for future development of pre-service teacher education and in-service professional development opportunities and programs.

These additions would be predicated on an assumption that teacher practice is influenced by more opportunity for teacher reflection and exposure to effective models and professional mentor relationships. From Kathy's example, it is possible to conclude that discussion can be used with intentionality disconnected from results.

If discussion is not accomplishing what the teacher intends, or worse, if it is impeding what the teacher intends, then discussion becomes an ill-conceived and counter-productive pedagogy. Reflection and the development of self-awareness become key components of teacher education.

Implications for Future Research

Certainly implications from this study would include recommendations for more studies related to what types of discussion are used, what types are more effective for a

variety of instructional and curricular purposes, and how can teacher proficiency be fostered. A part of that research would include the potential contribution of teacher education programs as well as the feasibility and efficacy of bringing instruction in the use of discussion into a pre-service setting. Certainly, discussion with these teachers in this study indicates a recognition of the need for teachers to have some knowledge in practice born of experiences that recognizes the potential pitfalls of implementing an effective classroom practice for discussion capable of meeting the many diverse educational needs and purposes of the classroom. Tom very clearly identified his opinon that novice and preserviee would not benefit from instruction in the use of discussion with some background grounded in experience.

One direction for future research within teacher education relates to the relationship between successful use of discussion and the role of knowledge, experience, and disposition. Knowledge, experience, disposition all play a role in developing a teacher's use of discussion, but what role does each one play? Does one play a greater role than another, or is it a combination of all three?

Further research rests on questions like these. What knowledge, skills, and dispositions are necessary for pre-service and in-service teachers to be able to implement a dialogic model of discussion in the classroom? What pedagogies, curriculum, and experiences will build the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that teachers need to implement dialogic discussion? When in the course of a teacher's professional development should these pedagogies, curriculum, or experiences be introduced? Should these experiences be facilitated in one large seminar or over an extended period of time and grounded in practical classroom experience? What role does a teacher's background

play in their conceptualization of discussion and what role will professional development play in helping to counter limiting beliefs about discussion as a valuable pedagogy? What background experience best serves teachers' ability and inclination to use discussion? What are effective models for managing whole-group and small group discussions? What are the distinctive features of discussion within and across content areas?What is the relationship between structured, formal opportunities for reflection and the development of teacher's ability and use of dialogic model of discussion?

Additional questions revolve around what would constitute appropriate and necessary experiences for guiding discussion as well as question about the best time in a teacher's early career to address this pedagogical content knowledge. Lastly, what is the role of a teacher's disposition, his or her willingness to try new approaches that may be very unlike those models seen in their own teacher training. The use of dialogic discussion is a function of professional disposition. Some teachers will be more comfortable with the dynamics of various levels of student-centered discussion than others. Bill's case demonstrates this conclusion. Although he is a participant with the least pedagogical preparation and education coursework, he demonstrates a professional commitment to help his students achieve high expectations.

Next steps may focus on making generalizations about discussion use across content areas and within content areas. How do teachers improve the quality and frequency of specifically dialogic discussion in the classroom? A part of defining pedagogical content knowledge for discussion is the identification of knowledge related to managing discussion in the classroom, apart from identifying what form that discussion takes.

It is too easy to assume that all discussion should be dialogic discussion, but meeting a variety of learning objectives requires a variety of tools. Dialogic discussion is only one tool. Other tools may be lecture, collaboration, or discussion. The quickest delivery system may be simply "telling" or direct instruction that takes the form of lecture. Lecture is a quick and efficient means of communicating information, but once students have that information, they need an opportunity to apply, synthesize, and adapt that information, and discussion is a primary means of fitting new information into existing knowledge structures.

The goal of this dissertation was to describe what is happening in these classrooms and how teachers are conceiving of and using discussion. The obvious conclusion from this study is that teachers are using discussion. It is indispensable tool in an English language arts classroom. Students cannot learn literary analysis and interpretation from objective tests and worksheets. It is by nature, a process of mentoring in which students must see the process at work and have opportunity to practice and receive feedback on the quality of their practice. If a goal was to define the type of discussion most often used, I would have to say that it tends to be more monologic than dialogic; if my goal was to identify weaknesses in monologic approaches, that would not be a conclusion that could be made from such limited periods of observations. It would also require gathering of data from test scores as well as other instruments measuring classroom climate and individual and corporate student engagement as well as measures of teacher efficacy.

The exigencies of the classroom may preclude always engaging students in a dialogic discussion. But sometimes their conceptions do not match their practices.

Teachers need more reflection and feedback to understand more clearly the relationship between their goals and their practice; What they think they are accomplishing may not be what they are really accomplishing. Any classroom observer may quickly realize that facilitating this level of discussion requires a lot of energy, focus, and preparation, and some may have more of a natural talent for crafting those types of discussions than others might.

The variety of definitions and approaches leads to questions about the value of pre-service and in-service training in developing teacher beliefs. Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) distinguish as knowledge-for-practice, knowledge that comes through formal classroom instruction, and knowledge-in-practice and knowledge-of-practice that are developed through experience, reflection and interrogation in light of contemporary education research. The teachers in this study each have advanced degrees and extensive classroom experience. It might be expected that formal education and experience would lead to a consensus of what discussion is and how it might best be utilized in the classroom. Such is not the case, implying that formal education may be less a factor in guiding the implementation of discussion than teacher attitudes and dispositions.

There are many purposes for discussion in the classroom. It may be used for assessing student understanding in the moment and using that information to guide and direct a continuing discussion, as Tom's beliefs and practices indicate. A part of that process of assessment then becomes instruction as knowledge of student understanding is translated into a shift in instruction. Often guided reading, connecting background knowledge masquerade as discussion as the teacher asks what become essentially rhetorical questions for which no answer is expected or needed. Students come to realize

157

this and check out, and teachers signal the fact when they do not stop and wait for an answer.

Discussion may even be used as part of an effort to encourage cognitive activities related to processing and supporting evidence; however, the question arises, and one that distinguishes a high level of monologic discussion from any level of dialogic discussion is whose ideas are being heard. Are students mimicking the teacher or are they inventing new knowledge. This question is understood as a teacher's stance toward the best way for students to develop their proficiency with the complex intellectual and social processes associated with literary interpretation. Some teachers like Tom show a sophisticated understanding of discussion but they see interpretation as a difficult process that requires close mentorship and leaves little room for allowing students to learn through self-discovery and encourages a larger role for students' voice. Other teachers, like Bill, recognize the conceptual difficulty of the task, and they also recognize value of helping students make that journey with minimal help.

Professional development in the use of discussion is lacking. The form of that professional development should include a mentoring model and an opportunity for teacher reflection. While pre-service training is already burgeoning with requirements, a brief introduction to discussion may be valuable, but the initial years of teaching may be a more opportune time for a more intensive exposure to those experiences.

Appendix A
Dialogic Inquiry Tool

Move		Test 1, 2	Instruct 3, 4	Dialogue 5, 6
Community				
Sharing the Floor		The teacher "holds the floor" most of the time and talks more frequently and longer than students. Student responses are short, often consisting of one word or phrase. The communication typically follows a recitation pattern of Teacher question-Student response-Teacher evaluation.	While students contribute to the discussion with longer answers, their responses are typically directed to and mediated by the teacher. The teacher leads the discussion, and peer-to-peer exchanges are rare or non-existent.	Class participants contribute equally to the discussion. Students have longer, elaborate responses and they direct their answers to other students, rather than to the teacher. There are consecutive peer-to-peer exchanges uninterrupted by the teacher. The teacher becomes one of the participants of the group, and intervenes only when necessary.
Dividing Resp.		The teacher has exclusive control over all discussion content and processes. S/he nominates students, asks questions, initiates topical shifts, and evaluates the answers.	There are occasional opportunities for students to freely engage in discussion. These are rare and/or involve only a few students. Most of the time, the teacher controls turn-taking, prescribes topic choice, and reshapes the discussion to align with specific fixed content.	Students take on key responsibilities for the flow of the discussion. Students participate in managing turns (self-selecting or nominating others), asking questions, judging each other's answers, introducing new topics, and suggesting procedural changes. No discussion content is being suppressed by the teacher.
Collaboratively Following the Line of Inquiry		The teacher shifts topics frequently and abruptly to "cover the text" and/or to assess comprehension of the basic story facts. • *Ok, let's now turn to page 626. What did Carlos have for breakfast?*	The teacher initiates topical shifts, which are logical and correspond to a predetermined plan for the lesson. The plan typically focuses on more substantive issues raised by the readings (compared with recitation) and it often leads students towards a particular conclusion. • *And that's what I wanted you to get from this story.*	There is a continuous logical line of inquiry, with topical shifts emerging from the discussion itself. The direction of the discussion may change freely as students introduce and collaboratively examine new ideas.

Inquiry				
Move		**Test** **1, 2**	**Instruct** **3, 4**	**Dialogue** **5, 6**
Discussing Contestable Questions		Teacher questions target recall of specific facts from the story. These are simple, "test" questions with one right/wrong answer known from the story or other sources (*What? When? How many?*) • *What happens next? The answer is on page 652.* • *How many eaglets were in that nest?*	The discussion has open questions, but these questions are often designed to "lead" students to a narrow range of interpretations of the text. The teacher often elicits the sharing of similar experiences and/or reshapes the discussion to emphasize predetermined "points-not-to-miss" during the lesson. • *What symbol tells you that it involves a court?* • *Have you ever been away from home?… Now you can imagine how the slaves felt.*	The discussion centers around truly contestable *and* cognitively challenging questions. The questions target higher-order thinking, involving students in critical evaluation and analysis of each other's arguments. The group follows the inquiry where it leads. • *Is there ever a reason to invade someone's privacy?* • *Can you both love animals and eat them?*
		Student responses are short, disjointed, and unrelated to each other. Students primarily "report" about established, known facts.	Students occasionally collaborate to address open-ended questions. The collaboration may involve sharing of similar experiences, rather than a critical evaluation of each others' arguments. Disagreement is rare. • *This happened to me too! I was visiting my aunt in Boston…*	Students engage in critical and collaborative co-construction of arguments in relation to a complex question. They often "take up" a preceding contribution to develop the argument further. Importantly, such co-reasoning often goes beyond simple agreement. For example, a reason given by one student can be contradicted or challenged by the next student

Inquiry				
Move		**Test** **1, 2**	**Instruct** **3, 4**	**Dialogue** **5, 6**
Tracking and Labeling Discussion Processes		The teacher does not comment on the quality of group's reasoning or the degree of collaboration. Instead, the teacher focuses exclusively on specific content.	The teacher occasionally, but not consistently, comments on the quality of student thinking and the progress of the group. Many of these monitoring comments are of the same type. • *Let's use elimination here.* • *Let's make sure everyone participates.* • *This was a good point.*	Whenever necessary, the teacher invites students to reflect on and identify the rules of inquiry, the progress on the group, and the degree of collaboration by group members. The teacher primarily focuses on the *process of reasoning*. S/he often identifies specific reasoning moves made by the students and comments on how these moves function to advance the argument further. • *You just made a good distinction that can help us rethink our definition of privacy.* • *How should we begin discussing this question?* • *I am not sure we are being consistent.* • *Are you then assuming that friendship is more important than winning?*
		Students do not comment on the group's reasoning.	Students make limited comments about the group's reasoning. They do not affect the process of the discussion.	Whenever appropriate, students comment on how their responses relate to the developing line of inquiry. They suggest alternative discussion strategies and goals. • *I don't think we are disagreeing.* • *Sounds like we are going around in circles.* • *Ok, Dianna is lost. What do you need to be explained?*

Requesting/ Providing Justification		The teacher often misses opportunities to ask students to explain and elaborate their positions with reasons and evidence.	The teacher selectively, but not consistently probes further into students' arguments, asking students to justify their views by generating reasons and evidence. S/he may miss opportunities to ask for further justification, especially when student answers are correct.	The teacher does not miss opportunities to ask students to explain and support their positions with reasons, examples, and evidence. • *What is the reason for saying that…? What makes you think this?* • *What would be an example?* • *How do you know this?* • *Is there evidence in the story to support this conclusion?*
		Students do not explain what they think and why. Their responses are brief and factual, consisting of one word or a phrase.	Students occasionally share opinions and provide good justification for them. Longer student responses may also represent simple retelling of personal experiences or events from the story, rather than reasoning.	Students consistently and effectively address the questions "Why?" and "How?" Students take personal positions on the issue (*I think, I believe*) and support them with reasons and evidence (*because it said in the story…*). They make elaborate, lengthy contributions, explaining their thinking to others.

Inquiry				
Move		**Test** **1, 2**	**Instruct** **3, 4**	**Dialogue** **5, 6**
Prompting for / Considering Alternatives		There are few, if any, opportunities for students to consider and evaluate alternative points of view.	The teacher makes an effort to invite multiple interpretations. However, s/he may miss opportunities to probe for alternative perspectives, especially when students' answers are consistent with the predetermined plan for the lesson. There are clear "content boundaries" for the discussion. The teacher may constrain and refocus the discussion in a predetermined direction.	The teacher does not miss opportunities to prompt students to take into account opposing views and probe for missing perspectives overlooked by the group. Multiple viewpoints are seriously considered through a disciplined process of collective inquiry. • *If someone disagreed with you, what could they say?* • *Does anyone disagree?* • *Are there other ways of looking at this?*
		Students do not bring up and discuss alternative viewpoints.	Students occasionally, but not consistently, bring up alternative viewpoints.	Students consider alternative viewpoints and challenge each other's reasoning by offering and responding to objections. • *I disagree with Jeff because* • *But, Ashley, who says you are an adult when you are 18? Why can't you be an adult when you are 12?*

Clarifying meaning / Summarizing		The teacher may repeat / ask students to repeat simple "right" answers, but s/he does not help students to clarify, restate, or reformulate more complex thoughts. Incorrect, incomplete, or ambiguous student answers often remain unexamined.	The teacher occasionally asks students to clarify their responses and to explain their thinking more completely. The teacher may restate student responses, changing the original meaning to make a specific point that students should not miss. The teacher sometimes selectively adds or subtracts information to student answers in order to fit in with a predetermined purpose for the lesson.	The teacher does not miss opportunities to prompt students to clarify their ideas. S/he closely paraphrases, probes for unstated propositions, and re-voices student responses to check that the group understands the ideas accurately and completely (not to "put words in student's mouths"). S/he also asks students to paraphrase or summarize each other's responses. The teacher often follows up with students to make sure the paraphrasing is accurate (*Is that what you are saying?*) • *So are you then suggesting that …?* • *Can someone re-state the point Jose just made?*
		Students may summarize specific facts in a list-like fashion in order to demonstrate their knowledge of the story, but they do not clarify their own answers, even when the answers are confusing.	Students occasionally paraphrase their own answers and or summarize the key ideas/content of the story or teacher's explanations in order to explore the content further.	Whenever appropriate, students paraphrase each other's arguments and summarize multiple arguments proposed by the group members. These clarifications and summaries help to add clarity, address confusion, track the progress, move the inquiry forward, or reach a conclusion. • *What I think John was saying is that…*

Inquiry				
Move		**Test** **1, 2**	**Instruct** **3, 4**	**Dialogue** **5, 6**
Connecting Ideas		The teacher does not relate student answers to each other.	The teacher sometimes misses opportunities to connect students' ideas. The requests for connections are often overly general. • *Anything else?* • *Anyone has something to add?*	The teacher does not miss opportunities to make visible the connections among student ideas. S/he prompts students to relate their ideas to what's been said by others in specific ways. S/he attributes student ideas and questions to specific speakers. • *Bill, do you want to respond to Kim?* • *Kelly, are you disagreeing with Jon's point? How are you disagreeing?* • *Who else mentioned this distinction?*
		Students simply state their answers in a sequential fashion, often disregarding the input of others.	Students occasionally relate their answers to the contributions of other group members. Often, these connections involve the sharing of similar opinions and personal experiences. Thus, the degree of simple agreement and repetition may be high. • *Colleen's story reminds me of one time when I got lost in the mall.*	Student responses are inter-related and often marked by explicit connection to the ideas of others. The responses are "chained together," as students react to each others' positions and justifications, both expanding and objecting to each other's reasoning. • *As Jack said before…* • *I disagree about one thing in what Brad just said…*

Connecting to/across relevant contexts		The teacher does not make / asks students to make meaningful connections to relevant academic, personal, social, and cultural contexts.	The teacher occasionally makes /asks students to make meaningful connections to relevant academic, personal, social, and cultural contexts. • *What do we know about this right in the Constitution from Social Studies?*	The teacher does not miss opportunities to ask students to relate the discussion relevant academic, personal, social, and cultural contexts. The connections are used to support or challenge the arguments considered by the group. • *Would this be the same as keeping an animal as a pet?* • *But how is this different from refusing immigrants to vote?*
		Students do not make meaningful connections to relevant academic, personal, social, and cultural contexts.	Students occasionally make meaningful connections to relevant academic, personal social, and cultural contexts. • *Here, it says that Kelly did not care about winning.*	Whenever appropriate, students relate the discussion to relevant personal, academic, social, and cultural contexts. The connections are used to support or challenge the arguments. • *This reminds me of "Numbers and Stars" that we read, because people were also mistreated there.*

Inquiry				
Move		Test 1, 2	Instruct 3, 4	Dialogue 5, 6
Checking for / Maintaining Accuracy		The teacher may reference the story when testing student knowledge of basic facts. However, the teacher misses opportunities to ask questions about the sources and accuracy of student's claims. • *Let's turn to page 442. What is the name of the character on the picture?*	The teacher asks students to use the story or other sources to justify their claims. *What part of the story makes you say this?*	The teacher does not miss opportunities to question the accuracy of claims, including student's interpretations of what has been said by other group members. These questions extend beyond a specific story. • *Is this what Amanda was saying?* • *Is this good evidence?*
		Students do not reflect on the quality and source of information.	Whenever appropriate, students reference the story or other sources to support their claims. • *In the story, it said…*	Whenever appropriate, students discuss the basis and accuracy of their claims, as well as interpretations of what has been said by other group members. Students go beyond simple references to the story. They correct each other's misrepresentations. • *That's not what he said.* • *The constitution does not say you have the right to privacy.*

Appendix B

Participant Semi-Structured Interview Questions

1. What has been your past professional development experience related to the use of discussion?

2. How do you define discussion?

3. How would you describe the role of discussion in your classroom? What is the pedagogical purpose?

4. How do you discussion to reach curricular goals? To put it in different terms, What literacy practices or cognitive skills are you attempting to develop?
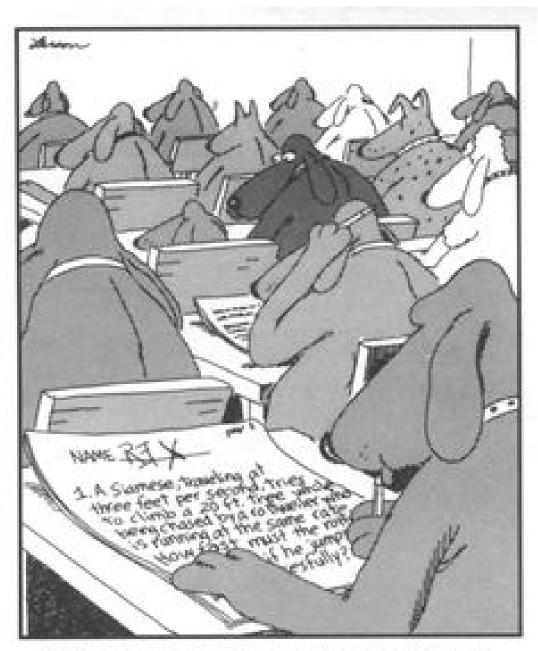
Appendix C

Participant Video Reflection Prompt Questions

1. Describe the learning objective during the videotaped segment.

2. How did you define discussion for the purpose of this lesson?

3. What was the purpose for using discussion in this segment?

4. What literacy practices or cognitive skills were you attempting to develop?

Appendix D

Gary Larsen Cartoon Bill Used in his lesson

Before their admission to any canine university,
dogs must first do well on the CATs.

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