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Complex Learning around a Simple Tool:

Improving Instructional Supervision by Improving Lesson Analysis

By

Pamela Coats VandeKamp

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education

in the

Graduate Division

of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in Charge

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Fall 2015

**Complex Learning around a Simple Tool:
Improving Instructional Supervision by Improving Lesson Analysis**

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By

Pamela Coats VandeKamp

ABSTRACT

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By

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Doctor of Education

University of California, Berkeley

Professor Heinrich Mintrop, Ph.D., Chair

Classroom instruction is a complex interaction that takes place each day between the teacher and students. The teacher has the responsibility to ensure that students are engaged in learning new skills or content, while students are responsible for responding to the teaching in a way that contributes to their own learning. With this in mind, it is important to consider the role of the principal in regards to the effectiveness of the teacher as she or he fulfills this responsibility. Ideally, the principal is the person designated to visit classrooms, observe instruction and develop an analysis to be used by teachers to make necessary improvements.

Nonetheless, in many schools, the principal is not able to adequately provide teachers with effective feedback about classroom instruction. This can be attributed to multiple factors regarding the many roles of the principal as manager, facilitator, district representative and parent liaison. One of the most common factors in this dilemma is that principals do not always have the requisite skill or the experience needed to analyze a sequence of teaching for quality instruction. Only when principals have the knowledge to conduct an in depth analysis of the teaching that occurs in the classroom and provide an analysis of what they have observed are they able to create effective feedback for teachers.

Above all, feedback begins with a clear vision about what instruction should look like in the classroom, observations that describe the current practices that occur during teaching, and a mechanism to move from the current to the desired practices. Clearly, this failure to analyze high quality instruction contributes to insufficient student achievement and engagement in classrooms around the country.

This Design Development Study addresses the lack of skill among principals to analyze classroom instruction. Through a series of carefully designed professional development opportunities, a cohort of five elementary principals participated in reading professional literature, observed sequences of quality instruction, and engaged in facilitated discussions to deepen their understanding of the behaviors of teaching and learning. They also were introduced to a structured framework for elements of instruction that contributed to the development of a common language for use in their discussions about high quality instruction.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my husband, Willem, who is my soulmate and best friend. He inspires me every day to believe in myself and to work hard to accomplish great things. It is also dedicated to my three daughters, Dora, Saskia and Ella who have encouraged me to take on this challenge, who have listened to all the stories along the way and who are as unfailingly supportive of the work that I do, as I am impressed with all they have accomplished and achieved. And lastly to my parents, who could never have imagined the work I do and the things that I have learned, but who would be proud of me nonetheless.

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CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM OF PRACTICE AND THE PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE BASE

Introduction

Teachers make a difference. Their daily work with students has a significant impact on student achievement (Cantrell, S., and Kane, 2013; Rivkin, S., Hanushek, E., Kain, 2005; Wright, Horn, and Sanders, 1997). The new Common Core standards require students to interact with ideas in more complex ways, which depend more than ever on teachers' ability to expertly guide and support students (Bland, J., Sherer, D., Guha, R., Woodworth, K., Shields, P., Tiffany-Morales, J., and Campbell, 2011). This development may be most critical in schools serving disproportionately high numbers of students from low-income and historically underserved racial backgrounds because these schools often have the highest numbers of teachers who are new to the profession, the highest number of teachers who are inexperienced and/or non-credentialed, and the highest rates of teacher turnover. This does not imply that the teachers in these schools are of lower quality than those in other schools (Bland, et al., 2011; Darling-Hammond and Wei, 2009; Ingersoll, 2003; Rivkin, et al., 2005), rather that, as new teachers, they are in need of continued professional development and support to improve their practice. Teachers improve their practice in a number of ways, including receiving targeted, meaningful and actionable feedback from others. One of the ways that school administrators can impact teacher quality is with the use of formal and informal observation feedback to support teachers in developing the teaching strategies and reflective skills necessary for high quality instruction (Blase, J. and Blase, 1998).

Depending on their skill, experience and school resources, administrators can devote varying amounts of time and energy to the work of formal teacher evaluations (Darling-Hammond, Wise, and Pease, 1983). These disparities have created a shallow view of teacher evaluation systems in public education and the impression that the systems have not adequately measured teacher merits or contributed to teacher quality (Marzano, 2012). When administrators do not have a systematic and standardized set of protocols and tools for observation and feedback delivery, the impact of the evaluation is limited, especially when the goal is to document efforts to impact teachers in their professional practice (Pianta, 2012). That is to say, teachers receive different levels and types of feedback and assistance when protocols are not standardized and validated across a district depending on the school or on the person conducting the observation (Pianta, 2012). Such approaches are unlikely to build capacity in a school or district, or result in system-level improvements over time. "The advantage of using tools which are standardized, reliable, and validated against student outcomes is that educators, mentors, and administrators can make comparisons on an even playing field. When noting strengths and challenges across classrooms, observers can see and note behaviors directly related to student growth and development. The use of these tools in no way interferes with giving personalized feedback to teachers (Pianta, 2012, pg. 14)."

Statement of the Problem of Practice and Design Challenge

The problem of practice selected for this design development study is that the elementary principals in Rancho Unified School District need to develop instructional leadership skills connected to understanding and identifying qualities of good instruction in order to deliver effective feedback in conferences with teachers. These actions include setting clear expectations, defining and discussing a process for improving student learning and achievement,

and a clear focus on teaching and learning (Ovando and Ramirez, 2007). There are multiple reasons for this problem, but for this design I will focus on the current practice of principals giving teachers evaluation ratings based on style or trait criteria which lead to vague descriptions of teaching and cursory conversations with teachers about their instruction. When principals are not able to understand and identify qualities of good instruction in order to deliver effective feedback, they are not able to provide the instructional leadership that will support teachers to refine their instructional practice so that they can engage students in learning. Principals are invested with the responsibility of supervising teachers' work and monitoring the implementation of curricula and instructional strategies (Bland, et al., 2011). An important component of this is for principals to identify and describe the qualities of good teaching.

Design Challenge

One problematic behavior, according to my preliminary research, is that many of the elementary principals in Rancho Unified School District give teachers evaluation ratings based on style or trait criteria which lead to vague descriptions of teaching and cursory conversations with teachers about their instruction. Several principals rely on their own teaching experience to give examples of instructional quality while others articulate vague expectations of quiet classrooms and professional dress to evaluate teachers. Recently, the Directors of Elementary and Secondary Education have made clear the expectation that principals spend increased amounts of time observing in classrooms in order to provide feedback to teachers about instruction.

Competent instructional leaders supervise teachers effectively when they are able to analyze instruction and student learning based on a deep understanding of quality lesson delivery that encompasses elements within the lesson phases. These phases are related to opening, modeling, guided practice, checking for understanding, and feedback. Research suggests that principals are in a key position to influence the teaching and learning process and feedback for teachers is an important component of that process (Ovando, 2006). Instructional quality can be increased when principals focus on conditions that promote student learning. Thus, while principals in Rancho currently employ a common observation and evaluation tool, they fail to effectively engage in the exact part of the process that holds the most promise to improve instructional quality – the understanding of qualities of good instruction that informs the analysis of and individualized discussion around instruction through effective feedback.

Consulting the Professional Knowledge Base

In my efforts to address the knowledge base specific to principal instructional leadership, I consulted topics that addressed aspects of feedback, approaches to effective feedback, definitions of feedback and vision, and features of professional learning.

Aspects of Feedback: From Prevailing to Desired Practices

In the following section, I will describe the existing principal practices identified in the literature, for providing feedback to teachers through the evaluation process. Based on this review, I conclude that teachers do not typically receive effective feedback, nor do they gain sufficient information from the process to make improvements in their instruction. I subsequently turn my focus to the elements of more desirable feedback practices. This discussion includes a fuller description of a range of practices that result in effective feedback for teachers and a discussion of practices that offer support to teachers as they make improvements in their instruction. I conclude that when these desired practices are used with teachers to

identify the gap between the current instructional methods and instructional methods which are informed by and aligned with a shared understanding of expectations and goals for effective teaching and learning, more effective instruction may result.

Prevailing Approaches to Feedback and Evaluations

Evaluation processes are frequently bureaucratic and formulaic, inhibiting effective feedback (Toch, Thomas, and Rothman, 2008). Principals' current practice is typified by principals making few classroom visits, then using a checklist to complete the required documentation, and holding a brief conference so that the teacher can review and sign their evaluation (Toch, Thomas, and Rothman, 2008). Often, the checklist neither focuses directly on teacher quality, nor does it look for specific instructional practices (Toch, Thomas, and Rothman, 2008). In their 2011 annual study of the teaching profession in California, the Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning (Bland, et. al., 2011) examined the principal workforce and approaches to evaluation in depth. Their study included surveys and interviews of 463 California principals about activities and strategies that were used in the teacher evaluation process and their level of knowledge and expertise that they applied when conducting evaluations. While this study is limited both by its focus on impact at a policy, rather than 'on the ground' at the teacher level, and by its reliance on teacher and principal self-reporting, it is nevertheless useful for making connections between the current use of evaluation instruments and the delivery of effective feedback for the purpose of improving instruction. Bland (2011) found that the current evaluation instruments provided little chance of in-depth feedback for teachers. Moreover, this was attributed to the ratings system used in many districts of meets/does not meet standards. When there are only two ratings to choose from, principals are limited in the ways that they can provide specific feedback directed at areas for improvement. While, when teachers are identified as 'not meeting standards,' there are additional opportunities embedded in the contract that mandate additional support and observation, these are generally not available within the formal bargaining agreement for teachers 'meeting standards.' Nonetheless, Bland (2011) found that principals identify the extensive due process requirements for evaluation that lead to teacher termination as lengthy and cumbersome and a serious barrier to improving teacher quality. They also cited the role of seniority as a barrier to staffing decisions. Limited resources, including time, also were seen as barriers to improving teacher quality (Bland, 2011).

Equally important, when administrators do not have a systematic and standardized set of protocols and tools for observation and feedback delivery, the impact of the evaluation is limited, especially when the goal is to document efforts to impact teachers in their professional practice (Pianta, 2012). Currently, teacher evaluation systems do not address the need for teacher development (Marzano, 2012; Toch, Thomas, and Rothman, 2008). According to Wise et al., (2012), "evaluation is both a difficult and inherently uncomfortable activity. It needs explicit mechanisms to make it important, that is, to ensure that it receives high priority. Without such mechanisms, evaluators tend to put it aside for more immediate and perhaps less onerous, demands on their time (pg. 104)."

From the standpoint of a practitioner, Platt, Tripp, Ogden, and Fraser, (2000) identify a number of unpromising practices that foster mediocre teacher performance. In reference to evaluation practices, they discuss the use of generalities to describe teachers' instructional practices. In this way, principals use vague and ambiguous language to combine both praise and unclear suggestions for improvements in the same sentence. This can lead to mixed messages for the teachers. Consequently, teachers continue to use unpromising instructional strategies and

students do not receive necessary opportunities for learning. In addition, when principals utilize imprecise and ambiguous language about teachers' work, these comments can be employed as templates for general use. These generalities can be applied to multiple documents for various teachers. This can happen when evaluators are working within limited time frames to observe and evaluate a large number of teachers. When principals are given the task of evaluation, as one of many urgent duties, it is possible that the deadline becomes the priority at the expense of the quality of substantive data necessary to accurately document mediocre performance (Platt, A. et al., 2000).

Another practice that fosters mediocrity can be uncovered when principals use ambiguous language or inflated performance ratings in their evaluations. As Platt, et al. describe it, "evaluators who want to be kind or who are afraid of 'destroying the self-esteem' of someone, may choose to couch their observations and recommendations for change in tentative or ambiguous language (pg. 25, 2001)." With this approach they make it difficult to identify the specific procedures that would need to be improved to meet the standard of practice. This type of feedback does not lead teachers to identify how to make changes and improvements to their teaching. If the desired practice is described using vague or poorly written comments, mediocre teaching is justified to the teacher (Platt, A. et al., 2000).

In sum, typical approaches to evaluation are formulaic, and neither do they focus on specific aspects of instruction, nor do they lead to actionable directions for improvement. The problem is exacerbated by a lack of clarity regarding what constitutes effective instruction, what evidence should be captured, and how much time should be dedicated to the enterprise. In the subsequent sub-section, I turn my attention to the literature on more promising approaches to providing teachers with useful feedback.

Approaches to Effective Feedback as a Means of Improving Instruction

In contrast to the bureaucratic and formulaic ways that currently prevail in principals' typical approaches to evaluation which fail to produce opportunities for effective feedback, I begin this sub-section by outlining the defining features of effective feedback, including: the need for a clear vision of instruction, the ability to gather evidence of current instruction, and approaches to providing meaningful direction on how to improve. Building on this framework, the concluding section of this discussion explores effective instructional conferencing as a means for delivering feedback, which consists of two parts: useful methods for understanding current and desired practice and productive strategies for teacher improvement.

Feedback should be connected to professional learning opportunities and provide collaboration and coaching (Blase, J. and Blase, 1998). It is not enough to guide the teacher to recognize areas of improvement or changes in instructional practice. In order to support the teacher to make necessary changes, targeted, ongoing professional development with continued opportunities for dialogue must be available and encouraged (Blase, J. and Blase, 1998). Elements of professional development that promote best practices in teaching include collaboration, coaching, action research, reflection, and resources for implementation (Blase, J. and Blase, J. 1998) If these elements are not present or if professional development is not made available, it is difficult for teachers to make or sustain changes in instructional practices. Targeted professional development provided to teachers can have a powerful impact on student achievement gains (Pianta, 2011).

Defining Feedback

In order to understand the principal's role in providing effective feedback, I must first define the elements that are included in delivering effective feedback between the actors involved in the exchange. Black and Wiliam, (1998) reviewed research to find evidence of effective feedback in the context of teachers and students. They identified four elements of feedback which can be applied in a general sense to the behavioral sciences to compose the feedback system. Here, I apply that model to the context of principal-teacher feedback processes: First, there needs to be information on the expected level of the teachers' performance. Next, there needs to be information on the actual performance of the teacher being observed and evaluated (a measurable attribute). When those two levels have been established, there needs to be a mechanism or system for comparing the two levels and producing information about the disparity between the two levels of performance. Finally, there has to be a mechanism to make changes in practice that will narrow the gap between actual and desired performance. In order for a feedback loop to be effective, the information that is gathered about the gap must be used to make changes to performance. If no changes are made, there is no feedback loop. In order to identify the gap between the present capacity and desired outcome, teachers need to develop their competence to identify and evaluate the discrepancy. While Black and Wiliam's (1998) review was focused on teachers and students, they drew broadly from the behavioral sciences, and I argue that their conceptualization of the elements of feedback is usefully applied to feedback as a component of the observation and evaluation process that principals use with teachers. Below, I will discuss the definition of a clear vision about quality instruction and the skills and strategies that contribute to student learning.

Defining a Clear Vision

Related to the notion that feedback requires information about the expected level of performance, a clear picture of the practices and indicators of student learning that represent a shared vision of educational excellence is necessary to establish the components of excellent teaching as identified in a report by the Education and California Commission on Teacher Credentials (Task Force on Educator Excellence, 2012). In particular, a significant body of literature, combining empirical research and practitioner oriented practices, indicates that institutions need to begin by defining the educational goals and conception of teaching, and then choosing a protocol that will measure progress toward meeting those goals (Little, 2006; Ovando, 2006; Pianta, 2011; Wise et al., 2012). Accordingly, the goals should be articulated as explicit standards for performance that are divided into specific key skills needed for effective instruction (Toch, Thomas, and Rothman, 2008). In addition, these should be clearly communicated to teachers at the beginning of the process to provide realistic objectives for professional development and to hold teachers accountable for making progress toward meeting those goals (Bloom, 2005). Consequently, developing a research based vision for student achievement and teacher growth was found to be an essential factor in high-performing schools of all grade levels, K-12 (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, and Wahlstrom, 2004; Seashore Louis, K., Leithwood, K., Wahlstrom, K., Anderson, 2010).

Beyond defining the goals, administrators should have a clear picture of the differences in performance levels as identified by a rubric describing the teacher's ability to engage students in learning (Sartain, L, 2011; Strong, Gargani, and Hacifazlioglu, 2011; Toch, Thomas, and Rothman, 2008). For example, the culminating findings of the Measuring Effective Teaching study (Cantrell, S., and Kane, 2013), commissioned by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation,

found that effective teaching can, in fact, be measured. The researchers start from the assumption that growth on standardized test scores are the most significant and reliable measures of student achievement. The study used a weighted formula, known as a Value Added Model, to identify students most likely to make gains in standardized student achievement tests and to measure the impact of other variables, such as teacher effectiveness, by the degree that they increased or diminished achievement gains relative to the predictive model. According to the report, the most effective determinant of student achievement using this method was prior student achievement. Nevertheless, there were other significant indicators including teacher effectiveness as determined by classroom observations and student perception surveys. In order to be predictive, classroom observations needed to be conducted more than once by multiple observers. Feedback in the context of this report is defined differently than I have defined it in this paper, and is defined as a combination of three components: teacher impact on student test score gains relative to predicted performance, student perception survey results, and classroom observations based on pre-defined instructional frameworks. One of the limitations of this study, as described in the study itself, was the inability to sufficiently control for student demographics, including race and level of income, as well as the school to which students were assigned. In addition, the report includes no analyses of teachers' performance on different student perception domains, making it difficult to determine specific weaknesses in teachers' practices based on the student surveys (Rothstein, Welner, Mathis, and Gunn, 2011). Most importantly, the study creates a causal relationship between teacher effectiveness and standardized test scores, but the specific Value Added Model applied in the study is not intended to be used to identify differences in effectiveness between teachers assigned to low and high performing classes of students (Rothstein, et al., 2011). Nevertheless, by linking instructional frameworks to independent measures of student learning, the study provides a useful framework to gather information about teacher practices that can contribute to improvement in both teachers' practice and student learning. Despite its limitations, the study provides compelling evidence of the efficacy of strong frameworks for effective teaching and their relationship to student learning.

An earlier report based on the same data set, entitled Feedback for Better Teaching Project, (2010) identified five examples of observation protocols that were used to determine what instruction that fosters student achievement looks like in practice. In particular, one protocol included in the 2010 study was the Framework for Teaching created by Charlotte Danielson in 1996. Teacher practices that aligned with this framework were found to correlate with increased student gains based on the Value Added Model. The Framework consists of four specific domains and within each domain there are specific skills that are relevant to proficient teaching. The framework has recently been updated (2013) to address the coming of the Common Core Standards (although the revised version was not the version used in the Measuring Effective Teaching study and has not yet been validated empirically). Another protocol from the 2010 MET study is the Classroom Assessment Scoring System developed by Robert Pianta (2011). It describes three domains that focus on teacher and child interactions. These domains are divided into 11 dimensions and a fourth domain was added that observes student engagement. Teacher practices aligned with this model were similarly found to be correlated with student achievement gains. These models can be used to provide clear definitions of proficiency in teaching practice. The results of the report are limited by the standard issues of correlation versus causality. Further, the links between test scores and teacher effectiveness are based on a simplified analysis and assume that student learning is measured well by a given test, is influenced by the teacher alone, and is independent from the growth of classmates and other

aspects of the classroom context (Darling-Hammond, L., Amrein-Beardsley, A., Haertel, E. and Rothstein, 2012). Since the study itself determined that prior student growth was the strongest indicator of future student growth, the question remains if an individual teacher's contribution (or "value added") to students learning gains can be isolated from other "noise," such as prior teacher and cohort effects. Nevertheless, the fact that the study was able to establish a correlation between certain instructional frameworks and student achievement gains is significant.

Taken together, I conclude that the literature discussed here points to the importance of defining the particular aspects of effective instruction so that as principals and teachers are engaged in a cycle of effective feedback there is clarity around the specific goals and practices that are being observed. Although there are complexities to be considered in interpreting these findings, the report provides evidence that the ability to deliver instruction consistent with certain instructional frameworks may be meaningfully related to improved student learning. These findings support the argument defining a clear vision of instruction, necessary for defining the expected level of performance as conceptualized in this paper, as an important aspect of creating a meaningful feedback loop around teaching.

Informing Current Performance

The feedback model I proposed also requires clear information about a teacher's current performance. In order to accomplish this, it is necessary for principals to use systematic observation protocols to gather evidence of teaching practice around a number of different domains. In addition, these protocols should be based on professional standards and grounded in research if they are to meaningfully examine teaching (Darling-Hammond and Wei, 2009). Furthermore, they should provide a low inference source of data on current teacher practice (Ovando, 2006; Rosenshine, 1970). The notion of low inference evidence as a tool for effective evaluation of instruction dates back to at least the late 1960s, and refers to evidence of instructional behaviors that are specific, denotable, and relatively objective (Rosenshine, 1970). In addition, both researchers and practitioners recognize that principals should have a solid foundation of knowledge about observation formats, scripting and appropriate terminology (Ovando, 2006; Bland, J., et al., 2011; Blase, J. and Blase, 1998; Darling-Hammond et al., 1983; Glickman, Gordon, Ross-Gordon, 2005; Platt, A. et al., 2000). Consequently, they need to be familiar with quantitative and qualitative observation tools in order to select the one that is most appropriate for the purpose of their observation (Ovando, 2006; Glickman, et al., 2009; Sullivan and Glanz, 2005). For example, Glickman (2005), in his textbook designed to provide guidance to principals, discusses a variety of tools that are consistent with this concept and that can be used to collect both quantitative and qualitative information about classrooms. These include:

- frequency instruments, used to measure how often certain behaviors are observed, for example, types of questions asked
- performance indicator instruments, used to measure if certain actions are observed, for example the components of direct instruction
- visual diagramming, used to document what is happening in the classroom, for example the pattern of verbal interactions in the classroom
- verbatim, used to create a record or script of verbal interactions in the classroom and can be selective as to the types of interactions that are recorded

This discussion of the effective use of protocols for gathering lower inference evidence of teaching informs a critical component of the feedback loop: defining current practice. These

methods can provide technical and relatively non-judgmental information about a teacher's current level of performance, which is a necessary precursor to closing the gap between current performance and desired performance.

Narrowing the Gap

As described in my proposed feedback model, based on Black and Wiliam's conception of feedback (1998), once the evaluator has gathered both quantitative and qualitative data, the next step is to interpret the evidence and to develop a process for improvement. This occurs in the context of both formative and summative assessment. In addition to the evidence discussed above, respected practitioners have claimed that the standards and rubrics defining effective instruction, as previously discussed, must guide the content of the feedback (Platt, A., et al., 2000; Toch, Thomas, and Rothman, 2008). They assert that written feedback can be effective when it consist of claims that identify broad categories of practice, low inference evidence to support the claims being made, interpretation of the effects of the practice and judgments about the strengths and problems associated with the practice (Platt, A., et al., 2000). Furthermore, it should provide a balance of attention to examples of positive practices that meet the criteria of the rubric and identification of constructive challenges that require additional reflection and adjustment of practices (Pianta, 2011). In this way, specific examples of behaviors that occur multiple times also give a more balanced overview of instructional practice (Pianta, 2012; Platt, A., et al., 2000). Specifically, in both written and face to face communication, the evaluator deploys particular conferencing techniques, such as mutually establishing that the collected low inference evidence is valid (Lipton and Wellman, 2003), paraphrasing, and summarizing the evidence from the observation (Blase, J. and Blase, 1998), which will be discussed in more detail below. Nonetheless, the interpretation of the meaning of the data is at the core of the observer training (Danielson, 2013b). Most importantly, it should be used to identify teachers' areas of strength and professional learning goals (Darling-Hammond, 2012).

As a result, teachers receive feedback based on concrete evidence about their practices that they can apply to their daily instruction (Bloom, 2005; Wise, Darling-Hammond, McLaughlin, and Bernstein, 1985). As an illustration, I refer to Platt and colleagues (2000) who have developed a framework of questions for analyzing the data collected during observations. These questions are founded on essential beliefs or common goals as described above. In addition, they focus on areas of classroom management, instructional strategies, motivation of students to learn, curriculum planning, and non-teaching areas of performance. They stress the value of objective analysis, using specific information, they suggest that the report connect current observation to previous reports, and they advise that the report is written with balance between claims, evidence, interpretation and judgments. They also recommend that the evaluator be fair, comprehensive, and refer to categories or standards of performance (2000). Hence, this framework would be useful in interpreting the data from the observation and to prepare for the post conference.

Together, the notions of defining effective instruction at the desired level, collecting evidence of existing performance, and engaging the teacher around understanding and taking action on the gap collectively define principal and teacher feedback, based on Black and Wiliam's (1998) framework.

Fostering Improvement in Principals' Feedback Practices

In order to increase the efficacy of principal feedback to teachers during the evaluation cycle, principals will need to make changes to the way they currently deliver feedback to teachers. It is crucial to define the essential features of professional development that must exist in order to facilitate this change. There is a dearth of research dedicated to the specific professional development of principals outside of principal preparation and induction programs. As a result, it has been necessary to review the research on professional development in educational settings more generally, which is most often related to teachers. Based on my analysis of this literature, many of the same principles of effective professional development for teachers can be applied to professional development for principals and district leaders. This assertion is supported by the literature on learning more generally, especially the literature on learning activities that promote transfer (Council, 2000; Greeno and Resnick, Collins, 1996), and by my evaluation of the components of teacher professional learning and application of those concepts to principal learning, partially through this lens.

Typically, professional development activities in education settings occur in the form of teachers attending a one-day workshop and then returning to their school building to implement the practices they have learned within the isolation of their classroom (Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, and Yoon, 2001). As a result, teachers experience these activities as superficial and disconnected from their own interests or problems of practice (Little, 2006). This indicates that these workshops have not been generally effective in developing the kind of reform that is needed to meet the goals of increasing student achievement (Garet et al., 2001).

As an alternative to the more traditional form of workshops, teachers should have opportunities for study groups, collaboration, committees, and mentoring, giving a broader definition to the types of activities in which educators can participate (Bland, J., et al., 2011; Bloom, 2005; Little, 2006). Generally speaking, this broader definition can create both formal and informal opportunities for participation within a school or department for teachers and leaders within or outside of the regular work day (Garet et al., 2001). In addition, these opportunities can include using newer types of information technology, working in small groups, videotaping, role-playing, or case studies (Peterson, 2002) to further enhance learning transfer. While the reform approaches to professional development are promising (Desimone, Porter, Garet, Yoon, and Birman, 2002; Youngs and King, 2002; Garet, et al., 2001; Peterson, 2002), they each come with their own complications. For instance, effective coaching requires capacity, time, and expertise (Bloom, 2005) for many of the same reasons that have been outlined in this paper, and as such, it cannot be implemented without creating the conditions for success. Moreover, exercises in videotaping and role-playing require relational trust between the participants (Bryk and Schneider, 2013; Hallam, and Hausman, 2009). Nevertheless, when educators engage in this type of professional development, they can contribute to increasing the capacity of the school by recognizing and relying on the knowledge, skills and talents of members of the professional community (Newmann, King, and Youngs, 2000). In particular, the professional development program should engage the participant in a deeper level of analysis that includes a strong element of reflection (Peterson, 2002). This is consistent with adult learning theory more generally, which suggests that the most successful adult learners are able to elaborate on their understanding and develop their own explanations and applications (Greeno, Resnick, and Collins, 1996). Lastly, participants should be able to transfer the learning to their own context. For transfer of knowledge to a new situation to be possible, there must be some

limits and/or allowances that are consistent under the transformations that alter the learning state into the transfer state. For transfer to occur, the learner must become attuned to those invariants in her or his initial learning (Greeno and Resnick, Collins, 1996).

Based on this expanded concept of professional learning, below I discuss features of professional development initiatives that are most promising for changing principal practice.

Necessary Elements for Professional Development Design

Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, and Yoon (2001) conducted a national probability sample of 1,027 mathematics and science teachers to provide an empirical comparison of effects of different characteristics of professional development on teachers' learning. They examined the relationship between features of professional development and self-reported changes in teachers' knowledge, skills and instructional practices. They concluded that a relationship exists between structural and core features of professional development and enhanced knowledge and skill, and change in teaching practice (Garet et al., 2001). They identify the following features of robust professional development designs:

Structural features

1. Responsive learning activity
2. Sustained duration of activity
3. Collective participation

Core features

1. Focus on content
2. Promotion of active learning
3. Fostering of coherence

This conceptualization of effective professional development provides a useful framework for examining professional learning more generally.

Structural features

Drawing on Garet and his colleagues' research (2001), I will delineate three structural features of effective professional development: the responsive learning activity, sustained duration, and collective participation.

To begin with, Garet et al. (2001) identify responsive learning activities as one of the structural features of professional development. They have made a distinction between two models of professional development. The first conforms to a traditional model of the 'workshop' occurring outside of the classroom according to a predetermined schedule lasting one or more consecutive days and led by other knowledgeable experts with no opportunities for practice or feedback. The second is referred to as a 'reform' model and focuses on activities such as study groups and mentoring or coaching (Garet et al., 2001). Darling-Hammond (as cited in Garet et al., 2001) argues that the 'reform' model may be more responsive to the needs and goals of the teacher. This distinction can change the concept of duration for professional development. The variety of opportunities to ask questions, solve problems and discover new ideas will continue to engage the learning community in a sustained fashion. Consequently, these activities might include study groups that address specific problems of practice or develop deeper understanding around a certain topic. In addition, they might include videotaping as a way to observe in 'real

time' (Little, 2006). The efficacy of learning activities of this type is supported by learning theory more generally, bolstering my argument that they are relevant to principals as well as teachers. Most compelling is the claim that guided learning activities and learning from individual experiences, such as role playing and problem solving, can play important roles in the functional reorganization of the brain (National Research Council, 2000) in order to sustain deeper learning and application.

Duration is another important structural feature of professional development. When professional development occurs over a longer period of time, participants can engage in deeper, more meaningful discussions of the content and application of the instruction. In addition, they can practice the concepts they have learned and receive feedback about their application. In this way, the number of days and the period in which they occur can both have an impact on the building of capacity and influence positive outcomes for active learning (Garet et al., 2001). After all, when professional development encompasses a longer span of time, it is more likely that it will include learning activities that support making connections between existing practices and new knowledge. On the whole, professional development that is sufficiently concentrated and sustained can afford an opportunity for in depth learning and professional exchange (Little, 2006). This can enhance collaboration between participants in order to implement more reform oriented activities (Penuel, Fishman, Yamaguchi, and Gallagher, 2007).

Collective participation is the final important structural feature for effective professional development (Desimone et al., 2002; Garet et al., 2001). When teachers participate in a traditional professional development model, they often are working in isolation attending single workshops without the opportunity to practice and share experiences with colleagues. Hence, collective participation functions with the 'reform' model and focuses on activities which include ongoing opportunities for interaction with colleagues. For one thing, it can include teachers from the same grade, department or school, or extend across schools to common goals within a district. Correspondingly, in the case of instructional leaders, it might include principals from elementary, middle or high school, or within departments with a common focus. As a result, there are several positive aspects to coordinating professional development for groups of individuals from a school or district. Notably, Little (2006) identifies peer observation as another tool that can provide opportunities to exchange ideas and dialogue about specific problems of practice. Generally speaking, discussion and learning about common aspects of the work that occurs within a school or district create opportunities for collective conversations about the practical application of the content that teachers have learned. Even more significant is the opportunity to build and participate in a shared culture of norms, agreements and expectations for instructional practices and outcomes that can exist within a school or district. Altogether, this creates the setting for dynamic conversations that can increase understanding about core elements of instructional practices and expectations. These conversations can lead to individual and collective changes that build overall school capacity and create expectations of successful student achievement (Garet et al., 2001). Most importantly, some learning theorists argue educational practices that have the goal of developing participation in social interactions of inquiry and discourse can be organized to provide a community that promotes the engagement of learners in those practices (Greeno and Resnick, L., Collins, 1996). This broader claim about learning through participation in social interactions supports the argument that principals need to be collectively engaged in a similar fashion to what has been identified in the teacher learning literature.

To extend the concept of collective participation, the literature indicates that professional development should be conducted within a strong professional community with shared goals, meaningful collaboration, established methods of inquiry and opportunities for members to influence the parameters of the work they are doing (Youngs and King, 2002; Newmann et al., 2000). This creates the opportunity for colleagues to build instructional quality and, through the experience of shared goals, values and commitment to outcomes, develop a shared sense of relational trust as a professional learning community in order to foster teacher learning and professional development (Borko, 2004; Little, 2006; Penuel et al., 2007). Finally, creating links between the professional community of learners and ongoing, sustained opportunities for professional development strengthens the establishment of a workplace in which there are supportive structures for professional growth and a culture in which professional learning is valued and enhanced (National Research Council, 2000; Little, 2006).

Core features

In addition to these structural features, Garet et al. (2001) further identify three core features that contribute to successful professional development: focus on content, promotion of active learning, and fostering of coherence. I will discuss each of these concepts in turn below.

When professional development focuses on content, it is necessary to include the qualities of effective instruction, as well as an understanding of how the learning occurs, with an emphasis on subject area, changes in practice, and goals for learning (Desimone et al., 2002; Garet et al., 2001). Knowledge and skills must be related to specific problems of practice that are aligned to school and district goals and expectations (Peterson, 2002). An explicit focus on specific contexts supports the development of significant knowledge. In other words, and drawing on the literature on learning more generally, when learners are engaged in problem solving activities with specific applications to practice, long term learning can result (National Research Council, 2000; Garet et al., 2001).

In addition, active learning is a core feature that contributes to valuable opportunities for professional development (Garet et al., 2001). This requires a broader understanding of the definition of professional development. Within the context of active learning, participants might be able to observe experts in their field, create short and long term plans for new curriculum or methods of instruction, review student work, or facilitate conversations about instruction (Desimone et al., 2002; Garet et al., 2001). For example, observations can be in person or videotaped, individually or in a group, by peers, mentors or coaches with the purpose of engaging in meaningful discussions about the content, teaching moves, and student learning during the time observed. Importantly, active learning can also take place when teachers meet together to plan using concepts introduced during professional development activities, connecting to the collective participation concept outlined above (Garet et al., 2001). This gives teachers the opportunity to review and gain deeper understanding of learning within a collective context of colleagues sharing the same experience in regards to implementation of curriculum and instructional strategies (Garet et al., 2001). Consequently, when teachers gather to review student work, they participate in another opportunity for professional development by examining responses to problems within the content area. This might provide an opportunity to create instruction at an appropriate level and problem solve with students about learning content (Garet et al., 2001). As a result, they gain a deeper understanding of how learning is developed with a focus on higher order thinking and instructional methods and this method can be more receptive to teachers' individual goals (Desimone et al., 2002). Above all, outstanding teachers have a

deep understanding of the content and structure and a thorough grasp of the types of activities that help learners understand a specific subject matter in order to be able to ask critical questions to support higher order thinking (National Research Council, 2000).

Finally, the core feature of coherence ensures that activities are connected to the broader goals and outcomes of the community (Garet et al., 2001). In order to give the professional development experience meaning and a connection to a larger experience of learning within the professional community, activities must connect to the participant's existing knowledge and abilities in regards to the content of the professional development opportunity. It should also be connected to other activities that they participate in to create coherence across the content area, going deeper into the meaning and goals of the larger aspects of instruction. With that in mind, activities must align with standards and assessments and the foundations of a common framework should have connections to the state standards and assessments (Peterson, 2002).

The literature suggests that when there is a coherent set of goals, there is an opportunity for teachers to improve and refine their instructional strategies. It is possible that coherence is also reflective when there is sufficient communication among the participants engaged in reform efforts. Generally speaking, when they share their learning in formal and informal ways, educators develop a deeper awareness of goals for learning as reflected in possible changes to their practice which can result in positive changes in instructional practices (Garet et al., 2001). In addition, when the school or district incorporates the core feature of coherence, there is a clear and sustained focus on learning goals across the institution that promotes shared values and outcomes (Newmann et al., 2000; Newmann, Smith, Allensworth, and Bryk, 2001). Peterson (2002) also identified clear cultural elements that contribute to the effectiveness of professional learning such as clear connection to the values and mission of the district context, including their commitment to high expectations and quality instructional opportunities for all students, and creating symbols and ceremonies that sustain a positive culture to increase the level of commitment to shared values and purpose.

To sum up the discussion of effective professional development for principals, I argue that these approaches to principal learning, adopted together, hold promise for supporting the development of more effective feedback practices that can lead to improving the quality of instruction and increase student achievement. I have extrapolated from the teacher professional learning literature to support this assertion, and I have used the scholarly research on learning theory more generally to bolster my argument about the transferability of these concepts to principals. Based on my analysis, I argue that a robust approach to principal learning that avoids the limited utility of traditional methods of professional development is necessary in order to foster a meaningful change in principals' approaches to providing feedback to teachers.

CONCLUSION

This chapter started with the supposition that the quality of instruction teachers provide has a direct impact on student learning and achievement and that effective feedback in both formal and informal settings is one component that can contribute to teachers' ability to maintain and improve the quality of their instructional practices.

I have argued that the scholarly and practitioner literature indicate that within the context of observations and evaluations, principals providing teachers with effective and comprehensive systems of feedback delivery in order to assist teachers in making necessary changes to their instructional practice is a promising approach to supporting instructional improvement. In order

to effectively deliver feedback that is useful for teaching and learning, principals need to participate in professional development that will give them the skills and capacity to identify the particular aspects of instruction that can be developed. When instructional leaders emphasize the value of effective communication, professional growth, and reflective practices for teachers, they create the conditions necessary for school improvement.

I have drawn on empirical research and practitioner recommendations to describe existing practices for principal-teacher feedback and to propose more promising practices. Further, I have outlined a framework for professional learning that suggests promising directions for developing principals' capacity to provide more effective feedback on instruction.

Taken together, I conclude that the literature discussed here points to the importance of defining the particular aspects of effective instruction, so that as principals and teachers are engaged in a cycle of effective feedback, there is clarity around the specific goals and practices being observed. It is necessary for principals to use systematic observation protocols to gather evidence of teaching practice around a number of different domains. Principals need to gather information about the types and uses of collecting data in order to be able to identify classroom practices. This discussion of the effective use of protocols for gathering lower inference evidence teaching is a critical component of the feedback loop.

When teachers have constructive information identifying explicit gaps in their practice, they are better prepared to make the necessary improvements. The principal requires expertise in developing the ability in teachers to reflect on their performance as represented in the observation data. The development of reflective practices for teachers can result in improved teaching performance. The cycle of identifying the goals and a continuum or rubric for performance, gathering evidence of current practice, giving opportunities for reflective feedback and opportunities for improvement needs to be ongoing. In sum, the need for a clear picture of the current practices and a vision of the desired state is critical in identifying the gap that exists between the two.

Principals will need to focus on ways to make improvements in their feedback practices. Typically, professional development activities have occurred in the form of workshops that teachers attend for a day and then return to their school building to implement the practices they have learned within the isolation of their classroom. As an alternative to the more traditional form of workshops, teachers (and leaders) need opportunities for study groups, collaboration, committees, and mentoring, giving a broader definition to the types of activities in which educators can participate. When educators engage in this type of professional development, they can contribute to increasing the capacity of the school by recognizing and relying on the knowledge, skills and talents of members of the professional community. In order to influence change in the way principals provide effective feedback for teachers during the evaluation cycle, principals will need to make changes to the way in which they currently deliver feedback to teachers. Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, and Yoon (2001) refer to important structural and core features that contribute to effective professional development.

Garet et al. (2001) identify the type of activity as one of the structural features of professional development. Duration is another important structural feature of professional development. Collective participation is the final important structural feature for effective professional development. They also identify three core features that contribute to successful professional development: focus on content, promotion of active learning, and fostering of coherence. In addition, active learning is a core feature that contributes to valuable opportunities

for professional development. The core feature of coherence ensures that activities are connected to the broader goals and outcomes of the community.

When principals have made the changes to their practice that are necessary for fostering effective feedback practices with teachers and when they implement these changes rigorously and consistently, the impact on the quality of teaching and learning will be significant.

CHAPTER 2

THEORY OF ACTION

Introduction

Principals are invested with the responsibility of supervising teachers' work and monitoring the quality of instruction (Bland, et al., 2011). In order to do this, principals need to be able to understand the qualities of good teaching and how they lead to student learning. They should be able to guide the teacher in understanding what good teaching looks like in his or her classroom and create instructional plans that will increase student knowledge and achievement. There are various ways in which principals may try to accomplish this. Some principals use the Professional Learning Community structure (Stoll, Bolam, McMahon, Wallace, and Thomas, 2006) to develop communities of practice and coherent understandings of student engagement and the implementation of Common Core Standards. In addition, principals might provide professional development opportunities for teachers to introduce them to new ideas or help them to refine existing practices. While these methods might have some success and may help teachers learn new strategies, they do not allow principals to ascertain whether or not teachers are engaging students in learning through Common Core Standards. Indeed, this is only possible to see by observing teachers in the classroom setting. In addition to allowing principals to see whether Common Core Standards are incorporated into the lesson with the goal of student engagement, observations of classroom practice can also be a vehicle through which principals help teachers build understanding about quality instruction. By identifying concrete ways that teachers can make improvements in the classroom, principal feedback to teachers can lead to changes in teacher performance (Brophy and Good, 1974). However, this approach to instructional improvement depends largely on the ability of the principals to recognize the characteristics of quality instruction, but also to articulate these elements and make concrete suggestions to teachers for improvement during follow-up discussions. Delivery of this kind of feedback to teachers requires that principals and teachers engage in powerful discussions about instruction leading to student engagement.

The problem of practice is that principals in Rancho Unified School District have varied levels of knowledge, experience and skill to deliver effective feedback in conferences with teachers. There are multiple reasons for this problem, but for this design I have focused on their lack of skill needed to demonstrate a depth of knowledge regarding quality instruction that leads to high student engagement and achievement. When principals are not able to give effective feedback to teachers about their lesson, they are not able to sufficiently support teachers to refine and improve their focus on student engagement and achievement.

Design Challenge

Defining the Problematic State

Formal observations are often one of the few opportunities that teachers have to be observed by a colleague. In many cases, teachers work in isolation (Rosenholtz, 1998) and are not able to engage in reflection with other teachers about their own teaching in their classroom. When principals conduct the observation and evaluation cycle, their purpose is to look for good instruction (Blase and Blase, 1998) and then engage teachers in a discussion about what good instruction looks like. In order to do this, they need to be able to identify and articulate the qualities of good teaching and the depth of understanding that leads to student learning. Thus, the discussion should be bounded by a collective vision of what good instruction should look

like. However, evidence suggests that principals, in general, and those in Rancho Unified in particular, were not well-prepared to recognize student engagement within a lesson or to explain it well to teachers.

In Rancho Unified School District, when evaluating teachers, principals use an observation and evaluation tool based on the California Standards for the Teaching Profession. Each observation is supposed to include a pre- and post- conference to allow time for collegial conversation and feedback about the observable behaviors. After the observation, the principal is supposed to complete the documented representation of the observation, using the CSTP, and a summary of the lesson. In practice, the CSTPs are too generic and non-clinical for teachers to continuously improve the quality of their lessons. The problematic behavior in Rancho is that principals have varied levels of knowledge, experience and skill to understand quality instruction and deliver effective feedback to teachers. Thus, while principals used the evaluation and observation tool, they were unable to effectively engage in the exact part of the process that holds the most promise to improve instructional quality – the individualized discussion around instruction. Principals needed to share with teachers their standards of good teaching, using a common analytical language that both teachers and principals understand, and illustrated through an observational framework, that guides observation of lesson sequences with a protocol that drives professional conversations.

Theory of Action

In this section, I will explain the theory of action leading to principals’ being able to provide effective feedback to teachers based on their understanding of quality instruction. I will explain the cause of this problem and describe how practices were expected to change in order to positively impact the process. I will also discuss the intervention that I implemented to support changes to current practices and the feasibility of this design.

Following the professional development, principals would be expected to be able to use their understanding of the qualities of good instruction to engage with teachers in discussions based on principals’ observation of classroom lessons and be able to deliver effective feedback to teachers

Table 1: Theory of Action

Problem	Principals in Rancho Unified School District give teachers evaluation ratings based on style or trait criteria which lead to vague descriptions of teaching and cursory conversations with teachers about their instruction. In addition, the Directors of Elementary and Secondary Education have made clear the expectation that principals spend increased amounts of time observing in classrooms in order to provide feedback to teachers about instruction.
Problem Description	When principals held observation conferences with teachers, they did not focus on describing observable behaviors that identify the gap between the current instructional practices that engage students in learning based on Common Core standards. They did not establish a clear vision of what good instruction should look like based on a shared understanding with teachers of a concrete framework of

	observable behaviors that occur during a lesson in the classroom. At the same time, there was increasing pressure on principals to spend more time in classrooms observing teachers and giving feedback about classroom instruction.
Theory of Change	In order for principals to be able to give teachers effective feedback, they needed to develop an understanding of what the observable behaviors are that constitute quality instruction. They develop this understanding of what good teaching looks like through observations of live lessons, videos, professional conversations and professional texts using an analytical language that both teachers and principals understand, centered on an observational tool that guides observation of lesson sequences and protocols that drive professional conversations. When principals develop this understanding, they guide teachers to identify the gap between the current instructional practices and effective instructional practices to address their students' needs.
Theory of Intervention	When principals participate in professional development that focused on deeper understanding of the qualities of good teaching and observable indicators using a concrete and common framework, they learn how to observe for qualities of good instruction.
Feasibility	It was necessary for the Director of Elementary Education to set aside meeting time within the K-5 Principals Meetings to implement the intervention. Principals need to commit to their participation in the intervention. It was also important for principals to recognize their own assumptions and biases of what is involved when students and teachers engage in the complex process of teaching and learning.
Outcomes	Principals develop a clear understanding of the qualities of good instruction. Principals use their understanding of the qualities of good instruction to observe teachers and articulate their observations of instruction.

Explaining the Problem

The problem that existed is that principals had varied levels of expertise, knowledge and experience in providing effective feedback for teachers. Principals have many responsibilities that are part of their daily work ranging from supervision of students at lunch time, disciplinary matters, parent interactions, and required paperwork and documents. The work of observations and conferencing with teachers can be lost in the fast-paced, daily existence of the principal. In addition, principals had not received sufficient, focused training, either in a pre-service program or in-service professional development to engage in reflection about these processes (Toch, Thomas, and Rothman, 2008) so these conversations were often overlooked or completed quickly to meet the contract minimum requirements. Most importantly, principals did not always have sufficient understanding of the qualities of good instruction. When professional development does occur in some form, as it has in Rancho Unified School District, it is not

sustained over longer periods of time or focused on the deeper intellectual core of teaching or dimensions of learning. In addition, in Rancho, principals did not have sufficient opportunities to observe good teaching and later engage in structured and facilitated discussions about a continuum of development as represented on a rubric related to observable practices in the classroom. The loosely coupled nature of teaching also makes it difficult for principals to directly impact what happens in the classroom (Rowan, 1990). Consequently, principals and teachers were not able to create a clear vision and understanding of the complex process of instruction that is necessary to engage students in learning.

As states and school districts engage in implementation of instructional delivery based on Common Core State Standards, this situation becomes even more problematic. During the years of No Child Left Behind, schools and districts began to fall under sanctions as a result of their failure to meet targets for student achievement. In the era of Common Core State Standards, the expectations for student learning rest on students' ability to become critical thinkers, applying complex principles of learning to multi-step problems while understanding and engaging with challenging academic vocabulary. Especially for students of color and students living in economically disadvantaged areas, the ability to access these more complex ways of learning are critical for their success as college and career ready students. Given the dismal pass rates for the California High School Exit Exam and the Academic Yearly Progress levels for students of color, students with special education needs and students impacted by poverty in Rancho and across the country, the urgency for high quality instruction is critical.

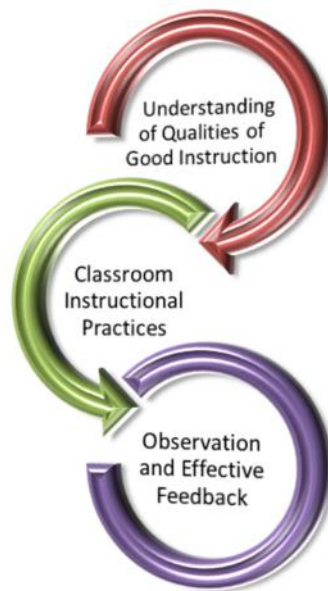
Often post observation and evaluation conferences are short or non-existent and they do not provide the opportunity to engage in deeper, more complex thinking and discussion about student learning in the classroom (Bland et.al., 2011; Pianta, 2012). In Rancho School District, principals gave observation feedback to teachers without the use of a concrete framework that described observable and concrete behaviors of the teacher and the student. They did not observe for student engagement or specific elements of the lesson. As a group of elementary principals, they did not share a technical culture that defined what constitutes good teaching and how the standards can be observed and communicated. While there were varied levels of attitudes about the effectiveness of the formal observation and evaluation process, not all principals saw the delivery of feedback as necessary to improve teacher capacity and student engagement. At the same time, they were overwhelmed in many cases with the daily demands of their work, including student, teacher and parent interactions, district and state compliance tasks and pressures associated with current accountability measures. Principals regularly participated in monthly meetings that were used as an opportunity to build a common understanding of the qualities of good instruction. There was also an environment of respect and trust that continues to exist among the elementary principals in Rancho.

Theory of Change

My theory of change focused on the need for principals to have a clear, concrete understanding of the qualities of good instruction. If principals have the opportunity to co-construct their understanding of the behaviors of students and teachers that take place during the structured elements of a lesson through targeted professional development then they will have a better understanding of the qualities of good instruction. The professional development sessions provide principals with a clear vision of the behaviors of students and teachers that ideally occur during a lesson, and allow them the time in which to read and discuss professional literature as a foundation for their understanding of quality instruction. They practice observing instruction

with the help of live and videotaped lesson segments using a well-designed and structured observation. When they engage in discussions with colleagues about what they have seen, they understand the qualities of good instruction and identify the gap between observed instruction and good instruction. When these conditions were in place, then they would deliver feedback that is meaningful for themselves and for teachers.

Figure 1: Theory of Change



THEORY OF INTERVENTION

In order for principals to be able to deliver effective feedback for teachers, it is necessary to have a clear vision of the qualities that constitute good instruction leading to student engagement. The best way for principals to learn this was to have multiple ongoing structured opportunities to co-construct their collaborative and common understanding of the behaviors of students and teachers that take place during the delivery of a high quality lesson. This understanding develops in conjunction with high quality research based professional literature that can create a framework for their understanding. Then, through discussion, they create a collaborative, well-articulated vision of what teaching and learning should look like that could be applied to their analysis of instructional behaviors. In order to effectively apply their new learning as they co-construct this understanding, it is helpful for them to have a clear, concise tool for observation during specific elements of the instructional lesson. They use this tool to observe quality teaching vignettes in person and on video, and engage in articulating a discussion and analysis regarding the behaviors of students and teachers in each of the segments of the lesson. Moreover, principals have opportunities to apply their learning to situations in their own organizations and then be able to reflect on their growth over time. In this way, they use this reflection to discover further areas for discussion with the group in order to refine their vision and their own practice.

Therefore, the intervention that was applied to this problem of practice consisted of facilitated conversations using quality research based literature that took place during professional development opportunities. As principals moved through the professional development opportunities with facilitated conversations, they refined their understanding and observations while gaining knowledge of student engagement, student learning, and student achievement which are the ultimate outcomes for education.

Theory of Design Implementation

The minimal conditions necessary for the implementation of this design study involved a number of factors related to participant selection. The principal participants were site leaders at the elementary level who were responsible for conducting informal classroom visits and formal observations and evaluations as a part of their job responsibilities. In addition, they had a desire to pursue opportunities for professional development and had at least two years of experience as a site administrator. It was important that they have experiences with observation and evaluation prior to this intervention, so that they could reflect on their existing practice and process and entertain ideas about ways to make changes to their practice. This work required support from the Rancho District Director of Elementary Education who supervises the elementary principals in order to designate sufficient time for this professional development.

Theory of Intervention Design

The theory of intervention design includes reading professional literature that assists in building a common and concrete understanding of the qualities of good instruction in relation to the use of Common Core Standards and high student engagement that would facilitate their skill in analyzing instruction. During each session, principals engage with a discussion and analysis of professional readings that establishes the concrete behaviors that can be considered during the multifaceted interaction that takes place between students and teachers in the classroom and that leads to student engagement. This assists principals in creating a common vision of the qualities of good teaching.

They apply this understanding to observations of classroom instruction and video clips of exemplary teaching with the use of a common tool to analyze observable behaviors during specific segments of a lesson. They also watch videos using a protocol that structured their observations and conversations about the teaching interactions. This would serve to generate discussion about use of the common observation tool and how to analyze the teaching behaviors that exemplify quality instruction.

Sequence of Activities

The Professional Development series consisted of six workshops of sixty to ninety minutes each to be held monthly during the course of the intervention between January and June. The workshops focused on two different topics: (1) Understanding Quality Instruction, to assist principals in creating a common vision of the qualities of good teaching; (2) Analyzing Classroom Lessons using an observation tool that structured their observations and discussions about the teaching interactions. In between the workshops, principals used their learning to observe for quality instruction. They were also asked to complete several tasks in between the professional development sessions to practice their new skills during classroom observations. Throughout the process, it was necessary to make adjustments to the intervention to meet the needs of the participants and of the design.

CONCLUSION

This design study was built upon the theory of action that in order to ensure that principals can deliver effective feedback to teachers following classroom observations, it is necessary for them to observe and be able to analyze the qualities of good teaching. I have implemented an intervention that endeavored to establish a common understanding of the qualities of good teaching and structured collaborative protocols for the observation. This intervention employed a series of professional development opportunities grounded in the literature regarding dimensions of learning, effective feedback and professional development.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Based on the theory of action, the research design chosen for this study is multifaceted. In this section, I present the methodological choices for the study and selection of participants and further discuss the “unit of treatment.” Then, I review basic elements of the research that include baseline data/impact data and design process data. Next, I present an overview of data collection strategies used in this study. Then, I discuss the procedures used for data analysis and issues related to reliability, validity, credibility, and transferability. Finally, I present safeguards against bias and issues related to rigor—both used to ensure rigor and protect against threats to rigor.

Methodological Choices

The literature states that design research is initiated for complex, innovative tasks within a specific context for which only very few validated principles are available to structure and support the intervention activities, and where iterative analysis, design evaluation and revision processes are essential (Akker, 1999). Consequently, with attention to the above explanation and hypothesis, I selected design research as the primary methods approach. The selection rationale was based on the fact that the heart of this study involved design, development, and measurement of effectiveness of an intervention that was grounded in untested theory and practice and conducted in the natural setting with iterations. The literature points out that action research assumes that insiders (i.e. individuals doing research in their own organization) are often true believers in their particular practices and tempted to put a positive spin on their data. Therefore the researcher needs to use mechanisms that address the issue of bias (Herr and Anderson, 2005). With that in mind, I used action research as a secondary methods approach. Herr and Anderson (2005) suggest that insider-research involves undertaking action and studying that action. Nonetheless, a design challenge that takes place within the educational setting can be exposed to a number of uncertainties and variables that create a sense of tension within the tightness of the intervention design. Hence, any time the researcher assumes the dual roles of designer-developer, design development research calls for the allocation of specific strategies for ensuring non-biased data (Richey and Klein, 2009). I established procedures to segregate data and subjective biases, triangulate the data by collecting data of different kinds from different sources, and included colleagues in the work of analyzing the data.

Study Participants and Unit of Treatment

A design study is the study of the process and impact of specific design and development efforts (Richey, Klein, and Nelson, 2004). When there are multiple sites, there is the advantage of supporting transferability to other contexts. Thus, the unit of treatment for this design study was five individual principals at separate school sites in Rancho Unified School District. The participants were principals at the elementary level responsible for conducting classroom visits, observations and evaluations as a part of their job responsibilities. In addition, they had a desire to pursue opportunities for professional development and at least two years of experience as a site administrator. It was important that they had experiences with observation and evaluation prior to this intervention, so that they could reflect on their existing process and engage in thinking about developing skills in analyzing instruction.

Types of Data

The data to be collected to measure intervention effectiveness were: 1) baseline and impact data, which were compared to assess the impact of the professional development design on principals' learning; and 2) process data which concentrated on collecting data during the study on how the actual intervention process is advancing.

Impact Data

Initially, principals provided a baseline of information about their understanding and experience regarding the elements of instruction—this baseline was established through multiple methods. Each principal completed a performance task in which they watched a video clip of literacy instruction approximately twelve minutes long and provided written responses to six questions about the instruction they observed. The questions were designed to correlate with behaviors associated with quality instruction. Following the viewing of the lesson, principals participated in a semi-structured interview consisting of open-ended standardized questions (Patten, 1990).

It was critical that the impact data were standardized so that they could be considered solid, robust, and low inference (Cresswell, 2013). I used rubrics specific to each element of the lesson to score both the baseline and impact data performance tasks and interviews. I reviewed the research on instructional leadership and effective feedback to create a performance task related to the two focus areas: understanding qualities of good instruction and observing for good instruction. The baseline performance task was administered to principals before the first professional development session. The written responses, interview, and interview notes about the video clip served as the baseline data. The exit performance task was administered after the final session in June. I have compared the responses and the rubric scores from the baseline and exit performance tasks for the impact data. I reviewed each video in order to identify specific behaviors of the teacher and students that align to the SET Tool for each element. Using this review, I developed rubrics for each of four elements of the lesson represented by the video clips used for the baseline and exit performance tasks. In order to be able to identify the individual behaviors of students and teachers that occurred during the four elements for which I collected data, participants completed performance tasks before and after the intervention. The rubrics were designed on a four point scale, with one being the lowest and four the highest rating. The indicators on the rubric reflected the intended outcome of the intervention. Following the data collection, I coded my audiotapes and artifacts to identify key responses and interactions. I developed my codes based on the research of qualities of good instruction as reflected in the rubric. During the analysis each indicator was analyzed separately.

Consequently, it was possible to ensure that the design was effective, avoiding judgments that were based on too high inference interpretations. Baseline and impact data collection protocols must be fixed in order to be able to effectively measure the impact of the intervention that is being implemented.

Process Data

Accordingly, the purpose of the process data was to capture the change that occurred throughout the design. Qualitative data is most appropriate to capture this change. Throughout the research, process data were collected in the form of participant reflections after each session, field notes, researcher reflections in the form of memos, and audiotapes of each session. I observed and documented participants' natural response to this design; and observed and

documented any changes in behavior over the course of the study. I observed the principals' interactions, reactions, and responses during each stage of the cycle of inquiry. I coded my audiotapes and artifacts to identify key responses and interactions. I developed my codes from the focus areas in the rubric. This helped narrow my process data to the overall outcome of the design.

In particular, this assisted me in reflecting on the process of the professional development and recognizing any problems that occurred within the intervention. I was able to look for what did not work, and with that information, formulate inferences about what the problems might mean, make adjustments and use the estimations to further test my assumptions in subsequent sessions. I conducted a reflective, long-term analysis of the process data following the intervention separate from the ongoing analysis of the process to modify the intervention in order to improve alignment to address goals. Process data was utilized to describe the complexity of the development of the process of change that was prompted by the design (Plomp, 2006). This data was analyzed after each session, in order to make modifications to the next session. Participants were asked what worked or did not work in each session, and whether the interventions resulted in perceived changes. I also made audio recordings of each of the sessions and reviewed the recordings to analyze what worked and what did not, based on my observations of participants. Then I used memos to record possible reasons for those participant reactions, and determine how to test out my hypotheses in organizing the next session. My Director of Elementary Education and my LEEP colleagues served as critical friends in this process.

Certainly, both types of data are necessary in the design development study (Plomp, 2006). In this study, I asked two main questions: (1) is the professional development design feasible, that is, is it appropriate for the time, energy, resources, and skills the participating principals bring to the table; (2) do the planned activities work as planned, that is, do they elicit the kinds of learning I assumed they would. At the conclusion of the series, I conducted individual interviews. These semi-structured interviews were audio-taped and transcribed. Multiple sources of data reduced the risk that my conclusions would reflect the bias of a specific method and allowed for a better understanding of the changes elicited by the intervention. By collecting qualitative data that describe the process and iterations, and the post-intervention interviews that support the baseline, impact and process data, the credibility of the results was increased.

Table 2: Design Outcome and Data Sources

Design Outcome	Baseline/Impact Data Sources	Process Data Sources Collected throughout
Principals will understand the qualities of good instruction	Pre and post <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys • Structured interview of participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field notes • Audio tapes • Researcher Reflections • Observations
Principals will apply their understandings of good instruction to observations of classroom practices through the use of a framework or rubric	Pre and post <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation document review • Structured interview of participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field notes • Audio tapes • Researcher Reflections • Observations

Data Analysis Procedures

Significantly, Maxwell (2012) recommends that the “researcher begins data analysis immediately after finishing the first interview or observation, and continues to analyze the data as long as he or she is working on the research (pg. 104).” I organized and prepared the data for analysis: all audiotapes from interviews were transcribed, observation field notes were typed up, and all identifying information was removed from the data (Cresswell, 2012). In addition, I listened to the audiotapes and read through the data, taking notes and creating memos in order to develop a tentative sense of coding categories and contextual relationships while beginning to understand its meaning. All materials were uploaded into Dedoose, a data analysis software program.

Consequently, based on the themes that I uncovered, I assigned specific descriptions that guided me in the initial coding process. For this project the findings have been delivered in a narrative format, with support from charts and graphs that assist the reader in reviewing the data and the findings. Lastly, the expected outcomes for the intervention were placed against the collected, organized, coded data and measured against the coding structures. Then, I analyzed the impact data to determine if intervention outcomes were realized.

Table 2: Data Collection Administration

Data Collection strategies	Baseline Data	Concurrent Data	Culminating Data	Totals
Interviews	Pre Semi-Structured interview with each principal		Post semi structured interview with each principal	Two rounds of interviews
Observations		Each professional development session was audio taped. Observation notes		Six audio-taped observations and notes
Performance Task	Pre-Intervention Performance Task completed by each principal		Post-Intervention Performance Task completed by each principal	Two Performance Tasks
Documents		Completed observation notes Principals’ written reflections on process after each session		Six sets of notes Six principal reflections
Researcher documents		Researcher field notes		15 Field notes

Validity, Reliability, Transferability, Avoiding Bias and Ensuring Rigor

Validity

Notably, the research must ensure that the design study and action research have validity. Creswell sees validation as one of the strengths of qualitative research. In qualitative research validity refers to the procedural steps taken to ensure the accuracy of the findings (Creswell, 2009). Creswell states “Proposal developers need to convey the steps they will take in their studies to check for the accuracy and credibility of their findings” (Creswell, 2009, p. 15). In a design study validity is proven in two ways: the design shows an impact (i.e. the theory of action proves to be valid); the process data show that the impact was produced by the design and not by chance. I have identified specific outcomes for my design, and my theory of intervention details the steps I have taken towards these outcomes. The meaningfulness of the findings was in part determined by how the research design addressed issues common to social research. In this design study, concepts such as “qualities of good teaching” or “elements of instruction” needed to be operationalized to determine if the intervention had an impact in these areas. Construct validity was established by collecting multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 2013) such as observations, interview data, document analysis, and survey data. Internal validity seeks to establish a causal relationship whereby certain conditions are believed to lead to other conditions (Yin, 2013). In this design study, I endeavored to establish a relationship between the intervention and principals’ growth.

Reliability

Certainly, in qualitative research reliability is obtained through careful planning of the intervention and activities. The activities are connected directly to the outcomes of the design. This is captured in my professional development agendas (Appendix A), as well as, clearly documented procedures for each intervention activity. As the design changed, this was documented and analyzed. For reliability, careful documentation is important. If another researcher attempted to duplicate the design they should be able to follow the methods and analysis and obtain similar results (Creswell, 2007, p.204). To increase the reliability of the study I used clear protocols for data collection. These included semi-structured interview questions, observation notes, field notes and written documents collected from the participants.

Transferability

Transferability in a design study refers to the extent to which an intervention can be transferred to a different setting or context and yield similar results (van den Akker, 1999). Although duplicate design studies may not yield identical results, a reader should be able to look at both research studies and clearly see how the results were obtained and how they were similar and different.

Avoiding Bias

In the design study I played multiple roles. I was the product designer, the researcher, and a participant/observer. People who read this study may believe that a potential bias exist in the fact that I created the design and researched its impact. The potential exists for advocacy bias (Stake, 2006). Some examples of advocacy bias include the researcher’s hope of finding the program or phenomena that is working, the desire to draw conclusions that are useful to others, and the desire to document findings that will lead to action (Stake, 2006). To avoid bias I

maintained the creation of the design and the research/analysis of the design separate. I also established research procedures before the design was implemented. These procedures included using colleagues to review observation notes for potential bias; reviewing data periodically throughout the study to identify inconsistencies in the data; and debriefing with the other note takers on the process of implementing the design.

Ensuring Rigor

It is worth noting that a key to undertaking design research is to establish rigorous research methods that enable one to make valid conclusions (Richey and Klein, 2009). To ensure rigor and control in methodology, I followed the procedures of design and action research approaches and methods of qualitative research. In this study I collected data from the baseline and exit performance tasks and interviews, written artifacts, reflections, and observations. For the impact data I constructed instruments that were low-inference. For the process data I constructed observation instruments that clearly defined what I was looking for and captured principals' responses to the professional development. Rigor in action research "refers to how data are generated, gathered, explored and evaluated, how events are questioned and interpreted through multiple action research cycles" (Coghlan and Brannick, 2010, p.14) This was mainly to control biases as a researcher. To ensure rigor and control in methodology, I followed the procedures of design and action research approaches and methods of qualitative research.

In addition to explicitly documenting participant behaviors, I constantly reflected on the quality and rigor using the questions for action research posed by Coghlan, and Brannick (2001). These questions lead the researcher to focus on issues such as the relationship between the action researcher and the participants, the level of reflection that occurred, the methodological appropriateness, and the significance of the project. They ask:

- How is the researcher engaged in the steps of multiple and repetitious action research cycles?
- How has the researcher challenged and tested his/her own assumptions and interpretations of what was happening continuously through the project?
- How has the researcher accessed different views of what was happening?
- How are the researcher's interpretations and diagnoses grounded in scholarly theory, rigorously applied?
- How are project outcomes challenged, supported or disconfirmed in terms of the theories underpinning those interpretations and diagnoses?

To address these questions I engaged in ongoing self-reflection on my role as researcher versus facilitator. Clear research procedures were established before implementing the intervention. When changes were made in the design I referred to research to help guide the process.

CONCLUSION

This design study informed the development of a research-based professional development protocol that helped principals identify the qualities of good instruction, and apply their knowledge to observations and analysis of good instruction. The goal was to develop principal capacity to support teachers, in order to increase student engagement and achievement outcomes for students. In this chapter, I identified a theory of action to guide the design, specified an intervention design, and discussed a suitable research design that may connect design impact with design process.

CHAPTER FOUR FINDINGS

Introduction

In this chapter, I present and analyze impact and process data that are reviewed and summarized as evidence for assessing the effectiveness of professional development activities and the core design as a whole. In Section One of this chapter I focus on the impact data and the three protocols for data collection that were used to establish a baseline and an impact of the professional development. Baseline and impact data were collected using a structured performance task that principals completed while watching a video of a teacher conducting a lesson, and an interview with the principal after watching the video. In an effort to utilize multiple data sources to confirm or disconfirm findings, I also took notes during both baseline and exit interviews. Each participant principal completed the performance task which consisted of watching a video of a close reading lesson, recording their observations based on a set of five questions (Appendix C), and participating in a semi-structured interview with a set of open ended questions (Appendix D) prior to and following the six sessions of professional development.

In Section Two, I present and analyze process data consisting of notes made from audiotapes collected during each professional development session, and feedback and reflections from principals about the content and the process of each professional development session. Throughout the process I continued to work with a critical friend to debrief each session and determine what improvements were needed to occur to meet the goal of the professional development series.

The design consisted of six professional development sessions of sixty to ninety minutes between January and June. The Director of Elementary Education consented to allow the professional development sessions to take place during the regular meetings of the elementary principals. All of the elementary principals in Rancho Unified School District (RUSD) took part in the professional development sessions. Participants for this research design study were members of the elementary principal cohort. Of the nine elementary principals in RUSD, five participated in the research element of this design, three declined to participate in the research and as the action researcher, I was the final member of the cohort. The participants were four females and one male. Two had five years of experience as principals, one had eighteen years, one had twenty years and one had two years of experience as a principal. The demographics of the participants are represented below in Table 4.

Table 3: Demographics of Principals

Principal Pseudonym	School Pseudonym	Gender	Years	Teaching Experience
Mia Zorro	Daylight School	Female	2	Middle school
Nancy Uribe	Evelyn Connor School	Female	18	High school
Isabel French	Earhart School	Female	20	High school
Yesenia Ines	Jefferson School	Female	5	High school
Jacob Ulrich	MLK School	Male	5	Elementary

From the analysis of the baseline and impact data it appears that principals' understanding of the qualities of good instruction increased in a positive direction when measured according to their skill in being able to recognize the behaviors of students and teachers during a lesson, and develop an analysis of the instruction based on their observations.

In Section One, I present an analysis of the baseline and impact data from the performance task for each of the five participating principals. Where appropriate and possible, I have included direct feedback from each participant in order to provide further evidence for their understanding of the qualities of good instruction.

SECTION ONE: IMPACT DATA ANALYSIS

Overall Design Baseline and Impact Data Analysis

To review, design impact data need to be low-inference and ideally ascertained through a procedure that rates the quality of a task or observable behavior. Consequently, I created a separate rubric for each of the videos used in the baseline and impact performance tasks to support my analysis of the baseline and impact data. The rubrics are based on the relatively simple Structured Engagement Tool that was presented to principals during the professional development.

The Structured Engagement Tool was developed in 2013 in a partnership between a local support provider and researchers at UC Berkeley, Graduate School of Education, and is based on research from a variety of sources (see Appendix B). The tool aims at a simple, easy to use approach to structuring clinical supervision conversations around basic elements of effective instruction (Fisher and Frey, 2008, 2003; Schmoker, 2011). It identifies six elements of lessons and the dimensions of learning present in each element. It also identifies behaviors exhibited by teachers and students during each of the elements that are connected with the dimensions of learning within each element. For this analysis I have focused on four of the elements that appear in lessons: Engaging/Opening of the Lesson, Modeling/Constructing New Knowledge, Guided Practice, and Checking for Understanding

Principals' understanding of the qualities of good instruction was based on their skill in providing an analysis of the instruction they observed during their viewing of a videotaped lesson prior to the professional development. During their viewing of the video, they recorded their responses to a set of five questions (Appendix D) about the instruction that they observed. These questions were designed to elicit responses regarding each element of instruction.

1. How does the teacher begin the lesson?
2. What does the teacher do to introduce the new skill?
3. What were you surprised to learn?
4. How does the teacher help students to practice the new skill?
5. What happens when students seemed confused?

When the participants had completed watching the video and recording their responses, I conducted a semi structured interview (Appendix D) using a set of six questions and additional prompts. These questions were also designed to stimulate responses that revealed the principals' understanding and ability to recognize and analyze behaviors associated with elements of quality instruction. Each interview was audio recorded. The following questions were asked of each participant:

1. In the video that you watched what phases of instruction did you observe?

2. How did the teacher open the lesson?
3. Was there any new skill or content that was taught? What makes you think that?
4. What did the teacher do to make sure that the students learned what he or she wanted to communicate?
5. What did the teacher do when students didn't understand the skill or content?
Probing Question: How did the teacher respond to student questions?
6. How did the teacher ask students to use their new learning? Probing Question:
What kinds of activities were students asked to do?

In order to triangulate the data, I also took notes during the interviews. Then, I coded and analyzed the data to determine a baseline of understanding of good instruction for each principal within each of the four elements observed during the lesson. The video was chosen based on its lesson structure which spanned the four components of a lesson as described previously in a high quality lesson based on the SET. These were the components that it would be possible to observe during a video segment. The Baseline Video Rubric is presented below. In the rubric, the behaviors of the teacher and the students in the lesson are operationalized as identified in the SET. Following each element, the rating scale was applied to the lesson on a scale of one to four, one indicating that the principal could not analyze the lesson, and four indicating that the principal was able to create a synthesis with an overall judgement of the quality of the component supported by evidence.

Table 4: Baseline Video Rubric

LESSON COMPONENT: ENGAGING/OPENING
Teacher did not call students to attention
Students paid attention to the teacher by quietly looking at her.
The teacher communicated the lesson objectives by telling students that they would have an essential question for the lesson: what are the character traits of inventors. She told them they would closely read the text, annotate with notes and share with the class. This information was also written on the whiteboard and she pointed to it.
The teacher did not stimulate student curiosity or create a hook for the learning. She did not take time to make the text interesting for students. She reminded students that they had already read about the invention of three other toys, Legos, Twister and Mr. Potato Head.
Students exhibited interest in new content by reading the text and talking with their partners about the events in the reading
The teacher did not use the co-constructed chart on the wall to help students recall prior knowledge. She only pointed to the chart as a reminder of previous work, but did not review or discuss the previous work with students.
Student participation was widely generated as students read the text, then discussed with a partner
Rubric Scoring for this dimension of the lesson:
1= Principal could not articulate an analysis about the opening of the lesson

2=Principal recognized that the teacher named the objective, referred to the chart on the wall and students were on task but gave no analysis of the opening

3=Principal recognized that the teacher opened the lesson, but did not use the opening to motivate students to engage in the learning

4=Principal recognized that the teacher named the objective, reminded students of other lessons related to character traits of inventors, but that the teacher did not create interest in the lesson by engaging students' curiosity, nor did the teacher connect to the students prior knowledge by reviewing in detail the chart that they had previously constructed

LESSON COMPONENT: CO-CONSTRUCTING NEW KNOWLEDGE OR SKILLS

The teacher presented new text that advanced previous knowledge by introducing a new text that students would use to apply their previously learned understanding of close reading. She gave students a new text to practice the previously learned strategy of close reading and infer character traits of inventors by looking for cause and effect, problem and solution and sequence of events in a non-fiction text.

The teacher did not give clear explanations of new skills to be learned but instead used co-constructing to guide them in discovering the character traits in their reading by examining the text in order to infer the traits based on evidence in the text.

The teacher asked questions that enable students to co-construct new understanding in dialogue with the teacher as she asked them to find examples of problem and solution, cause and effect and sequence of events. These appear to be strategies that she had previously taught in other close reading lessons. She asked students to read a short passage, look for evidence in the text, then discuss with a partner. The teacher gave students a language frame, "I was amazed to learn...and it surprised me because..." that students could use in their discussion. Then the teacher asked students to find an example in the text that showed sequential order. She asked students to help her annotate the text that would be added to their class chart. The teacher asked students to share specific events that the author of the text gave to help student infer the character traits of inventors. She directed them to go back into the text and look for words and phrases that the author used to show the traits.

Students were actively engaged in co-constructing with the teacher as they talked with a partner and in larger groups to discuss examples of problem and solution, cause and effect and sequential order. Then students shared their discussions with the whole group, and used evidence from the text to support their claims of character traits based on problem and solution, cause and effect, and sequence of events that was in the text. One student shared a sentence that included the wording "sold to date" as an example of sequence of events. The teacher asked if students agreed or disagreed, and asked for evidence, then had students discuss in a small group. The small group determined that the text discussed "how many had been sold, and was not an event." The groups then shared their discussion with the whole class. Students found that both the inventor of the Slinky and his wife were determined and gave evidence from the text. Another student found that the wife was creative because the husband didn't see the Slinky as a toy at first.

The teacher provided material and tasks that enable students to discern the new concepts. She gave them a text that connected to their content topic of character traits of toy inventors and she

shared a language frame that students could use in their conversations with partners.

Students engaged appropriately with the materials and task by underlining, highlighting, reading quietly, and talking about the text with a partner and their group, using evidence from the text to support their claims about character traits of the inventor of the Slinky.

The teacher modeled explicit strategies that students can apply later in guided practice by showing students how to break down an unknown word into parts. She also modeled reading several short passages. She also modeled reading the text to look for clues about qualities of inventors and referred to the class constructed chart.

Students actively attempted to use new concepts or skills in their discussions with partners by referring to the text and citing evidence for the traits that they recognized in their reading. Then in the whole group discussion, the teacher called on students to ask them questions and have them cite evidence from the text about their claims. Students responded with clear evidence of their thinking

Rubric Scoring for this dimension of the lesson:

1=Principal could not articulate an analysis about modeling or co-constructing that occurred during the lesson

2=Principal recognized that the teacher modeled reading a text, and asked students questions but gave no analysis of the co-constructing element

3=Principal recognized that the teacher modeled reading the text and looking for evidence, that students were included in co-constructing their evidence of character traits and gave a brief analysis of the student's learning

4=Principal recognized that the teacher built on previously taught strategies, gave students the opportunity to apply them to new text, and used questioning strategies and the support of a language frame to guided students to infer the character traits and use evidence to support their claims. They also recognize that students were able to have discussions with a partner and in small groups and use evidence from the text to support their claims.

LESSON COMPONENT: CHECKING FOR UNDERSTANDING

The teacher asked multiple clarifying questions throughout the lesson, including ‘What’s your thinking about the text?’, ‘Why do we need to identify this as an event in our sequence?’ , ‘What role did Betty (the inventor’s wife) play in this text (to help invent the Slinky)?’ and ‘Would Slinky have been as successful if Betty weren’t around? Talk to your partner.’

The teacher collected evidence of students understanding formally and informally by walking around the room as students were reading to collect evidence of their reading and notating in the text, and as they were talking with their partner or small group. She also asked them to share their understanding with the whole class after reading each short text by talking with a partner or in a small group.

The teacher asked students to make claims and back up with evidence throughout the lesson, for example, when she asked the students, “who said we had more to identify, can I hear your thoughts?”

Students attempted to make evidence based claims when they referred to the text and read it aloud to support their claim. For example, a student referred to the text and shared that “Betty

realized it was a toy,” as evidence that Betty was part of the process of inventing the Slinky.

The teacher recognized misconceptions and misunderstandings when students were adding events to their sequential order. For example, she said, “the sentence illustrates that they are famous. Do you agree? Why not?”

The teacher suggested appropriate reformulations when she asked, “Should we identify this as the last event in the sequence?”

The students exhibited understanding of teacher clarifications or reformulations when they engaged in discussion about whether a particular event belonged in the sequence, and one student argued that the event did not belong because it was only referring to the popularity of the inventors, and did not demonstrate a character trait of inventors.

A student demonstrated his understanding of reformulated understanding when he shared that he decided it’s only referring to the popularity of the inventors, and did not demonstrate a character trait of inventors.

Rubric Scoring for this dimension of the lesson:

1=Principal could not articulate an analysis about checking for understanding that occurred during the lesson

2=Principal recognized that the teacher asked students questions during the lesson, but did not analyze the way in which the questions and student responses were used to determine student understanding of the strategies to discover character traits in the reading

3=Principal recognized that the teacher asked students questions, then used the student responses to help students reformulate their thinking, and the principal gave a brief surface analysis of the way that the teacher made sure that students understood the content

4=Principal recognized that the teacher asked students questions, then used the student responses to help students reformulate their thinking, and the principal gave an analysis indicating that the teacher did some checking for understanding but also missed opportunities to ensure that students could apply their strategies of problem and solution, cause and effect, sequence of events to the text.

LESSON COMPONENT: GUIDED PRACTICE

The teacher gave clear directions by telling students that they would discuss character traits in the text, and give specific evidence that the author provides to infer the trait

The teacher provided coaching and support by walking around the room to listen to student conversations and ask questions, provide direction while students were discussing in pairs.

The teacher scaffolded student practice with materials and directions by providing appropriate text that engages students in the sequence of events that led to the invention of the Slinky. She did not use the co-constructed chart on the wall about the previous texts that students had read to help them use previously learned strategies in their reading. She did not use the document camera efficiently to project the text and model notating of the text.

The teacher established forms of interaction appropriate to the task by having students work with a partner and in small groups to discuss the events in the reading and how they illustrated or inferred the essential qualities of the inventors of the Slinky. She intertwined the elements of modeling, checking for understanding and guided practice through several passages of the same text, in order to practice using the previously learned strategies and applying them to a new text.

Students interacted appropriately with the task by underlining, highlighting, reading quietly, and talking about the essential questions with a partner and their group. Students participated in each of the intertwined elements as appropriate.

The teacher provided coaching, support and remediation by monitoring students and using individual mini-conferences to redirect when needed. She also redirected students in the whole group to go back and find words and phrases in the text that indicate or infer that Betty, the inventor's wife, was creative and that both inventors were determined

Rubric Scoring for this dimension of the lesson:

1=Principal could not articulate an analysis about guided practice that occurred during the lesson

2=Principal recognized that the teacher gave students opportunities to practice using close reading to discover character traits of inventors

3=Principal recognized that the teacher had students work in pairs to discuss their claims and evidence about the character traits of the inventors of the Slinky and that the teacher needed to increase the level of support for students. The principal gave a brief surface analysis of the way that the teacher asked students to practice their learning.

4=Principal recognized that the teacher intertwined the elements of co-constructing, checking for understanding and guided practice to build student understanding of the character traits of the inventors of the Slinky. The principal gave an analysis indicating that the teacher used these elements to build the students' application of the close reading strategy and that students demonstrated their application by interacting reading, annotating, and discussing the character traits of the inventors of the Slinky using evidence to support their claims.

At the end of the series of professional development following the final session, principals participated in a second performance task in which they watched a video of another fourth grade class learning about Close Reading. The video was chosen based on its lesson structure which spanned the first four components of a lesson as described previously in a high quality lesson based on the SET. These were the components that it would be possible to observe during a video segment. The Impact Video Rubric is presented below. In the rubric, the behaviors of the teacher and the students in the lesson are operationalized as identified in the SET. Following each component, the rating scale is applied to the lesson on a scale of one to four, one indicating that the principal could not analyze the lesson, and four indicating that the principal was able to create a synthesis with an overall judgement of the quality of the component supported by evidence.

Table 5: Impact Video Rubric

LESSON COMPONENT: ENGAGING/OPENING

Teacher called students to attention by having them gather in a circle of chairs so that they can

see her and one another.

Students paid attention to the teacher but were also moving around as they were listening to her talking, and looking at the camera recording the lesson

The teacher communicated the lesson objectives, and expectations in language understandable for students by telling them that today she would teach them in a different way to notice when a character is acting out of character. That means that the characters are acting strange and different than normally. If we pay attention to those times it can teach us a lot about the character.

The teacher stimulated their curiosity and created a hook for the learning by sharing a story from her own experience as an illustration. She told them a story from her childhood about her bossy sister who would always taunt her to get into fights with her, she told her exactly what to do all the time. One time when her sister was in middle school, her sister was acting out of character by having a friend over who her sister admired. The sister acted very differently doing whatever her friend told her to do, instead of being bossy and mean like she usually was towards the teacher. The teacher reflected that she thought more deeply about why her sister suddenly changed and she realized that her sister was having a hard time in middle school. The teacher learned a whole new side about her sister, and it made her sister a more complex person for the teacher.

The teacher generated questions about the new content by asking students: “Did you see how paying attention to how someone is acting can help you to understand them better?”

Students exhibited interest in new content by asking questions about the teacher’s sister and the way that she acted. The students made inferences about the sister’s behavior and why she might have acted that way

The teacher recalled prior knowledge reminding the students about other ways that she has taught them how to learn about the traits and qualities of characters in the stories they read. She told them that they had learned how to think more deeply about the characters and find what it can teach them.

Student participation was widely generated in that students listened to the teacher as she described her experience with her sister, and asked questions about what had happened.

Rubric Scoring for this dimension of the lesson:

1=Principal could not articulate an understanding about the opening of the lesson

2=Principal recognized that the teacher named the objective, and told a story about her childhood but gave no analysis of the opening

3=Principal recognized that the teacher shared the objective for the lesson, told a story about her childhood, and that the story was used to help students think about what might cause a character to change their behavior, giving a surface analysis that the use of the personal story to hook students into learning about character development was effective in creating a hook for students.

4=Principal recognized that the teacher established a purpose for the lesson when she told a story about her childhood, that the story was used to help students think about what might cause a character to change their behavior. The principal recognized that the teacher effectively used her personal story to engage students in thinking about reasons for characters to act in unexpected ways

LESSON COMPONENT: MODELING/CONSTRUCTING NEW KNOWLEDGE OR SKILLS

The teacher presented new concepts that built and advanced previous knowledge by introducing a chart that she had made to help them ask themselves questions when they are thinking about when a character acts out of character and ways to push their thinking, building metacognition. The teacher used the chart to model for students how to think about the characters in a story they were reading.

The teacher gave clear explanations about why they should be thinking about the ways a character acts out of character, saying that it would help them to understand what was motivating the character to act that way.

The teacher ask students questions but did not engage in dialogue with the students to co-construct their learning. She told students, “I want you to think what does this mean? What is important about that? While I am reading you are going to push yourself.” She gave the context of the story and then asked students, “We know Cistine, what is she like (usually)?” and “When Cistine saw the statue was her voice rude or mean?” and students responded with one word answers. The teacher did nearly all of the talking during the modeling of the lesson, although she asked students questions, they did not have an opportunity to answer the questions.

Students were not actively engaged in co-constructing with the teacher. Although she asked them to think about these questions, she did not have students respond to the questions during or after she read the passage to them. This would have been a helpful way for students to understand how the characters were acting differently in the story.

The teacher provided material and tasks that enable students to discern the new concepts by sharing the prompts that were written on the classroom chart and encouraging them to use the prompts. She also gave them the scaffolding for the task, by encouraging them to use the prompts in their small group discussions. She did not have students share their understanding of the prompts with the group, which would have helped them to understand the ways that characters are acting out of character.

The teacher modeled explicit strategies that students can apply later in guided practice by reading a passage from their story, using the prompts from the chart that she had shared and thinking aloud about how the character of Cistine was acting out of character when Cistine saw the figure of her that Rob had carved. Rob expected her to be angry, but instead Cistine was excited that he had made the carving. The teacher modeled her thinking about why Cistine might have acted differently.

Not all students actively attempted to use new concepts or skills. The teacher did not monitor all the groups in the circle to discover if they were using the prompts and discussing the way that they were pushing their thinking about the character of Cistine in their story.

Rubric Scoring for this dimension of the lesson:

1=Principal could not articulate an analysis about modeling or co-constructing that occurred during the lesson

2=Principal recognized that the teacher modeled reading a passage, and thinking about how the

character acted differently but gave no analysis of the modeling that occurred during this element

3=Principal recognized that the teacher modeled reading the text and describing the way that the character was acting differently, and noticed the lack of student response to the modeling, that students were not given the opportunity to respond to the prompts. The principal gave a minimal analysis of the instruction noticing that the teacher modeled thinking about the character in a way that could help students understand character development.

4=Principal recognized that the teacher used the chart to explain the prompts they could use to think more deeply about why a character in their story might act out of character, and that students did not have an active role in the lesson, nor were they able to answer the questions that the teacher had asked them to consider. The principal recognized that the teacher missed opportunities to push students thinking about the characters in the story.

LESSON COMPONENT: CHECKING FOR UNDERSTANDING

The teacher did not ask clarifying questions in the lesson, so she could not be sure if the students understood the task or not.

The teacher collected evidence of students understanding informally by participating in a group and listening to some of the groups. She did not check in with the group that was videotaped and was not able to correct their misunderstandings when the small groups came back together.

The teacher asked one students to make a claim and back up with evidence when the whole group talked about their small group discussions. She also shared the story from one student that she had observed in one of the groups.

Students attempted to make evidence based claims. One student shared her own thinking about Cistine saying that Cistine was excited because Rob carved a picture of her, citing evidence in the text. The student also shared that both characters have a connection because they don't like school, citing evidence from the text.

The teacher recognized misconceptions and misunderstandings in the small group as the group started in "the obvious place" of thinking about the characters. She shared that they began by saying, "Cistine likes Rob."

The teacher suggested appropriate reformulations when she encouraged students to push their thinking a little further using the prompts. She suggested that the character of Cistine is feeling that way because she feels connected to the character of Rob, and that changed the way she acted towards him.

The students exhibited understanding of teacher clarifications or reformulations and a student demonstrated his reformulated understanding. The teacher shared an example from the small group in which a student shared that he thought that Cistine is lonely and far from home without family or friends, experiencing many new things, and the student used that as a way to describe Cistine's motivation for acting differently towards Rob.

Rubric Scoring for this dimension of the lesson:

1=Principal could not articulate an analysis about checking for understanding that occurred during the lesson

2=Principal recognized that the teacher checked in with the small groups and used the students responses in the whole group

3=Principal recognized that the teacher checked in with the small groups, used the students responses in the whole group and the principal gave a brief surface analysis that the teacher did not use checking for understanding sufficiently to monitor and support the learning of the students.

4= Principal recognized that the teacher monitored a few groups, but did not listen to the group in the videotape, who were not able to clearly show their understanding. The teacher did not correct their misunderstandings when the whole group came back together, and were left not knowing how to apply the learning to their reading, while a few other students did show how they were able to push their thinking and ask themselves why a character would act out of character.

LESSON COMPONENT: GUIDED PRACTICE

The teacher gave clear directions after modeling and provided sentence frames that were familiar and posted in the classroom for students to refer to and to guide students thinking. She referred to the sentence frames several time during the lesson, read them to students and encouraged them to use the frames.

The teacher provided coaching and support by participating in a group, listening to other groups and sharing their feedback with whole group.

The teacher scaffolded student practice with materials and directions including the chart of questions and sentence frames to help students in their discussion.

The teacher established forms of interaction appropriate to the task by putting students in groups of three, and giving students' opportunities for interaction in small groups with scaffolded materials.

Students interact appropriately with the task The teacher did not specifically address the group of students that was observed to be talking together. That group did not use the prompts or appear to understand what they were being asked to do. The teacher did monitor other groups and shared their thinking, so it appears that some of the groups were able to respond appropriately and were using the prompts as they were modeled.

Rubric Scoring for this dimension of the lesson:

1=Principal could not articulate an analysis about guided practice that occurred during the lesson

2=Principal recognized that the teacher gave students opportunities to discuss why a character would act out of character, practicing using the sentence frames and prompts on the chart that she shared with the class.

3=Principal recognized that the teacher had students work in small groups to talk about why the character of Cistine would act out of character in the story, and that the group of students observed in the video was not able to use the prompts effectively to practice the strategy they had learned. The principal gave a brief surface analysis of the way that the teacher asked students to practice their learning.

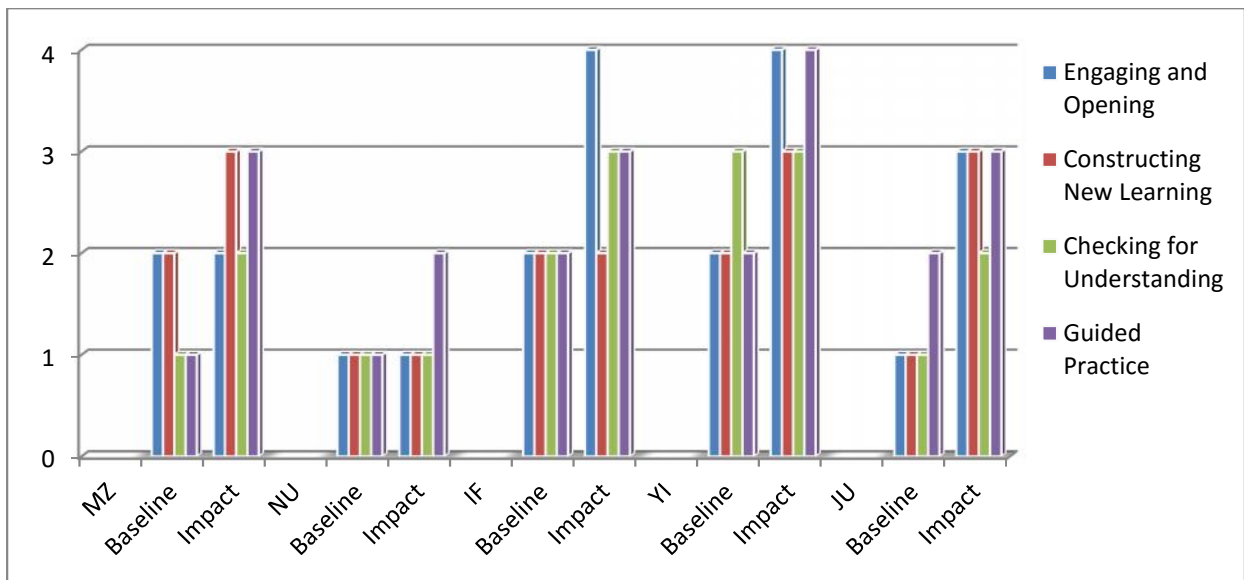
4=Principal recognized that the teacher was not successful in setting up guided practice

opportunities for all the students, but while some did not have a substantial discussion in their small group, it appeared from the debrief of the guided practice opportunity that several other students successfully used the learning to push their own thinking about why the character of Cistine would act differently toward the character of Rob in the story that they read. The principals would be able to recognize that a part of the element was successful, while the teacher needed to continue to support those students who hadn't mastered the concept yet.

Individual Participant Baseline and Impact Data Analysis

As the responses from the semi-structured interview, the written responses and interview notes were coded and analyzed several patterns emerged for each individual participant. The table below shows the baseline and impact ratings for each principal in each of the four dimensions of instruction that were reflected in the performance task.

Figure 2: Baseline and Impact Data for Individual Participants



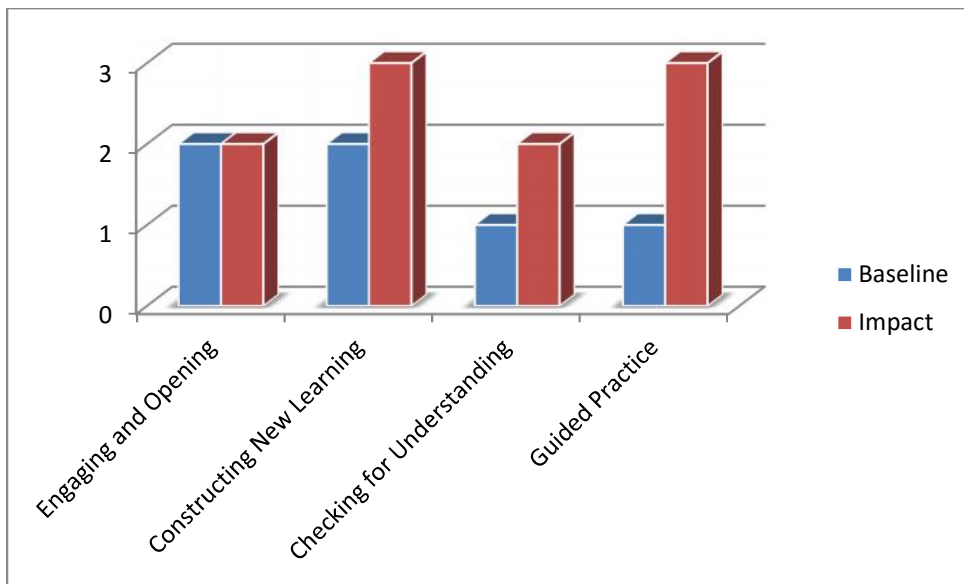
Generally, the table above represents that each of the five principals made some growth in demonstrating depth of knowledge of the qualities of good instruction as related in the observations during dimensions of a lesson. All principals showed growth over time in the area of Guided Practice. Three out of five principals made growth in their skill at analyzing the instruction which occurred during the remaining dimensions of the lesson. Isabel's and Yesenia's skill at analyzing the opening of the lesson grew by two rating points from a two (2) to a four (4), and Yesenia's skill at analyzing the instruction during guided practice also grew from a two (2) to a four (4).

In order to better demonstrate the ability of principals to be able to analyze instruction, I describe individual principals' ratings using their responses to the baseline and impact performance task which included audio recording transcripts, written responses and interview notes. I refer to the behaviors of teachers and students described within each dimension as represented in the Structured Engagement Tool (SET) that was presented and discussed during the professional development principals received within the design.

ID #1: Mia Zorro

Mia was the principal at Daylight Elementary School in RUSD. This was her second year as a site administrator and her first year at Daylight School. Prior to becoming an administrator, Mia was a middle school teacher with a background in Special Education. The table below reflects baseline and impact ratings for Mia. I review Mia’s baseline and impact data as reflected in the performance task which consisted of watching the video, writing responses to five questions and then participating in a semi-structured interview which consisted of six questions. The questions for the written task and the interview focused on the phases of the lesson, asking how the teacher opened the lesson, how she engaged students in the learning, how the teacher asked questions of the students, and how students were asked to apply their learning. The questions were designed to determine her skill in analyzing the qualities of good instruction. The chart below reflects the Baseline and Impact ratings in each of the four dimensions for Mia.

Figure 3: ID #1 Ratings for ID#1 MZ



Based on the data collected and analyzed during the baseline and exit performance tasks it appears that, in the dimension of opening the lesson, Mia made no growth. Specifically within the dimensions of constructing new learning, checking for understanding and guided practice Mia made growth in her skill of recognizing behaviors of teachers and students and analyzing a lesson. The growth in these areas indicates that she had moved in her understanding of the qualities of instruction and had increased her skill in giving a brief surface analysis for the dimensions of constructing new learning and guided practice.

Engaging/opening the lesson. Engaging students and opening occurs at the beginning of the lesson but may recur periodically throughout the lesson. For this dimension, Mia’s rating was a two (2) indicating that she was able to recognize that the teacher named the objective but Mia did not give an analysis of the teaching and learning from the video.

In her written response to the question, “*How did the teacher open the lesson?*” Mia only wrote “*essential questions.*” After watching the video Mia was interviewed, and asked, “*How did the teacher begin the lesson?*” Mia talked about a short introduction where the teacher communicated the lesson objective, and the steps that the class would take to meet that objective.

Mia also noticed that the teacher jumped quickly from sharing the objective into the modeling phase of the lesson. She connected that to her observations in her own school noting that *“Definitely when watching teachers at my school, they want to use every opportunity to teach all of the things that they need kids to know.”* Mia missed the teacher’s reference to a large chart that the class had previously constructed. Mia observed that the teacher told students the objective but Mia did not analyze the opening of the lesson to illustrate her understanding of the quality of the lesson. She did not notice the missed opportunity for the teacher to engage students in a meaningful way with a ‘hook’ nor did she notice that the teacher did not help students to connect to their prior knowledge about the non-fiction stories of toy inventors they had read previously which was depicted on a classroom chart. Given the lack of analysis of the dimension of the opening of the lesson and based on the rubric presented above, Mia’s baseline rating for this dimension was a two (2).

During the Exit Interview, Mia responded to the same question about the opening of the lesson with more detail about the teacher’s behaviors. Mia’s rating for the opening remained at a two (2) indicating that she was not able to analyze the teaching and learning that occurred during this lesson, but did recognize that the teacher named the objective and told a personal story in the opening of the lesson.

Mia’s written response to the question, *“What does the teacher do to introduce the new skill?”* revealed that Mia was unable to identify the hook in the opening of the lesson. She wrote that the teacher *‘tells a story about sister being bossy. Adrian becomes bossy to her sister,’* and Mia referred to the story as a way to illustrate that the listener or reader needs to think more deeply about a character’s motivation to understand them better. She shared that the teacher *“had an introduction. She gave a brief explanation of what it means when a character’s acting out of character.”* Here, Mia recognized that the teacher was setting the objective and communicating what students would be learning. At the same time, she noticed that only some of the students were paying attention to the teacher remarking *“that there were some people that were visually tracking the teacher.”* In addition, Mia identified the teacher’s personal story as *“a kind of guided practice,”* but Mia noted in her interview that the teacher did not do anything to practice the skill of noticing when a character is acting out of character. Here Mia seemed to be confused about the intention of the teacher in telling the story about her sister as a way to create interest for students in the learning, and so she did not analyze the story as a way for the students to get ‘hooked’ into the new learning. Based on her understanding that this was a kind of guided practice, Mia expected:

to see children be able to explain how a character is usually acting and how based on their normal behavior you would expect them to react to a particular situation and then calling out the situation where they acted out of character and then show some thinking about why they might be acting out of character using her prompts.

Within the opening of the lesson, Mia’s baseline and impact rating remained the same at two (2). During both videos, Mia was able to recognize that the teacher shared the objective in the lesson and the steps that the teacher would lead students through to meet the objective. She was not able to analyze the opening of the lesson in such a way as to synthesize the teaching and create an overall judgment of the opening dimension.

Modeling or co-constructing new knowledge or skills. Modeling or co-constructing occurs when the teacher intends to introduce new concepts or skills. In the baseline video the lesson is more student-centered and focuses on co-constructing dialogue between teachers and

students. For this dimension, Mia's baseline rating was a two (2) indicating that she was able to recognize that the teacher modeled reading a text and asked students questions, but she did not give an analysis for this dimension.

During the baseline interview, Mia responded to the question "*Was there any new skill or content that was taught?*" saying, the teacher "*did the think aloud and guided them through what to do when there's a confusing word or an unfamiliar word so she gave them some strategies via her example although she didn't necessarily name those as strategies.*"

The written notes from the interview confirm this understanding and reflect that Mia shared that the teacher "*taught in think aloud strategies to use when there is a confusing word. She also used cause and effect, problem and solution and went back to text, touching on pieces of close reading, not explicit, and close reading was not defined.*" Within the lesson, students were reading a text passage, and the teacher co-constructed with students what were the character traits of the inventors of the Slinky. The teacher used cycles of co-constructing, checking for understanding and guided practice to scaffold for students how to identify the traits. The teacher referred to several different strategies in the lesson, but Mia did not recognize the way in which the teacher focused on actively engaging students to apply close reading to the content. Mia also noticed that the teacher referred to several relationships (i.e. cause and effect; problem and solution) that would assist student understanding of qualities of inventors within the close reading, but here, Mia did not analyze the questioning strategies that the teacher used to co-construct students' knowledge of the qualities of inventors with the student responses in partner and small groups.

In addition, Mia did not refer to student engagement during the co-constructing phase of the lesson, for example, when students talked with a partner to find examples of cause and effect relationships in their reading. Mia's written response to a question about this dimension in the video noted only that the "*teacher modeled breaking down an unknown word' and 'talked about cause and effect, problem and solution.*" In Mia's interview she shared that, "*the teacher like many teachers is trying to do too much in one lesson*" indicating that she remained focus on the brief modeling of decoding an unknown word. She did not recognize the questioning strategies that the teacher used as a way to co-construct learning with the students.

In the baseline data, Mia observed the teacher breaking apart an unknown word and identifying relationships within a reading passage, but missed how this one event was one part of the teacher's cumulative instruction to support students' ability to identify and explain qualities of a toy inventor. For this dimension, Mia's baseline rating was a two (2), indicating that she recognized that the teacher modeled reading a text, and asked students questions, but she did not provide an analysis of this dimension.

During the exit performance task, Mia's rating increased from a two (2) to a three (3) based on her responses during the task. This rating indicated that Mia recognized that the teacher modeled reading the literary text and described the way that the character was acting differently. Mia also gave a surface analysis of the modeling phase, noting that the teacher modeled thinking about the character in a way that could help students understand character development.

In her exit performance task, Mia observed that the teacher presented the new strategy of noticing when a character is acting out of character and considering the author's development of

a character in the story. Mia responded to the question about new skill or content that was taught saying:

The teacher moves from the story to the chart and introduces this again, it's the scaffolding. She tries to think about ways that you can go back when you are reading or listening to something and the questions you can ask yourself that will help you with the deeper thinking, the more complex thinking. Then, as she's explaining it, she goes back to the story that she's already told about her sister as the illustration. Once again, that scaffold is really, really helpful.

In her reflection on the teaching, Mia recognized that the teacher used the scaffold of written prompts on a chart to help students push their own thinking about the character's motivation for changing behavior. She also understood that the teacher's personal story acted as a model for her to help students reflect on when characters change in behavior gives them the opportunity for deeper thinking.

During the interview, Mia response to the question, "*Was there any new skill or content that was taught?*" indicated that she found that students were not engaged in the learning. In her words, "*there just weren't a lot of kids that were actively verbally participating*" and that she would expect "*children to be able to explain a situation where someone was acting out of character.*" Here she gave her analysis of what happened and hypothesized that if students were more actively participating then they would be able to explain how someone was acting out of character. In the video, students were quietly listening, although they were moving around in their seats, so this depiction on her part is not accurate. In Mia's analysis she determined that she would expect students to have multiple opportunities for talking and asking questions during the modeling, which she did not observe in the lesson. In the video, the teacher used the small group discussions and then shared with students what she had heard, and asked one student to respond to the question about how the student pushed her thinking about the character. The teacher in the video did not notice a small group who did not use the prompts in their discussion about a character from their story acting out of character. In her written response to the question, "*What does the teacher do to introduce the new skill?*", Mia observed that the teacher "*tells a story about her bossy sister*" as a way of modeling how to notice when a character is acting out of character and thinking more deeply about why that might occur.

After the professional development, Mia's rating increased from a two (2) to a three (3), indicating that she noted the teacher modeled thinking about a character acting 'out of character', and how the teacher used materials, such as a written chart to scaffold for students. She also gave a brief analysis of this dimension of the lesson, noting that not all students were actively engaged in the learning, making it challenging for them to co-construct new learning, and lead students to deeper thinking.

Checking for understanding. Checking for understanding occurs when new content has been taught and the teacher ensures that students have understood the new content accurately. For this dimension, Mia's baseline rating was a one (1) indicating that she did not recognize checking for understanding and could not articulate an analysis of the dimension during the observed lesson.

In her interview prior to the professional development, Mia responded to the question, "What did the teacher do to make sure that the students learned what she wanted to communicate, observing that, "*there were parts where students got stuck so she went back to*

words that were confusing ... it seemed as if she was monitoring for comprehension maybe.” In this excerpt from her baseline interview, it appears that Mia observed the teacher recognizing misconceptions and misunderstandings. She also remarked that the teacher walked around the classroom to collect evidence of student misconceptions and understanding and then used that knowledge to model a way to understand unknown words. She made a connection that showed how the students’ misconceptions led to the teacher to model how to read a passage of text and what to do when the student encounters an unfamiliar word. At the same time, Mia did not observe multiple occasions when the teacher did check for understanding during the lesson. In fact, she stated that *“honestly I’m not sure how she was checking for understanding.”* In this way, it appears that Mia was not able to identify the ways that the teacher checked for understanding, including asking clarifying questions, such as asking one of the students, *“what is your thinking about the sequencing of events in this text?”* Mia did not recognize when the teacher asked students to make claims and back up with evidence using the question, *“what role did the inventor’s wife play in the text?”* Notably, in the baseline performance task, Mia’s rating was a one (1) indicating that she did not recognize the behaviors that are indicative of checking for understanding, and could not articulate an analysis of this dimension.

During the exit performance task, Mia showed growth in her ability to understand the behaviors that take place during a lesson, and to provide an analysis of these behaviors. During the interview, Mia responded to the question about checking for understanding and shared that she did not think that the teacher *“had any idea of whether or not students understood how to do what she wanted them to do.”* She supported her observation saying, that *“there weren’t a lot of kids that were actively or verbally participating.”* She explained that to observe the teacher checking for understanding that students would need to give their own examples of character acting out of character. In fact, she expressed that the questions the teacher should have been asking would refer to their own experience. Her examples included, *“is there somebody that you know in your life that is usually one way and then one day they were different? Why was that? Why do you think they were behaving differently? How do you think they felt?”* These questions reflected that Mia deepened her understanding of the use of clarifying questions in checking for understanding. She shared that these kinds of questions would also lead to students making claims and using evidence to back them up. Mia said that the teacher did the talking for the students rather than giving the students an opportunity to construct their learning through an exchange with the teacher, *“if a kid had a general understanding of the relationship between (the characters)...the teacher provided the textual evidence to show that.”* Noticeably, in the lesson, the teacher did ask students to share their thinking with each other. The small group that was videotaped in the lesson did not adequately demonstrate their understanding of how a character might act out of character, but the teacher shared other examples from her observations with student groups of how they did apply their understanding of the objective in their discussions. Mia did not notice this occurring in the lesson, while her expectation that it would happen, meets the criteria for a deeper understanding of how the behaviors associated with checking for understanding engage students in meeting their learning objective.

Mia showed that her skill in recognizing when a teacher is checking for understanding had increased from a one (1) to a two (2). Following the professional development, Mia recognized that the teacher checked in with small groups, and used the student responses in the whole group. Mia gave an analysis of checking for understanding, but her analysis was flawed based on the evidence from the lesson. Mia’s expectation for checking for understanding included having the students apply the strategy of noticing when a character is acting out of

character to the students' own circumstance, but this was not the objective of the lesson, nor would it have pushed the students' thinking in the way that the teacher intended. At the same time, the teacher used her personal story as a 'hook' to create interest in the lesson. Although Mia could give an analysis, it did not take into account the objective of the lesson. Given her belief that the teacher had not checked for understanding early in the lesson, Mia missed the behaviors that indicated that the teacher listened to students and acknowledged misconceptions, as well as reformulated for some students during the lesson.

Guided practice. Guided Practice occurs when students, after being exposed to new content and having had the opportunity to clarify their understandings, need their understandings reinforced or secured through guided practice or application. Within Guided Practice, Mia's initial rating was a one (1) which showed that she did not recognize that the teacher gave students opportunities to practice close reading to discover the character traits of inventors.

In the baseline interview Mia shared that she thought that the guided practice would occur after the end of the video clip when the teacher directed students to write in their journals about the characteristics of inventors. The interview notes confirm her response noting that students would '*write in journals about character traits using evidence from the text.*' Her own written notes about the video confirm that she noted the teacher assigning guided practice at the end of the lesson. In the interview Mia also said that students completed some of the tasks throughout the lesson. This gives the impression that she did not clearly understand the role of guided practice in this lesson, which was for students to identify the characteristics of an inventor within one text (about the invention of the Slinky toy). She did not specify if the students were speaking with a partner, in a small group or to the whole class. She did not refer to the materials, i.e. a class-constructed chart about traits of inventors, which was visible in front of the class.

At the completion of the professional development sessions about qualities of good instruction, Mia's ratings increased from a one (1) to a three (3). After watching the video at the end, she shared that she observed the teacher giving clear directions for the students. She said

The teacher puts the kids together and she asks them to think about the story they've been reading and sets the stage for their application of the new skill, that new concept, that deeper thinking about characterization, if somebody is out of character what does it mean.

Mia thought that, as she observed in the video, students "*were confused or didn't understand the content*" when they were in the small group to discuss the 'out of character' behavior of Cistine, the girl in the story that the class was reading together. In the video of the lesson, there was one small group being observed to discuss something which initially was not connected to the prompt that the teacher gave them, although when the videographer prompted them to use the sentence frame the group had a brief focused discussion. Mia noted that she didn't have enough data to know if students understood and could interact appropriately with the task, but in observing the video, one group of students didn't appear to respond to the prompt they were given. Mia remarked that the teacher ended the lesson with the words, "*today, when you're reading a book in homeroom or when you're in your independent reading center, think about why (it may be) important (to notice a character acting out of character.*"

Mia reflected that she would want to ask the teacher multiple questions about the guided practice such as "*what did you want students to know and be able to do by the end of this lesson and how did they do?*" It appears that she was thinking more deeply about the learning and

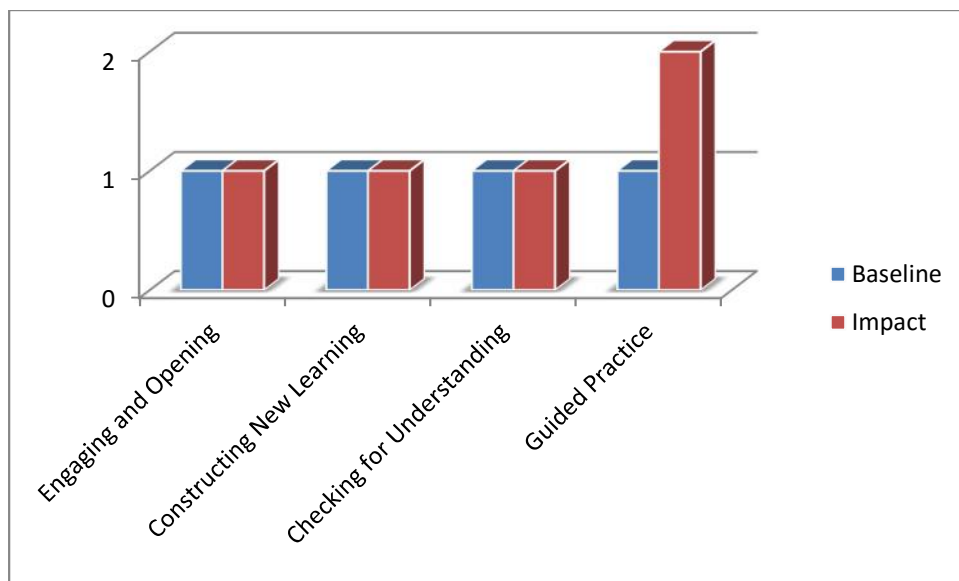
trying to understand what the teacher intended to accomplish in the lesson to meet her objective. This indicates a deeper understanding of the student and teacher interactions during the lesson, because Mia reflected more critically on the teaching and made connections between the instruction and the objective. She found that there was too much teacher talk in the lesson and that the teacher should have created more opportunities for students to practice the learning by responding to teacher prompts with the teacher providing coaching and support. She did not identify the small group activity in the lesson as a way for the teacher to check for student understanding, although the teacher did listen to several groups and shared their thinking with the larger group.

Mia's rating following the professional development was a three (3) indicating that she recognized that the teacher had students work in small groups to talk about why the character of Cistine would act out of character in the story, and that the group of students observed in the video was not clearly successful in using the prompts effectively to practice the strategy they had learned. Mia gave a brief analysis of the way that the teacher asked students to practice the reading. During the interview and written response to her viewing of the video, Mia reflected on what she had observed, and challenged the teaching by thinking about questions that she would have asked both of the teachers to better understand what they were trying to achieve within their lessons.

ID #2: Nancy Uribe

Nancy was the principal at Evelyn Connor Elementary School in RUSD. She had been at the school for ten years and retired at the end of the school year. She was a site administrator for 18 years. Previously, she worked as a high school teacher. Nancy's ratings of her skill in analyzing instruction using elements of a lesson are shown in the table below, as measured by the analysis of baseline and impact data in each of the four dimensions of instruction. Nancy made minimal growth across the four dimensions. She was not able to recognize behaviors of students and teachers that are linked to the dimensions of the lesson, and thus was not able to articulate any kind of analysis of the lesson. I review Nancy's baseline and impact data as reflected in the performance task which consisted of watching the video, writing responses to five questions and then participating in a semi-structured interview which consisted of six questions. The questions for the written task and the interview focused on the phases of the lesson, asking how the teacher opened the lesson, how she engaged students in the learning, how the teacher asked questions of the students, and how students were asked to apply their learning. The questions were designed to determine her understanding of the qualities of good instruction and skill at analyzing the lesson. The table below reflects Nancy's baseline and impact ratings for each of the four dimensions of instruction.

Figure 4: Ratings Growth for ID#2 NU



Looking at the data collected and analyzed during the baseline and exit performance tasks, it appears that Nancy was unable to make any growth in her skill of recognizing behaviors of teachers and students and analyzing a lesson. In the dimensions of guided practice Nancy was able to move her practice to be able to recognize the behaviors of the teacher and students within the lesson.

Engaging and opening. The participating principals were shown a video in which they were asked to focus on the four different instructional phases of a close reading lesson, including the opening of the lesson. In her responses during the baseline performance task, Nancy was unable to articulate an analysis of the opening of the lesson. In her oral and written responses to the questions about the baseline video, Nancy noted that the teacher introduced the lesson when she “*presented essential questions, what are character traits for inventors.*” Further, Nancy did not identify the objective for the lesson, but said during her interview, that the teacher told “*her students that they were going to listen and read and take notes, talk to each other, and come to consensus. And then they would be reporting out as table groups to the others.*” Nancy could not identify the objective of the lesson that was communicated to students. She also did not notice that the teacher did not engage students with a hook to create interest in the lesson, or connect to students’ prior knowledge during the opening, both key strategies that stimulate student learning at the opening of the lesson. Nancy’s baseline rating for this dimension was a one (1), indicating that she was not able to articulate an analysis, or in fact, identify the objective of the lesson to use close reading to help infer character traits of inventors.

At the conclusion of the professional development, data collected during the exit performance task revealed that Nancy was still unable to articulate an analysis of the lesson. Her rating remained a one (1). In the exit interview, Nancy described the opening of the lesson, saying that the teacher, “*introduced the objective and she gave a long example of what she was going to talk about, the idea of being out of character, personalized it using an explanation of how she saw her sister out of character.*” Similar to the baseline performance task, Nancy was unable to identify the teacher’s objective in the lesson, of using changes in a character’s behavior to create interest in a story, and make the reader think about the character’s motivation. Instead,

Nancy interpreted the objective to be about noticing changes in character within the students' own environment, rather than in their reading. In her written response to the question, "*How did the teacher begin the lesson?*" Nancy wrote that the teacher began by "*telling students they are going to learn to notice when someone acts out of character.*" Although she noted the example that the teacher shared, she did not identify it as a way to stimulate students' curiosity in the learning. Nancy stated in her exit interview:

By showing a personal connection to the notion of 'out of character,' the teacher was trying to get students to think about when they may have had that experience, either being out of character themselves or seeing a friend or relative, somebody they know acting out of character.

As indicated in this excerpt, Nancy misinterpreted the teacher's intention to engage students in making connections between a change in character's behavior as a way to indicate motivation, and character development. This lack of comprehension inhibited her ability to demonstrate an understanding of how students and teachers engage in co-constructing learning during this phase of instruction. In fact, at the conclusion of the six professional development sessions, the data revealed that Nancy still could not articulate an analysis of the opening phase of the lesson.

Modeling/constructing new knowledge or skills. Modeling or co-constructing occurs when the teacher intends to introduce new concepts or skills. In the baseline video the lesson was more student-centered and focused on co-constructing dialogue between teachers and students.

Here Nancy's rating again remained unchanged after the professional development. Since she was not able to identify the objective of the lesson in the baseline or exit videos, she had difficulty understanding what the new skill or content might be. In the baseline interview, Nancy noticed that students "*were underlining words that they thought were important for understanding the story and for fleshing out the character traits.*" In her written response to watching the video, she noted that the teacher moved through the following phases of the lesson: "*(First) close reading, (then) the teacher models and demonstrates what to do with challenging vocabulary, and (students) think about prefix, Greek or Latin roots.*" This was the part of the lesson in which the teacher modeled determining the meaning of an unknown word as they were reading the text. The teacher enacted this strategy when she noticed that students were having trouble understanding an unfamiliar word and represented how the teacher modeled explicit strategies that students could apply during their learning. Nancy did not recognize that the teacher asked questions or that students engaged in co-constructing the understanding with the teacher when students found examples of cause and effect, problem and solution and sequential order to infer qualities of inventors that were suggested in the text.

Following the professional development, the rating for Nancy remained a one (1) indicating that Nancy was not able to demonstrate any growth towards articulating an analysis of the co-constructing that occurred in the lesson. Since she did not understand the objective of the lesson, she was not able to recognize how the teacher used a passage from a shared reading to model for students what they could do to recognize when a character was acting out of character, and how they could think more deeply about why the character might act differently. The teacher referred to the chart of prompts multiple times to help students push their thinking about the characters and their motivation in their reading. Nancy continued to apply the teacher's instruction to the notion of identifying when a person is acting uncharacteristically, but she did not make the connection to the passage that the class was reading and that the teacher used as a

way of modeling and co-constructing the learning for the students. In her written response to the question, “*what does the teacher do to introduce the new skill,*” Nancy wrote that the teacher “*Gives the example of her own sister acting out of character with a peer.*” Nancy was unable to demonstrate an understanding of what the lesson was meant to teach students and this impacted her skill at analyzing the lesson.

Checking for understanding. Checking for understanding occurs when the teacher ensures that students have understood the new content accurately. Nancy’s rating for this dimension prior to the professional development was a one (1). In the baseline interview, Nancy responded to the question, “*What did the teacher do to make sure that the students understood what she was trying to communicate?*” saying, “*She started to break down the words into parts asking, ‘does this word have a prefix? Does it have a suffix? Does it have a base word?’*” Here, Nancy identified that the teacher used questioning to help students understand how to break down a work. In her written response to the question, “*What does the teacher do when students are confused?*” Nancy confirmed her misunderstanding and responded, “*Word types, parts of speech, break context clues.*” In these notations, Nancy appeared to refer to the part of the lesson where the teacher modeled breaking down a difficult word for the students. Nancy referred to this part of the lesson several times during the interview and in her written responses, believing that this was the objective of the lesson. In fact, the teacher was modeling one of the strategies that she wanted students to use in their reading, along with looking for cause and effect, problem and solution, and sequencing of events. The teacher had taught these strategies previously and wanted students to apply them when inferring character traits of toy inventors. When asked, “*How did the teacher respond to student questions?*” Nancy remarked:

The teacher spent a long time talking about other things besides traits of an inventor. In the middle of the lesson she set the kids on this course to collect some information, but then in her talking to the kids she veered it off to some other place talking about the construction of the slinky toy. So how did the use of that spring to stabilize a ship contribute to the invention of a slinky?

Nancy missed the intention of this exchange, in which the teacher supported students’ understanding that the text revealed how the inventors of the Slinky noticed that the springs of the ship acted in a way that stabilized the ship, and this realization led the inventors to discover that they could make a toy that acts like a spring. The lesson was not about the ship, but about the process that inventors go through to discover their inventions, and the character traits that they exhibit. Since she was unable to recognize the purpose of this exchange within the lesson, she was concurrently unable to make a clear analysis of this dimension of the learning.

Nancy was unable to analyze the actions of the teacher as the teacher guided students through the passage to identify the sequence of events that led to the invention of the Slinky. In the lesson, the teacher asked students to make claims about their inferences using evidence from the text. The teacher then asked students if there were more events in the sequence of the reading that would show the progress of the inventors in inventing the Slinky. Students responded with several ideas, and the teacher asked the students, “*Who said we had more to identify, can I hear your thoughts?*” The teacher also asked students to think about, “*What role did Betty (the inventor’s wife) play in the text.*” A student responded to this question by referring to the text and responding, “*Betty realized it (the spring) was a toy.*” Nancy did not refer to this exchange during her baseline performance task, and could not recognize the ways in which the teacher checked for understanding during the lesson.

In her exit performance task, Nancy did not demonstrate any growth in articulating an analysis of checking for understanding. Instead of noticing, or analyzing the quality of instruction in the lesson, she referred to feedback she would give the teacher:

I would have asked for volunteers, if somebody didn't understand. Kids understand it better when their peers explain it, better than just re-reading the passage perhaps, and then of course re-reading the passage is effective, but to have kids think about what they might have to answer. I would have had the sticks there with the kids' names on it and, you know, put them on the spot a little bit, because there's nothing else for them to do but listen. So, it would raise their level of concern if they knew they might be called on and they might listen better.

In this excerpt from her exit interview, Nancy indicated that she would tell the teacher to put students on the spot and to raise their level of concern so that the students would pay better attention to the instruction. Here Nancy did not indicate that she had acquired the skill to recognize the teacher behaviors that take place during the lesson, nor was she able to articulate an analysis of the lesson and her rating remained at a one (1). She continued to believe that the objective was to teach students to describe their own personal experience of meeting another person who is acting "out of character." Although she had feedback that she would have given to the teacher, she did not give an analysis of the lesson.

Guided practice/application. Guided practice occurs when students, after being exposed to new content and having had the opportunity to clarify their understandings, need their understandings reinforced or secured through guided practice or application. In this dimension of instruction, Nancy's baseline rating of one (1) reflected her lack of skill in articulating an analysis of the lesson. When she watched the baseline video prior to the professional development her written response to the question, "*How does the teacher ask students to practice the new skill?*" was that the teacher used "*Language frames. (and asked students to) look at confusing words.*" In the baseline interview, Nancy responded to the question, "*How did the teacher ask students to use their new learning?*" by saying, "*She had a language frame on the board and she asked them to look for words that were confusing to them, not that necessarily they didn't know what it meant, but how it was used in the selection that made the selection more clear.*" Nancy did not notice that the teacher provided coaching and support by walking around the room and listening to student conversations. She did recognize that students were working in pairs during this part of the lesson. The guided practice in the lesson was established when the teacher provided appropriate forms of interaction for students who were working in small groups and with a partner to closely read the text and infer characteristics such as determination and creativity of the inventors of the Slinky. They made claims and used evidence to support their claims. The dimension of guided practice was intertwined with checking for understanding and co-constructing the learning. Nancy did not recognize that these cycles of learning were occurring during this lesson and could not articulate an analysis of the lesson.

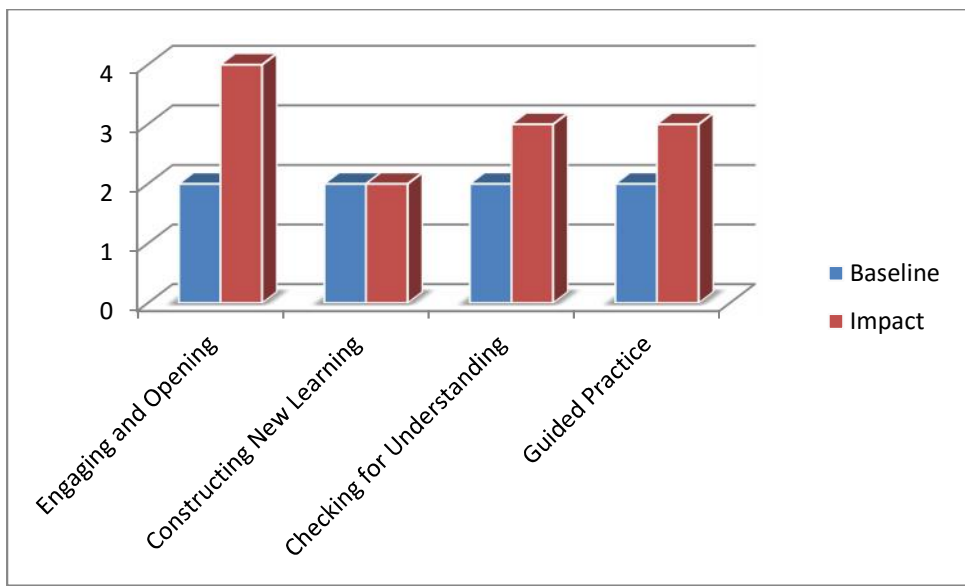
Following the professional development, during the exit interview, Nancy's performance task data reflected a rating of two (2). She responded to the question, "*How did the teacher ask students to apply their new learning?*" by sharing, "*She had them work in the triads and discuss. Most likely she listened to every group, she had prompts, but I didn't read through them.*" In this excerpt, Nancy identified that the teacher structured the lesson with written prompts that she referred to in the lesson. In her written notes, she wrote that to practice the skill the teacher "*goes to chart with explanation, prompts, questions, teacher reads passage, organizes trios for*

discussion.’ Here she was able to recognize that the teacher provided coaching and support for students in their small groups, she structured student practice with materials and established forms of interaction appropriate to the task. Although, Nancy could not develop an analysis of the lesson, she was able to recognize that teacher gave students opportunities to practice using close reading to discover character traits of inventors during the lesson. She did not recognize that the teacher used the prompts to assist students in making connections about why the characters in the story would be acting out of character because they were feeling lonely and far from home. In the lesson, the teacher discussed thinking more deeply about characters acting differently as a way to understand their motivation in the story. Following the professional development, Nancy had not made any gains in the skill of articulating an analysis of guided practice in the lesson.

ID #3: Isabel French

Isabel was the principal of Earhart School in RUSD for the past 20 years. Prior to becoming a site administrator, Isabel was a high school teacher in RUSD. The table below reflects baseline and impact ratings for Isabel based on the semi-structured interview and written responses about the videos she watched before and after the professional development. The performance task consisted of watching the video, writing responses to five questions (Appendix C) and then participating in a semi-structured interview of six questions. The questions for the written task and the interview focused on the phases of the lesson, asking how the teacher opened the lesson, how she engaged students in the learning, how the teacher asked questions of the students, and how students were asked to apply their learning. The questions were designed to gauge participants’ understanding of the qualities of effective instruction and how these qualities contributed to student learning. Isabel’s growth in these areas is reflected in the figure below:

Figure 5: Ratings Growth ID #3 Isabel French



It appears that, based on the data collected and analyzed during the baseline and exit performance tasks, Isabel made growth in her skill of recognizing behaviors of teachers and students and analyzing a lesson specifically within the opening the lesson, checking for understanding and guided practice. Isabel made no growth in her skill to analyze the teacher’s

behaviors constructing new learning,. The growth indicates that Isabel had moved in her understanding of the qualities of instruction and had gained skill in giving a brief surface analysis for the dimensions of constructing new learning and guided practice. In the opening the lesson, she clearly recognized the teacher behaviors that occurred and was able to give a deeper analysis of the teaching that occurred.

Engaging and opening. Engaging and opening refers to a task most prominent at the beginning of the lesson but may recur periodically throughout the lesson. The rating of two (2) gathered from the baseline data indicate that Isabel was able to recognize that the teacher named the objective but did not provide a hook with which to create interest for students in the lesson, or that the teacher did not make connections to students' prior knowledge during the opening of the lesson. In regards to the opening, Isabel answered the question, "*How did the teacher open the lesson?*" with "*review of previous readings: identify essential character traits.*" In addition, during the semi-structured baseline interview, Isabel shared that:

The teacher reviewed the previous readings that they had done and she was asking them to identify the essential character traits... she had the information written up on the whiteboard about what it is that they were going to be talking about and then linking it to what they had already done.

Notes taken during the interview with Isabel confirm this, showing that she shared that the teacher "*introduced the topic linking to previous lessons.*" Here Isabel recognized that the teacher shared the objective and linked to previous lessons, but she did not give an analysis of the lesson which would indicate that the opening did not create interest for students and that, although the teacher linked the objective to previous learning, she did not use the students' prior knowledge to prepare them for the new learning. Isabel did not articulate a sufficient analysis, and the data indicated a rating of two (2).

Impact data reflect that following the professional development, Isabel's rating increased from a two (2) to a four (4). In regards to the video that she watched after the professional development, it appears that Isabel was able to recognize that the teacher established a purpose for the lesson when she told a story about her childhood, and that the story was used to help students think about what might cause a character change their behavior. Isabel recognized that the teacher effectively used her personal story to engage students in thinking about reasons for characters to act in unexpected ways.

After watching the video, Isabel wrote in response to the question, "*How did the teacher begin the lesson?*" That the teacher was "*talking about characters who respond out of character. She told a personal story about her bossy older sister.*" During her exit interview, she responded to the question, "*What phases of instruction did you observe?*" by saying:

(The teacher) was so thoughtful in her process, taking her personal experience, which kids love to hear your own personal experiences, so trying to find a way to connect them and then connecting it to the literature, which is a little more separate and then, my guess is, that she's going to go back to that personal. She's finding a way for them to then talk about character development.

The exit interview notes confirm this and refer to the teacher "*introducing the concept of characters responding out of character, using that as hook for thinking about character that changes, connected to family story.*" The students' learning would be applied to '*character*

development’ and help them to better understand how it contributed to their reading comprehension. In her analysis of the opening of the lesson, Isabel related:

I was thinking too if there were more times to just turn and talk in that introduction – because it was long – but giving them some chances to turn and process. So what did you notice about my sister’s behavior? What did you notice about the character’s esteem? ... I think it could’ve gone in a little bit deeper level, but I think it was a good intro and I really get the sense from her that she’s very thoughtful in what she’s doing and so she’ll make sure that it connects.

In this excerpt, Isabel articulated an analysis of the teaching in the lesson, and recognized that the teacher was using the hook in the lesson to engage students in thinking about character development. At the same time, she found that students needed to be given time to process during the opening to consider ways of applying their new strategy to another context. At the end of the professional development sessions, Isabel was able to articulate a deeper analysis of the teaching that occurred during this lesson.

Modeling/constructing new knowledge or skills. Modeling or co-constructing new knowledge or skills occurs when the teacher intends to introduce new concepts or skills. In the baseline video the lesson is more student-centered and focuses on co-constructing dialogue between teachers and students. Based on data collected prior to the professional development, Isabel was able to recognize that the teacher modeled a text and asked students questions about the reading, but did not give an analysis of this dimension, indicating a rating of two (2). Prior to the professional development, Isabel watched the baseline video and remarked:

The teacher modeled a passage for the students of what she wanted them to be able to do. She rephrased for students to go back into the text so she was modeling a lot of what she was expecting the kids to be able to do... The passage that they were reading was new, but the strategies of using text to support their thinking appeared to be work that they had done previously.

Concurrently, in her written response to the question, “*How does the teacher introduce the new content?*” Isabel replied, that it was “*not new content, (but it was a) new passage, (teacher provided) strategies to use text to support thinking.*” She observed that the teacher modeled explicit strategies for students to practice their new skill, and that the teacher, “*models reading a passage and coming across an unfamiliar word (stabilize). (She) talks through her thinking.*” Isabel commented in her written responses that the teacher “*Rephrases for students to go back in the text. She talks with group about their thinking and students report out to whole class explaining their rationale.*” In addition to these written responses, Isabel referred to the teacher behaviors during her interview. She shared the following:

The teacher had them work in small groups and then report back to class. And then she would have them go back and look at another section and then again report back to the class. So she continually was asking them to restate what they came up with as a group.

These responses indicate that Isabel noticed the cycle of small group work and whole group debriefing. She observed that the teacher asked questions to enable students to co-construct their understanding, and students were actively engaged in co-construction with the teacher during the part of the lesson when students were reading, discussing in small groups, sharing their thinking and then returning to the text. She also noted that the teacher asked students to reformulate their thinking for the group.

At the conclusion of the professional development, Isabel watched another video of a close reading lesson in Fourth Grade and participated in an interview. Based on this data her exit rating on the performance task following the professional development was a three (3) indicating that Isabel recognized that the teacher modeled reading the text and describing the way that the character was acting differently. Isabel also noticed the lack of student response to the modeling, and that students were not given the opportunity to respond to the prompts. Isabel gave a minimal analysis of the instruction noticing that the teacher modeled thinking about the character in a way that could help students understand character development. In the exit interview, Isabel observed that the teacher *“was looking at character development. And my guess is that she’s working on that in their own reading and writing, developing character and character voice.”* The notes collected during the interview reflect the same information, saying that Isabel in the interview noted that the teacher was *“looking at character development and working on it in reading and writing”* during the modeling phase of the lesson. During the exit interview, Isabel reflected that

As the teacher was focusing on what she wanted them to look at she read a passage out of the story that then they were familiar with and could talk about the character traits of that character from what they remembered from the story.

In these excerpts, Isabel recognized the teacher modeling a passage of literature to help students understand character development, and used her observation to briefly analyze the learning for students.

Checking for understanding. Checking for understanding refers to the behaviors of students and teachers that occur when new content has been taught and the teacher engages in a set of actions to ensure that students have understood the new content accurately. Based on the data collected before the professional development, Isabel’s rating was a two (2) which denoted her recognition that the teacher asked students questions during the lesson, but Isabel did not analyze the way in which the questions and student responses were used to determine student understanding of the strategies to discover character traits in the reading. In her baseline interview, Isabel noticed:

The teacher was constantly having them work in small groups and then report back to class. And then she would have them go back and look at another section and then again report back to the class. So she continually was asking them to restate what they came up with as a group. I didn’t really see that they didn’t understand. She questioned and then had them rephrase again so ‘show me where in the text.’ Tell me where in the text it says that. And so it made them go back.

Isabel recognized that the teacher collected evidence of students’ understanding by asking groups to report to the class, while students attempted to make evidence based claims as they shared their understanding with the teacher. Isabel also referred to the teacher reformulating student understanding by asking students to restate, and then the teacher would rephrase their statement and ask for evidence. Isabel did not notice that the teacher structured the student understanding when a student wanted to include the statement that “the Slinky had sold many units to date” in the sequence of events. The teacher co-constructed the reformulation with the students, having them work in pairs to determine if this statement belonged in their sequence of events. Although Isabel noticed the teacher using questioning to check for understanding, she did not give an analysis of this dimension in the lesson.

During the post-intervention data collection, Isabel completed an exit performance task and watched a different video clip of a close reading lesson. During the interview with Isabel, she shared that the teacher “*encouraged (the students) to look back at the prompt,*” as reflected in the interview notes. She concluded:

The teacher did sit in on some of the groups and gave feedback to individual groups and then as a whole group she talked about what she heard from that group. But it might’ve also been helpful to have a little bit of a report out. And in their conversation she – one of the kids, kind of, started to get stuck. She encouraged them to look at the process. Take a look at the process if that would help. She used questioning strategies to help students to think about why somebody would behave the way they did, so she used a personal connection as well as, kind of, a more academic frame for their thinking and then having them share their thinking, talk about their thoughts...And again the only piece I thought could’ve been enhanced would be then to share out their thoughts.

The data collected following the professional development sessions reveal that Isabel’s rating was a three (3) indicating that Isabel recognized the teacher modeled reading the text and describing the way that the character was acting differently. Isabel also noticed the lack of student response to the modeling, and that students were not given the opportunity to respond to the prompts. Finally, Isabel gave a minimal analysis of the instruction noticing that the teacher modeled thinking about the character in a way that could help students understand character development.

Guided practice/application. Guided practice describes the set of teacher and student behaviors that are observed when students, after being exposed to new content and having had the opportunity to clarify their understandings, need their understandings reinforced through guided practice or application. The baseline data indicated that Isabel recognized that the teacher gave students opportunities to practice using close reading to discover character traits of inventors but did not articulate an analysis of the lesson, giving her a baseline rating of two (2). In response to the question, ‘How does the teacher help students practice their new skill?’ Isabel wrote ‘*rephrases for students*’ and ‘*goes back in the text. She talks with the group about their thinking. She reports out to the whole class explaining their rationale.*’ During the interview, Isabel reflected:

Students were reading a text, sharing information in small groups or in pairs, and then some were asked to report out, but not all. The passage that they were reading was new, but the strategies of using text to support their thinking appeared to be work that they had done previously. It didn’t look like that was new to them. When she would have them go back to their groups they went right to the group and then they were, kind of, arguing their point with one another.

The notes from the baseline interview confirm this observation, reporting that Isabel noted that “*(students) constantly work in small groups, report back to class and restate what they came up with as a group.*” In these excerpts from the interview and notes, it appears that Isabel recognized that students interacted appropriately with the task by working in small groups and reporting their evidence back to the class as a way to practice the close reading strategy.

Following the six sessions of professional development, data collected from the exit performance task revealed growth in her ability to give an analysis of the teaching in this dimension, which is reflected in her exit rating of three (3). In her exit interview, she noted that:

The teacher had the students engage in partner conversation and share their thoughts about it. So then I saw them having that student engagement because there was a little bit of separation between students at the beginning, but then having them connect with one another (increased engagement). She used questioning strategies to help students to think about why somebody would behave the way they did, so she used a personal connection as well as, kind of, a more academic frame for their thinking.

Isabel's written notes made while watching the exit video clip indicate that students were asked to *'take a character from a story they had read and her character traits. Then they read a passage and she asked them to push their thinking. They used a partner share and the teacher encouraged students to look at the prompts.'*

In these guided practice excerpts, Isabel recognized that the teacher collected evidence of students understanding informally when she participated in one of the triads and listened to some of the other triads. She shared her analysis:

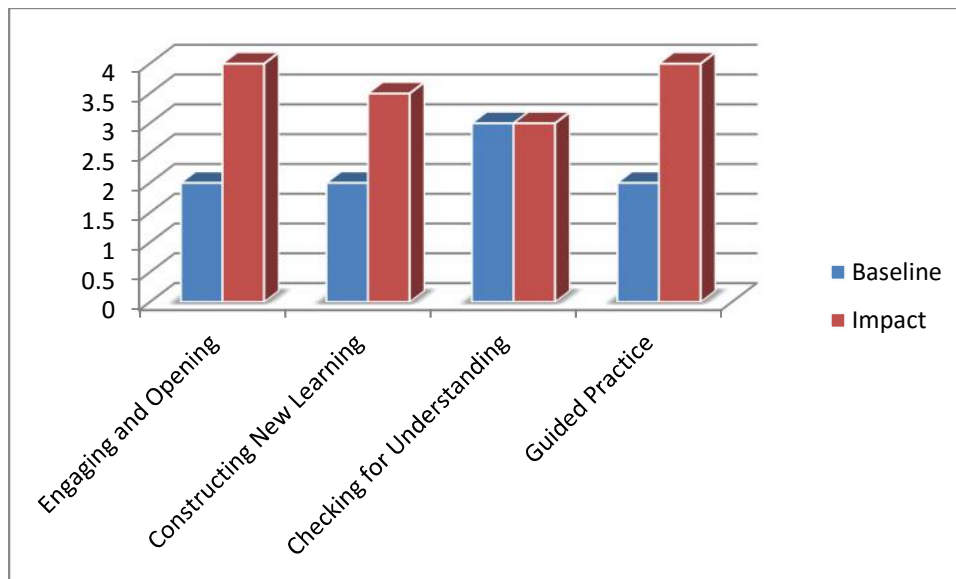
It might've also been helpful to have a little bit of a report out. You wouldn't necessarily need to have everybody report out, but then to have groups share in order to link them and to have them be more personalized but also to deepen their thinking. That's that processing piece for them. So that was one thing I noticed. That would've been helpful I think, but they were responding and engaged

Isabel's impact data reveal that at the end of the professional development sessions, Isabel was able to recognize the teacher had students work in small groups to talk about why the character of Cistine would act out of character in the story, and that the group of students observed in the video was not able to use the prompts effectively to practice the strategy they had learned. The principal gave a brief surface analysis of the way that the teacher asked students to practice their learning. At the end of the professional development, Isabel's rating for the dimension of guided practice was a three (3).

ID #4: Yesenia Ines

Yesenia was the principal of Jefferson Elementary School in the RUSD. She had been the principal of Jefferson for the past five years, and prior to becoming an administrator, she was a high school teacher. The table below reflects baseline and impact ratings for Isabel based on the interview and written responses about the video she watched before and after the professional development.

Figure 6: Ratings Growth ID #4 Yesenia Ines



I reviewed Yesenia’s baseline and impact data as reflected in the performance task which consisted of watching the video, writing responses to five questions and then participating in a semi-structured interview which consisted of six questions. The questions for the written task and the interview focused on the phases of the lesson, asking how the teacher opened the lesson, how she engaged students in the learning, how the teacher asked questions of the students, and how students were asked to apply their learning. The questions were designed to determine her understanding of the qualities of good instruction and how these qualities contributed to students learning. It appears that prior to the professional development sessions, Yesenia was able to recognize the behaviors of teachers and students that she observed in the classroom as they appeared in the four elements of instruction that are included in this design study. Noticeably, the data indicate that she also provided a brief analysis of the instruction within the element of checking for understanding

After participating in the six professional development sessions, the exit data indicate that Yesenia’s skill increased in all the dimensions of a lesson. She recognized the behaviors of teachers and students within the lesson, and she was able to give an analysis of the teaching and learning as well. Noticeably, in the areas of opening and guided practice her analyses were particularly detailed.

Engaging and opening. Engaging and opening refers to a task most prominent at the beginning of the lesson. Here, Yesenia’s baseline rating of two (2) indicates that she recognized that the teacher named the objective, and that students were on task, but she did not provide an analysis of the opening of the lesson.

In her written response to the questions posed as she watched the video, she wrote that the teacher shared the *‘objective and identified essential character traits of inventors and reviewed the how by looking closely at text.. The teacher asked students what you learned and what surprised you.’* In her baseline interview, Yesenia expanded on this understanding, saying that the teacher had:

A clear objective in establishing the purpose of the lesson and within that objective, the opportunity to not just talk about the essential question, tap into a little bit of prior

reading where students have practiced strategies before but also how they were going to achieve their objective by reading closely, annotating, discussing with the class

She did a very brief setup and framing of the objective and referenced the prior readings that students had done where they were looking at the essential question of what are the character traits for inventors and then she introduced the new, she said this is the new text we're going to be reading. We're going to be looking closely at the text as we've done before. We're going to annotate as we've read and we're going to discuss with the class and ultimately we're going to end up writing our response after we've had the opportunity to share with one another.

Interview notes confirm that Yesenia referred to the *'brief setup, framing of objective, referenced to prior reading,'* and *'a clear objective, establishing purpose of lesson.'* These excerpts point to Yesenia's skill of distinguishing the objective in the lesson which consisted of looking at traits for inventors and the steps students would take to meet the objective. She also noted that the teacher referred to previous work that the class had done on this topic. Within the baseline data collection, Yesenia did not notice that the teacher failed to create interest for the students with a hook, nor did the teacher engage students in accessing their prior knowledge and practice with close reading. For this reason, her baseline rating indicated that she recognized that the teacher named the objective and referred to the chart, but she did not analyze this element of the lesson

The exit rating of four (4) reflects that Yesenia made growth in this area and move beyond merely recognizing what occurred during instruction. In fact, Yesenia recognized that the teacher established a purpose for the lesson, stimulated students' curiosity and analyzed this element to come to conclusions about the effectiveness of the teaching that occurred during this element of the lesson.

As she watched the video, Yesenia responded to the question, *"how does the teacher begin the lesson?"* saying the teacher told students that she was going to *"teach you another way to learn about characters being out of character, named objective, circle up the class. Then she defines and gives example, from her own life. It's like the workshop model with an example students can relate to, a bossy sister."* Concurrently, the exit interview notes reflect that she described the lesson like *"scenes in a play, naming objective clearly, giving a definition with example, relatable, the phrasing connects to academic language, expands on that-several access points, slows down to say pay attention."* In the exit interview, she described the teacher and student behaviors in detail:

But even just talking about how she set up the kids, the class, the proximity in the circle and she put herself into the center of the circle at a certain point so that everybody was being addressed. Her pacing. Her deliberate pausing. If I were to kind of look at this as scenes in a play, she started by naming the objective. We've learned a little bit about characterization and now we're going to study what happens when someone's out of character. She defines it by giving an example from her own life with her story. It's kind of like the mini workshop where there's a workshop model. It was an example that students could relate to, her bossy big sister. She uses phrases like, "this is the way I've never seen her before, and this was out of character." Once again, it connects to that academic language that she wants the students to begin to understand. She names it. Then she expands upon that by (saying) normally she was very bossy, but now she wasn't, so that the kids have several access points to be able to follow her in the story.

Then she slows down to say you really have to pay attention because it would be easy to draw conclusion on something that, or dismiss something as just being weird and odd, and then she introduces that whole idea of complex thinking and pushing your thinking.

In these excerpts, Yesenia went beyond identifying the behaviors to create an analysis about the teacher's intentions and planning for the lesson. She made an analogy that the lesson was delivered, "like scenes from a play." She showed that gaining the students' attention set them up to be engaged in listening to her story. She mentioned the teacher's pacing, and delivery of the opening of the lesson, and inclusion of academic language in the lesson that pushed students' thinking. She noted that the teacher established a clear purpose for the lesson, and created interest by sharing her personal story which she connected to the concept of understanding character development in literature. In conclusion, following the professional development sessions, Yesenia analyzed the effectiveness of this lesson in her interview.

Modeling/co-constructing new knowledge or skills. Modeling or co-constructing occurs when the teacher intends to introduce new concepts or skills. In the baseline video the lesson was more student-centered and focused on co-constructing dialogue between teachers and students. Based on data collected prior to the professional development, Yesenia's rating of two (2) indicates that she recognized the teacher modeled reading a text, and asked questions, but Yesenia did not give an analysis of this part of the lesson.

In excerpts from the baseline data, Yesenia watched the video and wrote about the lesson that she observed, "*close reading, the teacher models and demonstrates what to do with challenging vocabulary and think about prefixes using Greek or Latin roots-go back into text to pick up clues.*" The baseline interview notes reflect that she made comments about "*feedback and references to prior learning. The teacher asked, 'where have we seen this before?'*" The objective was about "*traits of inventors, using predictions.*" In her baseline interview, Yesenia shared:

At one point, she had part of the text projected on the document camera where she was actually able to illustrate what parts would be worthy of annotating, the one she pulled out so the students were able to associate the support details.

Here Yesenia was not able to move beyond naming several of the activities in the lesson. While she identified using the document camera to clarify instruction for students, and modeling how to determine the meaning of a word, she did not refer to the questions that the teacher asked behaviors of the students as they were working with a partner to discuss the problem and solution within the text. She did not recognize how teachers and students interacted to co-construct their understanding of the qualities of toy inventors through the reading of the passage, discussion with a partner or asking questions of students to engage them in making claims and showing evidence from the text to support them.

The exit data collected and analyzed after the six professional development sessions took place reveal a positive change in her skill at analyzing behaviors associated with modeling/constructing new knowledge, indicated by the exit rating of three (3) for Yesenia. As Yesenia watched the exit video she wrote a response to the question, "*how did the teacher introduce the skill or strategy to students*" describing that the teacher had a "*story, names skill, gives story of sister (uses phrases like 'never seen her before-out of character, repeated and names it, normally bossy, but now...'*" In the exit interview notes, Yesenia related that the

teacher “*introduces the chart, scaffolding using questions, connects to story with scaffold.*” During her exit interview, Yesenia responded that the teacher:

Moves from the story to the chart and introduces this again, once again, is the scaffolding. She shows ways that you can go back when you are reading or listening to something and the questions you can ask yourself that will help you with the deeper thinking, the more complex thinking. Then as she's explaining it, she goes back to the story that she's already told about her sister as the illustration. Once again, that scaffold is really, really helpful. Then she puts the kids together and she asks them to let's think about the story we've been reading and sets the stage for that, so their application of the new skill, that new concept, that deeper thinking about characterization when somebody is out of character, what does it mean, what does it tell us.

Based on the data it appears that in the close reading lesson, Yesenia recognized that the teacher modeled reading the text and described the way that the character was acting differently, as well as how the teacher used a chart with prompts and sentence frames as a scaffold for the small group discussion. Yesenia gave an analysis of the instruction noticing that the teacher modeled thinking about the character in a way that could help students understand character development. Yesenia did not refer to the teacher's missed opportunities to further push students in their thinking about the characters in the story in her analysis.

Checking for understanding. Checking for understanding is the part of the lesson in which new content has been taught and the teacher ensures that students have understood the new content accurately. Within this dimension, the baseline and exit data reflect Yesenia's rating of three (3), indicating that after the professional development she did not make growth in her skill of analyzing checking for understanding in the lesson.

In watching the videotaped lesson before the professional development sessions, Yesenia responded to the question, “*what happens when students seemed confused?*” by writing that the teacher was able to “*discuss character traits and go back to text for specific evidence when author infers the trait, ask follow up question that help students go back to find words and phrases author uses that shows she didn't give up.*” The baseline interview reflected:

She asked follow up questions for clarification. She asked students if they agreed or if they had a difference of opinion and why. She asked them to look to see where they have that idea and actually look closely at the text together. She provided the opportunity for students to turn and talk with your partners and then let's hear what your partner has to say, what you had to say, what your group had to say. She both stretched and scaffolded the lesson, so that every child could understand.

Yesenia noted that the teacher asked clarifying questions, asked questions to determine if students agreed or did not agree and then had them cite evidence to support their thinking. She also described the opportunity for students to turn and talk in the lesson. She did not specifically name the students' responses, but they were implied in her discussion. Yesenia analyzed the lesson referring to the ways in which teachers and students interacted in order to engage in teaching and learning. She noticed that when the teacher uses questioning as a way to check for understanding, students are able to develop a clearer picture of how words and phrases are used in the text to infer traits of an inventor. This analysis of the lesson is reflected in Yesenia's baseline rating of three (3).

Following the completion of the six professional development sessions, the exit data collected for Yesenia reflect that there was no change in her skill of providing a brief analysis of checking for understanding that occurred during the lesson, and her rating remained a three (3). As Yesenia watched the videotaped lesson that was used to collect the exit data, she responded to the question of *“what happened when students seemed confused?”* by writing that, *“the teacher pointed out complex thoughts, gave examples of pushing herself and going further. She gave examples of students “pushing their thinking.”* In her exit interview, she reflected that:

The third person was encouraged to take a look at the prompt. Once again, it's the combination of scaffolding and stretching going on within the lesson throughout the lesson. In fact, that was the whole heart of this is it's stretching our thinking. It's not looking at just what's our first impression, but looking at the more complicated. And how does that help. The part that's going to come next, which is really sophisticated, is how does that move the story forward.

What I did note is that she was able, when she brought the class together, to emphasize the strengths that she wanted. She was able to attribute what the students who are thinking deeply what it looks like with the students in the classroom by using a student's example. (The student) brought really more, and he had a conversation that illustrated more complex thinking. This was what it looked like and what it sounded like. She gave a very specific example from the students to validate their work. Once again, the teacher reinforced the concept of deep thinking.

While the interview notes showed that Yesenia observed that *“we didn't see confusions, but focused on student strengths when she chose the student as an example (more opportunities for complex thinking). The teacher was validating the student response.”* In these excerpts from the exit data it appears that Yesenia noted that the teacher collected evidence of students' understanding during the small group interactions, and was able to use one student's comments as a way to illustrate the depth of thinking that she was looking for in all students' conversations. She also reflected on how the teacher reformulated their understanding as she shared the student's thinking with the whole group. Here she was able to illustrate the ways in which the teacher used checking for understanding to focus on student strengths as models and connect these behaviors of teacher and students in a way that pushed their thinking about the motivation for characters acting 'out of character.' Yesenia's brief analysis recognized that the teacher used the students' responses within the small groups to activate students' understandings of the ways that characters act 'out of character.'

Guided practice/application. Guided practice describes the set of teacher and student behaviors that are observed when students, after being exposed to new content and having had the opportunity to clarify their understandings, need their understandings reinforced or secured through guided practice or application. The baseline data collected during the performance task reveal that Yesenia's rating of two (2) indicated that she recognized that the teacher gave students opportunities for guided practice using close reading to discover traits of inventors.

Prior to the professional development sessions, Yesenia watched the videotape of a close reading lesson and responded to the question, *“How does the teacher help students to practice the new skill?”* writing that the teacher asked the students:

'What is the problem-solution?' She had students turn and talk, she asked for parts of text, and she gave the students work with a partner looking at the sequence of events and

key words. The teacher clarified, asked for agreement or difference of opinion and asked for a summary table talk.

The interview notes reflect that she shared the teacher giving “*the students an opportunity to speak with their partners.*” In the interview, Yesenia discussed the following observation of students and teachers during the lesson:

The teacher gave the students an opportunity to speak with their partners. She asked some key questions and scaffolded those questions and asked for clarification. They examine the text, they annotate the text. In some cases she was actually able to illustrate what would be worthy of annotating, with the one (example) she pulled out so the students were able to associate the support details.

In these excerpts, Yesenia noticed that the teacher assigned the students to work with a partner, and asked questions. Nonetheless, she did not move beyond recognizing the actions of the teacher. She did not articulate an analysis of the guided practice that occurred during the session, noticing why the teacher used particular strategies or indicating ways that the lesson was, or could be, effective.

After the six professional development sessions exit data were collected to indicate Yesenia’s skill at analyzing the lesson element of guided practice. The following excerpts related to this element were identified during the collection of exit data. The data reflect a significant increase in Yesenia’s ability to demonstrate the depth of knowledge associated with an understanding of the qualities of good instruction which occurs during guided practice. As she watched the videotape of the close reading lesson, she responded to the question, “*how did the teacher ask students to practice their new skill?*” writing that the teacher used a chart which she introduced to the students, asking “*what can we think about?*” Yesenia also wrote that students were seated in a circle, and during guided practice the teacher put students in groups of three for a brief discussion. In addition, Yesenia referred to written prompts to scaffold the activity, noting “*this is important because..., the bigger idea is....*” while the notes from the exit interview referred to the teacher behavior in which she “*put kids together to apply new concept and asked them, ‘what does it mean?’*” Finally, in the interview Yesenia shared that:

The teacher set up as part of her lesson plan: when I get to this point in the lesson, I’m going to put them into triads and I’m going to point out, before I put them into triads, here are some sentence starters to get you thinking more complex about your ideas... Then she puts the kids together and she asks them to think about the story we’ve been reading and sets the stage for that, so their application of the new skill, that new concept, that deeper thinking about characterization, if somebody is out of character what does it mean, what does it tell us. She was able to attribute what the students who are thinking deeply, and what it looks like with the students in the class by using a student’s example. The student had a conversation in his group that illustrated more complex thinking. This was what it looked like and what it sounded like.

Here Yesenia illustrated her analysis of the complex process of teaching and learning that took place during guided practice. She represented the behaviors of the teacher that provided coaching and support as the students met in triads, and the students’ response to the opportunity for guided practice by engaging in brief discussions of the characters in their story. Consequently, she analyzed the work that the teacher did to engage students in thinking in more complex ways about character development by describing the ways in which the teacher’s

actions stimulated the students to consider the motivation of the characters and their development in the story.

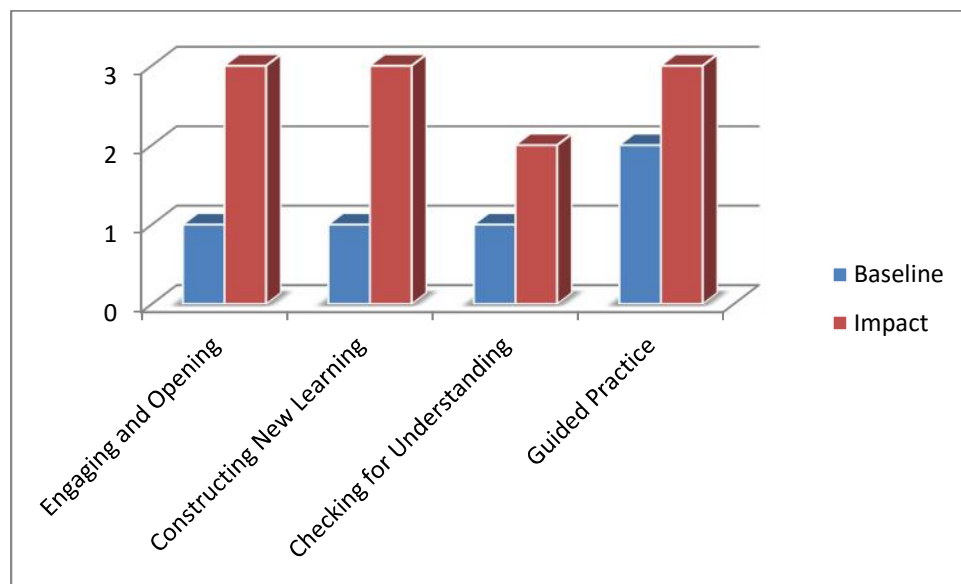
In conclusion, Yesenia’s baseline and impact data collected before and after the professional development showed a significant positive change, moving from a two (2) to a four (4). She moved from merely being able to recognize teacher and student behaviors within the lesson elements to conducting a deeper analysis of the ways in which the teaching fostered student learning. She articulated the momentum of the lesson, from the beginning in which the teacher hooked students with an engaging story towards the conclusion, including co-construction the meaning of character development as they act ‘out of character’ and students pushing their thinking to consider more deeply character motivation in the story and ways to apply that to their daily practice.

ID #5: Jacob Ulrich

Jacob was the principal of MLK School in the RUSD. He had been the principal of this school for the last five years. Prior to becoming a site administrator, he was an elementary teacher. At the end of the school year, Jacob shared that he would be returning to a teaching role in the coming school year. He has been employed by RUSD for his entire career as an educator.

The table below reflects baseline and impact ratings for Jacob based on the interview and written responses about the videos he watched before and after the professional development. Jacob’s understanding of the qualities of good instruction is reflected in the baseline and impact data collected in the two performance tasks which appears below in Figure 12.

Figure 7: Ratings Growth ID #5 Jacob Ulrich



Engaging and opening. Engaging and opening refers to a task most prominent at the beginning of the lesson but may recur periodically throughout the lesson. After having viewed the video, Jacob was unable to articulate an analysis about the opening of the lesson. The interview notes reflect that he talked about the teacher as she ‘*introduced the topic. (She was) explicit about outcomes. She demonstrated (the strategy) with one inventor.*’ In the interview, he shared that he noticed that “*the teacher introduced it (the objective) with the anticipatory set. I think she was pretty explicit about the outcomes that she wanted from them.*” Although he used

the term anticipatory set, which indicates the opening of the lesson Jacob did not identify the strategies that the teacher used to open the lesson. He did refer to the objective that the teacher shared with the students, but did not specify what the objective was in the lesson. He did not notice that the teacher did not stimulate students' interest or curiosity about the content of the lesson, nor did he recognize that the teacher did not access students' prior knowledge to help them gain access to the learning.

After participating in the six professional development sessions, Jacob's responses to the exit performance task indicate that he had increased his skill in delivering a brief analysis of the opening of the lesson, and his rating showed an increase moving from a two (2) to a three (3). As he watched the video of the Close reading lesson, in response to the question, "*What does the teacher do to introduce the new skill?*" he wrote the following bullet points about the behaviors of students and teachers,

- *(Students were) seated in circle*
- *(Teacher) gave background on the topic*
- *(Teacher) articulated objective- "when a character is acting out of character"*
- *(Teacher told) personal story illustrating the topic*
- *(Teacher shared how her deeper thinking) changed perception of her sister, and showed a whole new side of her*
- *(Teacher) Chart, tied it back to text being read, "Remember how...?"*
-

In addition, the interview notes reveal that he described "*the objective, the anticipatory set, and the hook using a personal story.*" In his interview at the conclusion of the professional development, Jacob shared:

Well, she started with setting the objective. She hooked them in with the personal story that she had. She had them seated in a circle. She gave them a little bit of background on the topic of when a character's acting out a character and stated that as the objective. It seemed like she was trying to get students to look at character or look at characters in a book as dynamic and that even though they may think that they understand a character to be a certain way that there are times where a character would act out of character as well. She stated that she wanted them to understand when characters are acting out of character and illustrated that with her own personal example of her sister and how it – she used a phrase that it changed her perception of her sister.

Jacob gave a detailed reflection of the behaviors of students and teachers that are present in the dimension of opening the lesson. He mentioned the hook in the opening that engaged students in listening to the teacher's personal story, and he articulated her purpose in sharing that story in order to help students see the characters in their reading 'as dynamic' in order to show their development. He was able to provide a brief analysis of the opening of the lesson, and the teacher's use of her personal story to hook students into learning about character development and its' effectiveness in engaging students in learning.

Modeling/co-constructing new knowledge or skills. Modeling or co-constructing occurs when the teacher intends to introduce new concepts or skills. In the baseline video the lesson was more student-centered and focused on co-constructing dialogue between teachers and students. The baseline data for this dimension reveal that, with respect to this lesson, Jacob could not articulate an analysis of the co-constructing of learning that occurred during this dimension of

the lesson which corresponded with this baseline rating of two (2). As he watched the videotaped lesson, Jacob wrote his response to the question, “*How does the teacher introduce the skill or strategy?*” noting that the teacher “*modeled the strategy (identifying unknown words using familiar parts of the word, context clues, illustrations/pictures). The teacher talks to the text, stops frequently and thinks aloud.*” During the interview when asked, “*Was there any new skill or content taught,*” he responded “*I can’t recall if there was anything that was new.*” These excerpts from the baseline data reveal that Jacob was not able to articulate an analysis of this dimension. He did not include the ways that the teacher used questioning strategies to engage with students in co-constructing their understanding of how they could infer character traits of the toy inventor from their reading. He also missed the evidence of the teacher presenting students with a language frame to support their partner discussions. Finally, he missed the student engagement with the text, with partners and with a small group.

At the end of the professional development, Jacob viewed another video of a close reading lesson from a different Fourth Grade class. In his written and verbal responses, he exhibited evidence of a deeper understanding of the behaviors that were present during the modeling and co-constructing phase of the lesson. In his written reflection, he responded to the question, “*How did the teacher introduce the skill or strategy?*” by sharing how the teacher structured the activities within the lesson, such as:

(The teacher) paints a mental picture of text up to this point, reads aloud slowly with expression, enabled think time, reread key passages/phrases, triads, discussion and gave prompts to use as sentence starters and grouped students in arranged groupings by moving the chairs.

In addition, the notes from the exit interview reflect that Jacob noticed that the teacher “*used the phrase, ‘let’s give this a try,’ and provided scaffolded support. She painted a mental picture when she read aloud, slowly with expression, and built in think time. She repeated a passage and students seemed engaged, calm, not off task, engagement showed more as they talked.*” Jacob’s interview revealed a more detail description of the work of teacher and students during the lesson:

I liked the way she phrased it when they went into that practice. She said, “Let’s give this a try.” It’s scaffolded support. We’re going to go ahead and give it a go and see if you understand what it is. She had them start painting out a mental picture of the text at that point, the setting and what happened in the plot after that. And that she read aloud. She read slowly with some expression. I wonder if that was deliberate about giving that think time. She even repeated one part of the passage that seemed to be important and then she broke them up into triads. They seemed to be engaged in the conversation.

Following the professional development sessions, Jacob provided a brief analysis of the modeling that the teacher used to support student understanding of how to recognize when a character is acting out of character and engage in deeper thinking about character development.. He noted the scaffolding of the teacher in identifying the way that characters might act differently and how that is connected to student engagement. Jacob’s rating rose to a three (3) indicating his skill of recognizing that the teacher modeled the reading of the text and described the way that the character was acting differently.

Checking for understanding. Checking for understanding is the part of the lesson in which new content has been taught and the teacher ensures that students have understood the

new content accurately. The baseline data for this part of the lesson revealed that Jacob's rating was a one (1) indicating that he could not articulate an analysis about checking for understanding. After viewing the video of the Close reading lesson, he wrote in response to the question, "*What did the teacher do when students were confused?*" that he was "*not clear on a time where students appeared confused*" while the interview notes show that he discussed the teacher's use of '*verbal checks for understanding, called raised hands randomly.*' In the baseline interview, Jacob shared that:

I was trying to remember if it was; how she did any check for understanding, or any sort of assessment...verbal checks for understanding. I think she did call upon, was it raised hands, or did she call randomly? I'm not sure, but she did call upon students. I think she did re-teach it then, if I'm remembering right.

These excerpts reveal that Jacob could not remember or was not aware of any of the behaviors of the teacher or students that could clarify or support student understanding of the learning during this lesson.

Nonetheless, after the completion of the professional development, the exit data reveal growth in Jacob's ability to recognize checking for understanding and articulate a brief analysis of the teaching, with a rating of three (3). During the exit interview as recorded in the notes, Jacob expressed his understanding that the teacher shared the '*informal assessment, listening to group check for understanding.*' In his exit interview, he reflected

The teacher did some informal assessment as far as were kids getting what the idea was about. She validated what they said and then at times she even extended a little bit further with their ideas. Like, 'it sounds like what you're saying is this and one thing to think about is that. It seemed to be presented in a way that it was pretty explicit and pretty articulate enough that it was easy to understand. I think given the example of it – there were a couple of comments, questions from students that showed some understanding.

These excerpts from the exit data reveal that Jacob observed that the teacher collected evidence of students understanding by asking them to share their understanding and asked the students to make claims and back them up with evidence. He also noticed that she suggested appropriate reformulations when she extended further with their ideas. In this way, he was able to articulate an analysis that reflected his understanding of the instruction.

Guided practice/application. Guided practice describes the set of teacher and student behaviors that are observed when students, after being exposed to new content and having had the opportunity to clarify their understandings, need their understandings reinforced or secured through guided practice or application. Within guided practice, the baseline data indicate that Jacob recognized that the teacher gave students opportunities to practice using close reading to discover character traits of inventors during the guided practice phase of the lesson. After watching the baseline video, Jacob wrote in response to the question, "*How did the teacher ask students to practice their new skill?*" that the teacher made "*use of groupings/pairings to collaborate and support students, as well as supporting language production (frequent use of Turn and Talk).* She also made use of language frames to support student verbal responses, and she requires students to cite evidence in supporting responses." The baseline interview notes reflect that he commented that the teacher "*took one example, applied it to more general traits of*

all inventors, did (multiple strategies including) writing, small group, turn and talk, heads together.” In his baseline interview he elaborated:

The teacher led the students through some guided practice with it. They did some small group, and they had like a turn and talk with their heads together or something like that, like they were together and talking and then they shared out... Well they took the one example, the inventor, and they had to apply it into a more general term of what are some traits of all inventors. If I'm remembering right, it was just some writing. They did some small group, and they had like a turn and talk with their heads together or something like that, like they were together and talking and then they shared out.

After his participation in the six professional development sessions, Jacob watched another video of a Close reading lesson while providing written responses to five questions. Subsequently, he participated in a semi-structured interview to provide the exit data for this dimension. Jacob's exit data reveal that after the professional development, Jacob could recognize that the teacher had students work in small groups to talk about why the character in the literature would act out of character, and that the group of students observed in the video was not able to use the prompts effectively to practice the strategy they had learned. Jacob provided a brief analysis of the way that the teacher asked students to practice their learning.

Jacob's written response to the question, *“How did the teacher ask students to practice their new skill?”* he noted that the teacher *“reread key passages/phrases, (grouped students in triads (for) discussion. She gave prompts to use as sentence starters (then she) grouped students, arranged groupings.”* The interview notes reflect that he shared how the teacher assigned students to *“talk in triads and share out.”* During the exit interview, Jacob said that:

They had to talk with their triad and share out – they were asked to share out to think about what – in the book that was read aloud what the character went through as far as a change and thinking about their putting themselves in the shoes of the character to think about what made them – what was motivating them. She really gave them the prompts, the sentences frames. She said, “Here's a sentence frame so here are some things that you can say. I recognize that or I realize that.” So she was prompting them with that too and did that in the small groups too, she prompted them to use the sentence frames. She also practiced using them. Yeah, it seemed like they had done this before, like this was not the first time they'd done this lesson where they're sitting in a circle and she's introducing a topic. She seemed very comfortable with letting them go off and doing it with very little direction, except for just having a couple kids move their chairs like they were in the triad.

The exit data reveal that Jacob observed multiple behaviors of the teacher and the students during the Close reading lesson in the video. He shared that the teacher provided coaching and support while students were in their triads, and that she scaffolded the student practice with sentence frames. At the conclusion of the professional development, Jacob was able to show a positive increase in his skill at articulating an analysis of instruction in all dimensions of the lesson.

DESIGN IMPACT CONCLUSION

Taking into consideration an extensive review of the data that were collected both before and after the design intervention, it appears that there was a positive change in principals' ability to understanding the qualities of good instruction. Following the completion of the six

professional development sessions, participants were again asked to watch a video, complete the performance task and participate in a semi-structured interview. The impact data that was collected was coded and analyzed using the same rating scale as with the baseline data.

Overall, these results indicate that there was a positive shift in the ability of principals to understand, articulate and analyze a lesson based on the analysis of baseline and impact data using multiple measures of data collection. Of the four principals who exhibited a positive change in their level of expertise, one was able to demonstrate a moderate to high level of skill, with exit scores for each dimension of 4,3,3,4. The remaining principals with positive changes in their expertise in analyzing behaviors within each dimension received ratings of 2,3,2,3; 4,2,3,4; and 3,3,2,3 respectively, indicating that they were able to demonstrate slight to moderate expertise in analyzing the behaviors that occur during each dimension of a lesson.

Another perspective that might be useful is to look across the dimensions of the lesson, and determine which of the dimensions represented the most growth across the ratings for the participating principals. Isabel and Yesenia made two points of growth in the opening of the lesson and reached the highest rating of four, indicating that they recognized that the teacher established a purpose for the lesson by telling a story which was used to help students think about what might cause a character to change their behavior. They also recognized that the teacher effectively used her personal story to engage students in thinking about reasons for characters to act in unexpected ways. By the end of the professional development sessions, three of the five principals could give a brief analysis of the modeling/co-constructing that took place during the lesson, noticing that the teacher modeled thinking about the character in a way that could help students understand character development. Two of the principals made no growth towards articulating a clear, articulate analysis of checking for understanding, while the other three made one point of growth. None of the principals could clearly articulate an analysis of the behaviors of students and teachers during this part of the lesson. All principals showed growth in guided practice, including Nancy, who did not make growth in any other dimension. Nonetheless, only Yesenia recognized that the teacher was only partially successful in providing guided practice opportunities for students, while the teacher needed to continue to support those students who hadn't mastered the concept yet.

Furthermore, the impact data reflect growth for four out of five participants in their knowledge of the vocabulary that is used to describe the behaviors of teachers and students that occur during the components of a lesson. In comparison to the baseline data, the impact data reveal that participants referred to actions of teachers and students using the vocabulary of the SET in multiple excerpts. At the same time, they demonstrated an increase in recalling the specific components as described by the SET and comprehension of the application of those components during a lesson.

Finally, by looking at the impact of the design across the dimensions of learning, the pattern would indicate that principals who began with stronger skills in analyzing lessons, increased their knowledge of analysis. Concurrently, those with little skill made little improvement. The amount of improvement in each of the dimensions varied for each principal. This analysis indicates that while all but one of the principals showed some growth, there is not a clear pattern of growth in any particular dimension of learning, except for guided practice. An analysis of the process data will inform the possibility of a relationship between the professional development and the increased knowledge and skill of principals in developing a clear and

articulate analysis of the instruction. Next, I identify the challenges that were present in determining the impact of the intervention design.

Challenges to Determining Design Impact

One of the challenges in determining impact was to design a rubric that captured principals' learning and to justify the fact that my interpretations determined where principals were placed on the rubric. I used my experience as an educator, both in the classroom and as a principal, in addition to participation and application of the specific close reading techniques that were the focus of the video excerpts. I also relied on my training as a researcher to assist me in these determinations.

Nonetheless, this was complicated by the protocols for data collection. I intentionally constructed open-ended questions for the performance task and used semi-structured interviews to gather additional information about the video that principals watched. I did not refer to specific elements, activities or behaviors within the performance task or during the interview of the lesson. Instead, I analyzed the performance tasks and interviews by coding for key words and by close reading. Because of this open-ended format, I was constantly rereading the data to interpret and recheck my interpretation of what principals were thinking and saying.

Throughout, I was aware that my analysis of the impact data could be colored by my interactions with the principals, so I constantly revisited the evidence and the interpretations and reviewed my work with my LEEP colleagues and the Director of Elementary Education who acted as my critical friend in this process.

In the next section, I analyze the design development data to logically link my findings on impact with what actually happened during the design process when teachers worked in a study group with a knowledgeable facilitator. I review the intervention process data and summarize the overall findings to determine the extent to which the intervention process can be attributed to the change in impact data findings for participating principals. Additionally, I provide evidence to substantiate these findings.

SECTION 2: PROCESS DATA ANALYSIS

In this section, I review the professional development that was implemented to test the Theory of Change and Intervention as stated in Chapter Two. According to the Theory of Change and Intervention, the best way for principals to gain a better understanding of the qualities of good instruction would be to create multiple, ongoing structured opportunities to co-construct their common understanding of the behaviors of students and teachers that take place during the delivery of a high quality lesson. This understanding was to be developed and supported with research based professional literature that provided a framework for their comprehension of the elements of instruction and their application to student learning. Then, through discussion, they would create a vision of what teaching and learning should look like in the classroom. In order to effectively apply their new learning as they were co-constructing this understanding, it was helpful for them to have a clear, concise tool to use during observations of specific elements of the instructional lesson. They would use this tool while observing quality teaching in person and on video, and would discuss what was happening during the lesson. Moreover, principals would have opportunities to apply their understandings to situations in their own organizations and then be able to reflect on their learning over time. In this way, they would use their reflections to discover further areas for discussion with the group in order to refine their own practice.

The purpose of the process data was to capture the learning and change that occurred throughout the intervention in order to explain the professional development's impact. Throughout the research, I collected process data in the form of session notes made from audio recordings of each session, field notes of my own observations throughout the process, and written session reflections from each of the participants. I observed the principals' interactions, reactions, and responses during each session and I also met with the Director of Elementary Education as a critical friend to debrief the sessions which I included in the field notes. Then, I coded this data to identify key responses and interactions. I developed my codes from the references to the behaviors of students and teachers that take place during the elements of quality instruction which were discussed during the professional development.

This development assisted me in reflecting on the process of the professional development and recognizing any problems that occurred. I was able to look for what did, and did not, work and with that information formulate inferences about what the problems might mean, make adjustments and use the estimations to further test my assumptions in subsequent sessions. Process data were used to describe the complexity of the development of the process of change that was prompted by the design (Plomp, 2006). The data were analyzed after each session, in order to make modifications to the next session. The Director of Elementary Education and my LEEP colleagues served as critical friends in this process.

Accordingly, the story of the process data explains the sequence of carefully planned and logically executed activities by way of a research-based professional development series intended to enhance the principals' supervision skills in understanding the elements of quality instruction. As reviewed and analyzed in the prior section, the impact data suggest that the participants made varying levels of positive change towards increasing their understanding of the behaviors of students and teachers that occur during the elements of a lesson, and that the effect was strongest across the cases in which the principal began with an existing foundation of knowledge about the dimensions of learning. This positive change was most significant in the dimensions of recall of the behaviors that are observed during the lesson, learning common and consistent vocabulary to describe those behaviors and understanding their application in the lesson.

In this section, I review the six sessions that took place between January and June and link the activities and experiences in which the principals participated, back to the session learning objectives. The proceeding analysis is organized according to the chronological timeline of the professional development sessions. I present evidence through direct examples and low inference associations from the process data referencing the change in principals' understanding of the elements of instruction.

The six professional development sessions occurred during the monthly meetings of the Elementary Principals. Each professional development session had a detailed agenda and learning objectives strategically aligned to specific activities designed to apply components of quality professional development in order to address the acquisition or enhancement of an understanding of the qualities of good instruction which is the target focus areas of this study.

I report data about each session by reminding readers of the learning objectives, describing in a low-inference way the proceedings or the implementation of the plan, and analyzing the session according to lesson objectives and expected professional learning.

Session One: Process Data Review

Learning Objectives for Session One

Before beginning the professional learning sessions, I met with Deborah, the Director of Elementary Education, who oversees the work of the elementary principals. She shared that it was especially important to focus on the strategy of guided reading during our principal meetings, since the Balanced Literacy Model was at that time one of the district's major instructional initiatives. She stated that many of the elementary principals ordinarily observed guided reading lessons in classrooms and gave teachers feedback on this instructional format. At the same time, Deborah felt that principals generally did not adequately understand elements of good instruction, nor have the capacity to support teachers in improving their practice of guided reading. She concluded that many of the elementary principals needed to know more about quality lesson elements as they related to the guided reading strategy. This created some tension between Deborah's purpose of supporting the principals to better understand the process of guided reading with my focus on building understanding of the qualities of a good lesson.

In the first session, the objective was that principals would be able to understand a common language regarding the elements of instruction and develop a framework for lesson structure that they would then use when talking about the instruction. In order to do this, I had the following lesson plan. The opening activity was a Listening Protocol that was intended to stimulate interest in the topic about the phases of instruction by giving participants an opportunity to talk about the best lessons that they had observed in the past. The participants would be paired with a colleague and asked to respond to the prompt, "*Describe a high quality lesson that you have observed.*" Each person would describe their observation of a lesson and then together they would engage in a conversation about their experiences. This interaction was intended to activate principals' prior knowledge of elements of good instruction, and would give them the opportunity to talk to each other about their individual perceptions of what good instruction might look like.

After this opening activity, principals would read a passage of practitioner literature that described the phases of instruction which would be discussed during the professional development. Then they would make connections to what they observe in the classroom in a more powerful way. This supported their understanding of what the behaviors of teachers and students look like during instruction and how the elements are connected to engage students in learning. They would be given a chapter from the book, Focus: Elevating the Essentials by Mike Schmoker (2012). Chapter 3, *How We Teach*, (pgs. 50-89), describes the way in which "effective lessons share the same, well-known, core structure (pg. 52)." This chapter describes the elements of an effective lesson. "The essential parts of a good lesson include a clear learning objective, with some effort to provide background knowledge or create interest in the topic, teaching and modeling, guided practice, checks for understanding/formative assessment, and independent practice/assessment (pg. 52-53)." This reading is used as a reference for the SET which would be introduced in the second professional development session. The SET would be presented as a way to structure the common understanding of the behaviors of students and teachers during a lesson.

As they were reading, participants would be given about three questions to think about. Each participant would read a section and then small groups who read the same section would discuss their learning. Next, they would regroup to be able to discuss the whole chapter. Each

group received three focus questions and each of these questions related to a particular strategy that Schmoker highlights in the chapter.

1. *How can teacher talk be most effective?* Schmoker highlights the use of teacher talk as an effective strategy when it is used in conjunction with checking for understanding. This question allowed principals the opportunity to discuss the concept of interactive lecture as described in the chapter (pg. 70), as well as the way teachers use co-construction of new skills or concepts to guide student learning through the elements of modeling, dialogue, checking for understanding and guided practice, and to assist participants' understanding of the framework of the lesson.
2. *How can the elements of instruction be applied to guided reading?* Since the strategy of guided reading was a particular focus for Deborah, and Schmoker refers to literacy instruction throughout this chapter, this question helped the principals to apply the elements of an effective lesson to the guided reading structure. Schmoker illustrates the effective lesson components with literacy instruction throughout this chapter.
3. *What is the role of formative assessment in the instructional process?* Schmoker uses the term formative assessment and checking for understanding interchangeably and highlights the cyclical process of modeling content/ co-constructing new understandings, checking for understanding and providing guided practice. This question was to intended to help principals discuss the connections between the elements and recognize how they linked together to form the frame for effective instruction.

After the small groups talked, participants were to have a discussion with the whole group of nine principals and the Director of Elementary Education. This discussion would serve to further deepen their understanding of the qualities of good instruction and their ability to engage students in high quality learning. It would serve to build on the knowledge and observations of their colleagues in order to integrate this into their own understanding.

I anticipated that as a result of the activities principals would be able to discuss the practices that they either saw or would like to see in classrooms which reflect the description of effective instruction as Schmoker described it. I envisioned that these discussions would prepare the principals for the ensuing sessions where we would target each element separately.

Implementation – What Occurred in Session One

In order to connect to the principals' prior experiences of observing and understanding elements of quality instruction, I introduced the Constructivist Listening Protocol by reviewing the process. For this session, I used the prompt, "*think about a high quality lesson that you have recently observed and what do you think made it high quality?*" Then, with a partner, they each had two minutes to describe what they observed. While the principals engaged in active discussions about their observations in the classrooms, they did not refer to specific behaviors that they had observed. Their conversations reflected a lack of common vocabulary to describe what they had seen in the classrooms at their schools.

Next, principals engaged in reading and discussing Schmoker's practitioner-oriented text from Chapter 3: *How We Teach*. They were asked to read an assigned section for a jigsaw activity and to use three guiding questions as described above to focus their discussion. For the first part of the activity, each small group discussed one section using one of the guiding questions. The discussion in the small groups centered on the components of the lesson. In reference to the opening of the lesson, one participant shared, "*the importance of sharing the*

objective in order to be explicit about the purpose of the lesson.” In addition, some of the participants discussed the element of modeling as a way to show what good readers do, extending this strategy to “*teach students how to take notes and organize their thinking*” according to one of the principals. Much of the small group conversation appeared to be focused on the element of checking for understanding as formative assessment. Participants discussed the way in which checking for understanding can lead to changes in instruction. They affirmed the importance of monitoring instruction by circulating around the room as a way to understand what had been missing from the lesson as well as to recognize students’ misconceptions and misunderstandings.

Next, principals regrouped for the second part of the jigsaw and engaged in further discussion about the elements of instruction as defined by Schmoker (2012). One group described some of the elements of instruction as including “*targeted, focused, interactive lecture, in addition to stopping to do checks for understanding.*” They noted that the teacher should continue to check for understanding and provide feedback. Both small group discussions of the reading used the language from the reading to describe the framework of the elements of instruction as well as multiple behaviors of students and teachers that were identified within that framework during the baseline rubric.

Following the small group discussions, the group began a whole group dialog which focused on two important questions: “*What are the essentials of good instruction, and what do they look like?*” It appeared that in the whole-group discussion, many of the themes from the small group conversations were echoed. The interaction began with naming the dimensions of instruction from the reading, i.e. “*sharing the objective (opening), modeling, guided practice and checking for understanding (formative assessment).*” One principal described it as “*going back to basics*” which echoed the message from the reading indicating that following this structure of a lesson is not new, nor is it complicated. At this point in the discussion, several members of the group described the teaching that they observe on a daily basis. Jacob found that when teachers begin guided practice it can be ‘messy’ meaning that this part of the lesson doesn’t follow the same procedures each time, but must be adapted as the teacher checks in with students to see if they understand the learning. Then followed several examples shared by members of the group in which they noticed the teacher checking for understanding. One of the principals shared an example when he watched a lesson that “bombed and the teacher made changes to the lesson to bring it back on track.” Here he shared his interpretation that checking for student understanding of the objective of the lesson can lead to deeper learning for students if teachers use their analysis to make changes to instruction. At the same time, he did not give his own analysis of what the teacher had done to make these changes or why. This was a missed opportunity to probe more deeply into his analysis of the lesson.

Nonetheless, this comment led the principals to continue their discussion, and they questioned the level of analysis that teachers apply to their instruction, wondering if they are focused on the content and the outcome or on the learning process for students. They noted that teachers can be distracted by pacing guides and test scores and miss the analysis that is necessary to ensure that students are learning. They connected their conversation back to Schmoker’s discussion about formative assessment, and noted that feedback for teachers should ask the question, “How do you know it’s time to release students to move on to independent practice?”

The final topic within this discussion focused on formative and summative assessments. Jacob shared that teachers often feel challenged by the element of checking for understanding.

Teachers are not always sure about ways to “bring students back on track.” Another participant remarked that “*teachers are busy looking for the end result, which is to stay on the pacing of the lesson, rather than ensuring that all students understand the learning, by going back to reteach a concept.*” Here the principal noted that, in his opinion, teachers choose to ignore student misunderstandings, because they (the teachers) feel pressured to finish the lesson within the timeframe rather than use correctives, reinforcement and reteaching to ensure that students understand the concepts that have been taught. At the end of the professional development session, the participants completed a closing reflection about the content and the process of the professional development session.

Analysis for Session One

The objective for the first session was that principals would learn to use a common language regarding the elements of a lesson and develop a simple framework for lesson structure that they could then use when talking about instruction. Data collected included reflections, audio recordings and field notes. In my analysis of the data, I found that the participants met the objective. They used a common language about the elements of instruction, based on their reading and discussion from the text by Schmoker (2011) that would be used throughout the professional development. They engaged in some general analysis about how teachers approach the teaching and learning in classrooms.

Most prominent in the professional development session were the references to the dimension of checking for understanding. Both in the small group and large group discussions, they referred multiple times to the ways in which teachers conduct formative assessment. This appeared to be a recurring theme during the session, because, as their comments reflected, the principals found it to be ineffective or lacking in the classrooms that they observed. There were several excerpts that reflected their desire to see more checking for understanding occurring. One principal found it ‘messy’, while Schmoker gives a clear model that describes the way in which checking for understanding can be effective. They found that teachers tend to focus on their teaching, but neglect to reflect on what students are learning by checking for understanding during the lesson.

As evidenced in their discussions, principals did use the language of the reading to discuss the components of the lesson. While I maintained my intention that principals could increase their knowledge about the qualities of good instruction, I let the structure of the agenda overtake the learning for the principals. Their discussion touched on the components of the lesson, but they did not have the opportunity to apply them without a specific lesson to observe.

The learning for the principals consisted of a reading and discussion about the framework that teachers are expected to use in their lessons. They noted that, in order for the dimensions to be effective, they must be used consistently and well. The principals acknowledged that within that framework there needs to be a balance between the amount of teacher talk through modeling a skill or concept and student talk through guided practice. They discussed challenges that might occur during the lesson, including when teacher talk gets in the way of student learning, for example, when it goes on too long, or moves away from teaching the skill or concept. While this learning recalled their existing knowledge of the components of effective lessons, and gave them more information about how the components are connected, it did not assist them in developing the skill of analyzing the teaching and learning that occurs within a lesson. The professional development focused on building a common vocabulary to describe the components that occur during the lesson, but did not give the principals the possibility of applying their learning to an

actual lesson, so that they could not develop their analytical skill in this area. As a result, principals spoke of the components of the lesson in general terms, rather than being able to discuss the specific actions that might occur during instruction.

The closing reflections from the principals reflect their general learning. They principals reiterated what Schmoker had stated: that these elements should be present in the lessons that they would observe. A few of the participants wrote that the elements were “back to basics”, indicating the straightforward nature of the lessons when they are conducted as described by Schmoker’s text.

The reflections asked participants to share what they had learned during the session. Principals learned more detailed information about the elements of instruction, either specifically or as a general concept and consistently described the elements as basic, simple, and clear. One participant summarized, “*Good teaching can be simple but must be a thoughtful process where all elements are present*” while another shared that, “*It is easier than we make it out to be. (We need to recognize) the importance of modeling teacher thinking and the importance of checking for understanding and ongoing formative assessments.*”

Finally, the field notes record my thoughts at the conclusion of the professional development session, noting that, “*At the next session, we will need to make additional connections between the steps of the lesson that we talked about and the new work that will be the focus of the session, moving from abstract to concrete.*” Clearly, I anticipated that it would be necessary to make some changes to specific activities within the process.

Session Two

Learning Objectives for Session Two

My objective for this session was similar to the first session, that principals would understand and use a common language to describe the dimensions of learning and teaching that orient observers to the components of high quality instruction. These dimensions are referred to in the SET, and I wanted principals to be able to define the terms used and understand the language of the tool. In the first session, the principals used the components of the lesson, as Schmoker described them. In this session, we would look at the language that was used to orient principals to what are described as the Cognitive and Social Dimensions of learning.

Prior to the second professional learning session, I met with the Director of Elementary Education, Deborah, another principal and one of the Common Core Teachers on Special Assignment (TSA) to plan for Session 2. Since the sessions were embedded in the monthly principal meetings, and the focus for Deborah was to increase principals’ understanding of guided reading strategies, she had asked for us to meet as a group to plan for the second session. This reflected the ongoing tension between the research focus of engaging principals in deeper understanding of the qualities of a good lesson with the district’s focus on only guided reading. Although, all guided reading lessons contain elements of good instruction, not all elements of good instruction are contained in a guided reading lesson.

As an outcome of the planning meeting, I was directed to separate the two parts of the session. This was one of the pitfalls of conducting the professional development during the principal’s monthly meetings. The Teacher on Special Assignment for Common Core (TSA) believed that the principals in RUSD did not understand how to recognize the components of the model of guided reading that were being taught through professional development to the teachers in RUSD. She was fearful that in the debrief following the lesson, principals would say

something to the teacher that would be perceived as critical of the teacher. Her objective of this part of the session was for principals to learn about how guided reading is taught. She wanted this discussion to be separate from an analysis of the teaching and learning that would occur, because she perceived an analysis to mean criticism of the teacher.

This meant that a strict division was imposed between the live observation of a guided reading lesson, and what was referred to as “your part” of the meeting, meaning the professional development that I would provide. Clearly there did not appear to be an understanding on the part of the Director of Elementary Education on the value of integration of observation and analysis. She deferred to the TSA who she perceived as the knowledgeable other in the room. Nonetheless, I would be able to refer to the observation of a live lesson to help principals observe a lesson which centered on multiple components within a lesson, most prominently guided practice and checking for understanding.

Consequently during the first part of the meeting, the principals would observe a teacher conducting a guided reading lesson with a group of four students. The principals would be given an observation form (Appendix H), devised by the Teacher on Special Assignment to use for observing the lesson. This observation form gave a space for notetaking about the classroom environment, and parts of the lesson. It would be used for principals to record observations about the highly structured lesson which followed a specific series of activities, including students reading familiar books, the teacher introducing a new book, students reading with teacher prompting, the teacher highlighting a particular strategy called a teaching point that would be used in the new book, and written word work at the end of the lesson.

Following the observation of the lesson, principals would be able to ask the guided reading teacher questions about her lesson that pertained only to student learning. I would give each participant the overview of the hand-out named Effective Lessons: Fostering Student Academic Engagement (Appendix G) and ask them to take turns reading each section aloud to the group. Then, each participant would talk with a partner about the dimensions and what they understood the dimensions of learning to mean using a guiding framework called “Defining Terms for Effective Lessons: Foster Student Academic Engagement.” The framework listed each component and the associated dimensions of cognitive and emotional learning. This partner activity would provide participants the opportunity to develop their understanding in collaboration, and ask questions about the meaning of some of the vocabulary. After partners discussed their comprehension, each pair shared their insight with the whole group. Within the whole group discussion, participants could further refine their understanding of the meaning and application of these concepts regarding the dimensions of learning that were referred in the observation tool around student academic engagement.

Implementation – What Occurred in Session Two

The three Teachers on Special Assignment for Common Core (CCTSA) also joined the group of principals, bringing the total number of participants in the group to eleven. Prior to the professional learning session, the principals and TSAs watched a live lesson of a teacher working with a small group of four students to teach a Guided Reading Lesson. Principals observed the live guided reading lesson and then talked with the teacher, giving compliments about the highly individualized work that she did with the four students. Principals asked questions about the student learning, but did not challenge the teacher’s choices in her instruction. I did not record this portion of the meeting, since I did not have permission of the teacher, and the expectation of the TSA was that this not be used for my data collection.

Following the observation of the live lesson, the principals and TSAs engaged in a discussion with the teacher about the parts of the lesson and the strategies embedded within guided reading that they had observed. Some of this discussion carried over into the group discussion in the second part of the session around the dimensions of learning after the teacher had returned to her duties. In the later discussion, there were multiple references to the teacher and student behaviors that occurred during the lesson participants observed.

As we moved into the next part of the principals' meeting, I gave each participant a third document that presented guidelines for the SET. This document was titled: Effective Strategic Academic Engagement at a glance (Appendix F). I shared some of the background about how the SET Tool was developed including the literature that supports it. Participants took turns reading aloud the descriptions of each element of the lesson from the SET. In order to help participants reflect on their definitions of the vocabulary regarding the dimensions of learning I gave each participant a guiding framework (Appendix G) that I had designed. The framework listed each element and the dimensions of learning with which it is associated, as well as a column to record comments about their understanding of the meaning of the cognitive and emotional dimensions of learning for each element. Then, with a partner they talked about one of the lesson elements. In this way each pair discussed a different element of the lesson. They talked with their partner about the meanings of the dimensions and their descriptors. At the end of the time each pair shared their definitions and examples from their own observations and from the live lesson that we had observed that morning for the dimensions of learning that were identified for each element:

1. Engaging and opening: Within this element, the discussion partners found that elements of engagement happen throughout the lesson. The dimension of cognitive dissonance meant that the teacher was giving just enough to make the lesson challenging, or giving students a reflective, puzzling question.
2. Constructing or co-constructing: Within this element, the partners shared that it could mean acquiring procedural knowledge about 'how to' do a new activity, or disciplinary knowledge about basic facts or concepts. They used the example of the guided reading lesson in which students were learning about the structure of narrative fiction, or how punctuation can be used to inform intonation. It could also describe a protocol for looking closely at a word, while the concepts might refer to learning from the teaching, i.e. the 'what' and 'how'
3. Building or checking for understanding: Within this element, the partners remarked that it functions in a cycle together with guided practice and co-constructing. They also determined that checking for understanding can refer to giving feedback through corrections. It can be accomplished by prompting to think more deeply about a concept.
4. Guided practice: Within this element, the partners found that they did not understand the meaning of the dimension, "decoding" as it related to this element. I told them my understanding, that decoding is a way to move from a difficult or complex concept or skill to an easier one that the students may be familiar with. The partners also saw application and performance as part of the actions of the students.

5. Feedback and synthesis: Within this element, the discussion partners found that feedback is used by the teacher to inform instruction, while synthesis is used by students to apply their learning. Teachers use their observations of students during feedback to ask themselves, “Did students understand?” The participants shared that they expect students to show what they know so that the teacher is able to recognize gaps in the learning. In synthesizing the learning, the participants expressed that they expected students to apply their understanding in different contexts. One of the participants remarked that there was evidence of synthesis throughout the guided reading lesson.

At the end of the conversation, I asked the participants to make connections between the dimensions of learning and their observation of the guided reading lesson. I did this because the lesson we had observed had already been mentioned during the discussion and it seemed appropriate given that we had the opportunity to apply the concepts that we had just discussed to actual instruction within the context of our conversation. Given that this lesson focused primarily on guided practice and checking for understanding within the context of guided reading, the participants saw the elements in the lesson as integrated throughout the lesson rather than linear and not confined to one particular activity during the lesson. If they had observed a full lesson, it might have been possible for them to see the elements as more separated within the lesson. In the lesson, they referred to their observation of moments of cognitive dissonance such as when the teacher gave just enough support to make the learning challenging for the child. “When a kid pauses, something is happening in the brain. Then the teacher gave a reflective, puzzling question to reflect on.” During the discussion about checking for understanding, one principal gave an example from the guided reading lesson, saying, “that in the lesson, kids were learning how narrative fiction is structured” through the co-constructing of knowledge. Another participant noted that, “the procedural learning in guided reading occurred when the students learned a protocol for looking closely at a word.”

Two diverse viewpoints emerged in the discussion about checking for understanding. Deborah said that she doesn’t see a lot of checking for understanding when she visits classrooms, while Mia made the observation that in her opinion, teachers overuse the CFU to make changes with individual students, which slows down the action of the lesson.-Mia interpreted checking for understanding to mean that, teachers stop the action in the class in order to correct the learning of individual students. Mia said,

I want to build a culture in which the teacher can let go of the idea that everyone needs to know everything. Teachers need to give themselves permission to not know, and principals need to let them know that it’s okay to not know.

It appeared that Mia did not see checking for understanding as a way for teachers to engage with students in order to address misconceptions, and encourage students to produce evidence of their understanding, but rather as a way to correct them without addressing the teaching and learning that are a part of checking for understanding. In this way she revealed her deeper thinking about her expectations for using checking for understanding within the lesson.

Yesenia provided the missing information for Mia in the discussion, saying that principals should engage in a conversation with teachers about how the teacher might decide when students are ready to be released to the guided practice. Checking for understanding occurs when the teacher observes misconceptions and makes changes to instruction.

One of the TSAs built upon this understanding, noting that often teachers continue to use the same lesson, without changing their instruction to meet students' learning needs, instead focusing on "putting out fires" as she phrased it. Mia brought the discussion back to her original idea that "teachers should understand that it's okay that you don't know. I don't expect for you to have it right all the time." Her interpretation of the meaning of checking for understanding appeared to affect her ability to see it as a part of the process of learning that is embedded in each lesson.

Deborah brought the discussion back to the guided reading lesson, and observed that the teacher gave "corrections without correcting, but rather questioning students so that students could self-correct in the lesson. The teacher was listening, scaffolded and gave constant feedback." Another principal added that "the teacher asked students, 'How did you know? And 'What's happening here?'" In this discussion, the participants recognized the ways in which the teacher in the guided reading lesson used questioning to check for understanding and address misconceptions in the lesson.

Deborah continued the discussion about the dimensions of learning asking, "Are these elements present in a lesson in various formats, flowing in and out of each other so that by the end of this you have engaged students in learning, and by the end of the lesson, the teacher has the synthesis that they are looking for?" In this statement, Deborah was able to articulate her observation that the elements of an effective lesson do not occur separately, but intertwine in a way that engages students in learning as they move through continuous cycles of constructing/co-constructing, checking for understanding and guided practice.

Analysis for Session Two

The previous professional development session was intended to give the principals a common framework for a lesson that followed a specific set of components. My intention was to introduce the SET tool, which mirrored those components, and then we would be able to better understand the language that was used in the tool. I was concerned that the language of the dimensions would be difficult for the participants to grasp, and so I devised an activity that would help them to understand what was meant by the dimensions of learning that were included in the SET. This activity did not support participants in learning about analyzing instruction. This did not contribute to the impact that I envisioned for the professional development. In the following analysis I will discuss how I have come to this conclusion.

As reflected in the data collected, I interpret my observations of the learning process to mean that the participants were learning vocabulary, but the professional development did not afford them the opportunity to engage in precise practice connecting the observation tool with actual events that take place during a teaching event. This was a result of the lack of connection between the live guided reading lesson and the manner in which professional development focused on using the observation tool. The discussion among the participants had as its main focus the language of the tool and application of that language to their experiences in classrooms, instead of using the tool in an analysis of the learning. Moreover, the participants had analyzed the live lesson sequence with an observation tool that was provided by the TSA, but was not aligned with the SET tool that I introduced later. This confused the participants even further, and did not facilitate their learning to analyze instruction.

In their reflections, participants referred to the opportunity to watch the guided reading lesson, and then apply their learning of the cognitive and social emotional dimensions of the

elements of instruction to their observation as an effective strategy in the session. During the discussion, they shared their understanding of creating links between what they observed and the language they had learned to describe it. The connections between descriptions of the dimensions of learning and the actual lesson that principals observed were discussed at multiple points during the session as well. One participant reflected that she was able to “*link the (guided reading) lesson with the content (of the dimensions of learning activity).*”

Many of the participants also noted in their reflections that they would take their new learning about the cognitive and social dimensions to use in classroom observations and to prepare professional development opportunities for the teachers at their schools, but this would not be as a result of the learning from our professional development. The introduction of two conflicting observation tools and the missed opportunity to analyze the live lesson that they observed impacted this perceived application. Deborah included in her reflection that her new learning included the concept that effective academic engagement connects students and teachers in reciprocal behaviors and cycles of several elements during the lesson, rather than taking place in linear form.

The process data from this session can be analyzed according to the Theory of Change and Intervention which states that the best way for principals to gain a better understanding of the qualities of good instruction would be to create multiple, ongoing structured opportunities to co-construct their common understanding of the behaviors of students and teachers that take place during the delivery of a high quality lesson. Unfortunately, although participants were able to observe a high quality lesson segment, the professional development continued to be a naming activity that did not further their skill in lesson analysis. In addition, the principals were provided two different observation tools which were not aligned nor did the tools share a common purpose. The guided reading tool was designed to help principals to recognize the components of the lesson, while the SET is intended to assist in analyzing the behaviors that occur during the lesson.

As in the previous session, there was an extended discussion of checking for understanding as something that teachers should be doing, but is not used effectively during the lesson to recognize students’ misconceptions and understanding, nor to reteach concepts or skills.

The guided reading lesson that was observed represented a missed opportunity for principals to practice their analysis of instruction. According to the process data gathered from this session, participants used the language from the tool to describe what they would expect to see during the components of a lesson. They referred to their own understanding of the behaviors of students and teachers, and to the live lesson which they had observed. These references connected to the language in the SET Tool, and reflected their recognition of the presence of the cognitive and emotional dimensions of learning within instruction. This indicated that they understood the language and could make connections between the language of the tool and their own experiences in classrooms.

Session Three

Learning Objectives for Session Three

During Sessions One and Two, I focused on principals practicing to use the language of the dimensions of learning that occur during effective instruction. Since the Director of elementary Education had moved away from her focus on guided reading, I chose to look more

closely at the specific elements of instruction as described in the SET tool. In order to build further on the foundation of using a common language that was laid in the first two sessions, the group would focus more specifically on particular elements giving principals literature that informed participants about the behaviors of teachers and students within each element and the ways that this interaction relates to teaching and learning.

My objective for the third session was for principals to learn about the behaviors of students and teachers that typically occur at the beginning of the lesson, as they interact to create interest in the learning and co-construct students' knowledge of the concepts and skills that are presented during the lesson. In other words, in Session Three, we focused on the work in classrooms that happens when teachers are engaging students and opening the lesson. Participants would also learn about the behaviors that occur as teachers are modeling or co-constructing the learning during the lesson.

Immediately after the second session in February, I met with Deborah to debrief the second session and to plan for the third session. During the discussion, we reflected on the need to focus more in depth on specific elements, and to continue using practitioner literature to inform the principals' understanding of the elements of instruction. For Deborah, it seemed that her desire to focus on guided reading was less of a concern, but, in her conversations with the Teachers on Special Assignment, she became aware of another issue that she wanted to address during the Elementary Principal Meetings. This issue concerned the types of deficit language that teachers used in referring to and talking to students in their classrooms. Deborah intended to address this situation at the next meeting, and I would present professional development following this activity.

Consequently, I developed a series of activities that were intended to foster participants' understanding about the specific elements of opening the lesson and modeling or co-constructing skills, strategies or content during instruction. Our first activity during the professional development session would ask the participants to do a quick write in which they shared their informal observations of a guided reading lesson that they had observed within the two months since the previous session. The guiding questions for this activity asked them to recall, "*What did you notice about the lesson you observed? How did students respond to the teacher's book introduction and teaching points following the first reading of the book?*" This activity was intended to revisit the previous learning and make connections to a guided reading lesson, specifically the elements that occur at the beginning of the lesson, which correspond to the elements of opening the lesson and modeling or constructing understanding of the concepts or skills. Principals then would share their observations with a partner to further discuss their connections with previous learning and application to their own context.

Next, participants would read the practitioner literature from Better Learning through Structured Teaching (Fisher, D., Frey, 2013). Chapter 2 is titled *Focus Lessons: Establishing Purpose and Modeling*, which Fisher and Frey identify as the *Key Features of Focus Lessons* (pages 21-37). The reading was intended to engage participants in learning about the strategies that they could expect to see during the beginning of the lesson in which the teacher would create interest and activate prior knowledge.

The learning activity that I selected for principals to engage in was called Inner/Outer Circle. This structure called for participants to choose three big ideas from an assigned section of the reading and then share the same idea with several different people within the opposite circle. In this way, each participant would share their own ideas several times and hear another

participant's learning about a different section of the reading. Consequently, each participant would have the opportunity to be the expert in one area and then learn more about the other sections of the reading. After this opportunity for participants to talk with a partner about their assigned section, participants would work in small groups to create a list of behaviors that they would expect to see during the opening and modeling/co-constructing elements of the lesson. Then they would receive a written verbatim of a lesson that they could review to recall and recognize the behaviors that they would expect to see.

Implementation – What Occurred in Session Three

Our session began with a brief review of our learning from the previous meeting. I asked the participants to write a few observations about guided reading lessons they had seen, specifically about the elements of engaging and modeling within the lesson. Then, I had them turn to a partner to share their reflections. Since the prompt was vague and unstructured, principals could not refer to precise descriptions of a lesson, but focused primarily on their experiences or perceptions about teachers. It appeared that the participants were engaged in sharing more about the broader literacy models within their schools rather than specific lessons. Neither conversation had anything to do with the topic at hand. This activity did not produce the intended outcome to orient the principals to the new learning.

Next, I introduced the reading (Fisher and Frey, 2013) and the activity called Inner/Outer Circle that the participants used to reflect on the reading. After participants completed the reading, they moved into an inner or outer circle to share their ideas with a partner standing across from them in the circle. The principals changed partners every five minutes and in this way were able to talk with several people and cover the content for the section regarding the opening and modeling of a lesson. In their conversations, they brought up the key ideas for the chapter. Deborah shared with her partners in the circle that the section that she read described three methods used most often in the focus lesson, i.e., metacognition, modeling and think aloud. She explained to them that metacognition might look like the teacher asking questions of the learners, such as “What am I trying to accomplish?” It is a different process than demonstrations or modeling. It asks students to focus on their own learning process, and think about what they are learning and why. Modeling could include demonstration, or direct explanation, and helps student to apply their learning while focusing on what is the student trying to accomplish and how would they do that. Another principal shared with his partners about the strategy of thinking aloud and how that connected to the Lucy Calkins Writer's Workshop lessons that are being taught in classrooms. Other participants had lively conversations and then switched to the next partner.

At the end of the professional development, I shared with principals a T-Chart that was in their packets and asked them to use it later when they were at their schools to observe behaviors of teachers and students during these elements of the lesson. The purpose of this ‘homework’ activity was to practice their learning by using the descriptors of instructional behaviors in a real setting, and bring their observations back to the group to share and discuss. Similar to the opening activity, it had little structure or connection to the deep work of analyzing instruction. In conclusion, I asked them to complete the evaluation.

Analysis for Session Three

The objective for this session was that principals would learn about the strategies that teachers use at the beginning of the lesson, as teachers create interest in the learning and model

or co-construct with students to gain knowledge of concepts and skills during the lesson, and then principals would apply this knowledge to their lesson analysis. In my consideration of the data, I found that the principals did not increase in their skill at analyzing instruction at the beginning of the lesson. Overall, the core principles that I had chosen for this design as applied to this professional development did not produce the intended results. The theory that principals would learn through discussion and professional literature did not allow for real life application of their learning.

To be more specific, the opening activity around reflection was unstructured with a vague prompt that did not give principals a common point of reference that could have anchored their analysis. It would have been more profitable to begin with a short video clip of a lesson which principals could have discussed using the observation tool which had been introduced previously. This would have provided an opportunity for application of the tool to observed events during a lesson that could result in clinical learning, rather than the declarative knowledge that was gained with a reading and activity.

Further, Mia noted in her reflection that ‘the repetitive nature of the circle was difficult,’ while others reported that the Inner/Outer Circle was an effective strategy for them. Nonetheless, the principals reading of professional literature and the Inner/Outer Circle only resulted in tidbits of sharing about the topic, but again did not address their need for deep analysis of real life examples of instruction with which they would be able to engage in precise and consistent practice of lesson observation and analysis. This refers back to the core principles of the design. It would have been possible to directly impact the principals’ procedural knowledge of lesson analysis by focusing more narrowly on actual learning occurring during a segment of instruction in the form of a video or a live lesson, so that they could practice using the tool to connect with real life events. This would have allowed them the opportunity to make connections between their understandings of the behaviors they observed in the lesson and their analytical responses. Rather than a chapter of text, applying the readings from Schmoker and exploring parts of the SET tool, perhaps trained on the specifics of read-alouds, at this time may have had a more beneficial effect and allowed the principals to use a more specific and clinical approach to their skill of analysis. As the field notes reflect:

Participants took it seriously, did their best. They took time to think about previous work we have done, and share their applications. They carefully read and record their learning. They shared their ideas with one another, and then gracefully stopped to move on to the next topic, also with their full attention. The inner/outer circle was something that everyone liked, but it was rushed and felt a little repetitive. The reading was easy to digest but there wasn't time to look for personal applications, which is what I wanted to get to.

This illustrates that although the principals moved through the activities, they did not show high engagement with the content. At the same time, the principals had varying amounts of experience, knowledge and skill understanding elements of the lesson. During their discussions, principals referred to examples that they had observed in their classrooms with the teachers in their schools. In connecting their experiences to the declarative knowledge of the professional reading, it was possible to activate their prior knowledge but in a way which was superficial and unstructured so that it did not increase their skill of deeper analysis.

Given that the activities that I had chosen for this professional development session did not produce the intended learning for this session of professional development, I conclude that

this session did not meet the objective that principals would learn about the behaviors of students and teachers that typically occur at the beginning of the lesson, and apply this learning to their analysis of this element during observations of instruction.

Session Four

Learning Objectives for Session Four

In my debriefing with Deborah following the third professional development session, she shared that when I first proposed doing a series of PD on the elements of instruction she thought it would be too rudimentary for the principals and that they wouldn't get enough learning out of it. But now, as the professional development was being implemented, she realized that the principals didn't have a sufficiently deep understanding or analytical skill in observing for basic elements of instruction as she previously thought, and that what I was trying to accomplish was a useful and meaningful professional development for the group.

Session 4 focused on developing a deeper understanding of the specific elements of guided practice and checking for understanding with the intention that principals use that understanding to apply to their analysis of lesson elements. The learning objective for the principals was for them to be able to develop the depth of knowledge necessary to analyze the behaviors that might occur when teachers are checking for understanding during a lesson.

Prior to the professional development session, principals would receive an email with a link to the professional/practitioner literature, *Why Check for Understanding, Chapter 1* (Fisher, D., Frey, 2007), that we would read in the session. They also received an observation recording sheet with two columns. In one column, they would be asked to write down the words and behaviors of teachers during a brief observation, and on the other they would record the words and behaviors of students. This would be used to share their observations in classroom, with the expectation that they would be able to use the SET tool to discuss their observations and form an analysis of the lesson they had observed. After their partner discussion, I would give a copy of the SET Tool to the principals and ask them to look at the tool to determine if they found behaviors that aligned to the behaviors that they had discussed from their observations. This activity was intended to create a link to the prior session in which we focused on engaging students during the opening of the lesson.

The next activity in the session was focused on reading a chapter from the book Checking for Understanding: Formative Assessment Techniques for Your Classroom, 2nd Edition, Fisher and Frey, Chapter 1: Why Check for Understanding? The section that the principals would read reflected learning about three phases of feedback, identified as feed-up, feed-back and feed-forward. These three phases represented cycles of learning in which the teacher clarifies the established purpose, responds to student work in a way that is directly related to the established purpose, and modifies instruction based on formative assessment of the learning. The reading was short and succinct in order to focus on the cycles of checking for understanding. Principals were to read the literature and were to make notes regarding key ideas, questions that were raised and applications to their practice. This would assist them in being able to recognize when checking for understanding occurs and evaluate its effectiveness.

Following the reading, the principals would meet in a small group of three to discuss what they found to be the key understandings from the reading. Then the whole group would engage in a debriefing of their learning from the reading. These discussions were intended to

activate their learning about the content of the reading by engaging in a deeper conversation with peers about their own application of the feedback loop based on these three phases.

After the discussion of the reading, the principals brainstormed in their groups about what kinds of behaviors they would expect to see during the guided practice portion of the lesson. This was intended to introduce another element that takes place during a lesson, and to recognize that checking for understanding and guided practice can be intertwined in the lesson, as the teacher should be checking for understanding, then providing time for application of the learning that is supported and scaffolded.

Following this discussion, the principals would watch a video clip of a teacher during the guided practice phase of instruction. The video was intended to give them an opportunity to observe instruction and then record their observations on another T-Chart. Following the short video, they were to have a whole group discussion about the behaviors they would observe. At the conclusion of the session, the group would review the SET Tool again to look for the behaviors that they read about and saw on the video. The purpose of this final activity was to train them to use the language in the tool, and, at the same time to continue their discussion about the quality of the instruction that they had observed.

Implementation – What Occurred in Session Four

Session 4 took place in May, and there were seven of the eight principals and the director of Elementary Education in attendance. At the beginning of the session, I reviewed the learning from our previous meeting which focused on the elements of engaging/opening the lesson and modeling/constructing the learning, and the ‘homework’ to observe a lesson and record behaviors of teachers and students on the T-chart. I also shared the objectives for the session noting that we would refer back to the SET (Appendix A).

Next, principals talked with a partner to share their T-charts about their recorded observations of what they saw teachers and students doing. They found that much of what they had observed was recorded on the SET tool. For example, Yesenia shared that one teacher wears a lab coat when teaching science. The principal observed that 100% of the kids were participating 100% of the day. In her analysis, the teacher created a hook for the learning by taking on the persona of a scientist. Isabel shared that she observed a teacher using integrated thematic instruction to learn about life cycles. The strategies that the teacher had learned during recent professional development created interest for the students in that classroom. Jacob talked about a unit that one of his teachers implemented that had to do with airplanes and airports which activated students’ interest in science and travel. Another principal reflected that he observed one of his teachers conducting a book group. In his analysis, the group appeared to be “a book club with one bossy lady,” rather than a class with a teacher, reflecting the high functioning skill of the group of students. During the debriefing, I noted that principals should look at what the teacher is doing in order to generate student engagement, asking where is the hook that really engages students and gets them involved, and how students are showing that they are engaged.

Following this opening activity, I passed out the reading. Principals were given time to read the section that they had previously received and made notes regarding key ideas, questions that were raised and applications to their practice. This would assist them in being able to recognize when checking for understanding occurs and evaluate its effectiveness. They were assigned to a group of three for a small group discussion about their understandings from the reading.

After ten minutes of small group discussion, I asked each group to share their group observations and learning about checking for understanding. In their discussion, participants noted that checking for understanding asks the question, “What are students getting out of the lesson at that moment?” It also includes behaviors that teach students how to check for their own understanding. One principal reflected that he went back and reread for understanding himself as he read the chapter. Deborah related that to the skills expected in Common Core, i.e. to read and then perform using the knowledge from the reading. She connected it further to the teacher’s practice of identifying the misconceptions and misunderstandings at time of planning and alert students to these issues, so that students could be prepared for them. In Deborah’s estimation, in order for teachers to be able to identify misconceptions and misunderstandings ahead of time, it is critical that they know the content that they are teaching on a daily basis.

From this discussion, the group moved into the element of guided practice, recognizing how these two elements are intertwined throughout a classroom lesson. Prior to watching a video of a teacher during the guided practice portion of the lesson, I invited the principals to discuss as a whole group what we would expect to see a teacher and student doing during guided practice. Yesenia said that it would look like the templates of lesson plans for Guided Reading which we had seen previously during our second session, while Deborah shared that it might look like turning to talk to a partner, a strategy that we used during our session. This discussion gave them the opportunity to connect to their own experiences in observing guided practice in their classrooms, but remained at the surface level of naming behaviors rather than demonstrating an understanding of the effectiveness.

After this brief share out, I introduced a video by Jan Richardson that consisted of a teacher conducting a guided writing lesson with a small group of five second graders. During the introduction, one of the principals reflected that as we are talking about guided practice he noticed that this practice fits in with the strategy of shared reading, because in shared reading students and the teacher are working together and the teacher is providing just enough scaffolding to help students be successful. Before the lesson began, I gave the principals another T-Chart to record the behaviors of students and the teacher. During the video, principals recorded their observations.

After the video ended I asked the group what they had observed the teacher and students doing in the lesson. They recognized that the teacher began the lesson with specific directions, and gave a high level of support, which the teacher adjusted for the students dependent on the students’ misunderstanding of the skill. They noticed that the teacher gave corrections and encouragement to the students in the group, while at the same time holding them accountable for their learning, monitoring their learning. Deborah noticed that the level of the support that the teacher provided indicated for her that this was a new strategy that the students had not tried before. Another principal added that, possibly since it was a new strategy, the teacher did a lot of the work for the students, such as identifying key words in the reading. Deborah also noticed that the teacher kept her questioning at a very basic level of recall. The principals concluded that the activity was very teacher-directed and the students practiced with a high level of teacher support to be able to write a single sentence. Therefore they would expect the appropriate next step to be for the teacher to gradually release the learning to the students a little at a time as students demonstrate their skill of writing a sentence about the story they had read.

Following their discussion I referred them back to the SET tool to look at the descriptions of behaviors in guided practice. Isabel said that she observed that the “*students were enabled to*

self-direct and self-monitor task completion.” Deborah said that she noticed that too, but that there needs to be a range. In closing, Deborah shared that *“it’s important to know for ourselves what all these elements are supposed to look like. It comes back to content knowledge, knowing what a lesson should look like.”* I asked them to use the T-Chart again to gather observation data about the behaviors of teachers and students in their own school, specifically within the elements of checking for understanding and guided practice, and to bring them to our next session. At the end of the session, I asked the principals to complete the session reflection and thanked them for their participation.

Analysis for Session Four

The objective for this session was for principals to analyze the behaviors that occur when teachers are checking for understanding during a lesson. In my analysis of the data, I found that the principals met the objective at the level of naming the behaviors and using the language from the SET, but they did not meet the more critical objective of being able to analyze a lesson segment. This indicates that the core principles of the design as practiced in the model of professional learning are at fault. While this may be the traditional approach to professional development in districts, and specifically in Rancho Unified School District, it did not create the context that is necessary for the deeper learning needed to be able to analyze classroom instruction in a way that will move teacher practice.

Furthermore, the data that was gathered during the professional development indicate that the principals use the language of the SET, but do not understand its application to clinical observation of lessons. While the chapter about checking for understanding gave an abstract frame for what quality instruction might look like, the video clip only gave an example of the component in practice that principals could discuss. The video clip of the targeted practices only provided declarative knowledge but it did not allow for a detailed observation of students and teachers, not did it allow for the application of their new language to observations. In short, this method of professional learning did not teach principals to give better feedback to teachers under their supervision.

Overall, the principals reflected that checking for understanding was the major focus of the session, while guided practice was not as prominent. The principals found checking for understanding to be the most relevant concept in the session, and the session reflections detail their learning, as Jacob shared, the reading and discussion *“Clarified the meaning of checking for understanding in detail, while the benefit of consistent use of checking for understanding is supporting students to monitor their own learning.”*

Other principals agreed that building metacognitive skills within this element is critical to student success, writing that, *“Teaching students to check for their own understanding while ensuring that teachers plan for checking for understanding is critical.”* Deborah concurred that it is important to review checking for understanding, *“in depth because it is often glossed over in lessons while it is a key component.”* Wendy articulated her observation that the learning from the session reflected the depth of analysis that the principals need to bring to their work. These reflections reveal the impact of the professional development session. While I clarified the meaning of the language and reminded the participants of their previous understanding it was not powerful learning in teaching principals the way to provide more effective feedback.

Session Five

Learning Objectives for Session Five

As I reflected on changes that were necessary for the next session, I considered the reflections from the previous session, and consequently, developed the agenda for Session 5 of the professional development. The objective for the session was that principals would learn to articulate and analyze the behaviors of teachers and students that occur when students have produced an artifact or performance related to new concepts or skills that need feedback so that they can correct or elaborate on current understandings.

The session would begin with the principals sharing their written observations of a classroom visit using a T-Chart to record the behaviors of teachers and students. They were asked to use the SET to observe for those behaviors that occur during checking for understanding and guided practice. This activity was intended to give principals an opportunity to discuss with one another ways in which they had applied the learning from our previous session.

Once again, principals were asked to engage in reading professional literature and have a deeper discussion with peers about their reading. I structured the activity for the principals by sending out the reading ahead of time so that, if principals chose to read it beforehand and take notes, they had the opportunity to do this. I also identified prior to meeting and at the session who would be reading each section, gave them a timeframe to complete their section, included focus questions. The guiding questions were primarily recall questions about the content of the reading instead of higher order thinking questions. The questions were chosen to give principals information about feedback and the role that it can play in a lesson. The questions mirrored the sections of the reading and were intended to orient the principals to the four levels of feedback, i.e. 1) feedback about the task; 2) feedback about the processing of the task; 3) feedback about self-regulation; and 4) feedback about the self as a person. These levels are derived from the work of Kluger & Denisi (1996). The reading also reviewed the use of a comparison group to examine student work, as a way to evaluate the product or performance. These groups could be norm-referenced, criterion-referenced or based on individual students. Finally, the reading referenced criteria for feedback, specifically that it is timely, specific, understandable and actionable. Since the sections would be discussed using the Inner/Outer Circle Activity, the questions were more informational to give principals a context for their learning about this element. The questions that were asked for each group are listed below.

Group 1: pages 62-71

1. How would you describe the four types of feedback?
2. What are the three ways to compare students?

Group 2: pages 71-76

3. What are the criteria for effective feedback?
4. How can feedback be delivered to learners?

Group 3: pages 77-88

5. When is it appropriate to give oral feedback? Written feedback? Peer feedback?
6. How should students respond to the feedback they receive?

Based on the positive feedback of some participants from a previous session, I included the Inner/Outer Circle again and made sure that I allocated more time for each pair to share their

learning from their section of the article. My plan was to give time for a deeper discussion at the end of the session.

In addition to reading about Feedback, principals watched a video clip from the movie, Mr. Holland's Opus in which the high school music teacher is trying to teach the football player how to play the bass drum for the marching band. In the movie, the teacher initially gives up because he says he can't teach this student. He is challenged to do better by the high school football coach, who tells him, "if you can't teach a kid like this, who wants to learn, then you aren't a very good teacher." The remainder of the clip shows the variety of feedback strategies that the teacher tries before he is finally successful and the student can find the beat in order to play the drum with the marching band. In the clip, the teacher gave The purpose of this clip was to give the principals an opportunity to record the behaviors of the teacher and student during multiple cycles of feedback, and then give them the opportunity to discuss what they observed and how it was effective.

Afterwards there would be a brief discussion with the whole group which would provide an opportunity for principals to apply their understanding from the professional reading to their observations of the teaching video clip. This was intended to help them to analyze the success of the feedback loop for this particular student and use the SET Tool to look for the behaviors that were present.

Implementation – What Occurred in Session 5

In the session reflection from our previous session, principals wrote that they needed some time to reorient themselves to the professional learning after leaving their school sites to attend the meeting. It was suggested to do a check-in round with a focus question. To accommodate this request, I asked them to think about a classroom visit that they had made the past week. I asked them to share the memorable and enjoyable things they saw with the entire group and gave them 30 seconds think time.

One principal shared about a teacher that he had observed recently. The teacher has a set of laptops for students, and the students were using an electronic student response system to give answers which appeared on the Smartboard in the classroom. Then he divided the students into an extension group and a group to work with for extra practice, and proceeded to reteach the math concept. Afterwards, the teacher gave students the test again and they could see the improved student responses, and recognize what they had learned. This was an example of the teacher using feedback in his lesson to guide instruction, foreshadowing the discussion for our session. Several other principals shared their observations about their classroom visits.

In order to make connections for principals with our previous discussions about the elements of the lesson, I referred back to our previous learning and asked them to share classroom observations where they saw teachers checking for understanding and giving opportunities for guided practice. Deborah shared that she was in a classroom, and the teacher was using a vocabulary chart. During her visit, she observed the teacher was adding to an existing chart based on students', thereby using something that developed over time and connected to the learning. Another principal talked about moving teachers from teacher centered to student centered instruction. Jacob shared that he saw that checking for understanding is much more present in guided reading because it is embedded in that structure, and teachers can transfer it.

Next, we focused on the content regarding the element of giving feedback by using practitioner literature. They were each assigned a section to read and given guiding questions to use for the Inner/Outer Circle Activity that we would complete after the reading. When most of the principals had completed the reading, I prompted them to move to the Inner/Outer Circle activity. During the activity, principals engaged in conversations about giving feedback. Most of their discussion involved defining the terms for feedback to better understand the types of feedback yet did not reflect the deeper understanding of the complexity of the reading. The type of activity, while the principals had some positive responses to this during prior sessions, did not give them the opportunity to develop the type of clinical understanding needed for analysis of teaching. Instead they repeated the language from the reading, sharing declarative knowledge that had no application to creating a bridge between current teaching and learning behaviors and exemplary teaching in a classroom. In hindsight, the reading was too abstract.

To follow up this activity, I reintroduced the SET tool and asked them to look at the section on ‘giving feedback’ and read through the behaviors of students and teachers looking for ways in which the tool connected to the professional literature. After they had read through the tool, we watched a video clip from the movie, Mr. Holland’s Opus, specifically the section where Mr. Holland taught a student to play the drum in the marching band. In the video, the teacher recognized that the student was not able to keep regular musical time when as he plays the bass drum in the marching band. Since the drum provides the beat for the band, it is critical that the student be able to ‘keep the beat. The teacher began by teaching the concept in the whole class setting, and observed the student’s performance as a kind of formative assessment, collecting evidence of whether the student’s understood the task. The teacher noticed that the student had not learned the skill of keeping the beat and provided direct corrective feedback, by showing him how to play the drum according to the beat. Then the teacher gave additional instruction to provide the student with multiple opportunities to learn the concept, including clapping the beat, tapping the beat, singing the beat and playing the beat on the piano and drums. as well as showing the student a musical staff to provide a written representation. He encouraged with specific and public praise when the student was successful. The teacher moved through cycles of instruction and feedback for the student. During each cycle the feedback was specific, timely and understandable.

Following the video, I asked the principals to think about what the teacher was doing, and what the student was doing. Then they were asked to look at the SET tool and consider what types of feedback the teacher provided, and compare that to the criteria for feedback in the SET. One principal made the observation that the music teacher in the video used a variety of strategies, including auditory, physical, and written feedback, while during the learning the student demonstrated recognition of his mistakes and yet, continued to persevere. One participant added that teacher praised and recognized him, and made sure to redirect the student in private. At the end of the session time, I gave the reflection response sheets out to the participants and asked them to return the reflection response sheets to me when the group reconvened in the afternoon.

Analysis for Session Five

The objective for this session was that principals would learn to analyze the way in which teachers are giving feedback as part of a formative assessment system. I found that the learning for this professional development emphasized reminding principals of what they already knew about the purpose of providing feedback during instruction. While this session increased their

awareness of the role of feedback, it did not provide learning about the way in which they would analyze for this component in a lesson.

At the beginning of the session during the check-in Yesenia remarked that these professional development sessions were “a reminder that we need to spend time on this, and that I (Yesenia) don’t have enough understanding of the check for understanding to recognize what it looks like when it is done well.” Notably, Isabel also recognized the importance of engaging with teachers in discussions about teaching and learning in the classroom. She shared, “I need to practice giving corrective feedback to teachers myself so they can see the value in providing feedback to their students.” Jacob wrote that his prior experience with giving feedback came from “classroom and administrative experience – I don’t recall any specific training on effective feedback for student.” Both Deborah and Jacob reported superficial observations of their viewing of the video clip, which did not represent an analysis of the lesson behaviors.

Principals used the professional literature as a reminder of their previous understandings about feedback, and an expansion of that knowledge, which can be used as a foundation to build understanding of familiar concepts. During the discussions they referred to the language and the concepts that were present in the reading, but they were not able to move from declarative knowledge to the level of skill necessary for clinical observation.

The lesson plan for professional development that was used in this intervention did not produce the desired result of engaging principals in analyzing instruction that occurs during the feedback cycle that produces an exemplary learning environment for students. After analyzing the data for this session, I have concluded that this application of the core design principles represented a traditional model of professional development in practice and did not produce the desired outcome. A more successful format could have been to start with a concrete instructional segment. Then principals would be asked to observe what they were seeing in a low-inference way. After completing their observations of the behaviors in a way that describes observable behaviors without an interpretation, then the principals could use the tool to make sense about what they observed and then read something more synthesizing. In this way, principals would be more likely to attain the goal of analyzing instruction in the classroom.

Session Six

Learning Objectives for Session Six

The objective for the session was to synthesize the learning from the previous sessions and apply it to a written verbatim of a lesson using a common understanding of the behaviors of teachers and students that are present during the elements of a lesson. Feedback from the previous session included a request to begin with a check-in for the participants, which would give them an opportunity to orient themselves to the work ahead, and provide a bridge from the daily activities and preoccupations to the more intensive work of professional learning. The check-in also would include a focus question that was related to their learning about quality instruction during the past sessions. This would give the group of principals an opportunity to think about their own learning specifically regarding the elements of instruction as applied to classroom instruction and then share their learning and observations with the whole group.

After the whole group time to check in about their observations of quality instruction, the principals would read and discuss a lesson verbatim to identify and describe the behaviors of students and teachers as reflected during the lesson. The lesson verbatim was taken from a third grade classroom guided reading lesson. In addition to the verbatim, they were given the SET

Tool to use to orient their discussion about the lesson. The purpose of the lesson verbatim was to provide an opportunity to use the language that had been introduced during the previous sessions in discussion about instruction that occurred in the classroom.

The second part of the session would be spent discussing the way in which principals can influence the teaching and learning process through the delivery of effective feedback for teachers. The decision to engage principals in this dialogue was motivated by several factors. I wanted to be able to give participants an opportunity for closure at the end of the professional development series and to allow for a conversation about what to do with their learning as they observe in classrooms and talk with teachers about instruction. The handout that was used for this portion of the session referred to a quote from Ovando (pg. 171, 2006), “Research suggests that principals are in a key position to influence the teaching and learning process and feedback for teachers is an important component of that process.” This activity asked the questions, “How can we, as elementary principals, influence the teaching and learning process through effective feedback?” I chose this question as a way for principals to articulate their thinking about using the elements of instruction as a way to influence classroom instruction.

As a way to support their discussion, I also distributed a chart that identified the types of behaviors that are observed during conversational discourse, followed by suggestions for ways to move towards the goal of engaging in a more objective and academic discussion about quality instruction and effective feedback, for example moving from thinking that answers and solutions are the primary goal of the conversation to reframing challenges and problems in order to engage in discourse that increase understanding the dilemmas that are present.

Implementation – What Occurred in Session Six

The final session of the professional development was held following the elementary principals’ end of the year breakfast. After the breakfast and informal sharing, I began our final session. Based on feedback from prior sessions regarding a check-in opportunity, I asked the participants to think about their own learning regarding instruction during the past year, what they have found to be the most significant.

Several themes emerged from this discussion. The most common theme was around the model of Balanced Literacy and more specifically about guided reading. The second and third sessions of the professional development had guided reading as a specific observation focus and the principals’ discussion, both before and during the professional learning, was observed through the lens of guided reading which was part of the district elementary literacy initiative. There was recognition of the value of checking for understanding that assists in differentiating instruction for students, using what students know as a ‘springboard’ to further instruction.

In particular, Isabel referred specifically to her own experience through the professional learning opportunities during the elementary principals meetings. She shared:

I was thinking about the process that we used from the PD, looking at articles to read and think about ahead of time and then discuss with peers at a deeper level, and at the same time there were opportunities to see the practice made real with a skillful teacher in a guided reading group and seeing interaction, helped me to go, “oh, this is what I should be seeing,” and then going into classrooms to see what is happening there.

From this excerpt, it appears that Isabel interpreted her learning to help her to move forward towards a deeper level of analysis. For her, all of the elements of the professional development contributed to building a level of skill that made it possible for her to go into

classrooms to observe for high quality instruction. In her reflection, she identified the opportunity to observe the skillful teacher during the second professional development session as the pivotal point in her learning about the qualities of instruction. The opportunities for observing live lessons, or video clips of high quality lesson were not consistently offered throughout the series of the professional development.

For our next learning activity, I shared a written selective verbatim from a classroom observation of a guided reading lesson in the format of a T-chart. The chart had two columns, on the left side a principal had recorded low inference, objective observations of teacher behaviors and on the right side, low inference observations of students' behaviors. The principals used the SET to provide a description of what was happening during the lesson. I asked them to consider ways to describe the instruction that occurred during the lesson, and then talk with a partner about the behaviors that they could infer from the verbatim. Participants recognized that the teacher established a purpose for the lesson, by telling students that they would learn how to annotate the story they were reading. They also referenced way that the teacher used sentence frames within the co-constructing phase to structure the student talk, and that the type of frames that she used was critical to scaffold student understanding. The participants noted that the teacher did not provide opportunities for guided practice in the verbatim. Finally, they observed that the teacher did not check for understanding during the lesson, since there was limited reference to students asking questions. From these conversations, it appeared that principals made low inference observations about the lesson in the verbatim, but did not use these observations to extend their analysis to the quality of the lesson.

As a final brief activity, the group engaged in a closing discussion about how teachers talk about students and how do principals talk about teachers. Here the focus centered on giving specific feedback to teachers about ways to co-construct the learning with their students. This was seen as a high leverage strategy for principals to engage teachers in reflecting on their instruction. At the end of the conversation, I thanked everyone for their support and participation, and asked them to complete the final reflection.

Analysis for Session Six

The objective for the final professional development session was for principals to synthesize the learning from the previous sessions and apply it to a written verbatim of a lesson using a common understanding of the behaviors of teachers and students that are present during the elements of a lesson. In my analysis of the data, I conclude that the principals did not meet the objective for the session.

I have come to this conclusion based on the outcomes of the three main activities that occurred during this session. First of all, the principals responded to the check-in activity with multiple stories about their experiences during the year. Several talked about larger district instructional initiatives that did not directly reference classroom instruction, while Isabel talked specifically about her learning from our professional development sessions. She referred to her learning from the professional development and shared that she took that knowledge into classrooms to apply it to her observations of the lessons. This indicates that she recognized that the learning was a useful and applicable endeavor. At the same time, it is difficult to determine, based on the conversations that the other principals found the sessions to be useful.

In my analysis, principals were not able to engage in discussions about lessons based on previous professional development sessions regarding the components that are found during a

lesson, and moving from low inference observation to a deeper analysis. Much of their conversation referred to generalities of the lesson, or the way that teachers felt about evaluative discussions which would include opportunities for feedback. This was typical of the outcomes of the previous sessions.

It appears that as the principals talked about the selective verbatim of a third grade reading lesson, they referenced several of the elements of instruction, but did not give more specific analysis of the behaviors present during the lesson, engaging in more general references to behaviors of teaching, or referring to the elements, but not giving an analysis of the lesson.

In other discussions during the final session, several principals referred to specific classroom observations, talking about ways that they conducted observations. More often, they spoke in generalities, rather than making comments to identify the exact behaviors that would be present in a high quality lesson. Overall, principals saw their role as supporting the conversation, by helping teachers to reflect on their own teaching. They wanted to coach them to improve their practice, and that they needed to devote sufficient time to that effort. Again, these references did not include more detailed analysis of what they might expect to see in the classroom on which to base their conferences with teachers.

Based on this analysis, it appears that the principals could not consistently articulate in these discussions what they would expect to see in the classroom. Instead, they expressed their intention to help teachers to recognize for themselves the ways that they would want to improve their teaching.

Summary of Process Data Analysis

Process data were collected for the professional development sessions as a means to understand the effect of the impact data and its associative relationship. For this study, the theory of action had as its premise that through a series of carefully designed activities linked to specific objectives, over the course of six professional development sessions, principals' would develop an understanding of the qualities of good instruction which they would apply to their analysis of a lesson. The core design principles for this professional development proposed that when principals were able to read professional literature, discuss this with colleagues in structured activities and apply their learning to videotaped or live lessons they would be able to analyze the quality of instruction.

Process data were collected across the sessions and systematically analyzed to help gauge and understand the principal learning processes as determined by the extent to which each lesson objective was met. The analysis of the process for each intervention session indicated that the principals did not learn to connect the observation tool with observed events in order to provide an in depth analysis of instruction.

At the same time, the process data indicate that principals struggled with maintaining a focus on their own professional learning and growth. Frequently in the session reflections, they expressed the desire to "take this back to my teachers." In other words, they wanted to replicate the session with their teachers, rather than reflect more deeply on their own gaps in understanding. Many references were made to their prior knowledge about the elements, and they experienced the professional development as a 'refresher.' In this way, the professional development failed to move the principals to the next level of observing a lesson and analyzing instruction through the use of an observation tool.

The Theory of Intervention that was applied to this problem of practice consisted of facilitated conversations using quality research based literature that took place during professional development opportunities. As principals moved through the professional development opportunities with facilitated conversations, it was intended that they would be able to refine their understanding and observations of instruction. The process data indicate that that was not the case, but instead that principals remained at a surface level of understanding regarding the elements that are present during a lesson and the behaviors of students and teachers during instruction.

For this study, the professional development that was implemented consisted of reading declarative text, then using the concepts in discussions that relied primarily on previous understandings without sufficient further instruction. In addition, principals were given a tool that added more concepts but lacked the application to instruction. In this way the professional development that was applied consisted of a reminder in generalities that did not push principals to the next level of in depth analysis of instruction.

Connecting Impact Data to the Process

This design study was built upon the theory of action that in order to ensure that principals can deliver effective feedback to teachers following classroom observations, it was necessary for them to understand the qualities of good teaching and use these qualities when analyzing classroom instruction. I implemented a series of professional development sessions that endeavored to establish a common understanding of the qualities of good teaching, and structured collaborative protocols for the observation and analysis of instruction. This intervention was grounded in the literature regarding dimensions of learning, effective feedback and professional development.

In summary, based on the findings from an extensive review of data collected prior to and following the design intervention, it appeared that there was some positive change in the expertise of participating principals to articulate and analyze for the behaviors of teachers and students associated with the elements of instruction during a lesson. Although the process data reflect that principals did not meet the intended objectives of analyzing instruction during the professional development sessions, they did reflect growth in their skill at recognizing and naming the behaviors that are present during components of instruction. This could be connected to references throughout the process that principals were familiar with the content that was presented and the activities in the professional development sessions activated their prior knowledge. The principals with higher ratings prior to the sessions, namely Yesenia and Isabel, evidenced the most growth, while those with the lowest ratings, namely Nancy and Mia, evidenced the least growth.

The analysis of the impact data that was collected prior to and following the professional development indicate that there was a positive change for five of the six principals who participated in the series of professional development sessions. Of the four principals who exhibited a positive change in their level of expertise, one was able to demonstrate a moderate to high level of skill. The remaining principals with positive changes in their expertise in analyzing behaviors within each element indicated that they were able to demonstrate slight to moderate expertise in analyzing the behaviors that occur during each element of a lesson.

The principal who did not make any significant change struggled with understanding the objective of the lessons both before and after the professional development sessions. As such,

this impeded her analysis of each of the elements of instruction. In addition, her responses were minimal and did not reflect an analysis of the behaviors within the elements as they related to quality instruction. In contrast, the principal with the highest scores appeared to be able to clearly understand the objective for the lesson, both before and after the professional development. She was able to apply that understanding to each of the performance tasks and her responses are thoughtful and reflective in regards to the teaching that she observed. The remaining three principals showed some increase overall. They were somewhat successful in analyzing instruction and made positive changes to their level of skill following the professional development based on the impact data

The analysis of the process for each professional development session indicated the professional development sessions did not engage principals in developing the skill and knowledge necessary to analyze the components of a lesson using a common tool. Nonetheless, the evidence as presented in the process data, reveal that principals increased in their skill at recognizing the dimensions of instruction and the behaviors that occurred within them. The activities of the sessions focused more on increasing the principals' skill in naming the components of instruction and the behaviors of students and teachers that are present during instruction. The analysis of the professional development sessions reflects that principals demonstrated their specific recognition of the behaviors and their ability to name them when they were present in a lesson, but as the impact data shows, they did not gain the expertise necessary to more deeply analyze a specific episode of teaching and learning. As reflected in the process data, planning and execution of the activities resulted in a consistent focus on naming behaviors and concepts, the use of long and complex professional readings, and a lack of precise and consistent application of the analysis tool to observe instruction impeded the learning of the principals during the professional development. This can be attributed to the traditional model of professional development which involved direct instruction and an emphasis on completing the agenda that was applied to this intervention. In Chapter Five, I will review the findings of this study, reexamine the Theory of Action and discuss the impact of this study on further iterations.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Introduction

The increasing emphasis on quality instruction in classrooms has far reaching implications for the instructional leaders in schools (Ovando & Ramirez, 2007; Ovando, 2006). Principals with varying levels of experience and expertise are given the task of providing formal and informal supervision and evaluation for teachers. Supervision and evaluation includes conducting classroom observations that are looking for high quality instruction (Bland et al., 2011; Blase and Blase, 1998).

In this chapter, I discuss the findings of this study and the Theory of Action. Consequently, I assert that the design of the professional development sessions failed to produce the intended outcome. Furthermore, I contend that the failure of this effort to design professional development for principals regarding the skills needed to analyze qualities of instruction yields important learning for those wishing to increase the expertise of principals in the area of analyzing classroom instruction. I begin with a summary of the findings in which I highlight key elements of professional development. Next, I identify the ways in which the study addressed the design challenge and the design principles. Further, I reexamine the Theory of Action and study limitations and in conclusion, discuss future iterations and implications for practice.

Summary of Findings

After a comprehensive review of the impact and process data, the findings suggest that the design, content, and process of the series of professional development sessions increased the knowledge of principals to name and describe the components of instruction and the behaviors of students and teachers during the lesson. Nonetheless, the planning and execution of the activities that were implemented during the professional development sessions did not contribute to a positive change in principal behavior as it related to the objective of the intervention design which focused on principals' proficiency in analyzing quality instruction using an observation tool. Although the impact data suggest that there was a positive change in principals' skill at recognizing the qualities of good instruction, and in some cases, their knowledge of analyzing components of a lesson, the process data show that the activities that were chosen reflected a traditional model of professional development that did not provide sufficient opportunities for principals to apply their skill at naming and describing the behaviors present during a lesson.

The findings indicate that four of the five principals evidenced some positive change as reflected by impact data. Of the four principals who exhibited a positive change in their level of expertise, one was able to demonstrate a moderate to high level of skill in analyzing instruction within each element. The remaining principals were able to demonstrate slight to moderate expertise in analyzing the behaviors that occur during each element of a lesson. It is possible to assume that the principals' growth in understanding of the qualities of good instruction can be viewed in relationship to the professional development sessions that were embedded in the monthly principal meetings, based on the findings of the process data. Throughout the process of the professional development, participating principals made multiple references to the series as a refresher, reminding them of qualities of good instruction with which they were familiar. The sessions provided the participants with a shared language in which to engage in discussions regarding the technical aspects of instruction. These discussions identified the behaviors and interactions of students and teachers, but did not provide them with sufficient opportunities to

observe lessons using a simple tool that would engage them in the analysis necessary to understand qualities of good instruction.

Consequently, it is valuable to review the process data and analysis in order to establish the relationship. In the next section, I review the extent to which I was able to meet the design features and principles.

Meeting the Design Features and the Design Principles

My analysis of the intervention that was applied to this problem of practice has determined that the planning and execution of the activities that were included in the professional development sessions did not meet the intended outcome of the design. Each session was centered on the professional literature that provided the basis for the SET tool. The professional literature that was chosen to inform principals of the qualities of good instruction was too long and complex, resulting in vague discussions of quality, and did not produce a connection to real life instruction. Using the literature, the principals then entered into discussions using semi-structured questions and activities. This format used guiding questions that asked principals to recall information, but did not examine the actual classroom behaviors that were necessary to meet the design challenge. The design did not adequately provide for the type of in depth study that was necessary to understand the content of the reading, nor did the reading address the need for consistent, precise practice in using the observation tool connected to observed events. Several times during the professional development, they watched a video or live lesson with a designated time to debrief afterwards. The SET Tool was intended to assist the principals in looking for specific behaviors in the instruction that they observed. Nonetheless, these opportunities were not designed to provide principals with the type of precise practice that would be needed to learn the skill of analyzing instruction in order to ascertain its quality.

It should be noted that as an action researcher, I remained alert to the importance of maintaining internal validity, ensuring rigor and guarding against bias throughout this design intervention study. I collected data in multiple forms, including audio recordings, session reflections, and field notes. At the same time, I met regularly with my Director of Elementary Education to examine each session in depth, and make necessary adjustments to the series of professional development sessions. Finally, in order to validate the findings and avoid biases, I carefully reviewed the data throughout the professional development and maintained regular communication with my LEEP colleagues, instructors and advisor to review the study progress, and responses from participants.

Reexamining the Theory of Action

Principals are invested with the obligation to support and evaluate teachers. This includes both formal and informal observations of daily instruction. Within the cycle of evaluation, each observation should conclude with an opportunity for the administrator and teacher to participate in a conversation that includes effective feedback about the lesson that was observed (Glickman, et al., 2005). This is one of the most high leverage duties within their sphere of responsibilities. When teachers are provided with effective feedback that describes high quality instruction and gives concrete recommendations for ways to close the gap between the current behaviors and desired behaviors, they can increase the level of rigor and effectiveness of the instruction and have a positive impact on student engagement and achievement (Toch, Thomas, & Rothman, 2008).

In this design intervention study the Theory of Action provided the rationale and plan for how the professional development addressed this problem of practice. The Theory of Change and Intervention was built on the premise that in order for principals to be able to give teachers effective feedback, they need to develop an understanding of what the observable behaviors are that constitute instruction and analyze them for quality. While I maintain that the Theory of Intervention was sound based on the professional development literature, the planning and execution of activities did not produce the desired learning that would support principals in lesson analysis as evidenced by the process data.

These activities represented a traditional format for professional development. The planning and execution of the activities for the sessions failed to address the specific type of learning that principals would need to analyze lessons. They did not include multiple live or videotaped lessons which principals could use to observe and analyze instruction with the observation tool that was provided. While the professional literature informed the principals' declarative knowledge regarding the elements of instruction, it did not provide for the clinical application and precise, consistent practice that is necessary for principals to analyze instruction. Thus, it can be concluded that the traditional model of professional development which was chosen for this intervention was not successful in this design. In the next section, I will reflect on features of the design that would be recommended for future iterations of this design.

Future Design Features

With any research experiment or study, the opportunity to suggest changes for future iterations can be beneficial, as is the case for my study. In response to the outcomes of this study, potential modifications for a future professional development series should address the need for the participants to use the observation tool in a consistent manner, through videotaped or live examples of high quality instruction. While, initially, professional literature can be used to assist principals in developing a common vocabulary to refer to behaviors of students and teachers during a lesson, it is necessary for principals to have multiple ongoing opportunities for application of the tool in observations of lessons. In addition, the sessions would abandon the direct instruction model of the current design with its emphasis on completing the agenda of activities. Instead, the small group of principals would co-construct their analysis of the lesson components by referring to the tool and the evidence from their observations of instruction in order to develop a deeper knowledge and skill at lesson analysis.

Based on the core design principles and the Theory of Action, the professional development that would be used in further iterations would reflect professional learning within a 'reform' model. In contrast to the traditional model of professional development, the reform model would include smaller study groups, as well as coaching and modeling of the desired learning. These groups would be disconnected from the larger professional development of the principals so that they could focus exclusively on the content connected to lesson analysis, and not be subjected to outside pressures for content.

In addition, the guided learning activities to be included would have as their primary emphasis analysis of specific teacher and student behaviors and would ensure that principals had sufficient time to practice, using the SET tool to record their observations and receive feedback about their learning. In order to increase the effectiveness of the intervention, the sessions would be conducted more frequently, and concentrate on principals who are specifically interested in improving their practice.

Study Limitations and Feasibility

An important limitation in this study was the emphasis on enhancing principal behaviors while embedding the sessions within the larger scope of the elementary principals' monthly meetings. This became more challenging when as competing priorities and shifting time frames emerged throughout the study.

A further limitation arises concerning the transferability of this study. I specifically focused on five elementary principals and their leadership behavior. With only elementary principals as the single focus, the transferability of findings to middle school or high school principals may be problematic. Since there are numerous structural and administrative differences in middle and high schools and their engagement in the observation and evaluation process may take a different form, a substantially modified design may be necessary to address the problem of practice for principals leading at secondary levels of education.

A number of feasibility factors related to time, session format and availability of the participants also impacted the design intervention. Most important within this endeavor was the willingness of the Director of Elementary Education to include this intervention within the monthly professional development for the elementary principals. Without her support, the professional development would not have been regarded as important or essential for the participants. Instead, it might have been considered an additional activity in which none of the principals have the availability or time to participate given the enormous pressure that they are under to manage their school sites and comply with multiple directives and compliance responsibilities from the District Office. The format of the sessions was often adapted to meet the needs of the other activities within the meeting time, and as such, it was necessary to have a flexible format that could engage meeting the learning objective while making changes to the agenda during the course of the meeting.

Implications for Practice

Over the course of my career as an educator in multiple roles, as teacher, coach, instructor and administrator, I have been able to examine and participate in the observation and evaluation process from many perspectives. As I began to investigate the areas of focus for my research within LEEP, I realized a deeper interest in finding a way to address these challenges within my own sphere of influence. As I developed a problem of practice within my organization, I found that I was quickly drawn to the idea of improving principals' expertise in delivering effective feedback to teachers. Throughout my study of the literature, it became evident that this was a problem that appeared in many schools and within a variety of settings. At the same time, it was not an unsolvable problem.

Consequently, during this process of developing a research focus and ultimately conducting research, I was able to reflect on my own process of learning. The outcomes of this study have significant implications for my own further participation in professional development within my setting. Over the course of many years, I have followed the traditional model of professional development, and it was my sincere belief that I should deliver the learning to the participants through reading professional literature and giving them the structure to engage in learning. In this way, I failed to see the value of a co-constructed model of learning that would be more effective given the objectives of the intended outcome. I have learned through this experience of conducting research and throughout my experience in LEEP, that in order to allow participants to learn and apply their knowledge to their specific context, they should participate

in professional development that is built on features of adult centered learning, including coaching and mentoring as well as ongoing opportunities for application and discussion of the specific understanding that has occurred.

This has empowered me to seek out opportunities to use what I have learned and its impact on my own practice. Concurrently, my participation in all aspects of LEEP Community has also furthered this process of self-reflection and empowerment. I recognize that any undertaking to further the professional learning of the education community will involve reflection and analysis of the impact of the professional development and the process that it entails along the way.

Final Thoughts

At the end of this process, I realize that this is only the beginning. Students will always deserve the very best, high quality instruction that is available. It is important to continue to recognize the fact that students who experience the effects of the inequities of the educational system often do not have access to this high quality instruction for various reasons. If that is the case, principals should view their obligation to analyze the qualities of good instruction and craft effective feedback that engages teachers in an ongoing cycle of continuous improvement as a moral imperative.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Intervention Session Agendas 1-6

SESSIONS 1-6	PROFESSIONAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES All Sessions to occur during monthly elementary principals meeting
Session 1: Introduction of the Problem of Practice	<p>Session Goal: Participants will collaboratively develop deeper understanding of the qualities of good instruction</p> <p>Activity:</p> <p>Share objective of Professional Development for 2015: to collaboratively develop deeper understanding of qualities of good instruction in order to meet current expectation of observing in classrooms</p> <p>Review group norms taken from TK-Adult Equity PD.</p> <p>Listening Protocol to share current understanding of quality instruction and how it can be observed</p> <p>Share with a partner a recent high quality lesson that you observed. What were the things that made it successful? What could be improved?</p> <p>Read Chapter Three: How We Teach, Focus: Elevating the Essentials to Radically Improve Student Learning (Schmoker, 2011)</p> <p>Small Group Discussion about what quality instruction looks like based on the reading from Schmoker</p> <p>Whole Group sharing key understandings from the reading and discussion</p> <p>Debrief session and elicit feedback for following sessions</p> <p>Data: Collect reflections, debriefing notes and field notes</p>
Session 2: Introducing the tool that helps focus on key lesson components and indicators of behaviors.	<p>Session Goal: The group will understand and engage in discussion about observable qualities of good instruction based on a common tool.</p> <p>Activities :</p> <p>Review Group Norms- Which one is most important to you today?</p> <p>Check in to share informal observations based on new learning from previous session using guiding questions.</p> <p>When in classrooms during the past month what did you notice about how you observed teachers? What strategies did you see that connected to the reading from Mike Schmoker about Effective Teaching?</p> <p>Introduce Strategic Engagement Tool as a Model for Effective Lessons: Fostering Student Academic Engagement-Components and Dimensions of Learning and Teaching-walk through each component. Have someone read the descriptor for each component</p> <p>Give thinking time to read and review with individual guiding questions:</p> <p>Point out that this addresses two lesson models: constructing and co-construction lessons</p> <p>Within each component, which of the dimensions are you most familiar with? Which are you unfamiliar with and need more information about?</p> <p>Using the worksheet, in a group of three, review the terms of the learning</p>

	<p>dimensions and share understanding of what they mean to you.</p> <p>Share examples of FSAE actions observed during Guided Reading lesson</p> <p>What new learning happened today and what next steps will you take?</p> <p>Debrief PD session and elicit feedback for following sessions</p> <p>Homework: Members will record observations of teacher and student behaviors using a T-chart during informal observation opportunities</p> <p>Data: Group discussion notes, individual reflections, field notes, memo</p>
<p>Session 3</p> <p>Focus on Lesson Element of Opening/Modeling</p>	<p>Session Goal: Principals will be able to identify, observe for and articulate observable behaviors that take place during the opening and modeling components of an instructional lesson.</p> <p>Activities :</p> <p>Review Group Norms</p> <p>Quick write to share informal observations based on new learning from previous session</p> <p>Have you been able to observe guided reading lessons in the past month?</p> <p>What did you notice about the lessons you observed? How did students respond to the teacher’s book introduction and teaching points following the first reading of the book?</p> <p>Professional Literature: Read <u>Better Teaching through Structured Learning, Chapter 2</u> (Fisher, D., Frey, 2013)</p> <p>Reading the professional literature, everyone will have a copy of all the literature, but only be responsible for a section.</p> <p>Each person will have three index cards to write their big ideas down.</p> <p>The group will form two circles- an inner circle and an outer circle, then share their ideas from their cards with the partner in front of them. Then they will rotate to a new partner until they have shared with the entire circle.</p> <p>Brainstorm in groups what to observe for in each of these phases using the readings</p> <p>Debrief PD session and elicit feedback for following sessions</p> <p>Data: Group discussion notes, field notes</p>
<p>Session 4:</p> <p>Focus on Lesson Elements of Guided and Independent Practice</p>	<p>Goal: Principals will be able to identify, observe for and articulate observable behaviors that take place during the elements of checking for understanding guided practice.</p> <p>Activities :</p> <p>Review Group Norms</p> <p>Review Prior Learning: share your T-chart about observable teacher and student behaviors during the opening and modeling of a lesson.</p> <p>Look at SET Tool to find common elements and facilitate discussion about what</p>

	<p>we would expect to see during the opening and modeling of a lesson</p> <p>Introduce next elements of checking for understanding and guided practice</p> <p>Read Professional Literature: Fisher, D., Frey, N. (2013). Chapter 1. Why Check for Understanding? <i>Better Learning through Structured Teaching: a Framework for the Gradual Release of Responsibility</i> (Second.). Alexandria, VA: ASCD.</p> <p>Read for Three Big Ideas, Two Applications and One Question with recording sheet</p> <p>Share with a group of three</p> <p>Each member has a number, when that number is called that person shares the group's understandings</p> <p>Brainstorm in groups what you would expect to see a teacher doing and what you would expect to see a student doing</p> <p>Watch a short video to apply this knowledge</p> <p>http://www.janrichardsonguidedreading.com/video-clips</p> <p>Jan Richardson-Guided Writing, Part 1</p> <p>Debrief PD session and elicit feedback for following sessions</p> <p>Data: Group discussion notes, individual video observations, field notes</p>
<p>Session 5:</p> <p>Focus on Lesson Elements of Feedback</p>	<p>Send out reading from Fisher and Frey a week ahead of time for principals to read.</p> <p>Session Goal: Principals will be able to identify, observe for and articulate observable behaviors that take place during element of feedback of an instructional lesson.</p> <p>Activities:</p> <p>Check in: Think about a classroom visit that you especially enjoyed this past week. What made it so enjoyable?</p> <p>Review Group Norms (posted on the back of the agenda)</p> <p>Review Prior Learning: share your T-chart about observable teacher and student behaviors during the check for understanding and guided practice elements of the lesson.</p> <p>Look at SET Tool to find common elements and facilitate discussion about what we would expect to see during the check for understanding and guided practice elements of a lesson.</p> <p>Introduce next elements of feedback and synthesis</p> <p>Read Professional Literature: Fisher and Frey, Formative Assessment Action Plan : Practical Steps to More Successful Teaching and Learning, Chapter 4, <i>Feedback: How am I Doing?</i>, ASCD, Virginia, 2011</p> <p>Inner/Outer Circle Activity: On index cards write the answers to the following questions:</p> <p>Group 1: pages 62-71</p> <p>How would you describe the four types of feedback?</p>

	<p>What are the three ways to compare students? Group 2: pages 71-76</p> <p>What are the criteria for effective feedback? How can feedback be delivered to learners? Group 3: pages 77-88</p> <p>When is it appropriate to give oral feedback? Written feedback? Peer feedback? How should students respond to the feedback they receive?</p> <p>Brainstorm in groups what you would expect to see a teacher doing and what you would expect to see a student doing during the element of Effective Feedback</p> <p>Debrief PD session and elicit feedback for following sessions</p> <p>Data: conference format notes, observation and field notes</p>
<p>Session 6: Focus on application of the understanding of quality instruction in daily practice and reflect on learning from all sessions</p>	<p>Session Goal: Principals will be able to identify, observe for and articulate observable behaviors that take place during all elements of an instructional lesson.</p> <p>Activities:</p> <p>Check in: Think about your own learning regarding instruction during the past year. What has been the most significant part.</p> <p>Review Prior Learning: using a written verbatim, identify and discuss with a partner the observable behaviors of a student and teacher during a Guided Reading lesson as described in the FSAE Tool</p> <p>Debrief PD session and elicit feedback for following sessions</p>

APPENDIX B: SET Guidelines

Lesson Component: Engaging /Opening
Engaging students in the lesson is a task most prominent at the beginning of the lesson, but may recur periodically throughout the lesson.
<i>This component orients students to the following dimensions of learning (cognitive and emotional): Concentration, Retrieval, Expectancy, Experience, Motivation, and/or Cognitive dissonance</i>
Lesson Component: Constructing or Co-constructing New Knowledge or Skills
This component occurs when the teacher intends to introduce new concepts or skills. This introduction can be more teacher-centered or more student-centered: CO-CONSTRUCTING/MODELING is oriented to a more teacher-centered modeling or co-constructing dialogue between teachers and students or students and students CONSTRUCTING, EXPLORING is oriented towards more independent discovery or exploration that is heavily dependent on the material the teacher provides.
<i>This component orients students to the following dimensions of learning (cognitive and emotional): Intellectual challenge, acquiring disciplinary concepts, acquiring new procedural or declarative knowledge, discovering or exploring new concepts, achieving higher abstraction or complexity, and/or explaining new concepts.</i>
Lesson Component: Building or Checking for Understanding
This component occurs when new content has been taught and the teacher ensures that students have understood the new content accurately. It may occur whenever understandings need to be secured in a direct teacher-student exchange. Note: Co-constructing and Checking for Understanding may be intertwined.
<i>This component orients students to the following dimensions of learning (cognitive and emotional): Comprehension, Recognizing misconceptions, Correction, Reinforcement</i>
Lesson Component: Guided Practice, Application
This lesson component occurs when students, after being exposed to new content and having had the opportunity to clarify their understandings, need their understandings reinforced or secured through guided practice or application. The purpose of the component is to enable students to work on the new content (new concept, new skill) with relative independence, but with guidance from the teacher.
<i>This component orients students to the following dimensions of learning (cognitive and emotional): Encoding, Reinforcement, Application, Performance</i>
Lesson Component: Giving Feedback:

This lesson component occurs when students have produced artifacts related to new concepts or skills that need feedback so that they can correct or elaborate on current understandings.

Note: Feedback and Guided Practice may be intertwined.

*This component orients students to the following **dimensions of learning (cognitive and emotional): Understanding standards of performance, Comprehension, Application, Recognizing gaps in understanding or misconceptions, Reinforcement***

Lesson Component: Synthesis

This lesson component occurs when students have been engaged in extended processing of new content via modeling, dialogue, exploration, construction, practice, application, and/or feedback, at the end of which they need synthesis and re-integration of the new content into the bigger picture.

*This component orients students to the following **dimensions of learning (cognitive and emotional): Comprehension, Application, Recognizing misconceptions, Synthesis, Reinforcement***

The following are examples of sequences you may construct using the components of the SET.

Sample Co-constructing Lesson Plan at a Glance

Criteria

The lesson is concerned with two main questions around students' *conceptual learning*:

Did the lesson enable the learners to learn a new/advanced concept or cognitive strategy? And if so, how widely distributed was this learning across a given group of learners

1-Opening /Engaging

Get students' attention, build a bridge between preexisting knowledge and new content, and motivate students by generating curiosity or anticipation for the new content.

Share the goals for the lesson.

2-Modeling /Co-constructing

Clarify what is new (including new vocabulary), more abstract, or more complex than what has come before.

Anticipate thinking processes that a variety of learners need to engage in, to move from more simple to more complex or from more concrete to more abstract.

3- Building/Checking Understanding

Enable learners to formulate new understandings in their own words, recognize and dispel misconceptions with corrective reformulations, and further reconstruction of new content.

4- Guided Practice

Increasingly relinquish control; students shift from interacting with the teacher to interacting with material and each other.

Offer materials and scaffolds that enable the majority of students to reinforce or apply the new concept or strategy with increasing independence.

Target support and intervention based on assessed needs.

Give students the opportunity to practice and demonstrate independent mastery of the objective based on assessed readiness.

Give feedback on the products or results of the practice phase.

5- Closure/Synthesis

Have students communicate results or products in their own words or symbols.

Make learning gains visible to the class, give additional feedback as needed.

Review and summarize key ideas.

Relate learned content back to big picture.

Revisit goals for the lesson.

Independent Practice/Homework**Sample Constructivist Lesson Plan at a Glance****Criteria**

The lesson is concerned with two main questions around students' *conceptual learning*:

Did the lesson enable the learners to construct a new/advanced concept or cognitive strategy?

And if so,

How widely distributed was this learning across a given group of learners?

1-Opening /Engaging

Build a bridge between preexisting knowledge and new content.

Motivate students by generating curiosity or anticipation for the new content.

Generate hypotheses or hunches that can be explored subsequently.

Share the goals for the lesson.

2-Constructing/Exploring

Provide materials and/or tasks that enable students to work independently.

Provide materials and/or tasks that require students to engage in higher order thinking: hypothesizing, testing assumptions, making sense of dissonances, formulating hunches, preliminary explanations.

Offer materials and scaffolds that enable the majority of students to discover the new concept or strategy with independence.

3- Giving Feedback

Elicit results from student practice and give feedback to students that helps them correct mistakes or misconceptions.

4- Closure/Synthesis

Help learners communicate results or products in their own words or symbols.

Make learning gains visible to the class and provide additional feedback as needed.

Review and summarize key ideas

Make reference to big picture

Revisit goals for the lesson.

Independent Practice/Homework

References

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APPENDIX C: Pre and Post Intervention Written Responses to Video Lesson

PERFORMANCE TASK JANUARY 2015

For participants in the Effective Feedback

Professional Development Research Design

Thank you for participating in this research project to develop a professional development to help principals' to provide effective feedback for teachers. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Pam VandeKamp

Name _____

School _____

Number of years as a principal _____

Please watch the video connected by this link and answer the following prompts:

Grade 4 Close Reading video 1

How does the teacher begin the lesson?
What does the teacher do to introduce the new skill?
How does the teacher help students to practice the new skill?
What happens when students seemed confused?
How does the teacher end the lesson?
What kind of feedback would you give the teacher?

Appendix D: Pre and Post Interview Protocol

PRE AND POST INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

For participants in the Effective Feedback

Professional Development Research Design

Thank you for being willing to meet and speak with me today. I asked to meet with you to find out more about how principals identify qualities of good instruction, use those qualities to observe instructional and provide teachers with effective feedback.

I have planned for this interview to last no longer than an hour. During this time I have seven questions that I would like to discuss. To assist in note-taking, I would like to audiotape our conversation. I am the only person with access to the recording and it will be destroyed after transcription.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK FOR TEACHERS	
Date/Time:	TBD
Place:	TBD
Interviewer:	Pam VandeKamp
Interviewee:	
Position of Interviewee:	Elementary Principal
Project Description	This Design Development Research Project focuses on principals' understanding of the qualities of good instruction, and how they might use this understanding to observe in classrooms and provide effective feedback to teachers.
Interview Questions:	
In the video that you watched what phases of instruction did you observe?	
How did the teacher open the lesson?	
Was there any new skill or content that was taught? Probing Question: What makes you think that?	
What did the teacher do to make sure that the students learned what he or she wanted to communicate?	
What did the teacher do when students didn't understand the skill or content? Probing Question: How did the teacher respond to student questions?	
How did the teacher ask students to use	

their new learning? Probing Question: What kinds of activities were students asked to do?	
Did students complete the task? What happened then?	

Thank you for your participation in this interview!

APPENDIX E: Intervention Session Reflections 1-6

Effective Feedback
 January Professional Development Closing Reflection
 (Content)
 Name:

Part 1: Guided Reading

What was new learning for you today about Guided Reading?

How will you use this new learning?

Part 2: Effective Academic Engagement

What prior knowledge or experience do you have that helped you to distinguish dimensions of learning?

What new concepts about effective academic engagement were introduced to you today?

How will you implement your new learning in your daily practice

1=not important 2=somewhat important 3=important 4=very important 5=essential

Please rate the overall P.D in relationship to your own practice	1	2	3	4	5
The organization	1	2	3	4	5
Teaching strategies	1	2	3	4	5
The content	1	2	3	4	5
Engagement	1	2	3	4	5

What structures/ strategies were most effective during today’s session?

Which structures/ strategies were least effective?

What structures/strategies would you like to see at future sessions?

Were there any teaching structures/ strategies that did not support your learning?

Effective Feedback
 March Professional Development Closing Reflection
 (Content)

Name:
 Date:

Part 1: Guided Reading

What was new learning for you today about Guided Reading?

How will you use this new learning?

Part 2: Effective Academic Engagement

What prior knowledge or experience do you have that helped you to distinguish dimensions of learning?

What new concepts about effective academic engagement were introduced to you today?

How will you implement your new learning in your daily practice

1=not important 2=somewhat important 3=important 4=very important 5=essential

Please rate the overall P.D in relationship to your own practice	1	2	3	4	5
The organization	1	2	3	4	5
Teaching strategies	1	2	3	4	5
The content	1	2	3	4	5
Engagement	1	2	3	4	5

What structures/ strategies were most effective during today's session?

Which structures/ strategies were least effective?

What structures/strategies would you like to see at future sessions?

Were there any teaching structures/ strategies that did not support your learning?

Effective Feedback
 Professional Development
 April Closing Reflection
 (Content)

Name:

Effective Academic Engagement

What prior knowledge or experience do you have that helped you to understand the lesson components of engaging and modeling

What concepts about the lesson components of engaging and modeling were most relevant to you today? Why?

How will your new learning affect your practice of classroom observations?

1=not important 2=somewhat important 3=important 4=very important 5=essential

Please rate the overall P.D in relationship to your own practice	1	2	3	4	5
The organization	1	2	3	4	5
Teaching strategies	1	2	3	4	5
The content	1	2	3	4	5
Engagement	1	2	3	4	5

What structures/ strategies were most effective during today's session?

Which structures/ strategies were least effective?

What structures/strategies would you like to see at future sessions?

Were there any teaching structures/ strategies that did not support your learning?

Effective Feedback
 Professional Development
 May Closing Reflection
 (Content)

Name:

Effective Academic Engagement

What prior knowledge or experience do you have that helped you to understand the lesson components of guided practice and effective feedback?

What concepts about the lesson components of guided practice and effective feedback were most relevant to you today? Why?

How will your new learning affect your practice of classroom observations?

1=not important 2=somewhat important 3=important 4=very important 5=essential

Please rate the overall P.D in relationship to your own practice	1	2	3	4	5
The organization	1	2	3	4	5
Teaching strategies	1	2	3	4	5
The content	1	2	3	4	5
Engagement	1	2	3	4	5

What structures/ strategies were most effective during today's session?

Which structures/ strategies were least effective?

What structures/strategies would you like to see at future sessions?

Were there any teaching structures/ strategies that did not support your learning?

Effective Feedback
 Professional Development June Closing Reflection
 (Content)

Name:

Effective Academic Engagement

What prior knowledge or experience do you have that helped you to understand the lesson component of effective feedback?

What concepts about the lesson component of effective feedback were most relevant to you today? Why?

How will your new learning affect your practice of classroom observations?

1=not important 2=somewhat important 3=important 4=very important 5=essential

Please rate the overall P.D in relationship to your own practice	1	2	3	4	5
The organization	1	2	3	4	5
Teaching strategies	1	2	3	4	5
The content	1	2	3	4	5
Engagement	1	2	3	4	5

What structures/ strategies were most effective during today's session?

Which structures/ strategies were least effective?

What structures/strategies would you like to see at future sessions?

Were there any teaching structures/ strategies that did not support your learning?

Effective Feedback
 Professional Development
 June 23 Closing Reflection
 (Content)

Name:

Effective Academic Engagement

What prior knowledge or experience do you have that helped you to understand the elements of quality instruction?

What concepts about the elements of quality instruction were most relevant to you today? Why?

How will your new learning affect your practice of classroom observations?

1=not important 2=somewhat important 3=important 4=very important 5=essential

Please rate the overall P.D in relationship to your own practice.	1	2	3	4	5
The organization	1	2	3	4	5
Teaching strategies	1	2	3	4	5
The content	1	2	3	4	5
Engagement	1	2	3	4	5

What structures/ strategies were most effective during today's session?

Which structures/ strategies were least effective?

What structures/strategies would you like to see at future sessions?

Were there any teaching structures/ strategies that did not support your learning?

Lesson Component: Engaging/Opening

Dimensions of Learning: Concentration, Retrieval, Expectancy, Experience, Motivation, and/or Cognitive dissonance

- a) Teacher calls students to attention
- b) Students pay attention to teacher
- c) Teacher communicates lesson objectives, topics and/or expectations in language understandable for students.
- d) Teacher stimulates curiosity and creates ‘hook’ for new content
- e) Students exhibit interest in new content
- f) Teacher recalls prior knowledge and/or experience
- g) Students connect to prior knowledge and/or experience
- h) Teacher generates questions or hunches about new content
- i) Students generate relevant questions, hypotheses, or hunches related to new content
- k) Student participation is widely distributed

Lesson Component: Modeling/Constructing

New Knowledge or Skills

Dimensions of Learning: Intellectual challenge, acquiring disciplinary concepts, acquiring new procedural or declarative knowledge, discovering or exploring new concepts, achieving higher abstraction or complexity, and/or explaining new concepts.

- a) Teacher presents new concepts, skills, or strategies that build on and advance previous student knowledge
- b) Teacher presents new concepts, skills, or strategies that are consistent with the conceptual flow of the lesson
- c) Teacher presents new concepts, skills, or strategies that are rooted in the discipline appropriate to grade-level
- d) Teacher gives clear explanations
- e) Teacher asks questions that enable Students to co-construct new understandings in dialogue with the teacher
- f) Students are actively engaged in co-constructing with the Teacher
- g) Teacher provides material and tasks that enable Students to discern the new concepts, skills, or strategies.
- h) Students engage appropriately with the materials and tasks
- i) Teacher helps Students attack the complexity of new content by:
Segmenting the whole into constituent parts

Illustrating abstract concepts with concrete examples

Breaking down procedures into steps

Providing examples that connect to Students' intuitive understandings

- j) Students actively attempt to use the new concepts or skills
- k) Students exhibit progressively clearer understandings
- l) Teacher models explicit strategies that Students can apply later in guided practice
- m) Teacher uses supporting media or forms of presentation that help clarify the concepts
- n) Students participation is widely distributed

Lesson Component: Checking for Understanding

Dimensions of Learning: Comprehension, Recognizing misconceptions, Correction, Reinforcement, Re-teaching

- a) Teacher asks clarifying questions
- b) Teacher collects evidence of Students understanding formally/informally
- c) Students ask clarifying questions
- d) Teacher asks Students to make claims and back up claims with evidence
- e) Students attempt to make evidence-based claims
- f) Teacher recognizes misconceptions and misunderstandings
- g) Teacher suggests appropriate corrections or re-formulations
- h) Students exhibit understanding of Teacher clarifications or reformulations.
- i) Teacher reformulates concepts as necessary
- j) Students explain or demonstrate understanding of corrected or reformulated understandings

Lesson Component: Guided Practice, Application

Dimensions of learning: Encoding, Reinforcement, Application, Performance

- a) Teacher gives clear directions or procedures
- b) Teacher assigns task that is conceptually clear
- c) Students indicate that they understand the task
- d) Teacher selects material or strategies conceptually coherent with the modeled content, allowing for reinforcement or application
- e) Teacher scaffolds student practice with materials and directions
- f) Teacher establishes forms of interaction that are appropriate to task/s
- g) Students interact appropriately with the task/s
- h) Students are enabled to self-direct and self-monitor task completion
- i) Students complete the task(s) in the allotted time

- j)Teacher provides coaching, support and remediation
- k)Teacher facilitates student-to-student learning and support
- l)Teacher provides differentiated support and accommodates individual differences

Lesson Component: Giving Feedback:

Dimensions of teaching and learning: Understanding, Comprehension, Application, Recognizing gaps in understanding or misconceptions, Reinforcement

- a)Teacher elicits results from student practice
- b)Teacher makes learning gains visible to Students and identifies performance that has met expectations
- c) Teacher gives feedback to Students that helps them correct mistakes or misconceptions
- d) Teacher ensures Students understanding of feedback
- e) Students provide appropriate feedback to classmates
- f) Students demonstrate recognition of misconceptions or mistakes
- g) Students are able to correct their mistakes or re-conceptualize their understandings
- h) Teacher recognizes differences in understanding and remediates accordingly
- i) Teacher uses a variety of strategies in order to assess or reinforce student learning

Lesson Component:Synthesis

Dimensions of learning: Comprehension, Application, Recognizing misconceptions, Synthesis, Reinforcement

- a)Teacher reconnects to original purpose of the learning phase
- b) Students reflect on new learning or learning strategies
- c) Students reexamine their learning in light of original questions or hunches
- d) Students embed new learning into experience or bigger picture
- e) Students participate in lively interaction with each other or with the teacher

APPENDIX G: Definitions of Dimensions of Learning

COMPONENT	DIMENSIONS OF LEARNING	UNDERSTANDING
Engaging/Opening	Concentration	
	Retrieval	
	Expectancy	
	Experience	
	Motivation	
	Cognitive dissonance	
Constructing or Co-Constructing New Knowledge or Skills	Intellectual challenge	
	Acquiring disciplinary concepts	
	Acquiring new procedural or declarative knowledge	
	Discovering or exploring new concepts	
	Achieving higher abstraction or complexity	
	Explaining new concepts	
Building or Checking for Understanding	Comprehension	
	Recognizing misconceptions	
	Correction	
	Reinforcement	
Guided Practice, Application	Encoding	
	Reinforcement	
	Application performance	
Giving Feedback	Understanding standards of performance	
	Comprehension	
	Application	
	Recognizing gaps in understanding or misconceptions	
	Reinforcement	
Synthesis	Comprehension	
	Application	
	Recognizing misconceptions	
	Reinforcement	
	Synthesis	

APPENDIX H:

GUIDED READING OBSERVATION <u>Architecture of Lesson:</u> Familiar Reading Book Intro New book Sight Word Practice/Letter work (optional)~ 1-2 minutes Guided/Shared or Interactive Writing or Word Work <u>Notice and Note</u>	
Classroom Environment (Materials organized, table free of clutter, other students independent with literacy work)	
Familiar Reading (students are “warming up” by reading books they have read with the teacher before)	
Book Introduction (is the kernel or gist of the story given, goal is to construct meaning, opportunities for students to orally practice new vocabulary and/or language structures)	
Independent Reading with Teacher Prompting (is the book at the right level, does the teacher prompt for strategies rather than item teaching)	
Discussion of Book (meaningful conversation after the book is read)	
Teaching Point(s) (only 1 or 2 teaching points)	
Working with words/Writing (Students practice orally saying the sentence or story before writing, students say words slowly as they write (prompted or independent), students reread while writing. Hands-on (magnetic letters/whiteboards for ex) opps for word work practice)	