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DESCRIBING THE SPOKEN DISCOURSE PRACTICES OF SECOND AND THIRD GRADE CLASSROOM TEACHERS IN APPALACHIA

Thesis submitted to
The Graduate College of
Marshall University

In partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Science

in

Communication Disorders

by
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Approved by
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Marshall University
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ABSTRACT

In order to meet the academic demands of the school system, school-aged children must be able to understand the language (discourse) of their teachers and the curricular expectations for verbal expression. Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs), working within the schools, need to identify and include in their therapy planning the learning supports that will contribute to students' classroom success. One useful data-set for this planning is knowledge of the types and levels of discourse used and expected by the classroom teacher. The purpose of this study was to examine the spoken discourse practices of second and third grade teachers in Appalachia. By understanding the specific discourse expectations of the classroom, SLPs working within the schools of Appalachia can appropriately adapt goals to better prepare children for academic success. Using phenomenological inquiry methods, this study explored the spoken discourse practices of two second grade and two third grade Appalachian teachers in order to better inform SLPs and educators of the possible effects of teacher discourse on students with language disorders.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The process of learning within the elementary school years requires students to not only maintain previously learned information, but also to acquire new material and, in turn, express it appropriately. Westby (2013) explained the importance of discourse use in the classroom when she stated that the "school-age years are filled with expectations for higher level uses of language in both spoken and written modalities" (p. 33). Elementary students must use spoken and written discourse to reflect how classroom teaching manages their academic success. Students are required to understand not only the content of academic material, but how and to whom they should express it appropriately (Cazden, 2001).

Zhang (2008), Spielmann and Radnofsky (2001), Steiner (2001), and Westby (1997) discussed that student learning is shaped and molded by many factors, which can be classified as either internal or external in nature. Examples of internal factors include cognitive abilities, such as attention, memory, and temperament (Steiner, 2001).

External factors affecting student learning include the influences of family, peers, and school atmosphere (Steiner, 2001; Van Djik, 1990). Steiner (2001) and Van Djik (1996) suggested that these three external factors are foundational for allowing school-aged children to apply their internal skills and develop their academic potential.

A prominent external factor affecting student learning is the spoken language of the classroom, which can be referred to as classroom discourse. Classroom discourse, controlled by classroom teachers, molds students' understanding of curricular instruction, fosters communication opportunities, and shapes educational expectations (Allen, 2008; Cazden, 2001). Students are dependent on educational and scholarly discourse to achieve academic potential. In

addition, and most fascinatingly, is that discourse influences internal factors of student learning through the formation of mental schemas of language. These schemas are learned through the written text, and the talk of the instructor.

Particularly concerning to speech-language pathologists are children with language impairments (LI) who have inefficient professing skills, response delays, limited vocabulary knowledge, and poor language organization (Peets, 2009). Classroom discourse is problematic for these children because in order to be successful, they need to "…follow classroom routines and understand complex verbal directions" (Nelson, 2005, p. 325). When these students advance to the elementary level, language complexity along with learning difficulty emerge in the classroom.

Discourse in the Classroom

Classroom discourse is a special type of communication with "interactional rules and decontextualized language" (Peets, 2009). The process of decontextualization is explained by Nelson (1989) as the process in which students "rely less on nonverbal context and more on [verbal] language to comprehend meaning" (p. 5). The rich physical cues of their kindergarten and first grade classrooms are minimized as students progress through the elementary curriculum.

Children in the elementary years are taught to think about and express abstract concepts through language alone, with little contextual support (Sturm & Nelson, 1997). Westby (1997) explains that students must be prepared to listen more than talk and to answer questions related to classroom discussion. Research on formal classroom discourse suggests that interactions within the classroom model a specific sequence of discourse of initiate-respond-evaluate (I-R-E). (Cazden, 1993, 2001).

Classroom discourse may be characterized by a sense of "power regularity" that is controlled by the teacher, which results in the teacher mediating turns at talk, confirming verbal contributions, and choosing classroom discussion (Hardman, 2010; Peets, 2009; Cazden, 2001). The dialogue of the classroom mediates and expands teaching and learning (Zang 2008). Spoken instruction proves to be the main modality for student education. Research strongly suggested that the spoken discourse of teachers play a crucial part in learner development.

During the elementary school years, children have moved past the stage of *learning to talk* and on to *talking to learn* (Delpit, 1992; Nelson, 1989; Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002). Students during this developmental period are exposed to new language(s) of the classroom, the expectations of the teacher(s), and the continuation of building appropriate social relationships. Knowledge of the classroom discourse expectations develops through the theory that human beings are motivated to interact socially (Griffiths, 2008; Nelson, 1989).

Elementary Curriculum

Innovative changes in technology, the global marketplace, and significant social, political, and environmental issues have dramatically affected what students must learn about in order to be successful in today's modern culture. Classroom curriculum has always changed in an effort to parallel the ways of learning and communicating with what society requires at large (Bruer, 1993). According to the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE, 2014), 21st century learners are

> multimedia oriented. Their world is Web-based. They want instant gratification. They are impatient, creative, expressive and social. They are risk-takers who thrive in less structured environments. Constant exposure to digital media has changed not only how these students process information and learn but how they use information. Children today are fundamentally different from previous generations in the way they think, access and absorb information, and communicate in a modern world. (p. 17)

Karen Cator, director of U.S educational technology and Milton Chen education expert, suggested that success in the 21st century requires not only knowing how to learn core content in subject areas but to express knowledge through diverse modern world mediums. She explained that it is not enough to just “know things,” for optimal success; students must engage in diverse perspective-taking and collaboration skills. Twenty-first century learning means that students master content while producing, synthesizing, and evaluating information via creativity, collaboration, and communication (WVDE, 2014). The curricula of the schools provides the context for this learning.

The curricula of schools can be defined as the information to be learned and the ways of learning it (Nelson, 1989). For students’ answers to be correct, the answers must be acceptable in both academic content and social form. To understand what students must know to be successful within the classroom, the teacher must consider their classroom scripts (classroom dialogue), the cues they use for defining and activating lessons, and students’ knowledge of scripts and awareness of cues (Cazden, 2001; Nelson, 1989; Westby, 1997). The teacher initiates and guides social scripts which influence what students view as important. Teachers signal how and when students are to participate, monitor information they provide and students’ understanding of the material, and in turn, adjust the academic content and social participation (Hattie et al., 2007). To be successful, students then must monitor and decode verbal and nonverbal actions of the teachers and other students while they monitor and decode the content of the lesson. The more students participate during instruction, the greater their academic growth (Flum & Kaplan, 2012)

As students move through school, they are responsible for developing, understanding and managing independence, self-regulation, and academic content of increased complexity (Brazil,

Coulthard, & Johns, 1980; Westby, 1997). Furthermore, classroom success requires students to predict and produce implicit classroom discourse, use multiple methods of producing discourse, and take responsibility for monitoring their own behavior and learning (Ehren, Erickson, Hatch, & Ukrainetz, 2012; McCarthy, 1991). However, the development towards these responsibilities is dependent on both internal and external factors (Allen, 2008; Steiner, 2001; Urkrainetz, 2006). As mentioned previously, an important external factor involves the socialization of classroom discourse through verbal scaffolding practices. Research shows that elementary curricula aims to increase students' self-control, both independently and in groups, through a continuation of decreased teacher prompting during decontextualized lessons/tasks (Cazden & Beck, 2003; Kuhl, Conboy, Padden, Nelson, & Pruitt, 2005).

English/Language Arts: The Common Core State Standards

Specific to this study is the English/Language Arts curriculum expectations established by state standards. Language arts standards include reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language. The standards mandate that instruction in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language is a shared responsibility within the school (WVDE, 2014). The K–5 standards provide specific expectations for students' proficiencies in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language applicable to a range of subjects. The language arts standards can be viewed as discourse dependent.

By emphasizing required achievements, the standards leave room for teachers to determine how goals should be reached. It is important to note, standards do not mandate metacognitive strategies that students may need to monitor and direct their thinking and learning. Teachers are the sole communicators that determine the form and function of learning. They are responsible for providing a filter of interactions – setting the scene for discourse.

New English/Language Arts standards call for regular practice of complex texts and their academic language. The standards call for students to grow their vocabularies through a mix of conversation, direct instruction, and reading (WVDE, 2014). Current second and third grade English/Language Arts standards in speaking, listening, and language knowledge are listed in Appendix A of this document.

How Language Impairment Affects Classroom Learning

The developmental and academic progress for most children is determined by the quality and quantity of their interactions with their educators (Girolametto, Weitzman, & Greenberg, 2004). Even if classroom teachers are providing curricular-appropriate interaction, students with language disorders are at a disadvantage because "such specific [discourse] demands are great for a child entering school; they are presumably greater for a child with communicative difficulties" (Peets, 2009, p. 8). Research proposes that these children are qualitatively different in the way they learn language (Nelson, 1998; Ukrainetz, 2006). Students with LI may have trouble understanding and/or expressing classroom content, organizing of concepts, or determining the way in which to use it appropriately. According to Steiner (2001), because of their struggles many children with LI are viewed as uncooperative and disruptive by teachers and parents and may face rejection from their peers. Unfortunately, these social difficulties not only "lead to academic problems, but feelings of low self-esteem, which in turn, affect the quality of learning" (Steiner, 2001, p. 8)

As previously stated, a crucial question is: how can educators and specialists within the schools provide support needed for these students to be academically successful? In order to begin to answer this question, we need to examine what types of discourse early elementary teachers are using in their classroom instruction and what types of discourse they are expecting

from their students. The aim of my study is situated in this examination. The purpose of my study was to describe the spoken classroom discourse of second and third grade teachers in Appalachia.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter I will discuss my review of the literature as it related to the aim of my study: describing the spoken discourse of second and third grade teachers. I was most interested in discovering what studies had been completed on discourse, classroom discourse, second and third grade curriculum, and language impairment. Using EBSCO host, iSEEK, WorldCat, and PubMed, I employed the following key word combinations for my literature search: "discourse", "classroom discourse", "elementary classroom discourse", "language impairment". I systematically reviewed the literature to determine the key findings of the research in the aforementioned areas. I considered what themes or issues connected these findings.

Discourse

According to Christie (1995), Van Dijk (1996) and Gee (2013) "discourse" refers to the relations among signs, between and among objects, subjects, and statements. However, many prominent language researchers such as Heath (1983), Nelson (2005), Gee (2013), Cazden (2001) and Hardman (2010), collectively define "discourse" as the use of language via various modes and mediums. When the term "discourse" is considered in a broader context, it can be viewed as diverse representations of social life. As Fairclough (1992) described it, discourse is a "social structuring of semiotic difference – a particular social ordering of relationships amongst different ways of making meaning" (p. 115).

Discourse endorses activities, establishes identities, and provokes learning within environments (Block & Cameron, 2002; Gee, 2013; Hegde & Maul, 2006; Van Dijk, 1996). Communities of practice, each using their own discourse habits, connect people from different organizations. As a result, they "knit the whole system together around the core knowledge

requirements" (Wegner, 1998; Wegner et al., 2002). Literature, a particular form of written discourse, provides rationale for the need of communities to become more "intentional and systematic" (Wegner et al., 2002) in understanding and managing the generalization of core knowledge requirements. It can be concluded that discourses among communities are much more different than they are similar, providing communities with a unique identity.

James Paul Gee has made significant contributions to the field of social linguistics, and in particular, explored the concept of Discourse ("big D" Discourse) and discourse ("little d" discourse). Gee (2013) explained that discourse refers to language-in-use. He argued that this discourse is unique to the individuals within a community. Discourse forms such as accents, abbreviations, slang, and other unique, individual variables are specific to "little d" discourse.

In contrast, when discussing the combination of language with other social practices (behavior, values, ways of thinking, clothes, food, customs, and perspectives) within a group, Gee referred to Discourse (with a big D). Individuals may be part of many different Discourse communities, for example "when you 'pull-off' being a culturally specific sort of 'everyday' person, a 'regular' at the local bar…a teacher or a student of a certain sort, or any of a great many other 'ways of being in the world'" (Gee, 2014). Here, "big D" discourse is viewed more as a concept, a gestalt way of thinking, acting, and speaking.

Classroom Discourse

Discourse researcher, Courtney Cazden (2002) provided us with several ways discourse provides meaning to our lives. She explained that spoken language is the medium by which much teaching takes place and in which students demonstrate to teachers much of what they have learned. In her book, *Classroom Discourse: The Language of Teaching and Learning* (2001), she defined the classroom as the main medium of instruction for students. By the nature

of school as an institution, the default pattern of classroom discourse is the Initiate-Respond-Evaluate model (IRE). The three part IRE sequence is the most common sequence in teacher-led services. Cazden (2001) explained that through this traditional model, the teacher assumes the right to control the talk. Also, as initiator of the sequence, the teacher maintains the right to call on students and facilitate discussions. Within this teacher-controlled discourse structure, students must have certain discourse strategies and skills to perform well. In addition, Cazden (2001) noted that being "right" in the classroom requires a student to Respond (R) to a teacher's Initiation (I) not only with the correct content, but also with the correct interactional timing and communicative conventions. Otherwise, the student's response may be ignored, discounted, or not heard.

Cazden contrasted this type of discourse with the nontraditional discourse documented in mathematics instruction of renowned teacher-researchers, in which explanations are as welcome as answers. In this scenario, teachers probe students to expand their thinking, and students more often listen to, refer to, and even disagree with one another's comments. Cazden encourages teachers "to have a repertoire of lesson structures and teaching styles" (p. 56). Cazden also pointed out that it may be generally helpful, especially for young children, to have different physical arrangements for events where different discourse norms prevail, and in doing so, moving away from teacher-controlled discourse. At the heart of her message was a shift to *discourse* as a way of impacting knowledge

Discourse researcher Rick Allen (2008), explained that proper use of classroom discourse can strengthen teacher-student rapport, create an open and supportive learning environment, and provide students with new ways of exploring information that leads to deeper understanding of new concepts. In his 2008 literature review on classroom discourse, Allen explained that despite

all the research on teacher discourse, the Initiate-Respond-Evaluate model was still dominant in most classrooms. Allen concluded that the IRE model sets up an unequal communication dynamic of "teacher-dominated discourse" that tends to serve curricula emphasizing knowledge acquisition over knowledge generation. He further noted that teachers need to study the variety of discourse that goes on in their classrooms to help make teaching and learning work better for all students, especially those with a language deficit.

Allen (2008), in response to the world-wide academia standards and objectives stated,

> The juxtaposition of more diverse classrooms with the wider world's demand for 21st century skills such as problem solving, effective speaking and writing, and collaborating with persons of diverse backgrounds makes understanding the role of classroom talk, or discourse, even more urgent than in the past. (p. 8)

Several researchers have provided strong evidence that spoken discourse is a crucial variable in student learning and that there is a positive interrelation between classroom discourse and student learning. Zhang (2008) conducted a meta-analysis to review research findings on the relationship between spoken classroom discourse and student learning in an attempt to reveal that student learning is closely linked to the quality of classroom talk. Distinctions were made regarding traditional vs. non-traditional lessons, discussion vs. scaffolding, and authoritative vs. internally persuasive discourse. Zhang concluded that oral tasks should be given greater prominence than what is evident in the traditional ratio of spoken and written tasks. Zhang suggested that the quality of student learning is closely associated with the quality of classroom discourse. He stated, "If we can improve the quality of classroom discourse, we can certainly raise the quality of student learning."

Researchers Rivard and Straw (2000) examined three variables affecting student learning. They studied the effects of writing, talking and peer discussion within the classroom. Their study focused on the role of talk and writing on learning science. Forty-three students were randomly

assigned to four groups, all stratified for gender and ability. At intervals during an instructional unit, three treatment groups received problem tasks that involved constructing scientific explanations for real-world applications of ecological concepts. A control group received simpler descriptive tasks based on similar content. Students in the talk-only treatment group (T) discussed the problem tasks in small peer groups. Students in the writing-only treatment group (W) individually wrote responses for each of the tasks, but without first talking to other students. Students in the combined talk and writing treatment group (TW) discussed the problems in groups prior to individually writing their explanations. The researchers found that individual writing is often the only strategy invoking language that is used in many classrooms. The author explained that talk or discussion appears to be important for sharing, clarifying, and distributing knowledge among peers. In addition, asking questions, hypothesizing, explaining, and formulating ideas together all appear to be important mechanisms during these discussions. However, their analysis did not support the idea that writing alone enhances learning more than talk or peer discussion. Peer discussion appeared to be an important mechanism for sharing and distributing knowledge among students.

Similarly, Chinn, O'Donnell, and Jinks (2000), examined the types of discourse structures that emerge during peer learning and the ways in which those structures are related to learning. The study was an experiment with two conditions. One-hundred and five fifth graders learned about writing conclusions that summarized the results of experiments they had conducted with electrical circuits. In groups of 4, they discussed the quality of 3 conclusions. Half of the groups discussed which conclusion was best and which conclusion was worst according to the principles of good conclusions that they were learning. The other half of the groups discussed whether each conclusion was OK or not OK. The authors found that the qualitative measures of

those argument structures were positively related to improvement in the student's ability to write their own conclusions. They explain that "Peer discourse provides speakers with an opportunity to integrate their ideas while speaking and listeners may receive new information that helps them construct new ideas" (Chinn et al., 2000, p. 77). Their findings highlighted three themes: the importance of considering the structure of peer discourse as a mediator of what students learn from peer interaction, the importance of individual students constructing complex arguments on their own, without help from others, and the importance of students constructing arguments collaboratively.

Peer discussion and student talk may also increase reading skills. Roth, Speece, and Cooper (2002) found a relationship between oral language and early reading development. They followed a group of 66 normally developing kindergarten children for three years and obtained measures of structural language, metalinguistics, and narrative discourse and background variables in kindergarten. Within this sample, 48 children were located for follow-up testing in first grade and 39 in second grade. Regression analyses were used to identify parsimonious models that explained variance in early reading. A major finding of the study was that semantic knowledge, as measured by word definitions and word retrieval, in combination with kindergarten print awareness, was a more potent predictor of reading comprehension in first and second grades than was phonological awareness. Their data also supported the hypothesis that metalinguistic skills, in addition to phonological awareness, were significant correlates of beginning reading. An important take-away here was the finding that semantic skills predicted passage comprehension. This suggested the importance of different elementary oral language discourse skills that could promote early reading.

Research has demonstrated how classroom discourse is a special type of communication with interactional rules and decontextualized language (Peets, 2009; Zhang, 2008). Classroom discourse may be characterized by a sense of power regularity that is controlled by the teacher and follows an I-R-E model, which results in the teacher mediating turns at talk, confirming verbal contributions, and choosing classroom discussion (Cazden, 1993, 2001; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Van Dijk, 1996; Westby, 1990; Zhang, 2008). Classroom discourse molds students' understanding of curricular instruction, fosters communication opportunities, and shapes educational expectations. Spoken instruction [discourse] was noted as the main modality and external factor in providing student education, playing a crucial role in student development and academic success. (Cameron, 2002; Gee, 2014).

Second and Third Grade

Delpit (1992) reviewed a seminal article written by James Paul Gee (2014) regarding discourse. She quotes Gee, "one never learns simply to read or write, but to read and write within some larger Discourse, and therefore with some larger set of values and beliefs" (p. 218). Her review provided information to teachers regarding the segue of discourses children go through when starting school. Delpit (1992) stated that teachers must acknowledge and validate students' home language without using it to limit students' potential. Students' home discourses are vital to their perception of self and sense of community connectedness. She further explained that teachers must recognize the conflict Gee details between students' home discourses and the discourse of school. They must understand that students who appear to choose to "not learn" may be choosing to maintain their sense of identity in the face of what they perceive as a painful choice between allegiance to "them" or "us." She suggested that an important role for teachers is to acknowledge the unfair "discourse-stacking' that our society engages in.

Carol Westby and Nickola Nelson, both noted researchers in the areas of speech and language services in the schools, illustrated the importance of understanding the communities of schools and what they expect of children, and specifically, how specialists can best serve children with additional speech and language needs in the schools. Carol Westby (1997) described the components of learning how to do school and how the scripts for "doing school' change across the grades in an elementary school. Westby (1997) engaged in qualitative methods of observational and interview data of second, third and fifth grade classrooms. The results of her studies confirmed that students use language to develop metacognitive skills that make self-control and self-regulation possible. She stated, "If students do not master both the changing academic content and the changing social scripts that require that they assume responsibility for their own behavior and learning, they are likely to be seen as unmotivated or as behaviorally or learning disabled" (p. 7).

Nelson (1989) identified six school curricula: the official curriculum (the curriculum endorsed by the state or local education agency): the de facto curriculum (the curriculum dictated by textbooks adopted by the state or district); the cultural curriculum; the school culture curriculum: the hidden curriculum (what teachers think about students); and the underground curriculum. Each of these curricula place different linguistic demands upon students. The cultural curriculum provides the student with a context for understanding the official curriculum. Explicit and implicit rules, governing behavior and communication during formal classroom interactions, form the school culture curriculum. The explicit rules include things such as posts on the bulletin board in the classroom; an implicit rule might be the way in which a teacher wants a student to request assistance. Nelson (1989, 2005) described the hidden curriculum as being conveyed largely through such mechanisms as tone of voice, nonverbal messages about

personal value, the attention paid to a child's contributions in formal and informal discussions, and opportunities that children have to participate in the varied activities of school. Each of these types of curricula has different expectation for discourse.

The sixth type of curriculum, the underground curriculum, was described by Cazden and Beck (2003) as the official talk of the peer culture. This discourse may differ from the discourse of the school culture curriculum. Typically, the teacher models the official curriculum, while students may reflect a completely different discourse/dialogue among peers. Fairclough (1992) provided a perspective to his readers that suggests students (of all education hierarchies) are integrated into an environment where language is conceived as a social practice and where they are expected to adhere to the process of appropriate social interaction among peers and authorities.

Ukrainetz (2006), Gillam (2006), and Ehren et al. (2012) are authors who have illuminated our understanding of language demands in the schools. They explained that the school-age years are filled with requirements and expectations for higher level uses of language in both spoken and written modalities. Entering second grade, typical children are expected to have understood the precursor elements of language (Gillam & Ukrainetz, 2006). The elementary curriculum requires children to then use their understanding and proficiency in language to learn new concepts. (Nelson, 1989; Westby, 1990)

Language Impairment

A focus of my study was my interest in how children with language impairment in the classroom may have trouble understanding the language of the teacher. Steiner (2001) concluded that students with language impairment (LI) may have trouble with understanding classroom content, expressing classroom content, organizing concepts or determining how to use

language appropriately. Because of this, many students show frustration and express overt verbal or non-compliant behavior in class. Oftentimes, teachers may misconstrue or ignore the underlying cause of outbursts (Peets, 2009; Steiner, 2001, Ukraintetz, 2006). Vygotsky (1986) explained that students in the elementary grades vary greatly, and if teachers want to maximize their students' individual potential, they will have to attend to students' varied learning needs in a way that is proactive. He concluded that there is ample evidence that students are more successful in school and find it more satisfying if they are taught in ways that are responsive to their readiness levels.

Peets (2009) explained that the classroom context is important in the identification, assessment, and therapy of children with language impairment. She described the rich body of research on the discourse types of the classroom among typically developing children, but the same work has not been carried out among children with language impairment. The purpose of her study was to explore the effects of context on the classroom discourse skills of children with language impairment. The discourse of four classrooms, grades one through four, were audiotaped with eleven children with language impairment. Peets (2009) confirmed that context affected the children's performance on language productivity and complexity measures, self-monitoring strategies, and turn-taking patterns. Her study suggested that representative discourse samples should include narrative (due to its wide variability and the complexity of the language produced), peer interaction (due to the unique forms that it demands), and academic discourse (due to its fast-paced turn taking demands that may prove difficult for a child with LI). She explained that viewing classroom discourse as a set of discourse genres is critical in the assessment and intervention of language impairment. In order to be representative of a given child's competence, several of such genres must be sampled in language assessment.

Westby (1997) and Cullata (2010) suggested that to facilitate the success of students, educators and speech-language pathologists must understand not only the academic content that students are to learn, but also the context in which they are expected to learn. Westby (1997; 2007) explained that educators and SLP's must consider the students' ability to follow the classroom script and the teacher's cue within the classroom. Cullata (2010) suggested that SLPs and teachers collaborate in using instructional discourse to guide students in the processes of attending to text, relating implied to stated information, connecting text content to background knowledge, and applying text content to students' own experiences. SLPs and teachers can promote comprehension within discourse as they modify text demands and apply strategies pertaining to questioning, responding, commenting, and extending discussions. Because of these important considerations, exploring and analyzing spoken discourse of classroom teachers of elementary classrooms is essential in determining the language goals of the student with a language impairment.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

This chapter will discuss the research design and methods used to collect and analyze qualitative data to gain insight into elementary teacher discourse practices. I will discuss criteria for participant selection, data collection, and analysis as well as the researcher's role in this study. Finally, I will explain the qualitative methods used to establish the validity of my findings.

Phenomenological Methods

In this study I used phenomenological methods and protocol to gather and analyze qualitative data. Phenomenology is popular in the social and health sciences, especially in sociology, psychology, nursing and health sciences, and education (Clarke, 2010; Flick, 2104; Patton, 2005). The purpose of the phenomenological approach to research is to illuminate the specific, to identify phenomena through how they are perceived by the actors in a situation (Husserl, 2012). To a qualitative researcher, this translates as gathering "deep" information and perceptions through inductive, qualitative methods such as interviews, discussions and participant observation, and representing it from the perspective of the research participant(s) (Clarke, 2010; Moustakas, 1994). Phenomenological research seeks essentially to describe rather than explain, and to begin perspective free from hypotheses or preconceptions (Husserl, 2012). Phenomenology is concerned with the study of experience from the perspective of the individual(s).

Phenomenology also has a strong philosophical component to it. It draws heavily on the writings of the German mathematician Edmund Husserl (1859–1938) and others who expanded on his views. However, there are differing opinions regarding how phenomenological research

is used and viewed (Husserl, 2012; Moustakas, 1994). Looking across all perspectives, the philosophical assumptions underlying their research methodology reflects the study of the lived experiences of persons, the view that these experiences are conscious ones (Husserl, 2012), and the development of descriptions of the essences of these experiences (Moustakas, 1994).

Phenomenological methods were chosen for this study because they allow the researcher to study the lived experience of the participants. By following phenomenological method guidelines, I aimed to illuminate the participants' motivations and actions, and cut through the clutter of taken-for-granted assumptions and researcher bias.

Participants

Participants in this study were identified using purposeful sampling combined with convenience and snowball sampling strategies. Two second grade and two third grade teachers were recruited. During the length of the study, all participants lived in taught in a medium-sized city in Appalachia. According to Golafshani (2003), Connelly & Clandinin (1990), and Hycner (1985), multiple participants in qualitative research enables improved interpretation of results once factors start to recur with more than one participant. I counseled participants in the purpose and methods to be used in the study to ensure that they reached a truly informed decision about whether or not to participate in my research. Their informed consent was given freely, without coercion, and was based on a clear understanding of what participation involved. Once they have read the consent document and their questions were answered, they signed and dated the informed consent document.

Data Collection

Data was collected via participant interviews, participant observation within the classroom environment, and examination of classroom artifacts. With these multiple data points

I was able to develop a composite description of the core experience for all participants. This description consisted of “what” they experienced and “how” they experienced it (Moustakas, 1994; Patton, 2005). The interviews and field notes were coded during the process of data analysis. Using observations and interviews, along with gathering artifacts as a means of data collection, I developed a description of the phenomenon and maintained a strong relation to the topic of inquiry.

Observations

Observation is a primary research method approach which allows the researcher to collect impressions of the world using all senses, in particular, looking and listening, in a systematic and purposeful way to learn about a phenomenon of interest (Maxwell, 2012; McKechnie, 2008). Observational research is often used with other methods such as interviewing and artifact analysis, which I will discuss shortly. Because speech is a way in which language can be expressed, observing spoken discourse was a method I employed to determine how teachers communicate, expressing their knowledge of the language of the classroom. In addition, it was also crucial during observation to view how students responded to teacher discourse. Observing behavior produced by teachers and students is a way to qualitatively evaluate language as a body of knowledge (Clarke, 2010; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Kuhl et al., 2005; Maxwell, 2012).

Observations took place over several months during the 2013–2014 academic year. I observed participants within the classroom during the school day and followed up with additional observations at different times of the day. I recorded the participants’ discourse during all observations. Discourse was recorded on a digital recorder and much of the discourse was transcribed verbatim. Specific lessons, time of day, and student responses were also recorded during observations.

Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with each participant and lasted approximately one hour. All of the interviews were recorded on a digital recorder and transcribed verbatim. Copies of transcripts were sent to the participants for member check after each interview. These interviews served to validate and clarify findings from classroom/field note observations. The teacher interview questions were guided by the qualitative theoretical framework posed by Agee (2009), Measor (1985), and Hycner (1985). Questions were created to reveal the why and how of human interactions, specifically the discourse of teachers within the classroom culture. The leading question of interest for this study was how teachers within the public school classrooms provide the early discourse support needed for students to be academically successful. This study sought to describe the spoken classroom discourse and discourse expectations of elementary teachers. Through the interview process, I developed an understanding of my participants' experiences of spoken discourse by inquiring about teacher philosophy, language of the classroom, communication in the classroom, and how students react to curriculum standards.

The following questions were used to structure the interviews:

1. Describe your teaching philosophy when you first started teaching. What is it now?
2. I understand from my own research that the 2nd and 3rd grade curriculum requires more responsibility and independence from students for their own learning. As their teacher, you provide assignments that require the student to use language to learn. Describe how you do that in your classroom.
3. Think about all the different ways you communicate with your students throughout the day. Describe these ways and give me examples of each.

4. I am sure within your classroom that you have some students that excel and some that are challenged by this curriculum. Illustrate how each of these types of students react to this curriculum.

Artifacts

When studying a culture, social setting or phenomenon, collecting and analyzing the texts and artifacts produced and used by members can foster understanding (Silverman, 2001). Understanding how artifacts and tools are used by teachers within the classroom provided insight into discourse practices, the social organization of the classroom, and the meaning of spoken discourse. Photographs of workbooks, lessons, and wall décor were collected. When analyzing these, I focused on how it was presented and used by the participants. Artifacts were analyzed in tandem with other data collected. Photographs of artifacts are provided throughout chapter 4.

Data Analysis

An empirical, transcendental, or psychological phenomenological approach (Moustakas, 1994) was used to analyze the data. This approach was chosen due to its systematic sequence of analysis. First, I examined the data (e.g., interview transcriptions) and highlighted "significant statements," sentences, or quotes that provided an understanding of how the participants experienced the phenomenon. Moustakas (1994) calls this step horizonalization. Next, I determined the patterns or themes that appeared from these significant statements. These themes were then used to write a description of each participants' experience (textural description). The themes were also used to write a description of the context or setting that influenced how the participants experienced the phenomenon. This procedure is termed "imaginative variation" or structural description (Moustakas, 1994). From the structural and textural descriptions, I then

wrote a composite description that presented the "essence" of the phenomenon, called the essential, invariant structure (or essence) (Moustakas, 1994).

The Researcher's Role: Validity and Reliability

Moustakas's (1994) view of transcendental or psychological phenomenology is focused less on the interpretations of the researcher and more on a description of the experiences of participants. In addition, Moustakas stressed one of Husserl's (2012) key concepts, that of epoche (or bracketing). In bracketing, investigators set aside their experiences, as much as possible, to take a fresh perspective toward the phenomenon. To reduce researcher bias and enhance validity of results, I bracketed out my bias on views before proceeding with analyzing the experiences of the participants.

In addition, triangulation was used to establish validity by analyzing data from multiple perspectives to ensure that the findings of this study are true and certain. Data triangulation involves using different sources of information in order to increase the validity of a study (Flick, 2014; Thurmond, 2001; Lester, 1999). In this study, observations, interviews, and classroom artifacts were obtained to compare and determine phenomenological themes. Investigator triangulation involved using several different investigators in the analysis process (Patton, 2005; Thurmond, 2001). In this study, the principal researcher conferred with two experienced qualitative researchers to reduce the influence of bias and reactivity, two threats to the validity of qualitative research (Merriam, 2012; Maxwell, 2012). The findings from each evaluator were then compared to develop a broader and deeper understanding of the phenomenon being studied. Findings from evaluators reached similar conclusions, heightening the confidence of "true and certain" findings (Guion, Diehl, & McDonald, 2011).

Environmental triangulation was also employed. Environmental triangulation involves the use of different locations, settings, and other key factors related to the environment in which the study took place, such as the time, day, or season (Stake, 2010; Marshall & Rossman, 2010). In this study, three of the four participants were from different elementary schools and observation data was obtained during different intervals throughout the 2013-2014 academic school years.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This chapter presents an introduction of participants and my findings based on my analysis of qualitative data. As previously stated, phenomenological studies provide descriptions and interpretations of qualitative findings. According to LeVasseur (2003), deep reflection on one's own findings can deepen the understanding of the findings. In order to ensure this deeper understanding, as well as to provide a valid depiction of phenomena, each interview and observation was viewed as a new and clean slate of information. Using Moustaka's (1994) epoche or bracketing protocol, my experiences, understandings, and biases with the phenomena were set aside as much as possible during collection and coding of data. Classroom artifacts, such as photographs of workbooks, lessons, and wall décor, were collected, which illuminated the discourse practices, social organization of the classroom, and the meaning of spoken discourse. My goal was to maintain a strong relationship with the topic of inquiry: understanding the spoken discourse of teachers.

Interview transcripts and observation field notes were coded and categorized into sub-themes, which were then compared and analyzed across participants. Comparison data provided further insight regarding teacher philosophy, fidelity and the types of constraints that might be preventing language support in the classroom. Collectively, results yielded a rich description of phenomena.

I will discuss my findings by first introducing each participant in detail. I will then discuss my three major findings: teachers' use of discourse in respect to function, teachers' use of discourse with respect to form, and the role of teacher mindset.

Participant Portraits

Sarah Lawrence-Lightfoot (2005) is a qualitative researcher and author who describes a qualitative method she calls "portraiture." In using portraiture, she aims to redefine the boundaries and redraw the map of social science inquiry and discourse. She explains that researchers such as herself, seek to capture the texture and nuance of human experience. The goal of "portraiture" is for researchers to paint a picture of their subjects. It is not meant to be a complete and full representation, but a selection of some aspect of reality that then transforms the reader's vision of the whole. Lawrence-Lightfoot (2005) stated "both artists and scientists hope that their choice of views, their shaping of perspective, allow their readers to experience the whole differently" (p. 7). Similarly, my goal was to capture my participants' character and culture. This section describes the assortment of characteristics that portray my "subjects." Using the method of portraiture, a more intricate connection between my subjects' individual personality and organizational culture was discovered. I wanted to provide a visual representation of each participant and their classroom. In doing this, I hoped to reveal the essence of the classroom, illuminate my perspective of the teachers', and bridge connections between findings.

Ms. Webb

Ms. Webb is a 65 year old second grade teacher at an elementary school in a medium-sized Appalachian city. She has a Master's degree plus over 45 years of teaching experience. Ms. Webb has been living in this Appalachian city for over 60 years and has been a classroom teacher for 43 years. She has taught second grade for 39 years. Currently, she does not have any other occupations; however, she has previously taught courses in children's literature at a local university.

Ms. Webb is the oldest and most experienced participant in my study. I experienced her as friendly, cooperative, and encouraging. The interview was in her classroom in the morning before students arrived. During the interview and all observation meetings, a relaxed, welcoming environment was evident. Ms. Webb made numerous overtures to help me feel comfortable within the classroom, offering beverages, such as coffee, tea or water. She had a soft and mannerly demeanor with me, and was always willing to share information. The classroom was observed to have an array of learning materials of crafts, books, water bottles, snacks, papers and workbooks. Ms. Webb's desk was covered with lesson plans, papers, and books. The students' desks were also observed to be showcasing name tags, pencils, water bottles, plants, and worksheets. The students' desks were arranged in the shape of a "T." Ms. Webb was observed both during the fall 2013 academic year and spring 2014 academic year.

Ms. Merry

Ms. Merry is a 42 year old elementary school teacher in the same region where she teaches the third grade. Ms. Merry has completed a master's degree and has been living in this region for 30 years. Ms. Merry has been a classroom teacher for 16 years and has taught third grade for three years. Currently, she does not have any other jobs or occupations. Previous occupations include restaurant hostess, server, and nanny at a daycare.

I perceived Ms. Merry as friendly and cooperative, with an obvious Appalachian dialect which she herself commented on during the interview. The interview took place in her classroom after the students had been dismissed for the day. The student's desks were arranged in a square. Compared to Ms. Webb's classroom demographic, Ms. Merry could be described as bare. Although there were some posters on the wall, my sense of the classroom was that it was

one of simplicity. Ms. Merry was observed both during the fall 2013 academic year and spring 2014 academic year.

Ms. Erinson

Ms. Erinson is a 43 year old second grade teacher working in the same Appalachian region. She has a four year college degree and has lived in the same city for 30 years. Ms. Erinson has been a classroom teacher for 16 years and has taught second grade for six years. Currently, she does not have any other jobs or occupations. Previous occupations include waitressing, bartending, and retail.

I viewed Ms. Erinson as easy-going and friendly. However, during the interview and spontaneous, informal conversations, she consistently expressed frustration with her students and staff. The interview took place in her classroom during her planning period. The student's desks were arranged in small groups of four. Her classroom was decorated in posters and some student work. Ms. Erinson was observed during the spring 2014 academic year.

Ms. Turley

Ms. Turley is a 26 year third grade teacher working at a local elementary school in Appalachia. She is the most recent college graduate in this group, and has obtained a four year college degree. Ms. Turly has lived in the same city for 26 years and has taught for three years and teaching third grade for two years. Currently, she does not have any other jobs or occupations. Previously, however, she worked in retail, as student security at a local university, and as a tutor.

Ms. Turley was the youngest participant with the least experience as a teacher. Prior to the interview she asked for a copy of the interview questions so she could prepare herself. The interview took place in her classroom after the students had been dismissed for the day. I viewed

Ms. Turley as pleasant and cooperative, yet also, at times anxious, regarding the logistics of this research (i.e. informed consent, pseudonyms, etc.). Her classroom was colorful, empowering, and bright. Piñata-crafted planets were hanging from the ceiling, seedlings blossomed in the pots by the window, lockers were decorated, and there were encouraging posters on the walls. Student desks represented the outline of a rectangle facing the front of the classroom.
Ms. Turley was also only observed during the spring 2014 academic year.

Discourse

After thorough examination of my observation field notes and coding of the interview transcripts, two distinct themes emerged regarding the participants' *use* of discourse: that of discourse function and that of discourse form.

Discourse Function

My first finding was centered on the theme of teachers' function of discourse. Discourse, by definition, is used purposefully to communicate (Vygotsky, 1978). However, dependent upon discourse environment and community, the need for communication can serve different purposes and functions (Mercer, 2002). The classroom serves as specific environment with established functions for communication.

One function of teacher discourse was classroom instruction. An example of discourse function taking on the role of classroom instruction was illustrated when Ms. Merry was describing the definition of adjectives: "They [adjectives] describe what kind, which one, and how many." Here, her spoken discourse was used to review the definition of adjectives during a lesson in which students were called upon to answer questions about a sentence. Ms. Webb also used her discourse to illustrate classroom instruction during a lesson about writing a letter, "Hook is an opening paragraph."

Ms. Erinson similarly used discourse instruction by stating, “Uniform, does anybody know what that means? It means that they are all pretty much the same shape.” Ms. Erinson was teaching a lesson about the different types of clouds. An artifact was collected that also demonstrated both a visual and written form of discourse used during a lesson on habitats. Here, this artifact represents an activity that gives students an understanding of what each habitat might look like, along with a written description. This artifact acts as an aid in discourse instruction on habitats.

Figure 1. Habitat artifact.

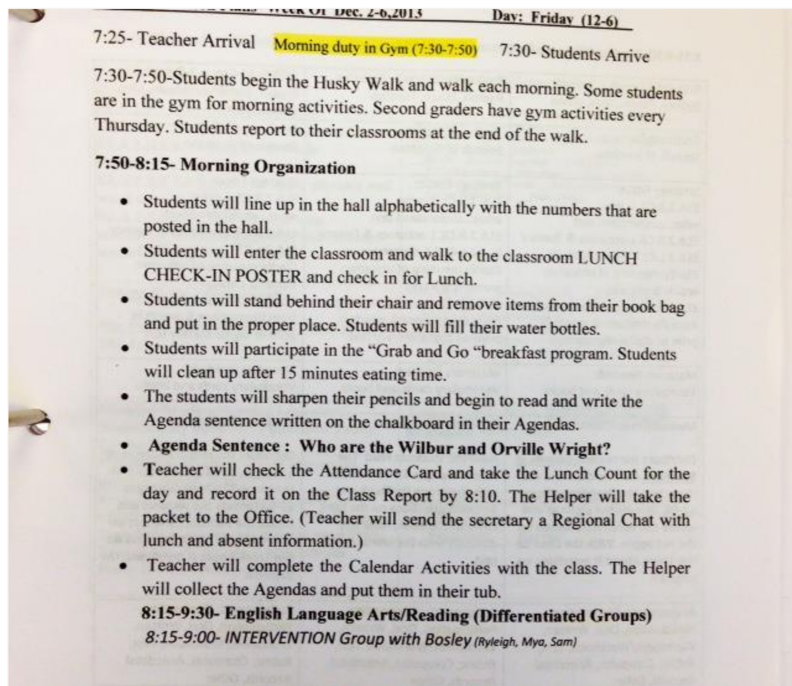
Another finding of discourse function is its use for behavior management. An example of discourse function for behavior management was demonstrated when Ms. Webb replied, “Very good, get a cone.” In doing so, Ms. Webb expressed a means of positive reinforcement after a student answered an open ended “wh” question correctly. Here, following Ms. Webb’s

statement, the boy walked over to a vacant desk which had small cones on it, and picked one up and put it on his desk.

Ms. Turley also used discourse to manage behavior when she stated, “Do that again but without the attitude” when a student was getting things out of her locker. Ms. Turley explained during her interview she felt she could “… teach more because I have more control.” One of the other participants, Ms. Merry, exemplified the discourse function of behavior management by her request to quiet the class down. Often Ms. Merry would say “Shhh” and “You two have got to stop talking.” Ms. Turley’s class used the “clip down” system as a way to manage behavior. This artifact demonstrates a visual form of behavior management, with the teacher or student moving the student’s clip up or down depending on good or bad behavior.

Figure 2. Visual form of behavior management.

The last finding of discourse function was that of time management. An example of discourse function as time management was observed when Ms. Merry was engaged in monitoring students when the students were working on an assignment independently at their desks. Ms. Merry was not instructing in front of the class, but rather said "You guys better get busy. Only a couple more minutes" while sitting at her desk. Another participant, Ms. Turley, stated in her interview that she likes "…using a timer so you don't waste time. I time everything. It just keeps us all on task…less time wasted." A third participant, Ms. Webb was observed stating, "Take your time, don't rush." The following artifact was collected to illustrate the function of discourse for time management. It is the posted schedule in Ms. Webb's classroom, directing the students as to when, and for how long, each instructional module will take in minutes.



Dec. 2-6,2013 Day: Friday (12-6)

7:25- Teacher Arrival Morning duty in Gym (7:30-7:50) 7:30- Students Arrive

7:30-7:50-Students begin the Husky Walk and walk each morning. Some students are in the gym for morning activities. Second graders have gym activities every Thursday. Students report to their classrooms at the end of the walk.

7:50-8:15- Morning Organization

- Students will line up in the hall alphabetically with the numbers that are posted in the hall.
- Students will enter the classroom and walk to the classroom LUNCH CHECK-IN POSTER and check in for Lunch.
- Students will stand behind their chair and remove items from their book bag and put in the proper place. Students will fill their water bottles.
- Students will participate in the "Grab and Go "breakfast program. Students will clean up after 15 minutes eating time.
- The students will sharpen their pencils and begin to read and write the Agenda sentence written on the chalkboard in their Agendas.
- **Agenda Sentence : Who are the Wilbur and Orville Wright?**
- Teacher will check the Attendance Card and take the Lunch Count for the day and record it on the Class Report by 8:10. The Helper will take the packet to the Office. (Teacher will send the secretary a Regional Chat with lunch and absent information.)
- Teacher will complete the Calendar Activities with the class. The Helper will collect the Agendas and put them in their tub.

8:15-9:30- English Language Arts/Reading (Differentiated Groups)

8:15-9:00- INTERVENTION Group with Bosley (Ryleigh, Mya, Sam)

Figure 3. Function of discourse for time management.

Another artifact of discourse used for time management came from Ms. Merry's classroom. It provides a visual representation of the sequence (a factor of time) of events as they were to take place in the classroom.

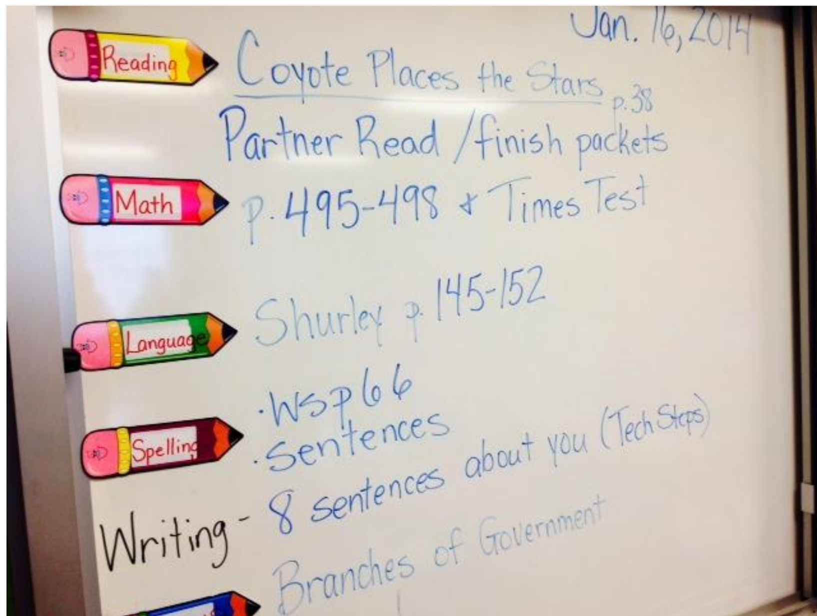


Figure 4. Sequence of classroom events.

Discourse Form

The form in which teacher discourse was presented was a second significant finding. Not all participants communicated in the same way or form, even if they had the same purpose or function of discourse. Five different forms of teacher discourse were used by participants. Discourse forms are: discourse shortcuts, tier II vocabulary, question recasts, "if…then" sentences, and use of metacognitive language.

Discourse shortcuts are catchphrases, buzz words, or gestures that are used to express a concept. Discourse shortcuts are often short syntactic phrases that require the listener to infer implied meaning, relying on the presuppositions that students can understand and decode their form of interaction. Ms. Webb made the remark: "Max, this is for you." This statement was used to manage a student's behavior. Ms. Webb was using a visual method of behavior reinforcement

by flipping a green card to yellow. However, instead of explicitly telling the student to not do that again, she provided a discourse shortcut accompanied by visual prompting.

Ms. Merry and Ms. Erinson used discourse in this form as well. Ms. Merry directed her students by stating, “Take a minute to work on Shirley book” when she was directing her students to engage in independent work. Ms. Erinson commented “Hold your thought” during a one-on-one conversation with a student prior to the start of another lesson.

These are dialogue snippets taking the form of discourse shortcuts. Literally and technically speaking, you cannot physically take a minute in time, nor can you physically hold the concept of a thought. Both of these statements can even be classified as figurative language. However, both statements are catchphrases, or implied, indirect statements alluding to requests. “Take a minute,” requesting an action of working efficiently, serves as a function of time management. “Hold your thought,” requesting an action to defer conversation to a later convenient time, also serves as a function of time management.

Without context, discourse shortcuts can be viewed as confusing or unclear. For example, it was later confirmed that Ms. Merry was requesting her students to complete questions 1-5, on page 37 of their language workbook – that focused on an author whose last name was Shirley. Another example of Ms. Merry using discourse shortcuts was when she announced, “James, strike two. Your chair is over there.” Many people are familiar with the catchphrase “Strike two” commonly used in baseball following the act of a batter’s failed attempted to hit the ball. Interestingly, this phrase is now commonly used in some classrooms to represent the concept of failed number of attempts in discourse communities other than just sports teams. Because of the negative connotation of the phrase, it is widely used by authority figures as a threat or warning in an effort to control negative behavior in the classroom. The

“Three strikes, you’re out” concept of behavior management was used by Ms. Merry, with the last strike resulting in the most undesired consequence and punishment. In addition, she tacks on a declarative statement “Your chair is over there.” Interestingly, however, the function of that statement was meant to request that the student go back to the proper assigned seat.

Students were also expected to use discourse shortcuts. The following artifact was used in Ms. Turley’s class to remind students of the gestures they should use (with the number of fingers they held up) to indicate if they wanted: 1) a pencil, 2) to go to the bathroom, 3) a drink of water, 4) a tissue, or 5) to ask a question.

Figure 5. Student gestures.

The statement, “Good learners keep their heads up” by Ms. Erinson and “I see some people that are going to clip down” by Ms. Turley were discourse shortcuts used to manage behavior. These phrases were implicit rather than explicit in nature, relying on students’ understanding of discourse shortcuts. “…clip down” and “good learners” were discourse shortcuts specific to the classroom environment that students had to be familiar with to understand. Ms. Turley also used another discourse shortcut statement of “Put your listening ears on…” and “123, read with me” as stated by Ms. Erinson to signal to the students that they should read aloud and in unison with her. For each statement to serve its intended function

(behavior modification, curriculum instruction, time management), students are expected to understand how to decode this form of rather construed discourse.

The use of metacognitive language was another form of discourse observed across participants. According to Marzano and Arredondo (1986), teachers that use metacognitive discourse use words that relate to thinking, often in an attempt to focus students' attention, derive word meanings, and/or to make adjustments when a student expresses an incorrect answer. Metacognitive discourse can specifically refer to words and/or phrases that relate to students' "automatic awareness of their own knowledge and their ability to understand, control, and manipulate their own cognitive processes" (p. 24).

Participants in the study were observed using many of these during the school day. Ms. Webb used several metacognitive phrases in a lesson on writing a letter to a friend. She said "Let's ***think*** here…." as she directed them use a hook which she defined as an opening thought. She added, "a hook is an opening ***thought***; ***remember*** we talked about it in a book." Ms. Webb also instructed the children to "Write down any word you're not sure" is spelled right. These statements required students to manipulate and manage their own thinking and knowing of language.

Ms. Erinson's discourse also revealed several forms of metacognitive delivery within the classroom. Take, for example the two statements, "What do we ***know*** about the cirrus cloud?" and "Let's ***think*** about this." Both of these discourse statements required the student to engage in metacognitive thinking. In addition, the student must understand the terms "know" and "think" that were used as cues to elicit recall of information previously learned and to reflect on the content-specific material.

All participants used and referenced metacognitive terms in their spoken discourse such as "think," "thought," "remember," "make," "study," and "understand" and "sure." The following is an artifact illustrating terms such as "study," and "read" which is a written form of discourse portraying metacognitive concepts:

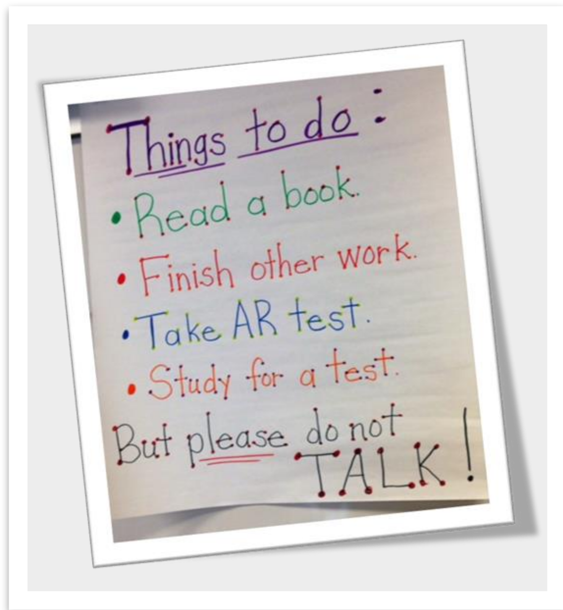


Figure 6. Example of written form of discourse portraying metacognitive concepts.

Use of complex syntax was an additional form of discourse observed across participants. Complex syntax is a form of sentence structure which involves the use of an independent clause plus one or more dependent clauses. A dependent clause starts with a coordinating conjunction such as: that, because, while, although, where, and if. I observed Ms. Turley's use of complex syntax as she prepared her students to watch a video on animal habitats. She stated, "put your listening ears on because you'll need to provide me with some feedback". Ms. Webb used complex syntax to manage her individual instruction of students in her classroom when she instructed one of her students by saying, "Rachel, grab someone else to come back that's not on the computer."

A particular form of complex syntax, the "if…..then" statement was also found to be prevalent in the language of the participants. Ms. Webb, again managing her individual instruction with students, directed them by stating, "If you are sitting at table one, please come back and work with me." While working on an art project, Ms. Erinson was also observed using this format when she said, "If you do not have a glue stick, raise your hand." Often, these types of statements reflected specific one-step directions that may require problem solving.

Another discourse form exhibited was that of question recasts. Question recasts are indirect questions where the teacher is actually directing the student to self-reflect. Ms. Turley used question recasts when she commented to a student, "I'm not checking that right now, how many times do I have to tell you that?" and "I'm proud of you. Are you proud of yourself? You tried your best." In addition, Ms. Turley explained in her interview that she is "constantly asking questions" to her students to direct their attention. The first statement alluded to the student not paying attention or listening during instruction about an assignment. The second statement aimed at applauding the student for good effort. Both, however, represent the form of a question, rather than a direct, commentary statement.

I also observed Ms. Erinson using question recasts when she stated, "What do you mean by that?" when talking one-on-one with a student. A third participant, Ms. Webb used her spoken discourse in the form of question recast that was directed to a small group of students. She stated, "Well, what would you tell your friend?" Questions often began with "wh" words, typifying who, what, where, and when,

A final form of discourse form that was widely used by the teachers was that of Tier II vocabulary. Tier II vocabulary are words that occur often in academic settings and within literature that have high utility across a wide range of topics and contexts (O'Connor et al., 2005;

Coleman & Pimentel, 2012). I observed the teachers using this higher level vocabulary which was specific to subject area material or lessons presented by the classroom teacher. Before watching a film, Ms. Turley stated, “Put your listening ears on, because you’ll need to ***provide*** me with some ***feedback***” and during the film she stated “Look at the background and really ***analyze*** that.” Ms. Merry provided her students with instruction before listening to a song that helped the students learn about parts of speech. Ms. Merry said, “Listen to your ***jingle*** before you start to sing it.” In response to a student’s question during a lesson on clouds, Ms. Erinson explained that “Water ***vapor*** is kind of like a gas.” During the morning social studies lesson, Ms. Webb confirmed and expanded on a students’ response by saying, “Yes, ***Iceland*** is an ***island***.” Participants were most aware of this form of discourse due to its specific connection to the new common core curriculum. The following artifact illustrates content specific mathematic Tier II vocabulary within the classroom, connecting both written and verbal teacher discourse.

The following artifact, which was on Ms. Turley’s wall, helped to remind students of the associations of math concepts, all of which are Tier II vocabulary.

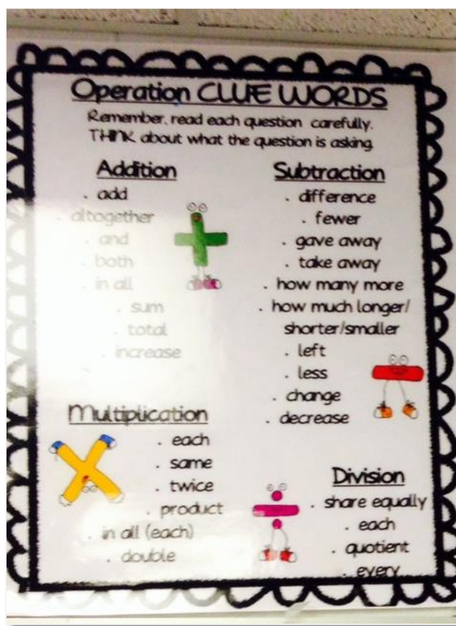


Figure 7. Reminder for students of associations of math concepts.

I observed these functions of discourse as part of the "assumed common knowledge" among the teachers and their students. In other words, the teachers appeared to assume that their students fully comprehended the function of the discourse they were using. Participants explained in their interviews that they also continue to make more abbreviated references to what is being discussed throughout the academic year, confirming specific discourse form, such as discourse shortcuts. All participants explained their use of abbreviated references of discourse shortcuts in their reply to my question: "How do the children know what you mean?" Ms. Erinson stated, "They know I will go like this [*gestures by sitting on her hands in her chair*], and that just means 'get on your bottom'. Ms. Webb also explained how by the end of the year discourse shortcuts turn into just gestures. For example, she stated "…pulling on my ear, they know what that means…if I touch my ear, that means maybe I'm hearing you and I shouldn't be. You're too loud." Other researchers have noted that teachers depend on and use different linguistic forms to carry out the function of their discourse. Mercer (2002) explained that "teachers depend on the use of particular linguistic strategies for guiding, monitoring, and assessing the activities they organize for their pupils". Mercer's (2002) findings revealed several similar discourse forms from his study.

Comparing Form and Function of Teacher Discourse

I have created the schematic seen below representing just one type of relationship that can be made between the functions and forms of teacher discourse. While it is not the purpose of phenomenological inquiry to determine causal relationship (here, that of form and function of discourse), I observed a strong relationship between the two findings. The form of teacher discourse was observed to be lenient depending on the function of discourse during a particular activity or event. Discourse function rests in the middle, portraying the foundation of

communication, while the forms of discourse surround it, acting as different avenues or paths spoken discourse can take. The following visual diagrams a possible relationship between my two findings of function and form of spoken teacher discourse.

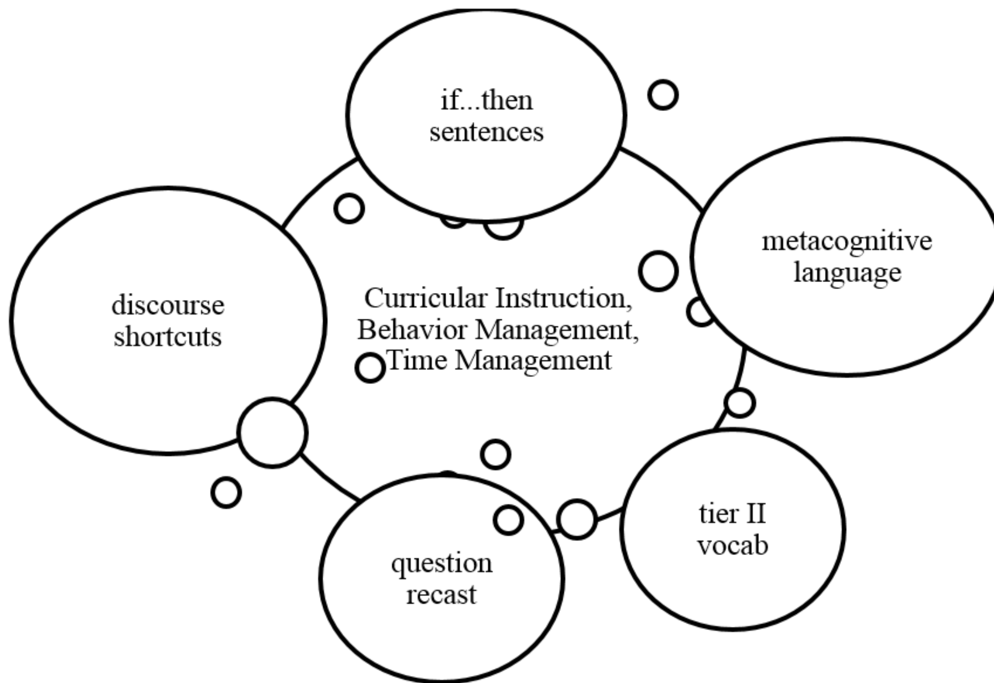


Figure 8. Possible relationship between function and form of spoken teacher discourse.

Mindset

During the past several decades, Carol Dweck (2006) has conducted research identifying two distinct ways in which individuals view intelligence and learning. "For years, my research has shown that the view you adopt for yourself profoundly affects the way you lead your life. It can determine whether you become the person you want to be and whether you accomplish the things you value" (p. 7). Individuals with a *fixed mindset* believe that their intelligence is simply an inborn trait—they have a certain amount, and that's that. In contrast, individuals with a *growth mindset* believe that they can develop their intelligence over time and view challenging work as an opportunity to learn and grow (Dweck, 2006).

These two mindsets lead to different schools of behaviors. When students view intelligence as fixed, they tend to value looking smart above all else. They may sacrifice important opportunities to learn, especially if it requires them to risk performing poorly or giving the wrong answer. When Dweck (2006) asked students, they reported that when they have to work hard, they feel dumb. However, she says that students with a growth mindset value effort and realize that they have to work hard to develop their abilities, make their contributions, and be academically successful.

So, how do these students obtain a growth mindset? Students *learn how to learn* through the model and practice of their teachers. Students are molded and shaped into functional beings by their authorities. If teachers are representing a fixed mindset on teaching and learning, students are at risk for developing within themselves negative attributes of learning.

The conceptual framework behind this theory is universal, meaning that mindset can be applied to populations of different discourse communities and environments. The essence of mindset was noticed within my four participants. For example, participants with a fixed mindset on the phenomena of teaching, quickly decreased their efforts or blamed a higher power or institution for communication breakdowns. Participants with a growth mindset were more likely to respond to initial obstacles by remaining involved, trying new strategies, and using all the resources at their disposal for teaching a concept, regulating behavior or managing time.

Limited Insight

Both Ms. Webb and Ms. Turley were able to confidently express how they used language in their classroom, providing examples and adequate insight on language use. They provided information on why a student struggled and suggested intervention. Ms. Webb stated, “some children are not on that level…I gear them down a grade at first. Give them something that they

will have some success with at first. Then praise." Ms. Turley explained "I had always expected my kids to just already know…you find out that they don't…I use the higher student as a peer tutor."

The other two participants confirmed that some students in their classroom struggled, but could not recognize or identify why. For example, Ms. Merry and Ms. Erinson stated, "It just doesn't click for them" and "He does not get that at all…they're so used being walked through everything," which are rather vague, incomplete explanations of identifying why a student is struggling.

Ms. Webb and Ms. Erinson, particularly, expressed their views on why students struggled academically, taking quite opposing views. Ms. Erinson rationalized that students' academic struggles were the result of a predisposed lack of intellect. She specifically suggested that student IQ determines academic success, and students that struggle will always struggle – due to their "fixed" intelligence. She also expressed her belief in students' lack of appreciation of education and suggested IQ screenings after every year, stating, "…not everybody [has] the same ability. I just really think it's time for people to realize that not everybody is going to be a doctor, not everybody is college bound." Additionally, she made a comment affirming students' lack of independence and responsibility as a direct result of their maturity level stating, "You have one group that you're working with and other groups do an independent activity but that doesn't always work out because, you have to self-control and again some of them are not mature enough to handle the independent time. I don't know how effective it is actually really is." Ms. Erinson not only viewed the students' lack of performance as a barrier but used the curriculum as a benchmark to measure success.

Similarly, Ms. Webb noted that not all students coming into second grade will be at a second grade level. She confirmed as well that not every student presents the same abilities entering her classroom. However, Ms. Webb recognized the different conjoining attributes and skills that shape a student's success. Whether success is academically, socially, or emotionally, Ms. Webb instilled the commitment to support the unique needs of her students. She stated, "…that's going to be the niche where I can help them most, is academically, but with some children it's going to be emotionally. I'm going to be that person there that's going to give them the stability that maybe they don't have in some situations. So I'm going to be there for them academically for some, I'm going to be there socially for some, I'm there emotionally for some." She explained that most students, and in fact people in general, do not acquire skills the same way or at the same rate, referring to both the literature and previous teaching experiences. She stated, "They progress through stages…make sure they have the background for one stage before you lead them onto the next…you might have some children that were not on that level…" Ms. Webb used the curriculum to her advantage by providing differentiated instruction, content scaffolding, and group learning.

It is clear these two classroom teachers, both second grade instructors, hold opposing mindsets on student achievement, academic success, and intervention. In summation, Ms. Erinson not only viewed the students' lack of performance as a barrier, but utilized the curriculum as a benchmark, measuring the success of her students, as most teachers do. However, Ms. Webb viewed her students' "lack of performance" as an opportunity, and utilized the curriculum as merely a tool – a resource, one of many, to establish success in her students.

Teaching Style/Philosophy

In my study, teaching philosophy appeared to parallel teacher mindset. How the teachers established their educational beliefs, instruction style, and function and form of classroom discourse depended heavily on their established attitude toward the phenomena. On one end of the spectrum, you have teachers such as Ms. Erinson, with a mindset controlled by the Discourse of higher institutions, such as the board of education, state standards and administrators – who continue to give out awards to teachers and schools who represent students that have "achieved success" on standardized tests based on their "performance" at one moment in time. These teachers may thrive too much on student product, applauding one student's "extraordinary IQ" versus another student's "extraordinary efforts." Here, students that struggled are exposed to the risk of feeling inadequate, unconfident, and unmotivated the next school year. Ms. Erinson stated,

> How do we instill in people that education is the key? That you can better yourself in education? It's not a privilege to be able to go to school, it's just a right sometimes." Honestly I do believe we should have testing in every grade. I think we need to see where they are at the end of each grade. I don't think they should wait until third. And, I know this doesn't sound too politically correct, but I really think there should even be screening, a basic screening…assessments that take a general IQ of people. That takes us back to realistic expectations. Let's make sure we are targeting how these children can be successful.

On the other end of the spectrum, you have teachers such as Ms. Webb, with a mindset controlled by the discourse of the classroom environment, created by her and her students. These teachers strive to give out awards to students who have "achieved success" on content that previously required intensive modification, but now, only require minimal adjustments based on the student's persistent effort and strategies performed over time. Here, the curriculum is not the benchmark. Both teacher and student success is measured by only comparing the student's

progress to their own previous standing at the beginning of the academic year. These students are more likely to maintain progress and motivation into the next school year. Ms. Webb stated,

> I'm going to touch some of them academically. You know, that's going to be the niche where I can help them most, is academically, but with some children it's going to be emotionally. I'm going to be that person there that's going to give them the stability that maybe they don't have in some situations. So I'm going to be there for them academically for some, I'm going to be there socially for some, I'm there emotionally for some. My gambit is not just delivering curriculum. I'm working on the total development of that whole child. I want the child to experience success, meet the needs of all the children, and provide for them a safe, nurturing environment while they are at school and while they are learning.

Findings from the analysis of my data suggest that the function and form of classroom discourse produced by educators could be guided by mindset, in other words, the teacher's established attitude toward the phenomena. Further, it could even be argued that teacher mindset is driven by the higher Discourse community of administrators or the creators of the curriculum. We see that teacher discourse functions and forms are specific and particular to the views, beliefs and expectations. Discourse function requires a socio-cognitive interface (Bruer, 1993; Dweck, 2006). Episodic models of specific classroom events and shared general knowledge or attitudes about societal structures can either be mapped on, or constrain the cognitive representations that underlie both form and function of discourse. As Mercer (2002) explained, the forms which teacher discourse takes can be used relatively well or badly, and to make an evaluation, researchers need to consider what their intended educational purpose might be. The functionality of discourse and its forms are likely to reflect an established mindset or attitude.

Table 1 shows an interesting relationship between discourse form, discourse function, and mindset:s

Table 1

Relationship Between Discourse Form, Discourse Function, and Mindset

	Function	Form
Growth mindset	Time management Behavior management Curriculum instruction	Don't rush, take your time. I'm proud of you. Are you proud of yourself? You tried your best." "I love learning about habitats. How many of you enjoy it?"
Fixed mindset	Time management Behavior management Curriculum instruction	"You guys better get busy. Only a couple more minutes." "No, we are done with that. Listen to our direction" "What do adjectives do?

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

My purpose in conducting this study was to describe the spoken discourse practices of second and third grade teachers in Appalachia. I was able to identify two second grade and two third grade teachers as participants. Using phenomenological inquiry as my research method, participants were observed over time and responded to semi-structured interviews. In addition, illuminating artifacts were collected from the teachers' classrooms. Focusing on the language of classroom teachers revealed the structure of spoken discourse, the concepts behind spoken discourse, and the related cognitive underpinnings of spoken discourse. Using a language lens enabled me to employ a linguistic and metalinguistic perspective in viewing teacher discourse. My findings centered on three emerging themes, those of discourse function, discourse form, and teacher mindset. For classroom educators and specialists alone, it is essential to use discourse purposefully when interacting with students, keeping in mind discourse form, discourse function, and mindset of both sender and receiver.

The Role of the Teacher

It is important for educators to understand the function of their discourse, and know why it is they are saying what they are saying. It is important for educators to understand the forms of their discourse. Are teachers aware they are using discourse shortcuts? If so, do they previously provide explicit instruction of what they meant? Educators also need to understand their mindset. Are their spoken discourses controlled by a fixed mindset or a growth mindset of learning? Or is their mindset someplace in between these boundaries of the continuum? What educators believe strongly facilitates what, how and why they teach students (Dweck, 2006). As previously stated, common knowledge of discourse function was something teachers assumed

students knew. However, it seems likely that self-awareness of new discourse conventions will be most helpful when it is treated as a consciously considered goal—as an agenda we can think about, analyze and argue with, rather than as an intuited test or criteria. Teachers expect students to absorb new discourse conventions. This process might be easier if it could itself become the object of cognition—an act the classroom teacher can be explicit about. The problem, however, is teachers don't always know how they do what they do. At most, it appears that teachers have such a limited understanding of the impact of their own discourse that they are left to only evaluate the students' responses. Teacher awareness of their own discourse form and function is crucial to maximizing the success of students in their classroom.

Also, when teacher feedback is given, it is likely to be corrective, task related, that is influenced by perceptions of students' need. The findings of this study suggest that teacher discourse serves to modify behavior. It was noted that participants gave challenged students praise; however, the majority of feedback was typically negative. Other researchers found similar results on behavior management, such that teacher feedback is likely to be constrained by the evaluative dimensions of classroom lessons because there is personal risk involved in responding publicly and failing (Hattie, J., & Timperley, H., 2007; Dweck, 2006; McCarthy, 1991).

Too often, the level of risk is determined by the likelihood that a student can supply an answer in a hostile climate set up by the teacher and other students. Typically, students respond only when they are fairly sure that they can respond correctly, which often indicates they have already learned the answer to the question being asked. Simply providing more feedback is not the answer. It is necessary for teachers to consider the nature of the feedback, the timing, and

how a student receives this feedback (or, better, actively seeks the feedback) (Cazden, 2001; Peets, 2009).

The ways and manner in which individuals interpret feedback information is the key to developing positive and valuable concepts of self-efficacy about learning, which in turns leads to further learning. Before teachers look at their function and form of discourse, they need to analyze their mindset and themselves critical questions such as: What is my attitude towards teaching and learning? What constitutes my teaching philosophy? How might I adjust your attitude to set a more positive learning tone within your classroom? Teachers need to view their classroom discourse from the perspective of the individuals engaged in learning and become proactive in developing less complex and explicit discourse that supports ways for students to ask questions of themselves and among peers.

The Role of the Speech-Language Pathologist

Understanding the function, form and mindset of teacher discourse also provides SLPs in the schools with a rich understanding of teacher instruction. SLPs have gone past inquiring "what goals do I set for this student" and on to "why is the child struggling?" and "How can I parallel the success in the therapy room to that of the classroom?," or vice versa. Understanding these spoken discourse demands allows SLPs to educate, collaborate and together investigate with teachers how to prevent communication breakdowns and promote academic success in order to best serve children with learning impairment. By understanding the specific discourse of the classroom, speech-language pathologists working within the schools of Appalachia can appropriately modify treatment style to parallel the discourse practices within the larger community of the classroom, not solely within the context of a speech/language therapy session. In this way, SLPs can improve the carryover of students' language skills and increase chances of

classroom achievement and success during these critical "using language to learn" elementary years.

According to Blosser, Roth, Paul, Ehren, Nelson, and Sturm (2012), speech-language pathologists should be profiling students' strengths and weaknesses within the context of classroom performance and addressing them specifically in treatment. The intersection of these contributions is where SLPs' uniqueness lies. Not only should specialists focus their practice on these contributions, but they should also be able to articulate them to others, especially teachers.

The contextualized language intervention (CLI) approach is an effective way to improve discourse-level language (Blosser et al., 2012; Kamhi, 2014; Nippold, 2014). CLI provides a therapeutic focus within a purposeful and meaningful activity (Ukrainetz, 2006). Topic continuity across activities is a key component of contextualized intervention. The specific intervention activities in CLI include listening to stories, answering comprehension questions, generating inferences, comparing/contrasting characters across stories, discussing and defining meanings of Tier II vocabularies, and brainstorming solutions to problems in the stories. Using this language approach to intervention for all goals instills a whole concept of learning. In addition, SLPs need to analyze and adapt a growth mindset of learning, teaching, and intervention as well. The way in which SLPs engage students in treatment can either encourage or constrain student confidence, motivation, and their SLPs views of learning and the classroom environment.

Goals should target the specific concepts and language of the narrative discourse using a therapy approach such as CLI that reduces attentional and memory demands through activities that engage the learner and facilitate recall (Blosser et al, 2012). Students are also encouraged to

use conjunctions, modals, and question forms as they discuss and retell the stories, mirroring a similar teacher discourse form we see in classroom teacher discourse.

Limitations

All studies have limitations or variables that were not or could not be controlled for. Qualitative research, by its philosophical underpinnings and methodological design, is often seen by quantitative research as flawed due to its limited number of participants and word-dependent and reflective form of data collection. For instance, the primary instrument used to collect and analyze data in qualitative inquiries are the researchers themselves. As can be expected, certain biases might occur when researchers act as the data collection instrument. However, rather than attempting to remove such biases, qualitative research operates on the belief that biases are present but monitored by the researcher to determine their impact on data collection and analysis.

Qualitative research is also criticized for the limited number of participants and the personal nature of this research. Findings are often viewed as too specific and descriptive, not allowing for generalization. However, as previously stated, there are qualitative methods, such as portraiture that expand, control, and generalize data variables. While not the focus of this paper, this viewpoint is acknowledged with the caveat that all do not agree.

This study had several limitations including: when the participant observations took place during the course of the academic school year, the limited number of observations that were possible given the time constraints of producing a study for a master's thesis, and the absence of male participants.

Participant observations occurred during the latter part of the academic year, not accounting for how teachers may have presented discourse at the beginning of school year. In an effort to increase consistency of findings, all observations should take place at the same, even,

multiple intervals of time starting in January and ending in May. The results of future studies may be strengthened by observing teachers at various points in the academic year.

Another limitation was the restricted number of observations obtained for each participant. At least two observations were obtained for each participant; however, due to time constraints and school closings, further observations were not scheduled. Convenience and snowball sampling led to the absence of male participants, which would have changed demographic content, and possible spoken discourse function, form, and mindset of teaching. It is possible with the addition of male discourse samples and mindset that different findings may have surfaced.

Implications and Further Research

Much research has been conducted in an effort to understand the underpinnings of language learning, more specifically, the language learning of children with language deficits. While advances in approaches to classroom teaching methods have been made, researchers, clinicians, educators, and specialists are still seeking evidence on the environmental and external supports and barriers to communication bounded by the context-specific classroom community. According to current researchers, Kamhi (2014) and Nippold (2014), speech-language pathologists working within the schools have begun to reorganize their treatment practices from "What goals do I target in therapy?" to "How can a team best serve this student?" In a perfect scenario, given the proper resources, a school-based team should include reading specialists, special educators, SLPs, classroom educators, and parents/caregivers. Like other professionals, SLPs can experience greater professional success if they know how to tailor their programs to fit the expectations, context, goals, and culture of their environment, in this case, the classroom.

As mentioned before, the curriculum standards provide teachers with instruction on what content needs to be delivered. Curriculum standards can be easily obtained by the SLP. However, due to differentiated instruction, teacher communication style is often a variable left uncontrolled. Many communication breakdowns are the result of incompatible interaction. To that end, many students in the classroom are described as not listening or paying attention, causing disruptive behavior, and are even identified as having a language delay.

Future research should engage in describing and understanding the spoken discourse of other communities that may have different rules, forms, and functions of interactions. Understanding the discourse demands of other communities, such as the home, and even among peers, will increase discourse awareness not just of teachers, but of parents, family members, friends, and other professionals. Finally, it is important that current and future SLPs investigate their own use of discourse as it relates to function and form, as well as the mindset they have as they approach intervention with students and classroom educators.

APPENDIX A

ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS: THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

Specific and parallel to this study is the English/Language Arts curriculum expectations established by state standards. Language arts standards are divided into reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language. The standards insist that instruction in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language is a shared responsibility within the school. The K–5 standards provide expectations for reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language applicable to a range of subjects.

By emphasizing required achievements, the standards leave room for teachers to determine how goals should be reached. It is important to note, standards do not mandate things such as metacognitive strategies that students may need to monitor and direct their thinking and learning. Teachers are the sole communicators who determine the form and function of learning. They are responsible for providing a filter of interactions – setting the scene for learning.

New English/Language Arts standards call for regular practice of complex texts and their academic language. The standards call for students to grow their vocabularies through a mix of conversation, direct instruction, and reading. The following are current second and third grade English/Language Arts standards in speaking, listening, and language knowledge:

Second Grade:

Speaking and Listening

1. Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 2 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.

a. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., gaining the floor in respectful ways, listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion).

b. Build on others' talk in conversations by linking their comments to the remarks of others.

c. Ask for clarification and further explanation as needed about the topics and texts under discussions.

2. Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.
3. Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to clarify comprehension, gather additional information, or deepen understanding of a topic or issue.

Knowledge of Language

1. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
    a. Compare formal and informal uses of English.
2. Determine or clarify the meaning of unfamiliar multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 2 reading and content, choosing flexibly from an array of strategies.
3. Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

    a. Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., describe foods that are spicy or juicy).

b. Distinguish shades of meaning among closely related verbs (e.g., toss, throw, hurl) and closely related adjectives (e.g., thin, slender, skinny, scrawny).

4. Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts, including using adjectives and adverbs to describe (e.g., When other kids are happy that makes me happy).

Third Grade

Speaking and Listening

1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 3 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

   a. Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly drawn on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion.

   b. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., gaining the floor in respectful ways, listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion).

   c. Ask questions to check understanding of information presented, stay on topic, and link their comments to the remarks of others.

   d. Explain own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion.

2. Determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

3. Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail.

Knowledge of Language

1. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
    a. Choose words and phrases for effect.
    b. Recognize and observe differences between the conventions of spoken and written Standard English.
2. Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.
3. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal spatial and temporal relationships.

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS SEPARATED BY PARTICIPANT AND GRADE

Ms. Webb

2nd Grade

"Ms. Webb, describe your teaching philosophy. I know that's a pretty broad question, so feel free to break that down however you'd like. For example, you could describe your teaching philosophy when you first started as a teacher and what it is now. Has it evolved? Has is stayed the same?"

> *"Right now, I think it's just a little bit of everybody that I read. I borrow a little from this, a little from this, and put it in a little package and see what best works with my children."*
>
> *"You know, remember Piaget, they progress through stages, which they definitely do. Make sure they have the background for one stage before you lead them onto the next."*
>
> *"...you borrow a little bit from Skinner, maybe with behavioral things you're doing in your classroom. [Along with] some of the others that you studied about, Piaget..."*
>
> *"My gambit is not just delivering curriculum."*
>
> *"I'm working on the total development of that whole child."*
>
> *"I'm going to touch some of them academically. But, with some children it's going to be emotionally. I'm going to be that person to give them the stability that maybe they don't have in some situations. So I'm going to be there academically...I'm going to be there socially for some...emotionally for some."*
>
> *"I want the child to experience success, meet the needs of all the children, and provide for them a safe and nurturing environment while they are at school and while they are learning."*
>
> *"...when we first started...the thrust was on delivering the curriculum. You know, you taught fourth grade, so you delivered fourth grade curriculum. Basically, you weren't tied...textbooks...is what you were expected to teach..."*
>
> *"Now we're more differentiated. We go down levels; we go up levels to meet where the needs of the children are. To give them that support, to make their weaknesses strengths and then to take what strengths they have and build on those and make them greater."*
>
> *"Now with core curriculum, you pull it all together, kind of like a project...the thing now is to make the whole day flow, weave one thing right from another."*

“I’ve been doing a little bit of research on 2nd and 3rd grade curriculum. The one thing that really has stood out to me, especially in these elementary years, is that the curriculum really expects or requires [students] to be more independent and to be more responsible for their own learning. How do you feel that you elicit that in your classroom?”

> *“They are responsible. They have responsibilities. They have certain jobs that they do in the classroom.”*
>
> *“They help pass out the agendas…maybe sweep the floor a little bit. They take ownership of the classroom. That’s something I want all of them to have, is ownership of the classroom. This is their room. We work together here. We follow rules together.”*
>
> *“We support each other. We’re there to help each other with work when needed, to study, collaborate, things like that. We are like a family, working together as one unit. This is important for all of us.”*

“Describe how you use language to teach.”

> *“In the classroom, they write stories. They are allowed to get in the author’s chair; they share the stories with the class. They share their stories with a buddy.”*
>
> *“We are learning to formulate sentences; we are learning to speak respectfully to others.”*
>
> *“I encourage them to expand on their vocabulary.”*
>
> *“…they know that language is important. We use it. We have the speaker’s respect. We work on that when someone is speaking. Language is in the curriculum all day long.”*
>
> *“Using language written, orally, whatever we can do to promote that language. Just to make them realize how important it is.”*

“Okay. So, you mentioned that you use language orally, as through written assignments. Do you use any non-verbal language cues in your classroom?

> *“…pulling on my ear, they know what that means.”*
>
> *“…if I touch my ear, that means maybe I’m hearing you and I shouldn’t be. You’re too loud.”*
>
> *“It’s just like our little kindergarten kids, when they come into the cafeteria, they have a finger on their lips and on their hips. You’ll see them coming up the hall like this because their hand can’t be on the wall. So we use different cues like that.”*

"…we also have a clap and the kids finish it."

"…a lot of verbal, non-verbal cues. Looks are good too."

"Do you have any students that struggle in the classroom with the curriculum? Or, reading those nonverbal cues, or even the verbal cues? Can you identify the children that may struggle with that?

> *"Some days they have it and some days they don't. With the ones that struggle, the big thing with them is that they think that they can't do it."*
>
> *"Gear them down a grade at first. Give them something that they will have some success with at first. Then praise. 'Did you notice that you didn't make a mistake? That you comprehended everything?' Then you just keep building from there. You've got to build that confidence."*
>
> *"…start them out in their comfort zone. Teach them strength."*
>
> *"Every day, after we've had our morning meeting, there's an assignment and up on the white board is a number where it is written."*
>
> *"Buddy at the table. Make sure that someone can read back the directions to you; that way, if you're sitting there and you have trouble and you can't read what's up there, you've got your buddy."*
>
> *"We work whole group, we work small groups, we work individually. All throughout the day. Whatever's needed."*
>
> *"Some get pulled out for special reading, some for math, some for speech. The speech team this year is very good about working with us too. We try to work on the same things."*

"I know we talked a little bit about the students that may struggle in the classroom, what about those students that seem to excel? Can you give an example of a student that excels in your classroom?"

> *"With those students, you're going to make sure that the reading materials and things like that are going to be on that higher level or more challenging level for them. You don't want to stretch it to where they are struggling"*
>
> *"…you have to be careful that some of the books that you select for them, you don't want to give them something that's not an interest to their age level."*

"They are so excited when they get their first chapter book and then they start reading it, but you don't want it to be where the first chapter is 50 pages long. You know what I mean?"

"You don't want to overwork them or always pair them with the lowest in the room. That's something you don't want to do. And you don't flaunt that they got it. You keep it on an even keel."

Themes

Ms. Webb's responses were then further analyzed and coded into themes. Themes noted for Ms. Webb include the following:

- Teaching philosophy = Teach child, not curriculum.
    - Evidence-based practice
- Discourse shortcuts/implicit discourse
- Curriculum supports academic success
- Content scaffolding
- Classroom community
    - Communication facilitator > traditional classroom dictator/disciplinary hierarchy
- Positivity in learning
- Metacognitive thinking

Ms. Merry

3rd Grade

"Describe your teaching philosophy when you first started teaching and how it's changed. Feel free to express this in any way."

"[Thinking] philosophy? I really don't know. When I first started teaching my very first job was kindergarten class. It had 10 students and no aid…I got the call about 2 days before school started. Of course, with the kindergartners it was a lot of the basic learning… just the day- to-day activities in the classroom. So, at first it [teaching philosophy] was survival…it was trying get stuff together and survival."

"We weren't required to do as much of the academic like they do now, since we got the common core…"

"[Common Core State Standards (2011)] changed a lot of the way we teach. It's changed how we expect the children to respond back to us. It's not just a question, answer, or showing how to work this problem. It's explaining, it's giving words, it's 'tell me how did this'…"

"I guess the delivery in what I expect back from the kids has completely changed."

"A lot of talking, a lot of explanation, writing…"

"…involves a little more time planning time as far as the teacher's part."

"I've been reviewing the literature… [which states] second and third grade curriculum really requires more responsibility and independence from the students to hold responsibility for their own learning. Can you describe how you elicit that in the classroom?"

"…before was lot more independent work and show me what you know…[Now, students] really talk about it with peers and come to consensus and agreement or disagreement…

[For example],

'Well, you know you didn't do that right.'
'Well, yes I did, I got the same answer as you do it, I just did it a different way.'
'I did mine this way.'
'Did you get this answer?'
'How did you do it?'
'Did you get this another way?'"

"A lot of discussion, a lot peer or buddy, partnering, partner reading, partner work, where they can kind of look at and check each other and help each other."

"Each [student] usually knows they have a task that they have to do, and then share, which makes it a little easier. It's not like just work this out with your peer. No you take a look at number this and do numbers through this and then we all talk about it. So that they have something they are responsible for so that can't get away with slacking."

"Describe all the different ways in which you communicate with your students."

"I communicate with the students through text…[via] computer because I put assignments in for the writing for things like that they have to do. Even though it's not really direct communication one way or other at least I put something in there that they have to give me back"

"Does sarcasm count? Sometimes, I look at them like, what?"

> *"I like to have conversation like, Kentucky played yesterday so we had overall different conversations about the game and who did, that's kind of stuff just social kind of stuff so you know were just, well, like buddies talking."*

> *"Elmo, the white board, smart board, worksheets, workbooks…paper, pencil"*

"So I'm sure within your classroom that you have seen students that really excel and then some that are really challenged by the curriculum, especially now with the new core curriculum. Can you illustrate how each type of these students reacts to the curriculum?

> *"…a couple students who never want to work with a partner, very quiet…it's not that they're bad students, it's not that they don't know how to do the work, it's just that they are kind of quiet and backwards a little bit and they do not want to do group work. They don't want to work with a partner. Sometimes, I make them, they just cringe."*

> *"…one student is a TAG student, she is very smart, very bright, never has difficulties, however, the problem solving, the word problems with fractions, trying to figure out who had more who had less, has thrown that child for a loop."*

> *"I don't know if it's the wording, I don't know if it's because she has to draw her own picture? I haven't been able to figure that out yet but that's really odd and that kind of has nothing to do with this but it's just really odd."*

> *"Verbal communication and being able put into words…is hard for them to do…"*

> *"The ones who truly struggle; they try but they just don't get it. I mean, it just does not click."*

Themes

Ms. Merry's responses were then further analyzed and coded into themes. Themes noted for Ms. Merry include the following:

- Teaching philosophy is molded by curriculum standards
    - Lack of evidence-based practice
- Limited insight on
    - why students struggle
    - discourse shortcuts
- Student expectations

- Teacher has presuppositions that students know their academic responsibilities
- Discourse code-switching (casual to academic)

- Complex discourse forms
  - Figurative language (sarcasm)
  - Written modalities

Ms. Erinson

2nd Grade

"Describe your teaching philosophy when you first started teaching and kind of how it evolved."

> *"…when I first started teaching it's all I wanted to do from the time I was 16 and I thought I was going to change the world and I had this philosophy that every child could learn, succeed and be successful, but now… I have realistic expectations on education. I still believe that [everyone can learn] but not to the same degree. And, not everybody will have the same ability."*
>
> *"I just really think it's time for people to realize that not everybody is going to be a doctor, not everybody is college bound."*
>
> *"How do we instill in people that education is the key? That you can better yourself in education? It's not a privilege to be able to go to school it's just a right sometimes."*
>
> *"…the sense around here, like, of working, that hard work, it's lacking. Education is not important. That's where it becomes frustrating."*
>
> *"…and sometimes I think, why the hell am I doing this anymore?"*
>
> *"I have kids ranging with IQ's of 60 up to 122… I know I am supposed to differentiate… I can spend 24 hours a day differentiating and I still feel like I am not meeting everybody's needs…"*
>
> *"And then, on top of it, you have the whole behavioral aspects…sometimes, I feel like I'm just a warden in a prison trying to keep the peace."*

"The transition from first to second, and second to third is really about students being more independent and responsible for their own learning. As a second grade teacher, how do you promote independence in your classroom?"

"…second semester we do way more writing….brainstorming, personal narrative…we really try."

"We will write, here in a minute, today we are talking about seasons so now that we have had that discussion, we have talked about it, we have read about it, they are going to come back and do graphic organizer about the seasons and then they're going to use their graphic organizer to write the persuasive piece of which is their favorite season and then explain why… and then, Friday, we will wrap it up with okay, let's see if you can answer these questions."

"…letting them answer their own questions about choosing what they want to read, that kind of thing."

"…right now we're getting into the solar system…that's because it's their natural interest."

"I have them do the research. I promote them."

"…they're so used to being walked through everything."

"There's a lot of discussion before we read anything...we use KWL charts, it tells me what they already know…we pull in a lot of background information. So, [then] it's what do [they] want to learn? And that's where they start taking responsibility for their learning."

"[For example] I want to know why we have clouds. How are clouds made?"

"Describe how you use language in your classroom or how you use language to learn.

Additionally, how do you promote [students] to use language to learn?"

"I don't know how to answer your question."

"Are you talking about engaging in questions?"

"I really don't know how to answer that."

"Okay, how do I use language to learn? Well, we do it through writing. We will write, here in a minute…they're going to use their graphic organizer to write the persuasive piece…"

"Think of all the different ways you communicate with your students throughout the day.

Describe these ways and give an example of each."

"So there is verbal, your basic verbal."

"I don't know sign language but I do 'sit on your bottom'. They know I will go like this [gestures by sitting on her hands in her chair], and that just means get on your bottom."

"I think I use a lot of body language myself, because now, 150-something days into school, they can read me."

"We use a lot of hand signals. We use 'thumbs up, thumps down' a lot."

"…there is one student…he doesn't have that social – he doesn't know when to ask questions or when to interrupt. I have found that when I am talking to another student or whatever I am doing, I would try to ignore him…I am not going to acknowledge you right now. He does not get that at all. He will continuously say, 'Mrs. Frye, Mrs. Frye, Mrs. Frye, Mrs. Frye'…"

"Now, if I look at him…he can read my facial expressions…he does get that because he will put his head down and cover his ears."

"Explain how some students excel and some students are challenged by the curriculum."

"…in the afternoon, we have SPL(Student Personalize Learning)."
"The Title One teachers target the ones that need the most intervention. You have one group that you're working with and other groups do an independent activity but that doesn't always work out because, they have to self-control and again some of them are not mature enough going into the third grade to handle the independent time when they are supposed to be working so I don't know how effective it actually is."

Themes

Ms. Erinson's responses were then further analyzed and coded into themes. Themes noted for Ms. Erinson include the following:

- Teaching philosophy molded by environmental context
- Frustration
- Written and reading modalities
- Discourse shortcuts
- Limited insight on
    - How she uses language
    - Why students struggle
- Metacognitive language expectations

Ms. Turley

3rd Grade

"Describe your teaching philosophy when you first started teaching and how it's evolved into what it is now. Or has it evolved? Has it stayed the same?"

> *"I didn't have the right mindset when I came in."*
>
> *"It was my first year and I had all these kids who were not well behaved and their behavior didn't allow me to teach as much as I wanted. I did not feel I had a successful year."*
>
> *"I questioned if I still wanted to be a teacher or not after that first year. It was so hard. I would just go home and cry because I was frustrated."*
>
> *"I don't think I had set my expectations high enough…so that was one thing that transform[ed] my teaching."*
>
> *"I feel that I have been able to teach more because I have more control."*
>
> *"I can't just assume that they know how to do things the way that I want them to do them."*
>
> *"…the first two weeks of school, I'll model like, "This is how I want you to sit in your seat. This is how I want you to line up. This is how I want you to…this is how I expect…"*
>
> *"I had always expected my kids to just already know…you find out that they don't."*

"…in summary, third grade is when students are required to hold more responsibility, independence, and accountability for their own learning. So my question to you is, how do you feel you elicit that in your teaching?"

> *"Confidence is key."*
>
> *"Yes, they are required to be independent, but they don't work alone until they have worked with groups and partners so that they can feel confident."*
>
> *"…if I see a student struggling, I tell them the answer. That way they can raise their hand and contribute and build that confidence that they need."*
>
> *"It's not just about the answer. Its more critical deeper, thinking. One child may do it this way, and another child may do it differently. Whatever works for them, works for me."*

"…as long as they understand what they're are doing."

"…then they can compare work with each other."

"I want them to solve it and explain how they got the answer."

"…using a timer so you don't waste time. I time everything. It just keeps us all on task…less time wasted."

"We do the behavior clipboard as well, which is consistent among all of our classrooms…holding them accountable for their actions."

"…if there is a behavior, I minimize it immediately."

"How do you use language to learn in your classroom?"

"We use trigger as a professional development tool…"

"It involves using the language of learning…"

"Instead of calling them students we call them scholars and learners and thinkers based on what they're doing."

"We use words like explain, analyze, communicate."

"If I say we are going to communicate, then I'll put the definition up and then I'll take that away eventually."

"We talk about important vocabulary…"

"What are all the different ways you communicate with your students?"

"Elmo, verbal instruction…visual cues, written cues."

"…questioning them. I feel like I'm constantly questioning them."

"Sometimes if we get a little out of control, I will say, 'Class, class'. Then they will say 'yes, yes'."

"…I'll snap my finger…give the teacher look."

"If they are off task or staring off into space or playing in their desk, I constantly say, "Who is accountable for your learning?"

"Can you provide me with evidence of how you found that answer?"

"I'm sure within your classroom you have some students that excel and some that struggle. I was wondering if you could demonstrate these type of students and how they react to the curriculum."

> *"I try to encourage a lot of communication between my students."*
>
> *"...students that excel are the ones who always raise their hand. They always want to provide an answer. Sometimes they shout out, which is common. My students that have difficulties are usually the ones that I try to call on the most. I feel like they would benefit from walking through what they are struggling with."*
>
> *"I want everyone to feel like they contribute to the class. One thing that helps with that is the peer talking. I think that that helps."*
>
> *"Sometimes, they just learn better from each other. They can explain it better than I can. In terms that they understand as 8 year olds."*
>
> *"I try to use that higher student as a peer tutor."*
>
> *"Sometimes the pairings aren't good and they don't get along...but they just kind of have to work through it."*
>
> *"They are constantly reminding each other of things that they need to know."*

Themes

Ms. Turley's responses were then further analyzed and coded into themes. Themes noted for Ms. Turley include the following:

- Teaching philosophy molded by classroom management
- Discourse shortcuts
- Complex discourse forms
    - Tier II vocabulary
    - Written modalities
- Metacognitive language
- Discourse used to regulate behaviors
- Limited insight on language demands

- Why students struggle
- Spoken language demands

APPENDIX C

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL LETTER

w w w . m a r s h a l l . e d u

Office of Research Integrity
Institutional Review Board
401 11th St., Suite 1300
Huntington, WV 25701

FWA 00002704

IRB1 #00002205
IRB2 #00003206

November 5, 2013

Susan Frank, PhD
Communication Disorders

RE: IRBNet ID# 514326-1
At: Marshall University Institutional Review Board #2 (Social/Behavioral)

Dear Dr. Frank:

Protocol Title:	[514326-1] Describing the Spoken Discourse Practices of Second and Third Grade Teachers in Rural Appalachia	
Expiration Date:	November 5, 2014	
Site Location:	MU	
Submission Type:	New Project	APPROVED
Review Type:	Exempt Review	

In accordance with 45CFR46.101(b)(1)&(2), the above study and informed consent were granted Exempted approval today by the Marshall University Institutional Review Board #2 (Social/Behavioral) Designee for the period of 12 months. The approval will expire November 5, 2014. A continuing review request for this study must be submitted no later than 30 days prior to the expiration date.

This study is for student Natasha Scott.

If you have any questions, please contact the Marshall University Institutional Review Board #2 (Social/Behavioral) Coordinator Bruce Day, CIP at 304-696-4303 or day50@marshall.edu. Please include your study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office.

- 1 -

Generated on IRBNet

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EDUCATION

M.S.: Communication Disorders, Marshall University, August 2014
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H.S. Diploma: Hedgesville High School, Hedgesville, WV, June 2008

PRESENTATIONS

2014 March
West Virginia Speech Language Hearing Association Conference
Description: State conference held in Huntington, West Virginia.
Name of Study: Describing the Spoken Discourse Practices of Second and Third Grade Teachers in Appalachia (Preliminary findings)
Presentation Type: Poster Session

2013 November
American Speech Language Hearing Association Conference
Description: Nationwide conference held in Chicago, Illinois
Name of Study: Assessing Stages of Grief in Children Who Stutter
Presentation Type: Poster Session

2013 September
Morgantown Stuttering Attitudes Research Conference
Description: State conference held in Morgantown, West Virginia.
Name of Study: Changing Peer Perceptions of Children Who Stutter
Presentation Type: Poster Session

CONFERENCES ATTENDED

2011 November
West Virginia AG Bell Conference
Description: State conference held in Morgantown, West Virginia.