

Literacy Coaching: Approaches, Styles, and Conversations

Roberta Apostolakis

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Gabriella Belli, co-chair

Rosary Lalik, co-chair

Sue Magliaro

Paul Renard

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Roberta Apostolakis

Abstract

This study is an investigation of teachers' perspectives on coaching activities and styles of feedback language used by literacy coaches. Because literacy coaching processes represent a common approach to school-based teacher learning, it is wise to examine their usefulness. The teachers being coached have a key role in shaping and informing the coaching process. Their thoughts on helpful coaching activities and feedback language are important and could enlighten stakeholders in professional development of teachers. The data collection tools for this study included teacher questionnaires and a video-taped session with a focus group of elementary education teachers. The main findings were that teachers perceived literacy coaching activities, especially co-teaching and visiting colleagues, most helpful to construct conceptual and procedural knowledge when they include opportunities for on-going collaboration, teacher autonomy, and active construction of knowledge, and when they occur in classrooms settings with practice and feedback. These findings have implications for why and how educators do professional development in schools.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to Mike, Tricia, and Teddy.

During my journey as a doctoral student, falling down was easy and I did it often. But getting up from those falls and continuing the journey was at times overwhelming and a challenge. You three were always there to push me on. You inspired me to continue. I love you.

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PREFACE

This dissertation is a collection of manuscripts designed for publication that I developed as part of my study on coaching activities and styles of feedback language used by school-based literacy coaches. In particular, I am interested in teachers' perspectives on the helpfulness of various types of activities and styles of feedback language. This research is important because it has implications for the way that we support teacher learning. Such learning is vital because teaching is a complex activity that requires continual refinement and renewal.

Manuscript one is a review of the literature that focuses on literacy coaching activities and styles of feedback in school-based settings. This manuscript addresses the question: what are some coaching activities and styles of feedback language used by literacy coaches to support teachers in applying knowledge from professional learning sessions into classroom practice? The purpose was to inform and support school administrators and reading specialists moving into a coaching model of professional development for classroom teachers. This manuscript was submitted to *The Journal of Staff Development* in February, 2008. This journal is read by educators and administrators interested in professional development for teachers.

Manuscript two is a report of my empirical study designed to examine teachers' perspectives on the helpfulness of literacy coaching activities and styles of feedback language. This manuscript addresses the question: what coaching approaches and styles of feedback language used by literacy coaches do teachers' perceive as helpful in improving instructional practice? The purpose was to inform school administrators, literacy coaches, and district level policy holders about teachers' perceptions of what is helpful in improving practice in relation to literacy coaching. This manuscript summarizes teachers' thoughts on helpfulness of 12 typical coaching activities and three styles of feedback language used by school-based literacy coaches. Teacher

questionnaires were used to collect data for this study. This research has implications for *why* and *how* schools define the role of the literacy coach in supporting school-based teacher professional learning. This manuscript is intended for an audience of educators and administrators in the field of literacy education. This manuscript will be submitted to *The Journal of Teacher Education*. This journal is read by educators and administrators interested in professional development for teachers.

Manuscript three is a report of follow-up empirical research using a focus group interview to further examine more deeply teachers' perspectives on the nature of helpfulness of coaching approaches and feedback styles used by literacy coaches. In particular, coaching approaches and styles of feedback language that teachers' viewed as helpful to foster conceptual and procedural professional knowledge and teachers' development of a self-extending system for learning. The purpose was to inform school administrators, literacy coaches, and district level policy holders about teachers' perspectives of what is helpful in improving practice in relation to literacy coaching. Focus group questions were designed based on findings from the survey study. The data collection tools for this study were audio and video tapes of a focus group session and a discussion chart completed by five teachers from an elementary public school that employs school-based literacy coaches to support teacher learning. The findings of this study have implications for stake holders interested in using literacy coaching to support school-based teacher professional development. Research findings were written in a manuscript format and will be submitted to *The Journal of Teacher Education*, a journal publication read by educators and administrators interested in professional development of teachers.

My dissertation ends with a reflection chapter. This final section of the dissertation provides a reflection on what I learned as a staff developer, researcher, and writer of research.

MANUSCRIPT ONE

Literacy Coaching: A Review of Approaches and Styles of Feedback Language

Abstract

This is a review of the literature that focuses on literacy coaching approaches and styles of feedback in school-based settings. This manuscript addresses the question: what are some coaching approaches and styles used by literacy coaches to support teachers in applying knowledge from professional learning settings into classroom practice? The purpose is to inform and support school administrators and reading specialist moving into a coaching model of professional development for classroom teachers.

An understanding of effective professional development for teachers begins with a look at teacher learning in schools, specifically teacher learning in the content areas of reading and writing facilitated by literacy coaches. Effective teacher learning experiences differ and there is no single model of an ideal professional learning setting that matches all teachers as learners. However, literature in the field of literacy has identified some common elements associated with successful school-based teacher learning (Bean, 2004; Blachowicz, Obrochta, & Fogelberg, 2005; Dole, 2004; Rodgers & Rodgers, 2007). In particular, they have identified certain elements of literacy coaching, such as approaches and styles of feedback language coaches' use, as fundamental support structures in helping teachers bridge new learning into practice.

Overall, literacy coaching as a support structure for teacher learning can be characterized by approaches, such as resource, problem solving, and observation; and styles of feedback language, such as mirror, collaborative, and expert. Literacy coaches can foster opportunities for teacher learning through a variety of activities; such as, sharing instructional materials, observing lessons, co-teaching, and problem-solving issues through instructional dialogues (Blachowicz et al., 2005). Coaches can also scaffold learning with essential feedback (Anderson, 1994). For example, coaches

using: (1) mirror language can foster teachers' learning through self reflection, (2) collaborative language can foster teachers' learning through co-constructive conversations by both teacher and coach, and (3) expert language can foster teachers' learning through explicit examples and guidance by coach (Bean, 2004).

What follows is a review of literacy coaching. Each view or perspective includes a brief overview of information to help administrators, literacy leaders, school-based staff developer, and reading teachers better understand coaching as a foundation for supporting and sustaining teachers' learning.

A View of the Research

Coaching as a support structure for teachers, in particular school-based literacy coaching, "offers great promise" (Casey, 2006, p.1). Coaching is a longstanding and respected tradition of support, and much has been written about some of its aspects (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Gusky & Huberman, 1995; Joyce & Showers, 2002). For example, Darling-Hammond (1998) suggested that "professional development strategies that succeed in improving teaching share several features. They tend to be...sustained and intensive, supported by modeling, (and) coaching" (p. 11). As researchers point out, if development in any model is confined to only encounters outside of the classroom, then there will be little if any application of knowledge from the sessions to instructional practice (Anderson, 1994; Smylie, 1989; Sparks, 1983). In more recent years Knight (2004) studied teacher learning in a partnership between a public school district working on school improvement and the Kansas University's Pathway to Success program. His research suggests that "intensive support (by instructional coaches) can improve teaching" (p.10).

Joyce and Showers (2002) researched hundreds of studies on effective models of professional development that support teacher learning and implementation in the classroom. They suggested from their findings that there are key components that affect application of practice; these include: (1) a focus on developing understandings of new knowledge, (2) demonstration and modeling of new techniques, and (3) on-going

feedback provided by coaches. In another research study, Smylie (1998) found from data analysis of over 1700 teacher surveys that “by far, teachers perceive direct experience in classrooms as their most effective source of learning” (p.545). Also, Wade (1984) suggested from her meta-analysis study of research on teacher education that “staff developers need to take a second look at coaching...when determining what really matters” (p. 48) in staff development of teachers. From her study of over 300 articles, dissertations, and ERIC documents, she suggested that “through out the staff development literature, coaching has been cited as an effective technique for achieving transfer of training” (p. 53) when combined with other factors associated with learning effectiveness, such as classroom observations and collegial conversations. Ideas of other education theorists who have shared their experiences and/or thoughts on the benefits and value of coaching to support teacher learning are shown in Appendix A.

Many teachers find opportunities facilitated by literacy coaches to be beneficial and supportive of their learning. Opportunities such as demonstrations or modeling of a new technique, discussing video clips, observing in teachers’ classrooms, and or a live simulation of the instructional task being studied (Rogers & Pinnell, 2002). Darling-Hammond (1998) suggests that professional development strategies that succeed in improving teaching “tend to be sustained and intensive, supported by modeling, coaching, and problem-solving” (p. 11). While all of these components have been reported in the literature as essential in “maximizing opportunities” (Joyce & Showers, 2002, p. 79) for teacher learning, researchers specifically point to coaching as a critical resource to foster implementation of new learning into classroom practice (Li, 2004; Swafford, 1998).

Traditionally classroom teachers are given the opportunity to develop an understanding of new knowledge by attending literacy workshops or in-services. This *sit-and-get* or *one-shot* model of teacher learning usually results in little if any application of learning to practice (Birman, Desimone, Porter, & Garet, 2000). However there is a growing knowledge base presented in the literature that if teachers’ professional learning is supported with opportunities to collaborate, problem-solve, and receive feedback from a coach, the results can be dramatically different (Allen & LeBlanc, 2005; Anderson, 1994; Birman et al., 2000; Duncan, 2006; Friend & Cook,

2003; Knight, 2004; Lieberman, 1995). This is exemplified in Anderson's (2001) study on the effects of coaching feedback on preservice teachers in classroom settings. She found through her analysis of feedback conversations between supervising teachers and 34 student teachers that coaching feedback was deemed "valuable" (p. 66) when student teachers had opportunities for problem-solving feedback from their supervising teachers as they were trying out new learning in classroom settings. Another study, with similar results, was conducted by Sharan and Hertz-Lazarowitz (1980) on small cooperative teacher peer groups. The groups were involved in cooperative learning activities during 52 hours of staff development work that was supported with practice and feedback by participants and the consultant. Findings from the study indicated that over a year later, 65% of the teachers were using what they learned in their classrooms effectively and on a regular basis. Swafford (1998) found through her observations of school-based peer coaches that "one benefit of peer coaching that permeated the data was that it provided teachers with support they needed when implementing new instructional practice" (p. 55). Coaching can be helpful to teachers in fostering opportunities for learning.

A View of Coaching Approaches

There has been a substantial amount of literature over the past decade on how literacy coaches can effectively support teacher learning through a variety of activities and approaches (Dole, 2004; Duncan, 2006; Knight, 2004). Bean (2004) found three levels of activity associated with literacy coaching. The levels involved: (1) activities informal in nature, such as curriculum development and study groups; (2) activities that focused on areas of teacher or student needs, such as co-planning lessons or analyzing student work; and (3) activities that provided feedback to teachers during lessons. Table 1.1 is a summary of typical coaching approaches in the field of literacy (Bean, 2004; Puig & Froelich, 2007; Rodgers & Rodgers, 2007). Activities are organized into three typical types of coaching approaches as well as examples of literacy coaching behaviors associated with each type.

Table 1.1**Types of Literacy Coaching**

Descriptions	What it might look like in a school setting
<p>Resource coaching</p> <p>Supporting teachers in general literacy topics through activities such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenting workshops • Facilitating professional book clubs • Facilitating informal literacy conversations • Sharing resource materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenting information on literacy issues • Meeting with teachers to share and problem solve on literacy content • Helping with literacy projects (ex: family literacy nights) • Teaming with classroom teacher/s to communicate with parents • Sharing literacy materials to support students and teachers (books, videos, websites) • Facilitating TAR- <i>Teachers as Readers</i> book groups
<p>Problem-solving coaching</p> <p>Supporting teachers in areas of specific needs such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modeling lessons • Facilitating study groups on specific needs of students or teachers, • Co-planning lessons, • Analyzing student work • Problem-solving literacy issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyzing student data to collaborate, plan and co-teach lessons • Collaborating with teacher/s to problem solve issues • Planning literacy lessons with teachers • Facilitating & planning school-wide literacy professional development to address issues • Modeling and demonstrating literacy concepts and activities
<p>Observation coaching</p> <p>Supporting teachers by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing feedback on instructional practice • Co-teaching lessons • Observing students and giving teacher feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observing lessons with pre & post feedback sessions • Collaborating & problem solving instructional plans for students

Coaches form partnerships with teachers to provide support and feedback with instructional practice. Differentiating approaches and activities based on teachers' needs is essential if the goal is to put into practice learning from professional development. It is the collaborative nature of the coach and teacher interacting that make possible opportunities for professional learning (Feger, Woleck, & Hickman, 2004; Hargrove, 2003). The coach can support a teacher's professional learning by facilitating and developing a collaborative problem solving setting, a setting where together they seek solutions to issues in areas of literacy curriculum and instruction, address specific teacher and or student needs, and support on-going learning with useful feedback (Bean, 2004, 2004; Bean, Swan, & Knaub, 2003; Blachowicz et al., 2005; Rodgers & Rodgers, 2007).

Rodgers and Pinnell (2002) suggested that in successful teacher coach interactions and experiences, "teachers and coaches continue to work closely together in a coaching context; they become colleagues, engaging in collaborative problem-solving and inquiry-oriented conversations" (p. 94). These conversations not only support teacher learning of new ideas but are critical for applying the new ideas into classroom settings. Gersten, Chard, and Baker (2000) claimed that "providing teachers with opportunities to observe others and to receive feedback from others with expertise" (p. 457) are factors that can greatly enhance implementation and sustained use of instructional practice.

A View of Styles of Feedback Language

If feedback matters (Anderson, 1998), then useful feedback is essential to teachers as they are moving new understandings into instructional practice (Rodgers & Rodgers, 2007; Rogers, 1987). Considerable attention needs to be directed toward the role the coach plays in facilitating ongoing instructional dialogues with teachers, and in particular, the particular styles of feedback language each teacher uses. Mrs. Bolvari, a second grade teacher, with 12 years teaching experience, explained the benefit of conversations between coach and teacher:

I want feedback on what I do, but I've not found formal feedback from my yearly evaluation to be helpful. It's always positive but it comes weeks after the lesson and it seems so contrived and not specific to what I really want to know or problem-solve on. Working and talking things through with my literacy coach is great. She comes in and observes. I try things out I would never consider doing in a formal evaluation. She gives me ideas right then or shortly after. Or we just work together on the spot to make the lesson work with my students. I don't feel that pressure to get it right on the first try. She encourages me to keep at it and I'm so glad she does. (A. A. Bolvari, Personal communication, January 22, 2006)

“Feedback is essential to teacher learning” (Sweeney, 2003, p. 51) and Mrs. Bolvari benefited from its immediacy and relevance. Feedback language typically used in teacher coach interactions can be grouped into three general styles: (1) feedback that reflects what is observable to the coach, sometimes referred to as mirror language; (2) feedback that reflects both the coach's and teacher's thoughts on what is observable and what is missing, sometimes referred to as collaborative language; and (3) feedback that reflects a coach's opinions and judgments, sometimes referred to as expert language (Duncan, 2006; Lyons & Pinnell, 2001). The coach when working as a mirror to give feedback to a teacher, typically uses language that reflects what the coach observed, such as, “I noticed you...”, or “this is what I observed you doing.” Collaborative feedback conversations such as, “Let's try together ...,” or “How can I help you...?”, or “What would you like me to focus on?”, are typically used by coaches when teachers are practicing or refining new learning from a professional learning session. Coaches taking on the role as an expert may use specific language such as, “Let me show you...”, and/or “I can model this for you...,” to support classroom teachers who are beginning to try out new instructional tasks. Table 1.2 contains examples of styles of feedback language used by coaches in the field of literacy to support teacher learning.

Bambino (2002) suggested that “effective feedback and strong support” (p. 25) by a coach during a professional development session are critical to teacher learning. These are exemplified in the teacher coach interactions she describes in a professional learning project called Critical Friends Groups. For example, the coach fosters teacher

Table 1.2**Feedback: Coaching Styles of Feedback Language**

Coaching conversations that reflects what's observable	
1.	I saw...
2.	I noticed you...
3.	The students were doing...
4.	I noticed (student's name)...
5.	You did...
Coaching conversations that reflects what's observable and what's missing	
1.	I saw that...what are your thoughts?
2.	I noticed you did...what are you thinking you might do next?
3.	What would you expect your students to do...Let's try together to teach...
4.	I noticed (student's name)...what did you notice? We could try...
5.	We could try together...
Coaching conversations that reflects a coach's opinions and expertise	
1.	I saw...try this....
2.	I noticed you did...I could help you with that...I could...
3.	Students should be able to...Have your tried? You could do...
4.	I'm concerned about (student), watch him to see what he does when I try..
5.	I could model ...to show you how to....

learning by facilitating a discussion of data collected by teachers and coach during classroom visits to examine progress of students. This discussion provides opportunities for reflective and constructive feedback that teachers have found to be very helpful to support their learning. Bambino describes teacher and coach interactions that include feedback and support as the “catalyst for changes in the teaching, learning, culture, and climate of (school) learning communities” (p. 27).

It is understandable that teachers without opportunities for feedback on their implementation of new learning typically make little if any progress in applying new knowledge to classroom instruction. Effective coaching activities and feedback language can change this pattern (Blachowicz et al., 2005; Herll, 2004). The likelihood that teacher coach interactions foster opportunities for teachers to apply knowledge from learning sessions to classroom practice depends on a clear understanding about the relative helpfulness of various elements of literacy coaching, such as approaches and styles of feedback language. Thus, we would benefit from studies that examine helpfulness across coaching approaches and styles of feedback language.

Venue for Publication

An earlier draft of this manuscript was submitted for review to *The Journal of the National Staff Development Council* on February 15, 2008. Manuscript guidelines specified that word count not exceed 2000 words. In order to meet that requirement, I discussed only a few of the many writers that have contributed to the study of coaching in the field of literacy. Additional references from the literature on coaching models used in the field of literacy (types, descriptions, and sources for further information) are included in Appendix A.

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MANUSCRIPT TWO

Teachers' Perspectives on Literacy Coaching Approaches and Style of Feedback: A Survey of their Thoughts

Abstract

This study was an examination of teachers' perspectives on literacy coaching activities and styles of feedback language. Teacher questionnaires were used to collect data on teacher perceptions. The findings from this research indicated that teachers perceive as helpful a wide range of literacy coaching activities, including sharing resource materials and co-teaching lessons. Teachers found all styles of feedback language helpful, particularly, language that is collaborative in nature.

Teachers' professional development is linked to student learning (Hawley & Valli, 1999; Tallericco, 2005). Hargreaves (2007) pointed to this association while adding a caution "student learning and development do not occur without teacher learning and development. Not any teacher development will do, though" (p. 37). The identification of effective approaches to teacher development remains an important goal for research. There is, however, some evidence to suggest that the activities of peer coaches can facilitate teacher learning (Anderson, 1998; Joyce & Showers, 2002; Vogt & Shearer, 2003). This is especially evident in the field of literacy where coaches have been shown to offer opportunities that foster teacher learning, such as facilitating collegial conversations around literacy topics, observing teachers and providing feedback on instructional practice, and co-teaching lessons (Bean, 2004; Li, 2004; Rodgers & Pinnell, 2002; Swafford, 1998). If literacy peer coaching is linked to teacher learning and teacher learning is linked to student learning, then it is imperative that coaches provide effective support for teachers.

The use of peer coaches to support teacher learning has become a current trend in school-based professional development (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Diaz-Maggioli, 2004; Duncan, 2006). School-based coaches are referred to by many names: mentor, content coach, instructional coach, cognitive coach, reading coach, critical friend, and literacy coach (Bambino, 2002; Dole, 2004; Duncan, 2006; Flaherty, 1999; Gusky & Huberman, 1995; Hargrove, 2003; Knight, 2004). School-based literacy coaches are usually colleagues working in collaborative problem solving roles to assist rather than evaluate teachers (Rodgers & Rodgers, 2007; Vacca & Padak, 1990). Literacy coaches often provide teachers with feedback and orchestrate on-going problem solving conversations around student learning (Pinnell & Rodgers, 2004). They can assist classroom teachers in better understanding pedagogy and the need for change based on evidence from student learning (Puig & Froelich, 2007).

Current efforts to employ coaches and learn about ways that coaches can be effective in their efforts to support teacher learning have evolved in part from the growing awareness that sessions outside the classroom (workshops, lectures, presentations, in-services, seminars, or institutes) alone are insufficient for supporting teacher inquiry and understanding, as well as for improving classroom practice (Lieberman, 1995; Robb, 2000; Roberts & Pruitt, 2003; Rodgers & Pinnell, 2002; Tallerico, 2005).

Teacher knowledge gained from professional development opportunities, typically, falls into two basic categories; the knowing, conceptual knowledge, and the doing, procedural knowledge (Dorn & Soffos, 2001; Fowler & Arcangelo, 1999). Conceptual knowledge refers to a teacher's verbal understandings. Teachers who have developed conceptual knowledge are able to speak and write about what they are learning through staff development. Procedural knowledge refers to a teacher's ability to apply literacy knowledge to classroom practice. Teachers who have developed procedural knowledge are able to demonstrate in the classroom with children the use of what they are learning through staff development. While these types of knowledge may not be mutually exclusive, successful learning of one type does not equate with success with both. Professional development sessions that take place outside the classroom

tend to support learning of conceptual knowledge, but they are far less likely to lead to procedural knowledge (Joyce & Showers, 2002). For procedural knowledge to develop, teachers benefit from opportunities to try new practices in the classroom with the support of a knowledgeable colleague (Dorn & Soffos, 2001). These opportunities are referred to in the literature as coaching (Duncan, 2006) and researchers and educators have argued for the need for research to identify the characteristics of effective coaching (Hargreaves & Dawe, 1990; Robb, 2000; Showers & Joyce, 1996; Sparks, 2002).

Through workshops or other staff development sessions outside the classroom, a teacher may be able to talk about the approach, but without support for trying out new teaching approaches, that teacher is unlikely to attempt the approach in the classroom. If s/he does, s/he is likely to become discouraged by limited success and abandon the new approach before s/he has achieved sufficient control over the use of the approach (Darling-Hammond & Sykes, 1999; Hargreaves, 2007; Joyce & Showers, 2002). Even so, many staff developers “assume that teachers could learn new strategies, return to a school, and implement their new learning smoothly and appropriately” (Showers & Joyce, 1996, p. 13). Evidence from research provides little support for this common assumption (Gusky & Huberman, 1995; Joyce & Showers, 1996; Rodgers & Rodgers, 2007).

There is, however, evidence to suggest that the activities of on-site coaches in schools can help teachers to demonstrate new understandings and practices in the classroom (Diaz-Maggioli, 2003; Hargreaves & Dawe, 1990; Hargrove, 2003). Such activities include: (1) sharing resource materials to support student learning, (2) sharing resource materials to support teacher learning, (3) facilitating problem-solving on literacy issues, (4) facilitating analysis of student work, (5) providing feedback based on observation of students, (6) providing feedback based on observation of teacher, (7) Modeling lessons, (8) facilitating professional book clubs, (9) presenting literacy information in a workshop format, (10) co-teaching lessons, (11) facilitating colleague visits, and (12) facilitating discussion of video lessons. From among these typical

activities, it is important to learn which are perceived by teachers as most helpful to teacher learning.

In addition to activities, literacy coaches typically employ a range of styles of feedback language, as they orchestrate on-going problem solving conversations with teachers around student learning (Anderson, 1998; Puig & Froelich, 2007). Coaching feedback, in this article, is defined as language used by a coach to help teachers reflect, inquire, and construct meaningful knowledge about literacy instructional practices (Garmston, 1997). Like the coaching activities, feedback language may be used to create opportunities for coaches and teachers to bring to light perceptions, values, beliefs, information, and assumptions about literacy teaching and learning. Feedback language used by coaches may be a means for improving practice and, in some cases, for supporting teachers' inquiry and professionalism.

Feedback language used by literacy coaches has been sorted into three broad categories: mirror, collaborative, and expert (Carr, Herman, & Harris, 2005). With mirror language, a coach tells a teacher what s/he did or said to provide the teacher with feedback to encourage reflective learning (e.g. "I noticed you tried..." or "I saw you do..."). With collaborative language, a coach and teacher share collectively their thoughts, to foster conversations to inquire about practice and generate ideas together (e.g. "Let's try together..." or "How do you think it went?"). With expert language, a coach tells a teacher what s/he needs to do, to grasp new understandings (e.g. "You could do..." or "Try doing this..."). Coaches are encouraged to use different feedback language to help teachers to reflect upon, make sense of new information in light of common beliefs, and to create actions consistent with new understandings (Dorn, French, & Jones, 1998).

In studying coaching activities and feedback language, theorists and researchers have often relied on the views of coaches, administrators, and staff developers (Bean, Swan, & Knaub, 2003; Diaz-Maggioli, 2004; Duncan, 2006). While information from these perspectives is useful, research on the viewpoints of teachers is sorely needed to complement current knowledge. By-passing or ignoring teachers' views would seem unfeasible and impractical. Yet such oversight is common in the study of teacher

professional development (Darling-Hammond & Sykes, 1999), leaving the field of research and literature on teacher learning incomplete. The study reported here is an attempt to begin to address this gap in the literature by examining teachers' views on the various activities and styles of feedback language used by coaches. In particular, the study was an examination of (1) the extent to which teachers experienced 12 selected literacy coaching activities, and the degree to which teachers perceive these 12 activities as helpful, and (2) the extent to which teachers experienced three different styles of feedback language, and the degree to which teachers perceive each style of feedback language used by literacy coaches to be helpful.

Review of the Literature

What We Know About Teacher Learning In School-based Professional Development

Effective school-based professional development fosters opportunities for teachers to learn, reflect, and refine instructional practice (Rogers & Rogers, 2007). Effectiveness may be considered the degree to which teachers develop conceptual knowledge and procedural knowledge and the extent to which teachers become self-initiators of their learning. Four principles for effective school-based professional development recur in the literature: (1) opportunities for teacher learning need to occur in classroom environments through practice with feedback, (2) opportunities for ongoing collaboration among educators, (3) opportunities for teacher autonomy, and (4) opportunities for teachers to actively construct their own knowledge (Ball, 1996; Borko & Putnam, 1996; Gusky & Huberman, 1995; Hawley & Valli, 1999; Lieberman, 2008; Little, 1993). Coaches are encouraged to use these principles when they design various activities and provide feedback (Duncan, 2006; Gusky & Huberman, 1995; Hargrove, 2003).

School-based Teacher Learning and Coaching

A range of designs for school-based teacher learning have been developed over time (Bean, 2004; Diaz-Maggioli, 2004). These designs typically reflect one of four models: (1) collaborative problem solving, (2) observation and application of teaching, (3) training, or (4) inquiry and action research (Darling-Hammond & Sykes, 1999; Gusky & Huberman, 1995; Robb, 2000; Sparks, 1990; Tallerico, 2005). The collaborative problem-solving model involves two or more teachers thinking and working together (Rodgers & Rodgers, 2007). The observation and application model relies primarily on teacher partnerships and is focused specifically on observation in each other's classrooms (Dorn & Soffos, 2001). The training model relies on five components (theory, demonstration, practice, feedback, and coaching) to help teachers learn and apply new classroom practices (Showers, 1983; Tallerico, 2005). Action research involves teacher inquiry, reflection and then if warranted, "change in some practice as a result of what is learned" (Tallerico, 2005, p. 46).

In a collaborative problem-solving model, coaches and teachers collaborate on literacy issues, such as, analyzing student work, supporting curriculum implementation, and studying data patterns (Murphy & Lick, 2005; Tochon, 1999). In an observation and application model, coaches and teachers working usually in pairs, focus specifically on observing each other's teaching. In Tallerico's (2005) words, teachers and coaches provide "a second set of eyes and ears for one another for subsequent joint discussions and reflection on the instructor's teaching and students' learning" (p. 41). In a training model, coaches facilitate teachers in learning or refining their use of instructional strategies or techniques through opportunities for theory, demonstration, practice with feedback, and on-going support (Joyce & Showers, 2002). In an inquiry model, coaches collaborate with teachers to raise questions and gather, analyze, reflect and synthesize data to inform instructional practice (Pinnell & Rodgers, 2004; Schon, 1983). In all four models, literacy coaching is intended to provide a scaffold for teachers between verbal understandings and classroom application.

Coaching includes an array of processes with the intent to facilitate teacher learning in school settings. In recent years, increased attention has been directed to the role the coach plays in supporting the teacher as a continuing learner and problem solver (Rogers & Rogers, 2007). Coaching activities “range from activities that help teachers develop or increase their knowledge about a specific issue to activities that focus on implementation issues” (Morrow, 2004, p. 2). Activities fall into three generic categories of teachers’ needs: (1) resource, allocation such as, locating and distributing materials and presenting theory on literacy practice, (2) problem-solving, allocation such as, analyzing student work and co-planning lessons, and (3) observation, allocation such as, co-teaching lessons and observing students and teacher in the classroom.

Besides conducting an array of activities intended to support teacher learning, coaches also use language known as feedback to support learning (Anderson, 1998; Ashford & Cummings, 1983). Research attention has been directed to the effectiveness of the type of language the coaches use. Garmston (1987) described three styles of feedback language: (1) meditative, feedback language that reflects what’s observable only, (2) technical, feedback language that reflects what’s observable and what’s missing, and (3) evaluative, feedback language that reflects the coach’s opinions and judgments.

These feedback styles have been redefined in more recent literature by terms such as mirror, collaborative, and expert, respectively (Diaz-Maggioli, 2003, 2004). With mirror feedback the coach works as a scribe to document observations of students and teacher. The goal is to use language to report as accurately as possible a description of the event from the notes. With collaborative feedback, the coach listens to the teacher and responds with reflective questions intended to help the teacher, and perhaps the coach, develop a deeper and richer understanding of an issue. With expert feedback, the coach uses language to report strengths and gaps in literacy teaching (Diaz-Maggioli, 2003). Regardless of the style used, feedback by coaches is intended, at the very least, to assist teachers in developing and applying new learning (Sweeney, 2003).

What We Need to Know More About

Given there is more than one model of professional development for teachers in school, the question then becomes which one to choose? Two questions to consider are: first, does the model support the teacher in applying new learning in the classroom in such a way as to promote children's literacy development, and second, and equally important, does the model support the teacher in developing learning strategies that would enable him/her to self-initiate and self-extend his/her professional growth and development beyond the parameters of the formal staff development experience? One source of information pertinent to both of these questions is the teachers themselves.

Because learning, most importantly teacher learning, is an active constructive process, the need for teachers themselves to have a voice in what is helpful in their professional development is paramount. However, in most settings teachers have been excluded from opportunities to assess the helpfulness of staff development (Anderson, 1998). Surveying teachers about their views on coaching activities and styles of feedback language used by coaches is one small step toward addressing this oversight in the literature.

Method

To learn about teachers' views, I designed a questionnaire. Specifically, the items on the questionnaire asked teachers to report on their experience with 12 coaching activities and three styles of feedback language used by literacy coaches. It also asked teachers to rate the helpfulness of the activities and feedback types, regardless of the extent of their prior experience.

For the purpose of this study, the term coaching relates to 12 activities that literacy coaches use to support teachers in school-based settings. The term feedback relates to three styles of coaching language: (1) mirror language, where the coach may use words like, "You did..." or "I noticed you tried..." or "I saw you do..." or "Your

students were...when you...”; (2) collaborative language, where the coach may use words like, “We could do...,” or “Let’s try together...,” or “How do you think it went?”, or “What would you like your students to do?”; and (3) expert language, where the coach may use words like, “You could do...,” or “Try doing this...,” or “Let me show you how to do...,” or “Try this...your students will do...”

Instrument

To survey teachers’ perspectives on literacy coaching activities and feedback styles, I developed the questionnaire over several years, revisiting repeatedly the content to refine questions and format based on feedback from teachers, colleagues, and other researchers.

During the first stage of development of the questionnaire, I identified what coaches do and say to support teachers. Step one, I conducted a comprehensive review of the literature and constructed tentative categories on literacy coaching approaches and feedback language. The categories included coaching approaches (resource, problem-solving, and observation) and styles of feedback language (mirror, collaborative, expert). Step two, based on the literature, I compiled a list of coaching activities, drawing particularly on the work of Bean (2004), Dorn (2001), Friend & Cook (2003), Garmston (1999), and Hargrove (2003). I sorted the corpus of activities into the three general coaching approaches listed in Table 2.1. Step three, I sorted the activities into two sets: (1) activities that were familiar to me, such as, coaches can present literacy information in a workshop format, and (2) activities that were not familiar, such as, the 2 + 2 model of peer feedback (Allen & LeBlanc, 2005) and video study groups (Tochon, 1999). Step four, I collaborated with two school-based literacy colleagues who took descriptions of the unfamiliar activities and tried them out in coaching sessions with teachers. Step five, I refined the original group of coaching activities into a list of activities that my colleagues and I found helpful to teachers. Step six, I shared this list of activities with 33 school-based literacy coaches, who in turn, further refined the list based on their work with teachers.

Table 2.1

Summary of Steps to Develop Questionnaire Based on Activities from the Literature

Process of refinement	Coaching Approaches		
	<p>Coaching ~resource Supporting teachers with all-purpose literacy activities</p>	<p>Coaching ~problem-solving Supporting teachers with areas of specific needs</p>	<p>Coaching ~observation Supporting teachers with observation and feedback</p>
<p>steps 1-3 List of coaching activities from review of the literature</p>	<p>Literacy Workshops Share resource materials Teachers as Readers</p>	<p>Demonstration lessons Study groups Co-teach lessons Co-plan lessons Analyze student work Colleague conversations around literacy issues</p>	<p>The studio video study group classroom observations 2+2 Performance Appraisal model Peer coaching Team</p>
<p>Steps 4-5 Two school-based literacy coaches tried out unfamiliar activities with teachers, then collaborated with me to refine the list</p>		<p>Facilitate colleague visits Study groups were considered too broad of a topic Co-plan lessons was combined into co-teach lessons</p>	<p>Delete 2+2 Performance Appraisal model that was deemed not helpful by teachers and coaches. Refined the studio video study to a generic video study of classroom instruction Provide feedback based on observation replaced the terms classroom observations and peer coaching teams</p>
<p>Steps 6 Shared list of activities with 33 school-based literacy coaches who collaborated with me to refine the list based on their experiences</p>	<p>E Expand sharing resource materials to support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students • Teachers Teachers as Readers was reworded to facilitate professional book club Reword literacy workshop to present literacy information in a workshop format</p>	<p>Colleague conversations around literacy issues refined to facilitate problem solving on literacy issues Demonstration lessons refined to modeling lessons Facilitate colleague visits</p>	<p>Expand provide feedback based on observation to include both: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student • teacher Reword study of classroom instruction to facilitate discussion of video lessons</p>

At the end of stage one, two issues had emerged and influenced the development of the questionnaire. The first issue was that some of the descriptions of some activities did not reflect the coach's role, so they needed to be reworded, for example, adding the word "facilitate" to the coaching activity analysis of student work, in order to reflect the coach's role in the activity. And the second issue was a limited amount of examples of specific coaching feedback language in the literature, so I needed to survey coaches in the field to identify examples of feedback language. I address both of these issues during stage two of the development process. In stage two, to address both the issue of coaching activity descriptors and example of specific feedback language, I sought input from school-based coaches and teachers. First I asked two subgroups of school-based coaches (10-12 coaches in each group) currently working as literacy coaches in their schools (with no less than two hours per week scheduled to coach in classroom settings) to meet in a study group format to document examples of feedback language from their experiences that fit the category definitions extrapolated from the literature. Next to gain insight into teachers' thoughts about the content of this preliminary work by coaches, I presented this information to a group of four primary classroom teachers (1 kindergarten, 2 first grade, and 1 second grade) working in a study group format. They all had over two years experience working with a literacy coach. I asked them to share their perspectives on the examples of feedback language constructed by the coaches and any other feedback language they had experienced.

I used the content and suggestions from both of these groups (coaches and teachers) to inform my decisions as I constructed the examples for the categories of feedback language that would appear on the questionnaire. I combined teachers and coaches examples of feedback language that were similar in nature into common phrases and matched them to each category. Here is one example of how a few word changes altered the nature of the feedback language to define differences between the categories: "we could do..." (collaborative), "You could do..." (expert), and "You did..." (mirror).

During the third and final stage of development of the questionnaire, I constructed questions and inserted a five point Likert scale to survey teachers' perspectives on their experience with and the actual or assumed helpfulness of: (1) coaching activities and (2) types of feedback language. Teachers were asked to respond to these items with a Likert scale ranging from 0 (never/ not at all/ none) to 4 (often/very much/ a lot). Two additional sections were added: (1) to document the teacher-coach relationship, and (2) to obtain demographic data. Finally, I piloted the questionnaire with 10 classroom teachers in a K-5 school setting. Feedback provided from this group confirmed that the questionnaire was teacher friendly, easy to understand, and took approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

Participants

I asked the 30 school-based literacy coaches I worked with to assist in the study by distributing questionnaires (Appendix B) to teachers with whom they had coached in suburban K-5 elementary public schools. These schools are located in one suburban school division in the southeast United States. To protect respondents' anonymity, teachers who completed the questionnaires returned them anonymously via a collection box or a designated area.

Completed questionnaires were returned by 194 teachers out of the 250 distributed to the coaches. Of those teachers, 187(96.4 %) were female. Teachers taught a range of grade levels, with 67% of the teachers teaching grades kindergarten through second, and 29% in grades third through fifth. Teachers had a wide-span of experience. Over one third reported three or less years (38.1%), another third 8-20 years (32%), and 11 teachers reported over 21 years experience. All teachers reported having completed a bachelors degree, over a third reported receiving a masters degree (35.6%), and a few (6.7%) reported a masters plus 30 credit hours.

Results

Teachers' Relationship to Literacy Coach

To establish a frame of reference for completing the questionnaire, each teacher was asked to complete the questionnaire while thinking of someone who had worked with him/her in a role of a literacy coach. If a teacher had experience with more than one coach, s/he was asked to think of the person who was the best.

Teachers reported a range of experiences with literacy coaches. Almost half of the 194 teachers in the study reported having worked with two or more coaches (44.8%), and most of the others had worked with only one coach (44.8%). Very few (3.6%) had never worked with a literacy coach. Most teachers (81.4%) were currently working with a literacy coach, while several had not worked with a coach in over a year (6.7%) or longer (11.2%). More than two in three teachers (67.5%) had worked a year or less with a coach, while about one in four teachers (26.8%) worked with a coach from two to five years. A few of the teachers (5.2%) had worked with a coach for over five years. Some teachers (18.6%) initiated the teacher-coach relationship. However, more often coaches (33%) or administrators (27.8%) initiated the first session with teachers. When asked to assess the friendliness of the relationship, almost three quarters of the teachers (72.7%) rated it friendly, while a very few (4.6%) rated it contentious. Findings from the data indicate that teachers had a wide array of experiences with literacy coaches.

Experience with and Helpfulness of Coaching Activities

Teachers both experienced and rated helpful a range of coaching activities. As shown in Table 2.2, two coaching activities were experienced frequently by over 80% of the teachers and perceived to be very helpful in improving instructional practice by over

Table 2.2

Number and Percent of Teachers Who Selected High Ratings for Experience with and Helpfulness of 12 Coaching Activities (N = 194)

Coaching Activity	Experience ^a		Helpfulness ^a	
	N	%	N	%
Share resource materials to support student learning	162	83.5	182	93.8
Share resource materials to support teacher learning	160	82.5	180	92.8
Facilitate problem solving	125	64.4	171	88.1
Facilitate analysis of student work	125	64.4	169	87.1
Provide feedback based on observation of student	122	62.9	171	88.1
Model lessons	111	57.2	170	87.6
Provide feedback based on observation of teacher	98	50.5	158	81.4
Facilitate professional book club	94	48.5	103	53.1
Present literacy information in a workshop format	86	44.3	137	70.6
Co-teach lessons	80	41.2	152	78.4
Facilitate colleague visits	75	38.7	124	63.9
Facilitate discussion of video lessons	65	33.5	96	49.5

^aPercentages reflect ratings of 3 and 4 on a scale of 0-4 with 0 being none and 4 being a lot

90%. Both involved sharing resources materials (1) to support student learning, and (2) to support teacher learning.

Five coaching activities were experienced frequently by between half to almost two-thirds of the teachers, but viewed as very helpful by 81% to 88% of the teachers. These related to a coach facilitating (1) problem solving and (2) analyzing of student work, providing feedback based on (3) observations of students and of the (4) teacher, and (5) modeling lessons.

The remaining five coaching activities were experienced frequently by only one-third to less than a half of the teachers. However, even these activities were deemed as either having been or likely to be very helpful by half or more of the teachers. Co-teaching lessons was rated as very helpful by 78% of the teachers and presenting literacy information in a workshop format was so rated by 71%.

As might be expected, there appears to be a pattern, with greater experience for an activity being somewhat associated with more ratings of helpfulness. However, it is interesting that, in all cases, a higher number of teachers rated each coaching activity as having been or likely to be very helpful than the number who had experience with it.

Findings indicate that there is a relationship between teachers' experiences with coaching activities and teachers' perspectives on helpfulness of coaching activities to improve instructional practice. Based on results, not included in Table 2.2, the relationship between teachers' experiences with and helpfulness of coaching activities was statistically significant for each of the 12 activities ($df = 4, p < .001$) based on cross tabulations and chi-squares (Table C1 in Appendix C). In other words, simply put, the pattern of responses reflected my expectation that the more teachers experienced an activity the more they would perceive it helpful. Findings from several different data views (frequency, cross tabulations, and chi square) indicate that overall teachers, regardless of experience, rated activities mostly as helpful. And most interesting is teachers with a lot of experience with coaching activities rated them as very helpful. For example, regardless of experience over 82% of all the teachers rated coaching activities with some degree of helpfulness. Also based on cross tabulations, of those teachers with a lot of experience, almost all (95%-99%) rated all but two activities very helpful.

Interestingly, even the two activities rated least helpful out of the group of 12, were still rated as very helpful by a large number of teachers who had frequently experienced them, as shown in the following:

- 83% of the 93 teachers, who had frequent experience with their coach facilitating a professional book club, rated it very helpful.
- 89% of the 65 teachers, who had frequent experience with a coach facilitating discussion of video lessons, rated it very helpful.

Co-teaching lessons with a coach were experienced frequently by less than half of the teachers (42%), yet 99% of those teachers rated it as very helpful. Also, well under half of the teachers (40%) had experience with their coach frequently facilitating colleague visits, yet like co-teaching lessons, those teachers overwhelmingly rated it as very helpful (95%). Overall teachers consistently characterized frequent experiences with their coach co-teaching lessons as very helpful and discussion of video lessons as least helpful among the twelve activities.

Experience with and Helpfulness of Coach's Feedback Language

All three styles of feedback language used by literacy coaches were experienced frequently by a majority of the teachers, as shown in Table 2.3. Almost three-quarters of the teachers reported frequent experiences with their coach using collaborative feedback language and two-thirds reported frequent experience with expert feedback. Also mirror feedback language was reported to be experienced often by 62% of the teachers.

All three styles of feedback language were rated as having been or likely to be very helpful by a majority of the teachers. Almost 90% of the teachers rated their coach using collaborative feedback language as having been or likely to be very helpful to support implementation of practice. And there appears to be a pattern, in all language cases, that a higher number of teachers rated each style of feedback as having been or

Table 2.3

Number and Percent of Teachers Who Selected High Ratings for Experience with and Helpfulness of Three Types of Coaching Feedback Language (N=194)

Feedback Language What it might sound like	Experience ^a		Helpfulness ^a	
	N	%	N	%
Collaborative “We could do...” “Let’s try together...” “How do you think it went...?” “What would you like your students to do...?”	140	72.2	173	89.2
Expert “You could do...” “Try doing this...” “Let me show you how to do ...” “Try this... your students will do...”	129	66.5	144	74.2
Mirror “You did...” “I noticed you tried...” “I saw you do...” “Your students were...when you did...”	121	62.4	157	80.9

^a Percentages reflect ratings of 3 and 4 on a scale of 0-4 with 0 being none and 4 being a lot

likely to be very helpful than the number who had frequent experience with a coach using such language forms.

Findings from this study indicate there is a relationship between teachers' experiences with a style of coaching feedback language and helpfulness of that language to improve instructional practice. Based on results, not included in table 3.4, findings indicate that the relationship between teachers experiences with and helpfulness of feedback language was statistically significant for each of the three styles ($df = 4, p < .001$) based on cross tabulations and chi squares (Table C2 in Appendix C). Almost all the teachers with frequent experience with feedback language tended to rate it as very helpful. This was true for all three styles of feedback based on cross tabulations (94%-96%).

However, this pattern of most teachers rating all feedback styles as very helpful changed dramatically for teachers with little to no experience. Findings indicate that:

- While 23 teachers had little to no experience with their coach using collaborative styles of feedback language, 83 % of them rated it was or would be very helpful. This was a slight drop in teachers' perceived helpfulness when compared with the 96% of teachers with frequent experience who deemed it very helpful.
- While 36 teachers had little to no experience with their coach using mirror styles of feedback language, only 61 % of them rated it would be very helpful. This is a large drop in teachers' perceived helpfulness when compared with 95% of teachers with frequent experience who deemed it very helpful.
- While 33 teachers had little to no experience with their coach using expert styles of feedback language, only 33 % of them rated it would be very helpful. This was a dramatic drop in teachers' perceived helpfulness when compared with 94% of teachers with frequent experience who deemed it very helpful.

While the number of teachers is small, it is still an interesting change in the pattern of perceived helpfulness between teachers with a lot of experience and those with little to none.

Additional Comments from Questionnaire

Teachers were asked, at the end of the questionnaire, to write any additional comments they had about literacy coaching. Thirty-two teachers (16% of the respondents) wrote comments as shown in Appendix D. Generally comments fell into three categories: (1) generic statements about a teacher's coach or coaching experience, (2) generic statements about lack of experience or interest in more opportunities to work with a coach, and (3) specific statements that elaborated on specific coaching activities or feedback. Many teachers' comments reflected generic positive statements about experience with a literacy coach. For example, teachers wrote, "Working as a team is always beneficial", or "I see results in children that have experienced literacy coach and me working together. Collaboration is the key. We learn best from our peers, just like the kids". A few teachers wrote comments that reflected their lack of experience with coaching; for example, one teacher wrote, "K [kindergarten] teachers in my building had little interactions with reading coach." Also, several teachers' comments elaborated further on one or more of the coaching activities or feedback; as exemplified by the following two comments: "My reading specialist was very helpful. She modeled running records and provided resources". Another wrote, "Our literacy coaches are very helpful...they provide great feedback and resources." Overall teacher comments reflected positive thoughts on helpfulness of literacy coaching.

Discussion

In this discussion, there are three focal points: (1) what was learned about teachers' perceptions of literacy coaching, (2) how this learning relates to the literature, and (3) implications for future research.

Teachers' Perceptions of Literacy Coaching

Overall teachers perceived most coaching activities helpful regardless of experience. However, the more experience a teacher had with coaching activity the more likely the teacher was to report it as very helpful. It is important to note, that there was a strong tendency for teachers, even those reporting little or no experience, to rate activities as helpful or potentially helpful. Also over 95% of the teachers with frequent experience with coaching activities found them to be very helpful; with two exceptions, a coach facilitating professional book clubs and discussion of video lessons.

Three coaching activities-sharing resource materials, co-teaching lessons, and facilitating colleague visits- were so similar with very high ratings by teachers on helpfulness to improve practice. Yet, unfortunately, they were so different in the number of teachers who had frequently experienced each activity. Most teachers had experienced their coach offering opportunities to support their learning by sharing resource materials. In contrast, almost half had little or no experience co-teaching lessons, the activity that 99% of the teachers with frequent experience perceived as the most helpful to improve their instruction. Teachers wrote additional comments on their questionnaire stating the value of on-going opportunities for collaborative work between coach and teacher, and specifically, the need for more co-teaching. Also, a coach facilitating colleague visits, while not experienced by most teachers, was thought to be very helpful by 95% of the teachers who had experienced it a lot. Interestingly, a higher number of teachers perceived co-teaching lessons and colleague visits as having been or likely to be very helpful than the number who had experience with it.

Collaborative feedback was perceived by teachers as the most helpful style of language used by their coaches regardless of their experience. Overall teachers who had frequent experiences with their coach using any of the three styles of feedback language perceived them to be very helpful. In contrast, teachers with limited experience with their coach using feedback language tended to perceive collaborative feedback as having been or likely to be more helpful compared to others.

Overall teachers' written comments on their questionnaires supported the helpfulness of on-going coaching activities and collaborative feedback language. For example, a primary teacher, with several years experience working with a literacy coach, wrote this comment:

You caught me at a good time...I think I finally have a fabulous "literacy coach" so I'm becoming more & more excited about "literacy"! My current "literacy coach" has guided me through the process of teaching reading in such a way that I feel very confident about my teaching. She meets with me on @ least a weekly basis, discusses how reading is going, we decide together where to go next. She also supports other teachers on my team & ESOL teacher in the same way. She also comes in and models lessons when introducing a new strategy, etc. These things have been extremely helpful and very different than what I've experienced in the past!
(questionnaire # 191)

A few written comments suggested that teachers had little to no experience working with a literacy coach but would like the opportunity. As reflected in the following teacher's comment:

I have never had a literacy coach in my entire 29 years of teaching. That saddened me greatly. I would have loved to have someone help me, guide me and mentor me through my early years. Gosh, I'd love it now!! I'm an upper grade teacher and many believe "we" (in the upper grades) don't need the support as in the lower grades. HOGWASH!! Help us to help our young ones!

Teachers' comments repeatedly expressed their positive thoughts on the helpfulness of coaching activities and feedback. And just as importantly, teachers' comments expressed a need for and the value of opportunities to work with a literacy coach.

The Study and the Literature

There are several points of convergence between findings from this study and the literature. For example, like conditions of effective professional learning found in the literature:

- Teachers perceived most coaching activities that provided opportunities for on-going collaboration as likely to be or having been helpful. Overall, similar to the literature, activities collaborative in nature, such as, co-teaching lessons with a coach and a coach facilitating colleague visits, were perceived by teachers as helpful.
- Teachers perceived all styles of feedback language used by coaches as helpful. The value of on-going feedback, similar to the literature, was reflected by teachers in their ratings of helpfulness. For example, expert feedback language was perceived as very helpful by most teachers when experienced frequently and not as helpful by teachers when experienced very little to not at all.

As would be expected from the literature, teachers perceived coaching activities that were on-going and occurred in classroom environments through practice with feedback as helpful. For example again, both co-teaching lessons and colleague visits, activities that typically occur in classrooms, were perceived as very helpful by teachers who had frequent experiences. The nature of co-teaching lessons and colleague visits also foster opportunities for teachers to take ownership and to actively construct knowledge, as purported in the literature. Most coaching activities were perceived as very helpful when teachers had opportunities to experience them frequently, one of the conditions of effective professional learning stated in the literature.

However, there are several points of divergence with findings from this study and the literature. For example, unlike conditions of effective professional learning found in the literature:

- Literacy coaches facilitating professional book clubs and discussing video lessons were perceived by many teachers who experienced them frequently as least helpful. Both activities tend to have conditions of learning that are collaborative in nature and on-going, principles of teacher learning found in the literature to be effective. Yet teachers perceived these coaching activities as less helpful compared to other activities to implement instructional practice.

- Literacy coaches sharing resource materials to support teacher and student learning were perceived by teachers as very helpful by most teachers. Yet, the nature of these activities tends to not foster opportunities for on-going collaboration and usually occurs outside classroom settings with little if any feedback. Again this finding is inconsistent with the principles found in the relevant literature.

Also there is inconsistency between teachers' views and the literature in regards to helpfulness of *on-going* feedback language to improve practice. For example, with expert feedback teachers' perceptions tended to align with the literature, in that teacher with on-going experiences perceived expert feedback as *very helpful* and teachers with little to no experience perceived it *least helpful*. In contrast, different from the literature that states on-going feedback matters; collaborative feedback, regardless of on-going experiences or not, was perceived by teachers as being or would be most helpful. While there are certain aspects of this study that are inconsistent with the literature on principles of effective teacher learning, most of the findings from this study on teacher perspectives align with the literature on principles of effective professional development.

Implications for Future Research

Teachers' thoughts on coaching activities and feedback language are informative, yet, more studies are needed. The majority of the teachers in this study perceive working with a coach as helpful. However, my research was limited in exploring the nature of helpfulness. Future studies will be needed to explore further and dig deeper into teachers' thoughts on helpfulness of coaching activities. Future studies such as:

- Distributing my questionnaire to a larger pool of teachers to collect more data on teachers' perspectives.
- Examining more deeply the nature of helpfulness of coaching activities through qualitative focus group interviewing. For example, do teachers

perceive their coach co-teaching a lesson as helpful to: (1) active construction of knowledge, (2) experience new learning with practice and feedback, (3) collaborate on new learning, or (4) apply new learning to teaching repertoire?

- Examining more deeply the nature of helpfulness of coaching activities through qualitative in-depth interviewing of teachers. For example, showing teachers video episodes of coach and teacher interactions and asking teachers why it would be helpful or not to improve instructional practice?

All these areas are fascinating and worthy of serious reflection but lie beyond the scope of this research study.

Teachers' perceived feedback from their literacy coaches as helpful and further research is needed to examine if any one style of feedback is deemed more helpful to learning conceptual knowledge and/or procedural knowledge. Continued exploration in ways such as:

- Examining teachers' perspectives through qualitative in-dept interviewing of teachers in a clinical setting, as they observe behind a one-way glass, a coach and teacher interaction using different styles of feedback language.
- Examining the nature of helpfulness of coaching styles of feedback through qualitative focus group interviewing of teachers with a range of experience with a coach using feedback language, including asking teachers with little to no experience or frequent experiences "why" they perceive feedback helpful or not.

Continued exploration of teachers' thoughts on helpful feedback language to foster professional learning remains an important goal for research.

Venue for Publication

This manuscript will be submitted to editors at *The Journal of Teacher Education*. Manuscript guidelines for *The Journal of Teacher Education* have restrictions on the number of words that may be included in manuscript submissions. Due to this restriction additional data are included in Appendix E and Appendix F. Appendix E includes figures illustrating the percent of teachers' responses on the questionnaire to the extent that their coach offered each of the 12 coaching activities (experiences with activities), from not at all to a lot. Appendix F includes figures illustrating the percent of teachers' responses on the questionnaire to how helpful each activity was or would likely to be, from not at all to very much. Also Appendix G and Appendix H include figures illustrating teachers' responses to similar statements as above (experiences with and helpfulness of) but in relation to the three styles of feedback language.

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MANUSCRIPT THREE

Teachers' Perspectives on Literacy Coaching Approaches and Style of Feedback Language: Investigating the Nature of Helpfulness

Abstract

This study is a follow-up and deeper inquiry to a prior study on teachers' perceptions of literacy coaching activities and feedback styles. It is a continued exploration of teachers' perspectives on the nature of helpfulness of coaching activities and styles of feedback language used by literacy school-based coaches. In particular this study was an inquiry to better understand the relationship between helpfulness and types of knowledge development and the relationship between helpfulness and teachers' development of a self-extending system for learning. The data collection tool for this study was a video taped focus group session with five teachers from a suburban elementary public school. The findings from this research indicate that teachers view literacy coaching activities, especially co-teaching and visiting colleagues, most helpful to construct conceptual and procedural knowledge when they include opportunities for on-going collaboration, teacher autonomy, active construction of knowledge, and when they occur in classroom environments with practice and feedback.

The literature is rich with information about teacher learning, specifically school-based professional learning. Views from psychologists, such as cognitivists and developmentalists (Borko & Putnam, 1996; Clay, 2004), and views from scholars and educators (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Knowles, 1980), have influenced opportunities for teacher learning. Regardless of the perspective, four principles of effective support recur in the literature. They are: (1) opportunities for teachers to have on-going collaboration, (2) opportunities for teacher autonomy, (3) opportunities for teachers to actively construct their own knowledge, and (4) opportunities for teachers to experience

practice with feedback within classroom environments (Ball, 1996; Borko & Putnam, 1996; Gusky & Huberman, 1995; Hawley & Valli, 1999; Lieberman, 2008; Little, 1993). Researchers typically find these four also apply to effective professional development opportunities fostered by school-based coaches (Anderson, 1994; Joyce & Showers, 2002), especially literacy coaches (Puig & Froelich, 2007; Rodgers & Rodgers, 2007).

Learning opportunities for teachers are typically fostered through coaching activities and different styles of feedback language. Coaching activities can be sorted into three generic areas of support for teachers (Bean, 2004). They are: (1) resource activities, for example, coach sharing resource materials to support teacher and student learning; (2) problem solving activities, for example, coach analyzing student work with teacher; (3) observation activities, for example, coach co-teaching lessons with teacher. Coaches typically use three categories of feedback language to foster learning opportunities for teachers (Carr, Herman, & Harris, 2005). They are: (1) mirror style of feedback language, for example, “I noticed you tried...”, (2) collaborative style of feedback language, for example, “Let’s try together...”, and (3) expert style of feedback language, for example, “Try doing this...” School-based literacy coaches are encouraged to foster opportunities for teacher learning by connecting the principles of effective professional development into their coaching activities and feedback language (Birman, Desimone, Porter, & Garet, 2000; Blachowicz, Obrochta, & Fogelberg, 2005; Casey, 2006).

Findings from a study on teachers’ perspectives on the helpfulness of coaching activities on teacher learning indicated that a majority of the teachers perceived 12 typical activities used by coaches to be helpful for improving instructional practice (see Manuscript Two). Teachers with frequent experiences perceived all except two activities (facilitating professional book club and discussion of video lessons) as very helpful to improve practice. The more experience teachers had with a coaching activity, the more they tended to rate it as helpful. It is interesting that, in all cases, even teachers who had little to no experience with a coaching activity rated it as likely to be helpful.

Results from the same study showed that a majority of the teachers rated all three styles of feedback language used by literacy coaches as helpful. Teachers who

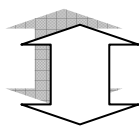
had experienced all three language styles frequently perceived them as very helpful to improve practice. Teachers with little to no experience rated collaborative feedback as more helpful than either mirror or expert feedback languages to improve their practice.

Teachers' perceptions of helpfulness of coaching activities and feedback language are informative; yet, still needed is an exploration of how these coaching activities and styles of feedback language contribute to teachers' knowledge development. In teacher learning there are two types of professional knowledge to consider: (1) conceptual knowledge, such as, theories and understandings from learning, and (2) procedural knowledge, such as doing and applying learning (Fowler & Arcangelo, 1999). Teachers need opportunities to construct both knowledge types, yet different coaching activities and feedback language may foster different opportunities for learning (Diaz-Maggioli, 2004). In order to examine teacher's views on how activities and interviewed a focus group of teachers. feedback language are helpful in building conceptual and procedural knowledge, I

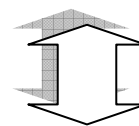
Theoretical Framework

I developed a literature-based theoretical framework, in order to help focus on the interconnections of both coaching activities and feedback language with principles of effective professional development that foster opportunities for teacher learning. In other words when activities and principles for professional development align what teacher learning can be fostered, if any? And is the same true for feedback language? Figure 3.1 provides this framework, along with the elements considered in each component. Each component is described below.

A1. Coaching activities	A2. Styles of Feedback Language
<p>Resource Share material to support teacher learning Share materials to support student learning Facilitate Professional book club Facilitate workshop</p>	<p>Mirror Feedback Language “You did...” “I noticed you tried...” “I saw you do...” “Your students were...when you did...”</p>
<p>Problem-solving Analysis of student work Facilitate problem solving of literacy issues Modeling Facilitate Video discussion</p>	<p>Collaborative Feedback Language “We could do...” “Let’s try together...” “How do you think it went...?” “What would you like your students to do...?”</p>
<p>Observation Co-teach lesson Facilitate Colleague visits Provide feedback based on observation of student Provide feedback based on observation of teacher</p>	<p>Expert Feedback Language You could do...” “Try doing this...” “Let me show you how to do ...” “Try this... your students will do</p>



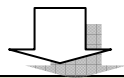
Interconnect with



B. Principles of Effective School-based Professional Development

1. On-going teacher interactions with colleagues
2. Teacher Autonomy
3. Teachers learn from actively constructing their knowledge
4. Teacher learning occurs in classroom environment with practice and feedback

To foster opportunities for teachers learning



C. Two Types of Professional knowledge

- Conceptual knowledge
- Procedural knowledge

Figure 3.1

Theoretical framework: The interconnectedness of coaching activities and styles of feedback on teacher knowledge development

Coaching Activities

Coaching as a support structure for teachers, in particular school-based literacy coaching, “offers great promise” (Casey, 2006, p. 1) for fostering teacher learning (Dorn & Soffos, 2001; Rodgers & Rodgers, 2007). For this study, a school-based literacy coach is defined as a colleague, working to support the learning needs of teachers in a school (Diaz-Maggioli, 2004). The coach offers opportunities to help teachers to construct new understandings and apply new practices (Bean, 2004; Burkins, 2007; Rodgers & Rodgers, 2007; Toll, 2005; Vogt & Shearer, 2003). Literacy coaches support teachers by offering a range of activities to foster opportunities for teacher learning. Coaching activities “range from activities that help teachers develop or increase their knowledge about a specific issue to activities that focus on implementation issues” (Morrow, 2004, p. 2). Activities fall into three generic categories of teachers’ needs (Bean, 2004): Figure 4.1 identifies these categories and provides examples. Taken together these 12 activities represent typical activities coaches use when working with teachers (Bean, 2004).

Styles of Feedback Language

Coaches typically provide a range of feedback language to teachers, as they orchestrate on-going conversations around student learning (Duncan, 2006; Parsloe & Wray, 2000; Poglinco & Bach, 2004; Puig & Froelich, 2007). Coaching feedback is defined as language used by a coach to help teachers reflect, inquire, and construct meaningful knowledge about literacy instructional practices (Diaz-Maggioli, 2004; Garmston, 1997). Feedback is essential for teacher learning; according to Knowles (2005) it “confirms correct knowledge and corrects faulty learning” (p. 75). Feedback language is intended to create opportunities for teachers to bring to light perceptions, values, beliefs, information, and assumptions about literacy teaching in order to

examine, reconsider, and when appropriate, restructure their knowledge (Friend & Cook, 2003; Little, 1990).

Feedback language that literacy coaches are encouraged to use has been sorted into three broad categories: mirror, collaborative, and expert (Carr et al., 2005). With mirror language, a coach tells a teacher what s/he did or said to provide the teacher with feedback to encourage reflective learning. With collaborative language, a coach and teacher share collectively their thoughts, to foster conversations to inquire about practice and generate ideas together. With expert language, a coach tells a teacher what s/he needs to do, to grasp new understandings and apply practices. Examples of each type of language are given in Figure 3.1. Coaches are encouraged to use different feedback language as they help teachers to reflect upon, construct meaning from new information, and to create actions consistent with their new understandings (Bean, 2004).

Principles of Effective Professional Development

Different theorists express different views in different ways or with different examples on opportunities for teacher learning (Ball & Cohen, 1996; Borko & Putnam, 1996; Darling-Hammond & Sykes, 1999; Little, 1990). Yet, most will agree on some common principles (shown in Figure 4.1) that are requisites for effective professional learning (Abdal-Haqq, 1995). For this study the term effective means not only efforts that successfully support teachers' development of conceptual and procedural knowledge consistent with best practices, but also and most importantly, effective means efforts for teachers to develop a self-extending system of professional learning that allows the teachers to constantly question, test, and reconsider his or her own practices with students. In other words, professional development efforts can be effective in fostering teacher learning by: (1) teaching teachers best practices, (2) teaching teachers to be interested by seeking meaningful purpose for learning the new practice, (3) teaching teachers self efficacy by taking ownership of their new learning of the new practice, and (4) teaching teachers to be strategic so they can extend their

learning beyond the new practice through work with their own students (Duckworth, 2006). The daily work of teachers teaching students is rich with opportunities for effective professional development (Dorn & Soffos, 2001; Taylor, Pearson, Clark, & Walpole, 2002). This is exemplified in Hawley and Valli's (1999) words; "professional development should be primarily school-based and integral to school operations" (p. 140). In the following sections, I present each principle and the literature that supports it, as a point of departure for examining teachers' perspectives later in the discussion.

Principle 1: Opportunities for on-going teacher collaboration. Teachers' collaboration matters in professional development of teachers. Collaboration is defined as collegial actions between teachers with the intention to socially construct knowledge (Barth, 1990; Little, 1990; Rodgers & Rodgers, 2007). An image of teacher collaboration in school-based professional development would include teachers learning in partnerships, problem-solving issues collectively, and pooling resources to support teacher and student learning. A familiar picture in schools that support teacher collaboration would be teachers engaged in purposeful conversations, meeting frequently, on issues they deem meaningful in relation to student achievement. "Adults learn best in situations where they can share and learn from other adults" (Diaz-Maggioli, 2003, p. 3). Little (1990) believes that in settings of teacher learning "something is gained when teachers work together and something is lost when they do not" (p. 492).

Often teachers return from professional development sessions excited about new information they have gained. However, with few opportunities to share, discuss, and refine learning, the excitement typically becomes mute. Teachers need follow-up opportunities after professional development sessions to share and problem-solve with colleagues on issues that emerge from new learning (Ball, 1996; Gusky & Huberman, 1995; Taylor et al., 2002). Hawley and Valli (1999) state that a school that fosters teacher learning will be one that...provides educators opportunities to learn collaboratively" (p. 131). Many opportunities to collaborate on learning are needed by teachers to sustain learning beyond the professional development setting (Abdal-Haqq,

1995). Based on the literature, without on-going opportunities for teachers to share, problem-solve, and learn collectively, it is difficult for new learning to reach instructional practice with students (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

Principle 2: Opportunities for teacher autonomy. Teachers' autonomy matters in professional development of teachers. Autonomy is best defined by teachers "taking control of the goals and purposes of learning and assuming ownership of learning" (Knowles et al., 2005, p. 186). An image of teacher autonomy in school-based professional development would include teachers, in shared decision making roles with administrators, deciding what to learn and how to learn new instructional information. A familiar picture in schools that supports teacher autonomy in professional learning would be teachers constructing their own learning goals based on student and curriculum needs and, most importantly, having choice in how to best meet those goals. Teachers need to know that they are valued, respected, and are essential to their own learning and professional growth (Lieberman, 1995). "Emphasizing the wisdom teachers can bring to the task can be a powerful motivator for engagement in teacher development initiatives" (Diaz-Maggioli, 2003, p. 3). So often in schools the curriculum drives professional development with very little attention to the learning needs of teachers. In professional learning of teachers, there needs to be balance between the interest and needs of teachers and curriculum driven needs of a school (Little, 1993). Teachers need to be the owner of their learning and play a significant role in its development.

Principle 3: Opportunities for teachers to actively construct their own knowledge. Teachers' active construction of knowledge matters in professional development of teachers. Active construction of knowledge is defined as a state of purposeful inquiry, engagement, and reflection by teachers as they continuously engage in their professional development (Darling-Hammond, 2006). An image of teachers actively constructing their own knowledge in school-based professional development would include teachers frequently asking questions, seeking answers, formulating

explanations, and acting upon possible solution to issues surrounding students' learning. A familiar picture would include teachers observing a demonstration lesson they requested; they would be asking clarifying questions, brainstorming ideas on implementation, trying out new learning with their students, and reflecting and sharing with colleagues. "Cognitive theorists tell us that learning occurs not by recording information but by interpreting it" (Resnick, 1989, p. 2). Learning outcomes result from an active and constructive process of reflecting, problem solving, and seeking resolutions to inquiries (Borko & Putnam, 1996). Little (1993) observed exemplar models of teacher learning where teachers were involved in the "construction and not mere consumption" (p.135) of knowledge. All new knowledge is reconstructed or eliminated after shifting through a teacher's preexisting knowledge base and beliefs (Gusky & Huberman, 1995). Opportunities for teachers to actively construct mental inquires that lead to reflection on their practice, and if necessary, modification of their instruction, should be a central part of school-based professional learning.

Principle 4: Opportunities for teachers to experience practice with feedback within classroom environments. Teachers' learning in classroom environments through practice with feedback matters in professional development of teachers. Practice with feedback is defined as a state of teacher learning in a classroom setting whereupon the teacher initiates and seeks feedback from colleagues on classroom practices (Hammerness, Darling-Hammond, & Bransford, 2005). An image of teachers experiencing practice with feedback in school-based professional development would include teachers trying out, reflecting, refining, and inquiring further on new learning as a result of their immediate work with students and colleagues. A familiar picture would be teachers working in partnerships in a classroom setting with the intention of trying out new learning during the professional development session and then back in their own classroom. Teachers must have opportunities to learn in their practice and learn from their practice (Ball & Cohen, 1996). Teachers need opportunities to try out and practice new learning with the support of a coach in their classroom (Ball, 1996). Teachers need opportunities for feedback as they reflect, inquire, problem-solve, and

resolve issues “interwoven with the daily life of the classroom” (Little, 1993, p. 133). Darling-Hammond (1998) stated that teachers need learning opportunities:

“...that are more powerful than simply reading and talking about new pedagogical ideas. Teachers learn best by studying, doing, and reflecting; by collaborating with other teachers; by looking closely at students and their work; and by sharing what they see. This knowledge cannot occur in college classrooms divorced from practice or in school classrooms divorced from knowledge about how to interpret practice” (Darling-Hammond & Sykes, 1999, p. 8).

Diaz-Maggioli (2003) concurs that, “to be effective, professional development opportunities have to be rooted in practices that give adults the chance to reflect on what they do and then modify their actions, if they deem it necessary” (p. 3). “Much of what teachers need to know must be learned in context” (Ball & Cohen, 1996, p. 11) in classroom settings with feedback from colleagues. Smylie (1989) found from data analysis of over 1700 teacher surveys that “by far, teachers perceive direct experience in classrooms as their most effective source of learning” (p.545). And according to Ball (1996), “the most effective professional development model is thought to involve follow-up activities, usually in the form of long-term support, coaching in teachers’ classrooms, or on-going interactions with colleagues” (p. 501).

Types of Professional Knowledge

Teacher professional knowledge is complex and has been studied from different perspectives. However, simply put, it is an expertise, awareness, and comprehension of content that is acquired by experience or study (Gusky & Huberman, 1995; Holt, 2005; Lyons & Pinnell, 2001). In teacher development sessions, two generic types of knowledge may be gained: (1) conceptual knowledge, verbal understandings of pedagogy and (2) procedural knowledge, the doing or act of teaching of pedagogy (Dorn & Soffos, 2001; Fowler & Arcangelo, 1999; Rodgers & Rodgers, 2007). Teachers

need both conceptual and procedural knowledge as they develop their craft of teaching. Literacy coaches can offer opportunities to foster both types of knowledge for teachers. While the activities of literacy coaching with respect to two kinds of knowledge they develop are not mutually exclusive, some activities used by coaches tend to foster learning of conceptual knowledge by teachers, such as teachers:

- Building awareness of new information
- Breaking through preconceived theories
- Learning specific instructional language to better communicate
- Experiencing new information
- Forming opinions based on new information

And other activities used by the coaches tend to foster learning of procedural knowledge by teachers, such as teachers:

- Trying new learning out
- Problem-solving and collaborating as they try new learning
- Practicing new learning several times
- Valuing and adjusting prior beliefs through on-going practice
- Making new instructional practice part of teaching repertoire

A learning environment where teachers can construct both conceptual and procedural knowledge is needed for effective professional development (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Darling-Hammond, 2006).

Most importantly, coaching activities and styles of feedback language used by coaches, must not only foster teacher development with types of knowledge, but also foster opportunities for teachers to develop self-extending learning system for continued knowledge development. Self-extending learning systems are defined by teachers' ownership and active construction of their learning. Self-extending learning systems are evident in teachers actions by trying out, constructing, sustaining and extending learning over time. Clay's (2001) research exemplifies the importance of a self-extending system of learning for young children. It is equally important for adults. Teachers can develop

knowledge through didactic coach and teacher interactions; however, these interactions may inhibit teachers from constructing self-sustaining learning systems.

Yet, coach/teacher interactions that foster opportunities for teachers to actively construct new knowledge may foster self-extending systems of learning that allow him/her to continue to learn beyond initial formal experiences. Teacher/coach interactions that interconnect with principles of effective professional development generate learning outcomes for teachers that not only develop knowledge but develop and nurture a system for self-extending that knowledge (Rodgers & Rodgers, 2007).

The Study

I conducted this study in order to add to the aforementioned study (see Manuscript Two) where findings indicated teachers' perceive coaching activities and feedback language as helpful to improve instruction. The purpose of this study was to further explore teachers' perspectives on helpfulness of coaching activities and styles of feedback language, specifically, to understand how they are helpful to foster teachers' conceptual and procedural knowledge and help the teacher develop as a self-sustaining learner. Also I wanted to explore what principles of effective professional development were evident to teachers as helpful to foster their knowledge by talking to a select group of teachers to examine their perspectives: (1) on the manner in which various coaching activities contribute to their development of conceptual and procedural knowledge, (2) on the manner in which three styles of feedback language contribute to their development of conceptual and procedural knowledge, and (3) on how both coaching activities and styles of feedback language relate to development of self-extending systems of knowledge.

Method

To address these research questions, I met with a focus group (Morgan, 1993) of five elementary public school teachers (a kindergarten, a first, a third, and two 4th grade) to interview them on their views on literacy coaching. Specifically, they were asked about their views on helpfulness of 12 coaching activities and three styles of feedback language used by their school-based literacy coaches. For the purpose of this study, the term coaching activity relates to 12 activities that literacy coaches typically use to support teachers in school-based settings and the term feedback language relates to three styles of typical coaching language as shown in Figure 3.1. The teachers were specifically chosen for this focus group interview because they all had recent experience working with a school-based literacy coach. Most importantly, this focus group interview offered me the opportunity to probe into teachers' perspectives by asking reflective and clarifying questions based on teachers' discussion of literacy coaching (Morgan, 1998).

Summary of Focus Group Process: Step by Step

The focus group format for this study included ten general steps:

1. I invited a group of nine teachers to participate in a focus group discussion on literacy coaching; five teachers agreed to participate.
2. I audio and video-taped the focus group discussion for later data analysis.
3. I began the session by welcoming the teachers and explaining that the purpose of the session was to gather information on their thoughts about their work with their literacy coach as they learned about a new writing program.
4. I asked teachers to write down their thoughts to several opening questions.

5. I initiated and guided a discussion using opening, transition, focused, probing and ending questions around the topic of literacy coaching approaches and styles of feedback language. Periodically I made reference to two discussion charts that I had prepared. One chart listed coaching activities and the five descriptors for both conceptual and procedural knowledge. The second chart listed each style of feedback language as either set A, B, or C, with examples of typical language for each.
6. I asked teachers to complete individually a discussion chart by indicating their perspectives on coaching activities and styles of feedback language by placing a check mark in boxes that reflected their thoughts. Each teacher recorded using a different color pen.
7. I closed the session by thanking teachers for sharing their thoughts with me.
8. I transcribed the 60 minute audio tape.
9. I coded along with a school-based literacy coach, sections of the data collected on the audio and video tapes to establish inter-rater reliability.
10. I completed the coding of the data; analyzed the codes; identified patterns and summarized my findings.

Participants

The participants in the focus group included five classroom teachers teaching in a suburban elementary K-5 public school. In addition to on-going experience working with a school-based literacy coach, the teachers shared six noteworthy characteristics: (1) they were representative of the population of educators who completed the research questionnaire upon which this work is based, (2) there was one male and four females, (3) they varied in number of years teaching experience: three years to over 25 years experience, (4) they varied in grade level teaching experiences (a kindergarten, a first, a

third and two fourth grade teachers), (5) they were all participating in school-based professional development sessions to implement units of study in writing in their classrooms (three of the teachers had requested to be in the professional development and two were told they would be participating by their principal), and (6) they varied in teaching competency as assessed by their principal: very skilled in teaching writing to unskilled. Also, most importantly, members of the focus group reported to me prior to the interview that they had recent experience with all 12 coaching activities and three styles of feedback language; their recent experiences set the stage for deeper inquiry on helpfulness.

Focus Group Questions

To probe teachers' perspectives on helpfulness of coaching activities and feedback language I asked them to reflect on their work with their coaches (Krueger, 1998). Categories of questions I included were:

1. Opening questions to "establish a sense of community" (Krueger, 1998, p. 23) and common focus. I asked teachers to respond in writing to two questions, which would not be collected, but shared verbally with the group to begin the conversations. The questions were:
 - a. Can you describe your experiences with helpful activities used by your literacy coach that supported new understandings?
 - b. Can you describe activities that were helpful to support implementation and application of new learning into classroom practice?
2. Using two discussion charts, which listed 12 coaching activities and three styles of feedback language, I moved "the conversation" (Krueger, 1998, p. 25) to a deeper study of teachers' experiences with the following transition statement :

I want your feedback for a minute...I heard over and over again how this "collaborative nature" of working with colleagues helped

with implementation. I have three sets of feedback language that literacy coaches commonly use, this language is what our coaches in our district came up with and also we matched it with the literature. I'm going to read each set of feedback language to you and I want you to be thinking... do you find this set of language helpful and in what way or not. All right?

3. To probe teachers to share perspectives on specific coaching activities and feedback language, I asked focused questions, such as how were coaching activities and feedback language:
 - a. Helpfulness for facilitating new understandings?
 - b. Helpfulness for facilitating the application of new learning to practice?
4. To "allow participants to state their final position" (Krueger, 1998, p. 26) on coaching activities and styles of feedback language, I asked, which of the coaching activities had been most helpful in facilitating application of new understandings to their classroom practice?
5. To "elicit additional information" (Krueger, 1998, p. 45), I asked teachers through out the focus group discussion questions such as:
 - Go ahead (teacher's name) is there anything else?
 - What does it help you do?
 - What I'm hearing you say is...(repeat what was said)
 - What do the rest of you all think?
 - Do you agree?
 - Do the rest of you think that?
 - Did that help with your understandings or did it help with implementation in your classroom?
 - What do you think?

I encouraged teachers to discuss and raise other issues as the conversation moved in different directions and as new ideas emerged.

It should be noted that I did not explicitly ask teachers to discuss their views on principles of effective professional development or on the aspect of developing a self-extending learning system for continued knowledge development. I intentionally did not ask because I wanted to see if those important aspects of teacher learning were apparent to the teachers and emerged and were revealed through their discussions rather than my questions evoking or influencing their responses.

Data Analysis

Data from both the audio and video taped focus group session were used to inform my analysis (Morgan, 1998). Verbal and non-verbal responses of teachers were used in the analysis. For example, my analysis was influenced by whether the non-verbal responses seen on the video showed agreement or disagreement with verbal statements being made on the audio tape (Krueger, 2000).

I used the discussion chart (Morgan, 1998) as a record to document each teacher's perception of each coaching activity and style of feedback language. The chart was a record of the checkmarks teachers recorded individually after the discussion. This discussion chart was summarized and is shown in Appendix I. It includes the number of teachers who checked coaching activities and styles of feedback language helpful to foster types of conceptual and procedural knowledge.

Data Coding

I constructed a coding sheet to code data specifically on teachers' thoughts in regards to the four principles of effective professional development found in the literature. Table J1 as shown in Appendix J includes a copy of the coding sheet used by a school-based literacy coach and me to code the teachers' discussion of coaching activities and the interconnections with the four principles of professional development.

Also, in Appendix J, Table J2 is a copy of the coding sheet we used to code the teachers' discussion of styles of feedback language and the interconnections with the principles of professional development. In addition to using the coding sheets, I went through the entire set of data to identify words and phrases teachers used that revealed aspects related to characteristics of a self-extending learner.

Using the coding sheets, I compiled data and used it to construct an "overview grid that provided descriptive summaries of the content of the focus group discussions" (Morgan, 1998, p. 47). Appendix K includes these summaries of teachers' discussions of nine coaching activities. It should be noted that three coaching activities-professional book clubs, observations of students, and observations of teachers-were not discussed by teachers even though they were listed on the discussion chart and all teachers had stated that they had experienced each. Overall teachers reported that co-teaching lessons with a coach and a coach facilitating colleague visits as most helpful in fostering opportunities to learn both conceptual and procedural knowledge. Appendix L includes summaries of the focus group's conversations of each style of feedback language as discussed during the session. Also included in each of these Appendixes is the number of teacher responses with exemplifying teacher quotes. Overall teachers reported collaborative feedback as most helpful in fostering opportunities to learn both procedural and conceptual knowledge.

These data, data from the discussion chart (completed by teachers) and data on the self-extending learner, were used for analysis.

Inter-rater reliability

To establish inter-rater reliability for coding sheet decisions, I worked with a school-based literacy coach. We watched three sections of the 60 minute video taped focus group for approximately 10 minutes per section. As we watched the video we individually coded the teachers' discussion using the coding sheet (sample blank coding sheets are shown in Appendix J). We used a check mark to indicate our perceptions of a match between teachers' responses and categories on the coding sheet.

I conducted a “test of inter-rater reliability” (Trochim, 2001, p. 96) to establish consistency in coding observations. I then used a ratio measurement to calculate the percent of agreement between the coding by the literacy coach and me. The ratio was calculated by dividing the number of possible teacher responses on the coding sheets with the number of responses the literacy coach and I agreed upon. This ratio “gives an idea of how much agreement existed” (Trochim, 2001, p. 97) between the literacy coach and myself. The percentage of agreement after watching the three clips ranged from 91%-96%. After each coding observation, the literacy coach and I discussed our ratings, in particular the areas we focused on differently. Through the discussions we agreed on a common method to code the data for analysis. I used the above process as a guide to code the remaining corpus of data with the coding sheets.

Analytical Framework and Focus Group Results

While teachers were never specifically asked about the principles of effective professional development, they nevertheless described through their conversations several interconnections between coaching activities and principles of professional development. Also teacher discussed the influence of those connections on their learning and themselves as learners. In other words, there were specific teacher and coach interactions described by the teachers that involved interconnections between coaching activities and the principles of effective professional development that fostered their learning of conceptual and procedural knowledge. Table 3.1 and Table 3.2 include results from the study that I aligned with the analytical framework to show the interconnectedness between coaching activities and the principles of effective professional development on fostering opportunities for teachers’ learning of conceptual and procedural knowledge. Each table is framed by the 12 coaching activities and four principles of effective professional development, and each table lists results from teachers’ perspectives on the specific knowledge or lack of knowledge each interconnection fosters.

Table 3. 1

The Interconnectedness between Coaching Activities and Principles for Effective Professional Development on Fostering Opportunities for Teacher Learning in Schools^{ab}

Fostering Conceptual Knowledge				
Coaching Activity	Principles			
	On-going Interactions	Teacher Autonomy	Active Construction of Knowledge	Learning in Classroom Environment
Sharing materials to support teacher	Builds awareness Learn instructional language	Builds awareness Learn instructional language	Builds awareness Learn instructional language	Builds awareness Learn instructional language
Sharing materials to support student learning	Builds awareness Learn instructional language		Builds awareness Learn instructional language	Builds awareness Learn instructional language
Facilitate Professional book club				
Presenting literacy information in a workshop	Builds awareness Learn instructional language		Builds awareness Learn instructional language	Builds awareness Learn instructional language
Analyzing student work				
Facilitating problem-solving on literacy issues				
Coach modeling lessons				Builds awareness Break preconceived theories Learn instructional language Experience new learning Form opinions
Facilitating discussion of video lesson		Builds awareness Break preconceived theories Learn instructional language Experience new learning		
Co-teaching lessons with coach	Builds awareness Break preconceived theories Learn instructional language	Builds awareness Break preconceived theories Learn instructional language	Builds awareness Break preconceived theories Learn instructional language	Builds awareness Break preconceived theories Learn instructional language
Facilitating colleague visits	Builds awareness Break preconceived theories Experience new learning Form opinions	Builds awareness Break preconceived theories Experience new learning Form opinions	Builds awareness Break preconceived theories Experience new learning Form opinions	Builds awareness Break preconceived theories Experience new learning Form opinions
Providing feedback based on observation of student				
Providing feedback based on observation of teacher				

^a Three of more teachers responded during focus group discussion

^b Three of more teachers checked it as helpful to build knowledge on focus group discussion chart

Table 3.2

The Interconnectedness between Coaching Activities and Principles for Effective Professional Development on Fostering Opportunities for Teacher Learning in Schools^{ab}

Fostering Procedural Knowledge				
Coaching Activity	Principles			
	On-going Interactions	Teacher Autonomy	Active Construction of Knowledge	Learning in Classroom Environment
Sharing materials to support teacher				
Sharing materials to support student learning				
Facilitate Professional book club				
Presenting literacy information in a workshop	Part of teaching repertoire		Part of teaching repertoire	Part of teaching repertoire
Analyzing student work				
Facilitating problem-solving on literacy issues				
Coach modeling lessons				Value and adjust prior beliefs Part of teaching repertoire
Facilitating discussion of video lesson				
Co-teaching lessons with coach	Try it out Problem-solve and collaborate	Try it out Problem-solve and collaborate	Try it out Problem-solve and collaborate	Try it out Problem-solve and collaborate
Facilitating colleague visits	Try it out Value and adjust prior beliefs	Try it out Value and adjust prior beliefs	Try it out Value and adjust prior beliefs	Try it out Value and adjust prior beliefs
Providing feedback based on observation of student				
Providing feedback based on observation of teacher				

^aThree of more teachers responded during focus group discussion

^bThree of more teachers checked it as helpful to build knowledge on focus group discussion chart

The following examples highlight the interconnectedness between coaching activities and the principles on fostering teacher knowledge discussed by the teachers. As one teacher explained, “That was really, really helpful when my coach came in and showed exactly what was expected of me. And then had me take ownership.” Similar perspectives on interconnections were evident from teachers’ comments of their coach presenting information in a workshop format and fostering opportunities to try out and practice that information immediately in a classroom setting. For example a teacher reported, “We went into the classrooms and we tried it with other people’s children...”, and another teacher added, “We would work in small groups too with the kids... (this helps you go back to your classroom and try it”. It is evident from the following teacher’s comment that a coach sharing resource materials connected with opportunities for on-going collaboration is helpful to foster knowledge: “There’s definitely a difference when you just get materials versus materials with a literacy coach helping you go through the materials.

Surprisingly, it was evident from the teachers’ comments that they perceived only two coaching activities, co-teaching lessons and colleague visits, to interconnect with all four principles of effective professional development. These interconnections were best described in the following examples from teachers’ comments. They perceived their coach co-teaching lessons fostered learning when interconnected with opportunities for:

- On-going collaboration. One teacher best described it as, “Watching someone else’s style of teaching that might be different from ours [is] really nice,” and another teacher added, “No one can do it alone...it is a collaborative process.”
- Teacher autonomy. One teacher best described it as, co-teaching “...was really, really helpful when my coach came in and showed exactly what was expected of me. And then had me take ownership...,” and another teacher added, “Then we kind of took over.”
- Teachers actively constructing their knowledge. One teacher best described it as, “Co-teaching was my favorite ... to see how someone

else did something...you know you always learn from someone else.”

Another teacher added, “Now you know what works, what didn’t, what to do better,,...where to manage things and adjust to my students.”

- Teachers practicing new learning with feedback in classroom environments. One teacher best described it as, “By having somebody you knew was going to be there [in the classroom] and help you through it.” Another teacher added, “Co-teaching and having colleagues that support you ... that helps you actually implement and change your practice. Really change it profoundly.”

Further, it is evident in the following examples from teachers’ comments that they perceived their coach facilitating colleague visits as fostering learning when interconnected with opportunities for:

- On-going collaboration. One teacher best described it as, “The literacy coach was helpful when... we got to go into other teachers’ classrooms ...and [talk with them about] what they were doing with their kids.” Another teacher added, “Weekly meetings ...to talk about what we had seen at the other school [was helpful].”
- Teacher autonomy. One teacher best described it as, “[colleague visits validated] my own understandings.” Another teacher added, “We can be ourselves...taking ownership.”
- Teachers actively construct their knowledge. One teacher best described it as, “Every time I went into somebody else’s classroom I picked up new things that I could take back with me,...for my own understanding and to help my kids.” Another teacher added, “It helps you reflect... if I thought something wasn’t working at all in my classroom and I went somewhere else and (saw) it did.”
- Teachers practicing new learning with feedback in classroom environments. One teacher best described it as, “If you saw something really dynamic when you’re visiting your colleagues, it could definitely impact upon your prior beliefs.” Another teacher added, “[it] helps me adjust my way of teaching.”

I aligned results from the study, as shown in Table 3.3, with the analytical framework to view the interconnectedness between styles of feedback language and the principles of effective professional development on fostering opportunities for teacher learning. The table includes two sections, each framed by the styles of feedback language and four principles of effective professional development. Also, each section lists results from teachers' perspectives on the specific knowledge or lack of knowledge each interconnection fostered.

The teacher discussion made evident the interconnectedness of styles of feedback language and principles of effective professional development: For example, one teacher reported "When we come for subsequent workshops... every month we would come back and there would be a lot of feedback about how did that work for you, or what did you do that was a little different to make it work better for you." This comment exemplifies the connection between feedback language and on-going collaboration.

Teachers' described interconnectedness between their coach using collaborative feedback language and all four principles of effective professional development. These interconnections are illustrated in the following examples from teachers' comments. Teachers perceived their coach using collaborative feedback language to foster learning when interconnected with opportunities for:

- On-going collaboration. One teacher best described it as, "[Collaborative feedback is] the most positive and collaborative." Another teacher added, "[Collaborative feedback] absolutely helped with implementation of the new practice."
- Teacher autonomy. One teacher best described it as, collaborative feedback "challenged" her to take ownership by "questioning what you have done." Another teacher added it was "more positive."
- Teachers actively construct their knowledge. One teacher best described it as, "The questions, 'how did you think it went...', and what would you like your students [to do]... are very reflective questions." Another teacher added, "[Collaborative language] absolutely helped with implementation of the new practice."

Table 3.3

The Interconnectedness between Styles of Feedback Language and Principles for Effective Professional Development on Fostering Opportunities for Teacher Learning in Schools^{ab}

Fostering Conceptual Knowledge				
Style of Feedback Language	Principles			
	On-going Interactions	Teacher Autonomy	Active Construction of Knowledge	Learning in Classroom Environment
Mirror	Build awareness Break preconceived theories Learn instructional language			Build awareness Break preconceived theories Learn instructional language
Collaborative	Build awareness Break preconceived theories Experience new learning Form opinions	Build awareness Break preconceived theories Experience new learning Form opinions	Build awareness Break preconceived theories Experience new learning Form opinions	Build awareness Break preconceived theories Experience new learning Form opinions
Expert				
Fostering Procedural Knowledge				
Styles of Feedback language	Principles			
	On-going Interactions	Teacher Autonomy	Active Construction of Knowledge	Learning in Classroom Environment
Mirror	Part of teaching repertoire			Part of teaching repertoire
Collaborative	Part of teaching repertoire	Part of teaching repertoire	Part of teaching repertoire	Part of teaching repertoire
Expert				

^aThree of more teachers responded during focus group discussion

^bThree of more teachers rated it as helpful to build knowledge on focus group discussion chart



- Teachers practicing new learning with feedback in classroom environments. One teacher best described it as, “The two of us [coach and teacher] in a true co-teaching model sharing ideas.” Another teacher added, “Putting in a few suggestions or helpful hints or whatever to each other [as they worked in the classroom].”

While the other two styles of feedback language used by coaches interconnected with fewer opportunities for effective professional development, teachers reported them very helpful. This is exemplified best by one teacher who said, “I really liked A [mirror feedback language] because when I needed something...I feel that set A works for me.” Another teacher added, “[Mirror] language would help build awareness.” Both of these teachers perceived mirror feedback language used by their coach fostered learning if it was connected with opportunities for on-going collaboration and occurred in classroom settings.

Expert styles of feedback language fostered learning when it interconnected with on-going practice in classroom settings, as evident in the following teacher’s comment, “I loved...’let me show you how to do this’...I loved watching other people do things and show me.” Another teacher said “[Expert feedback] would help you experience the new practice.” However, interestingly, not all teachers perceived expert feedback as helpful in classroom settings, as evident in this teacher’s comment, ‘I like all of them better than set C [expert language]’, it is “threatening” and “I’m at a point where you’re NOT going to TELL me [what to do].”

Teachers were not explicitly asked to discuss aspects of a self-extending system for learning. Yet, the focus group participants described coaching activities and feedback language that fostered teacher actions that define teachers with self-extending learning systems. In other words, teachers’ actions that include active construction of knowledge, reflective practice, and self-initiated practice of new learning are some of the characteristics of teachers with self-extending systems for learning. These self-extending teacher actions were best described by one teacher who reported colleague visits with her coach as “very helpful”, and added:

To see how someone else is doing it and how their students respond...sometimes we think oh I'm glad I did it this way because my students seem to have gotten it more deeper than these kids or ... the opposite of that, my kids didn't get this at all but what this teacher just did is something I'm going to take back with me and try so that my students can understand it better.

A slightly different perspective was evident from another teacher's comment describing co-teaching lessons with her coach:

Having a coach coming into my room and who could do something really new that had never happened (before). Let's face it in the old days if something was going on you sent your children out to the reading teacher and she took care, she weaved her magic and she did something, AND NOW (raising voice) we're the ones who get to weave the magic (for our students) and we're learning from our literacy coaches. They are guiding us.

In both cases teacher/coach interactions were described as fostering opportunities for teachers to take ownership over their learning and self-initiate future teacher learning by adapting new knowledge. Two coaching activities described most by teachers that included teacher/coach interactions that fostered opportunities for teachers to self-extend their learning were co-teaching lessons and colleague visits.

Teachers' discussions also made evident that a coach using collaborative styles of feedback language fostered opportunities for teachers to self-extend their learning. This is exemplified in the following teacher's comment about her coach using collaborative feedback in a co-teaching setting:

[It] would help [with] valuing [new learning] and adjusting prior beliefs... for what it's worth, it's so big [the writing kit of materials]..., when you first sit down and look at nine volumes and how much time you already don't have in the day and that you are a week or two in realizing that you are not facing it alone and so it truly becomes for me it has to become a "we". And I know I'll be a bit more on my own next year but that's fine because I've had nine months of a "we"... I think it was especially helpful...it was just an enriching experience all the way around from the first day that we step into the classroom.

Additionally, teachers were asked directly to discuss and then document their views on a discussion chart that listed coaching activities, styles of feedback language, and types of conceptual and procedural knowledge. Teachers' responses reflected their perspectives on coaching activities and feedback language that fostered learning of different types of knowledge. Overall three coaching activities were reported as offering the most opportunities to foster knowledge; they were modeling lessons, co-teaching lessons, and facilitating colleague visits. Modeling lessons was rated by almost all teachers as fostering opportunities to learn all types of conceptual knowledge included on the discussion chart. Colleague visits and co-teaching lessons were rated helpful to the development of procedural knowledge. Collaborative style of feedback language was reported more than other styles of feedback in fostering a variety of learning, both conceptual and procedural. Teachers indicated that this type of feedback language would build awareness, break through pre-conceived theories, experience new information, and adjust prior beliefs to "make new learning part of teaching practice"

Discussion

Based on this study there are several important new understandings I learned from the teachers in the focus group about why they thought coaching activities and styles of feedback language were helpful to foster their knowledge. An unexpected, yet very important understanding came from the teachers' conversations about specific teacher/coach interactions that fostered opportunities for teachers to develop a self-extending system for learning. These teacher/coach interactions described by the teachers fostered on-going conversations valuing teacher autonomy and enthused teachers to practice, adapt, and reflect on new learning during and beyond the initial learning session. These teacher actions exemplify characteristics of teachers with a self-extending system of learning.

I also learned teachers' perceive coaching activities to foster different types of teacher knowledge depending on teacher/coach interactions. Their conversations reflected interconnectedness between some of the coaching activities and some

principals of effective professional development. These interconnections were described by teachers as teacher/coach actions that fostered different types of conceptual and procedural knowledge. Teachers' discussion from the focus group suggested that coaching activities- sharing materials to support teacher learning, co-teaching lessons, and colleague visits-fostered teachers' knowledge when the activities included opportunities for: (1) on-going teacher interactions with colleagues, (2) teacher autonomy, (3) teachers to actively construct knowledge, and (4) teacher learning to occur in classroom settings. Most focus group teachers perceived these coaching activities very helpful to foster knowledge, yet, not always similar areas of knowledge. In particular, most teachers in the focus group perceived:

- A coach sharing resource materials to support students and teachers fostered opportunities to construct a few areas of conceptual knowledge, specifically, building awareness and learning instructional literacy language.
- A coach co-teaching lessons fostered opportunities to construct many areas of conceptual and procedural knowledge, specifically, building awareness, breaking through preconceived ideas, learning instructional literacy language, trying out new learning, as well as problem solving and collaborating on instructional issues and practices.
- A coach facilitating colleague visits fostered opportunities to construct many areas of conceptual and procedural knowledge, specifically, building awareness, breaking through preconceived ideas and forming new theories, experiencing and trying out new learning, and valuing new learning and adjusting prior beliefs.

Another new understanding for me was described by teachers as interconnections between some of the styles of feedback language and some of the principals of effective professional development. These interconnections fostered different types of teacher knowledge. Focus group teachers were able to point out and describe distinctions in knowledge learning among the styles of the feedback language.

Teachers' perceived expert language as less helpful compared to collaborative or mirror styles of feedback language in fostering conceptual knowledge, such as, building awareness and breaking through preconceived theories. Teachers perceived collaborative feedback language to foster the most opportunities to learn both conceptual and procedural knowledge. In particular, it fosters opportunities for teachers to construct knowledge by experiencing new learning, forming opinions and making new learning part of their teaching repertoire.

All this does not necessarily mean that coaching activities and styles of feedback languages that are perceived to foster the most areas of knowledge are the only activities and feedback that should be used. Nor does it mean that activities or feedback language that foster opportunities to construct limited areas of knowledge should be dismissed or abandoned. I am suggesting that we think carefully about what teachers are saying about opportunities that foster knowledge and a self-extending system for learning.

Based on this study, I have several recommendations for literacy coaches, administrators, and stake holders in school-based teacher learning. Suggestions for practice, such as:

- Teachers should have increased opportunities to work with a literacy coach on activities they deem very helpful to improve practice and foster professional knowledge. Activities such as co-teaching lessons and colleague visits that are perceived as or likely to be among the most helpful to improve practice and foster many types of conceptual and procedural knowledge.
- Teachers should continue to have frequent opportunities for their literacy coach to share resource materials that support teacher and student learning. Both of these activities were perceived helpful by teachers to foster conceptual knowledge
- Teachers should have increased opportunities to learn with their coach using feedback language. Collaborative and mirror styles of feedback language were perceived by teachers to foster many areas of knowledge.

Another suggestion would be to reevaluate activities deemed less helpful by most teachers in fostering knowledge, in particular, professional book clubs and video discussions. I would suggest not eliminating these or other activities deemed less helpful but rather re-evaluate the purpose of each and have a close look at how these are being conducted in schools where teachers perceive them to be helpful to foster knowledge. Also, a coach using expert feedback language was perceived by teachers with mixed degrees of helpfulness. I suggest that this feedback type should be experienced more frequently in order to study closely teachers views on why and how it is deemed helpful or not.

This study was the beginning step for me in exploring teachers' perspectives on why school-based literacy coaching activities and styles of feedback language may or may not foster knowledge. In the future I could step further on the path of research I've just begun to explore, such as by embedding my research into a larger study. Alternatively, I could choose a different path to explore, such as qualitative studies on the context of styles of feedback language. Whichever research path I take, the focus will continue to be on teachers' perspectives. Teachers are such a valuable source of knowledge to inform the literature, and I believe there is much more to be learned from their perspectives. For example, I could learn more about teachers' views on literacy coaching by:

- Studying teachers' perspectives by interviewing focus groups of teachers from across the teaching life span. For example, interviewing teachers homogeneously grouped by specific characteristics such as years of teaching experience (student teachers, beginning teachers, teachers with 3-5 years experience, etc.). Asking these different groups of teachers their perspectives on why specific coaching activities and feedback languages are deemed helpful to further explore the nature of helpfulness across the professional life span.
- Studying teachers' perspectives on the helpfulness of styles of feedback language in a contextual way, such as interactions between coach and teacher in a trusting relationship versus coach and teacher with little to no relationship.

- Studying teachers' perspectives by interviewing additional focus groups, embedding my research into a larger study, with a similar format to my study on coaching opportunities that foster teacher knowledge.

Teachers' perceptions of literacy coaching and the role it plays in fostering teacher knowledge is worthy of further study.

Venue for Publication

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Reflections

What I love to do is to teach teachers. I love to stir up their thoughts about how they learn; about how on earth anyone can help anyone else learn; and about what it means to know something. I love to help them feel that any aspect of human endeavor is accessible to them and that they can make it accessible to any person they teach. I love to try to find ways into a subject that will catch everybody's interest; to find out what people think about things and to find ways to get them talking about what they think; to shake up things they thought they knew; to get people wrapped up in figuring something out together without needing anything from me; to help build their fascination with what everybody else thinks, and with the light that other people's thinking might shed on their own. I love to see the most productive of questions be born out of laughter, and the most frustrating of brick walls give way to an idea that has been there all along. (Duckworth, 2006, p. 173)

What Did I Learn as a Staff Developer?

Similar to Duckworth (2006) I also love to teach teachers. Her words could be used to define how I perceive my role as a district wide staff developer as a result of the learning from the past six years of my graduate work. I have learned more than I could ever write. However, three salient points of learning, that have and continue to influence my teaching of teachers, include: (1) teachers need more than just learning current best practices, and if I foster opportunities for a teacher to develop a system for self-extending learning, s/he could self-initiate and continue his/her learning forever; (2) activities that include collegial conversations between colleague to colleague merit big payoffs in teacher knowledge; and (3) all the conceptual knowledge I have gained, from the results from my study, needs to continually be adapted into my teaching of teachers. What follows are brief discussions of the aforementioned salient points of my learning as a staff developer.

When I teach teachers I love to share current research on best practices. Actually, it is a major part of what I am asked to do professionally. The problem for best practices that are current today is they become outdated. Teachers using only knowledge gained from a current best practice session will be limited. However, if teachers have a system for extending and continuing their learning beyond professional development sessions they will have a system for learning that will foster self-initiated learning of whatever the current best practices are and perhaps develop best practices themselves. I have learned that it is not only important to share best practices but I also must foster opportunities for teachers to continually reflect upon their current practices in relation to student needs, engage in conversations about their practices, and move beyond the walls of their classrooms to notice and reflect upon other teachers' practices. I have learned teachers need professional development not only on current best practices but also learning opportunities that foster construction of a self-extending system for learning. I believe this learning system for teachers is constructed from opportunities to: challenge preconceived theories, actively problem solving on their practices, and socially construct knowledge and solutions with colleagues.

I have learned collegial conversations between colleagues can influence teacher learning immensely. I have always included in every teaching session with teachers opportunities for them to have topic related conversations with each other; now I know the value of these conversations. I have learned from my research how much teachers learn from having opportunities to co-construct knowledge together on literacy topics. Collegial conversations arise from many different opportunities; however, from my research I've learned co-teaching lessons and colleague visiting are perceived as very helpful to foster knowledge. Based on this information when appropriate, I now include in professional development sessions with teachers the opportunity to work with each other in partnerships to plan together and try out new learning with children as part of the professional development session. I love to see during my follow-up visits to classrooms, the most skeptical of teachers from those learning sessions, begin to try out and adapt new learning into their practice. It is validating to hear from my literacy coaches that I teach how much payoff to teacher learning they are noticing from

including activities that include collegial conversations in their teaching of teachers as well.

Prior to my doctoral studies, I usually included in my presentations a multi-media approach, engaged my audience in lively conversations, and evaluations from the sessions reflected positive comments. I now know and have learned from my research that my presentations alone, no matter how engaging, foster little, if any, knowledge for adapting new information into practice. I have learned that teachers need on-going opportunities for learning that include teachers actively constructing their knowledge, and most importantly, they need to have ownership in their learning. Absence of any of these principles will limit teacher knowledge gained from my professional development sessions.

What Did I Learn as a Researcher?

As a researcher I studied and learned to use empirical approaches to gain knowledge. I learned that research can be descriptive, for example my study using a questionnaire to gather teachers' perceptions. I have learned research can be experimental, an approach I have yet to try but very much hope to with future studies that I conduct. And I learned that there are quantitative and qualitative methods of research; both I explored, applied, and learned so much from in my dissertation.

I loved the process of learning to research a topic from beginning to end. I learned to start with an area of interest, teacher learning, and how to narrow it down through a funnel of interconnecting topics until a specific point of interest, literacy peer coaching, trickled out. I learned the process of problem-solving and reflecting on which method of research, quantitative or qualitative, or both, would best offer opportunities to explore and seek out answers to questions I had on my topic of literacy coaching.

I learned to take my topic and continue through the research process by asking myself, "Do I want to conduct a quantitative study that will yield data similar to a 'fishing expedition' where I gather lots of data and see what information and patterns emerge."

Or I ask myself, “Do I want to conduct a quantitative study that will yield data based on specific questions I am seeking more information on?” I learned how to construct, pilot, refine, and distribute a questionnaire; one of the many data collection tools I learned are available to researchers. I learned how to use statistical software to synthesize my data. And I learned to use statistical procedures to analyze, interpret and summarize data to inform my knowledge.

As a researcher, I learned to research and conduct a deeper inquiry into a topic by using a qualitative method of research: a focus group. I learned using a focus group study format how to: plan the research study, develop questions, moderate the participants/teachers, and analyze and report the findings. I learned that this qualitative method of study was especially useful for exploring and getting an understanding of why teachers perceived coaching activities and styles of feedback helpful.

Most interestingly to me, I learned that I love being a researcher. And I want to embrace this love of research by continuing to do research. Also, I would like to conduct studies that offer me the opportunity to use different types of statistics, those I am less familiar working with, in particular, inferential statistics, such as ANOVA and t tests comparing means of samples in a study. I studied these in research and statistic courses that not only offered me the opportunities to learn many different types of statistics and research methods, but also sparked an interest in conducting research that allows me to apply this new knowledge to practice. And while I have learned a lot about the process of being a researcher, I have also learned there is so much more to study and learn.

What Did I Learn as a Writer of Research?

As a writer of research, I have learned that I not only need to read extensively published research reports and professional journals, but I must also study these reports and articles through a writer’s lens to be able to learn the craft of writing research. Research as a writing genre was and continues to be a challenge for me. Yet,

the more I read research articles, study the writing craft in the research articles, and continue to write my own research reports with continual feedback; the more comfortable I become as a writer. Please note that I did not say I have become an accomplished writer of research, but rather more comfortable. While I have learned a lot, I know I have so much more to learn. I intend to continue learning by reading and using as mentor texts, journal publications and research articles. I plan to continue to write often, seek feedback on my drafts, revise, and start the process over again.

I have learned many writing tips from courses and feedback sessions on my writing over the past several years. Some highlights include: (1) use *The Elements of Style* (Strunk, 2006) as a mentor text for grammar, (2) orally rehearse my thoughts before writing, (3) highlight only key ideas, don't write everything, (4) use journals as models and mentor texts, (5) read, read, read many different research reports to study styles of research writing, (6) ask for feedback on my writing, continually, and (10) use the APA manual (2001) to guide formatting decisions.

I began this dissertation study inspired by my interest in teacher learning. Similar to the message in Duckworth's words at the beginning of this reflection, I also want to "find out what teachers think about things and to find ways to get them talking about what they think" (p. 173); especially what they think about opportunities for continuing their professional learning. I have made some small though informative steps forward in my investigations. Even so, my journey has just begun.

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Appendix A

Coaching Models Used in the Field of Literacy: Types, Description, and Sources for Further Information

<i>Types</i>	<i>Description</i>
<p>Curriculum Coaches or Staff Developers sometimes referred to as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cognitive coaching • Analytical coach • Student achievement coaches • On-site facilitator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching to improve teacher quality, • sometimes a reflective questioning process between teacher and coach, • catalyst for change of student achievement scores • Coach chooses and provides the information for learning, through questioning or staff development • Curriculum driven
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Sources for Further Information</i></p> <p>Cognitive Coaching: A Foundation for Renaissance Schools (Costa & Garmston, 1994) The Heart of the Matter: Coaching as a Vehicle for Professional Development (Poglinco & Bach, 2004) How to Thrive as a Teacher Leader (Gabriel, 2005) Fine Points of Facilitation (Jobst, 2004) Learning From Teaching in Literacy Education: New Perspectives on Professional Development (Rodgers & Pinnell, 2002) Literacy Teams: Sharing Leadership to Improve Student Learning (Cobb, 2005) Shaping Literate Minds (Dorn & Soffos, 2001) Systems for Change in Literacy Education: A Guide to Professional Development (Lyons & Pinnell, 2001)</p>	
<p>Content-focused Coaches sometimes referred to as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy coaches • Content coaches • Instructional coaches • Literacy coaches • Content coaches • Instructional coaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching to provide the classroom teacher with support from coaches who have deep content area knowledge as well as classroom experience and can address issues related specific to content area teaching. • Coach is the authority • Content driven

Sources for Further Information

- Coaching for Balance: How to Meet the Challenges of Literacy Coaching (Burkins, 2007)
- Designing Professional Development That Works (Birman et al., 2000)
- The Effective Literacy Coach (Rodgers & Rodgers, 2007)
- Instructional Coaches Make Progress Through Partnership: Intensive Support Can Improve Teaching (Knight, 2004)
- Literacy Coaching Developing Effective Teachers through Instructional Dialogue (Duncan, 2006)
- The Literacy Coach Guiding in the Right Direction (Puig & Froelich, 2007)
- Literacy Coaching for Change (Blachowicz et al., 2005)
- Literacy Coaching the Essentials (Casey, 2006)
- The Literacy Coach's Handbook: A Guide to Research-based Practice (Walpole & McKenna, 2004)
- The Literacy Coach's Survival Guide: Essential Questions and Practical Answers (Toll, 2005)
- Reading Specialist in the Real World (Vogt & Shearer, 2003)
- The Reading Specialist (Bean, 2004)
- Responsive Literacy Coaching Tools for Creating and Sustaining Purposeful Change (Dozier, 2006)
- Promoting Effective Literacy Instruction: The challenge for literacy coaches (Bean, 2004)

Appendix B

Teacher Questionnaire on Perspectives on Literacy Coaching and Feedback Language

Literacy Coaching & Feedback Language

A peer literacy coach may support your learning with informal activities, with activities that specifically support your teaching needs, or by observing your teaching and giving feedback on your instructional practice. Please begin this questionnaire by thinking of someone who has worked with you in a role as a literacy coach. If you have experience with more than one such coach, please think of the person who was the *best* as you answer the following.

<p><i>To help set the stage, please describe this person and your professional relationship to him or her by answering the following questions about your only or best literacy coach. Please either fill in the blanks or select the appropriate answer.</i></p>	
1. How long did you know you coach before the coaching relationship began?	_____ years _____ months
2. For how long did you work with the coach?	_____ years _____ months
3. How long ago did the coaching end?	_____ years _____ months OR Still active
4. Who <i>initially</i> initiated the coaching relationship? (1) The coach (2) Myself (3) An administrator (4) Other:	5. Who <i>typically</i> initiated other coaching sessions? (1) The coach (2) Myself (3) An administrator (4) Other:
6. How would you assess the focus of the relationship during coaching? The focus was primarily: (1) on my interest (2) on coach's interest	7. How would you assess the "friendliness" of the relationship during coaching on a continuum from very friendly to contentious?
8. How many different peer coaches have worked with you?	<p>Friendly Contentious</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1 2 3 4</p>

Feedback Language

Please consider the following three sets of different types of feedback language a coach might use. For each set, please indicate (a) the extent to which the coach you described above used such language, and (b) how helpful you would find the use of such language in a coaching situation, whether or not your coach used it. Rate each set on a **scale of 0 to 4**, according to the rating scales below.

Feedback Language	How often did your coach use words like the ones in each set?	How helpful would such language be?
<p>Set A:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ “You did...” ▪ “I noticed you tried...” ▪ “I saw you do...” ▪ “Your students were...when you did...” 	<p>Never Often</p> <p style="text-align: center;">0 1 2 3 4</p>	<p>Not at all Very much</p> <p style="text-align: center;">0 1 2 3 4</p>
<p>Set B:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ “We could do...” ▪ “Let’s try together...” ▪ “How do you think it went...?” ▪ “What would you like your students to do...?” 	<p>Never Often</p> <p style="text-align: center;">0 1 2 3 4</p>	<p>Not at all Very much</p> <p style="text-align: center;">0 1 2 3 4</p>
<p>Set B:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ “We could do...” ▪ “Let’s try together...” ▪ “How do you think it went...?” ▪ “What would you like your students to do...?” 	<p>Never Often</p> <p style="text-align: center;">0 1 2 3 4</p>	<p>Not at all Very much</p> <p style="text-align: center;">0 1 2 3 4</p>

Experiences with Literacy Coaching

In the center column below is a list of activities you may have experienced with the literacy coach. Please respond to each activity in two ways: (1) regarding what your literacy coach actually did, and (2) regarding your belief of whether such an activity was or would be helpful

<p>What Your Coach Did</p> <p>Reflecting on these coaching activities to what extent did your literacy coach do each of the following?</p> <p>Indicate your response by circling the appropriate number from 0 = none, not at all to 4 = a lot.</p>	<p>Coaching Activities</p> <p>List of potential literacy coaching activities.</p>	<p>What Was or Would be Helpful?</p> <p>How much would such an activity help you improve your instructional practice? Indicate your response by circling the appropriate number from 0 = none, not at all to 4 = a lot.</p>
<p>none a lot</p>		<p>none a lot</p>
<p>0 1 2 3 4</p>	<p>Presenting literacy information in a workshop format</p>	<p>0 1 2 3 4</p>
<p>0 1 2 3 4</p>	<p>Sharing resource materials to support my learning</p>	<p>0 1 2 3 4</p>
<p>0 1 2 3 4</p>	<p>Sharing resource materials to support my students' learning</p>	<p>0 1 2 3 4</p>
<p>0 1 2 3 4</p>	<p>Facilitating <i>Teachers as Readers</i> professional book club</p>	<p>0 1 2 3 4</p>
<p>0 1 2 3 4</p>	<p>Facilitating problem solving</p>	<p>0 1 2 3 4</p>
<p>0 1 2 3 4</p>	<p>Facilitating analysis of student work</p>	<p>0 1 2 3 4</p>
<p>0 1 2 3 4</p>	<p>Modeling lessons</p>	<p>0 1 2 3 4</p>
<p>0 1 2 3 4</p>	<p>Co-teaching lessons</p>	<p>0 1 2 3 4</p>
<p>0 1 2 3 4</p>	<p>Facilitating colleague visits</p>	<p>0 1 2 3 4</p>
<p>0 1 2 3 4</p>	<p>Facilitating discussion of video lessons</p>	<p>0 1 2 3 4</p>
<p>0 1 2 3 4</p>	<p>Providing feedback based on observation of my teaching</p>	<p>0 1 2 3 4</p>
<p>0 1 2 3 4</p>	<p>Providing feedback based on observation of my students</p>	<p>0 1 2 3 4</p>

Please list any other literacy coaching activities that your coach used:

Demographic Information

<p><i>The following information is important to reflect your experiences. Please answer each of the following by providing a response or circling the one or more options that apply.</i></p>	
1. How many years have you been teaching?	_____ years _____ months
2. How many years have you been teaching your current grade level assignment?	_____ years _____ months
3. Which grade level are you currently teaching?	1. K-2 2. 3-5
4. Which grade levels have you taught?	1. K-2 2. 3-5
5. What is your education level?	1. Bachelors 2. Masters 3. Masters +30 4. Doctorate
6. Are you Board Certified?	1. Yes 2. No
7. What is your sex?	1. Male 2. Female

Please add any additional comments you may have about literacy coaching.

Thank you. Your thoughts are important and appreciated.

Appendix C

Relationship between Variables: Experience with and the Helpfulness of Coaching Activities and Styles of Feedback Language

Table C1

Relationship Between Teachers Responses to Experience with and Helpfulness of 12 Coaching Activities

(N=194)

Coaching Activity	χ^2 ^a	V ^b
Share resource materials to support student learning	22.92	.25
Share resource materials to support teacher learning	22.92	.24
Facilitate problem solving	67.48	.42
Facilitate analysis of student work	47.99	.35
Provide feedback based on observation of student	71.98	.43
Model lessons	37.75	.31
Provide feedback based on observation of teacher	53.25	.38
Facilitate professional book club	87.43	.49
Present literacy information in a workshop format	65.93	.42
Co-teach lessons	49.91	.36
Facilitate colleague visits	79.00	.46
Facilitate discussion of video lessons	84.64	.48

^a df=4, p< .001 in all cases

^b Cramer's V represents the strength of the relationship between the two categorical variables: experience with and the helpfulness of the coaching activity.

Table C2***Relationship Between Teachers Responses to Experience with and Helpfulness of Three Styles of Feedback Language*****(N=194)**

Styles of Feedback Language	χ^2^a	V^b
Collaborative "We could do..." "Let's try together..." "How do you think it went...?" "What would you like your students to do...?"	40.44	.33
Expert "You could do..." "Try doing this..." "Let me show you how to do ..." "Try this... your students will do..."	97.64	.51
Mirror "You did..." "I noticed you tried..." "I saw you do..." "Your students were...when you did..."	40.69	.33

^a df=4, p< .001 in all cases^b Cramer's V represents the strength of the relationship between the two categorical variables: experience with and the helpfulness of the coaching activity.

Appendix D

Teachers' Written Comments from Questionnaire

N=33

Type	Teacher comments
Generic comments about a teacher's coach or coaching experience	<p>I feel that my literacy coach was very effective</p> <p>I see results in children that have experienced literacy coach and me working together. Collaboration is the key. We learn best from our peers, just like the kids."</p> <p>Excellent coach!</p> <p>Working together as a team is always beneficial</p> <p>(My coach) has helped with my professional growth. She has been a wonderful coach and is always available for advice. She is a GREAT help!</p> <p>My r/coach rocks!! I enjoy working with her- she's very knowledgeable and willing to share a lot !!</p> <p>Though it is a professional relationship; my literacy coach has also been helpful with personal problems as well!! She is the best!!</p> <p>The experience I had in working with my school's literacy coach was wonderful. I felt like I became a stronger teacher and my students became stronger writers because of that coaching relationship.</p> <p>My coach is there when I need her...she didn't do some of the things above (on the questionnaire) because they weren't needed, but I know she did them with many other less experience teachers. It should be a full-day job to really get to all who need it.</p> <p>Fabulous!</p> <p>My mentor was such a huge help to me! She not only offered advice, but helped give me confidence as a teacher. Even though we no longer teaching together she still holds a dear place in my heart!</p> <p>She is super! I never feel threatened!</p> <p>Worthwhile to get it-Most definitely.</p> <p>Sometimes the coach takes too much of a reading first "enforcement" attitude rather than offering ideas to improve my classroom.</p> <p>They are always there when I need them and really think outside the box to help me in every and all ways they can. The conversation continuing long after we stop talking and they always check back in. Thanks !</p> <p>I really did not work w/ a literacy coach. I had access to going to them for questions, thoughts, and feedback.</p> <p>Came into class to help set up. Watching some one do a guided reading format</p>

My Reading specialist was very helpful. She modeled running records and provided resources.

K teachers in my building had little interaction with reading coach

Came in and worked 1 on 1 to model interventions and new strategies

Based on former Reading Recovery teacher I worked with 4 years ago.

Many of these strategies need to be used together to be most effective.

Literacy Coaching is an integral piece for teachers, ESPECIALLY new teachers. If I didn't have the support from my coaches, I wouldn't have been as interested or done as well. Even though I came into (named school district) with great background knowledge having been trained in Reading Recovery, I found that there was always something to learn or something to try differently. It's because of my literacy coaches support that I was successful with my students.

Type	Teacher comments
Generic comments about lack of experience or interest in more opportunities to work with a coach	<p>I would love to be able to discuss work samples, problem areas for the students, and to have the coach in the classroom at least once a week to see the children as they learn, not after the fact. Would love the support of a regular co-teaching time in the classroom to help reach struggling readers quickly.</p> <p>Very important for first year teachers equally important to have frequent revisits w/ veteran teachers as well however.</p> <p>Literacy Coaches in my schools only help K-2 teacher. "Do not have time" to help 3-5</p> <p>Not much experience. So I hope I filled this out accurately!</p> <p>(Comment from uncompleted questionnaire) It is with great regret that I'm unable to fill this questionnaire. I have <u>never</u> had a literacy coach in my entire 29 years of teaching. That saddened me greatly. I would have loved to have someone help me, guide me and mentor me through my early years. Gosh, I'd love it now!! I'm an upper grade teacher and many believe "we" (in the upper grades) don't need the support as in the lower grades. HOGWASH!! Help us to help our young ones!</p>
Specific comments that identified or elaborated on coaching activities or feedback	<p>(My coach) has been great in helping me to understand problems some of my students are having.</p> <p>My literacy coaches have been extremely helpful in facilitating my learning and teaching. They always make time to meet with me, and make tons of helpful materials available to me. They give me realistic solutions to problems that arise, and understand the challenges that classroom teachers in my school face. They are wonderful!</p> <p>Our literacy coaches are very helpful. They are a great support to us. They also provide great feedback and resources.</p> <p>She has so many teachers and is very active in our school. It would be</p>

good if we could tape so we get the language ingrained in our brain. I wish there was a way we could videotape her lessons to review. Our school is very committed to literacy. She supports and guides us as we struggle over each hurdle. She is always positive and finds the good things in what we do. I couldn't have made it over the years without her or our team leader.

You caught me at a good time...I think I finally have a fabulous "literacy coach" so I'm becoming more & more excited about "literacy"! My current "literacy coach" has guided me through the process of teaching reading in such a way that I feel very confident about my teaching. She meets with me on @ least a weekly basis, discusses how reading is going, we decide together where to go next. She also supports other teachers on my team & ESOL teacher in the same way. She also comes in and models lessons when introducing a new strategy, etc. These things have been extremely helpful and very different than what I've experienced in the past!

Appendix E

Percent of Teachers with Experiences with Literacy Coaching: Responses on Questionnaire to What Their Coach Did

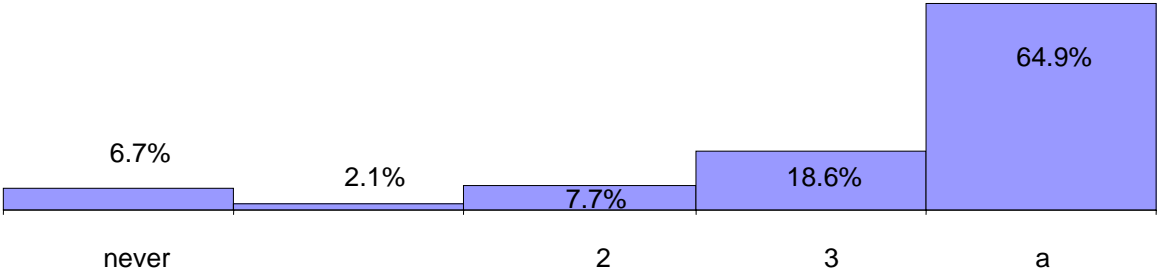


Figure E1. To what extent did your literacy coach share resource materials to support your students' learning?
N=194

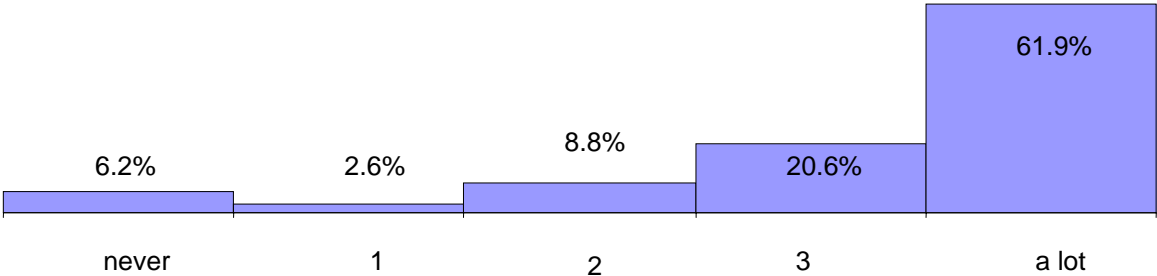


Figure E2. To what extent did your literacy coach share resource materials to support your learning?
N=194

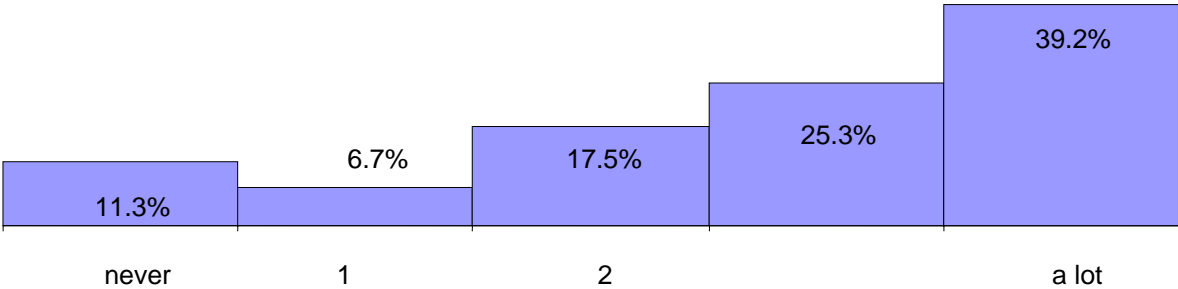


Figure E3. To what extent did your literacy coach facilitate problem solving?
N=194

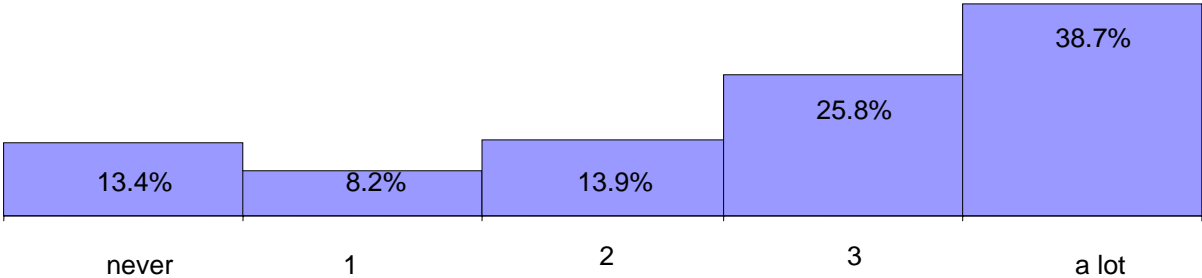


Figure E4. To what extent did your literacy coach facilitate analysis of student work?
N=194

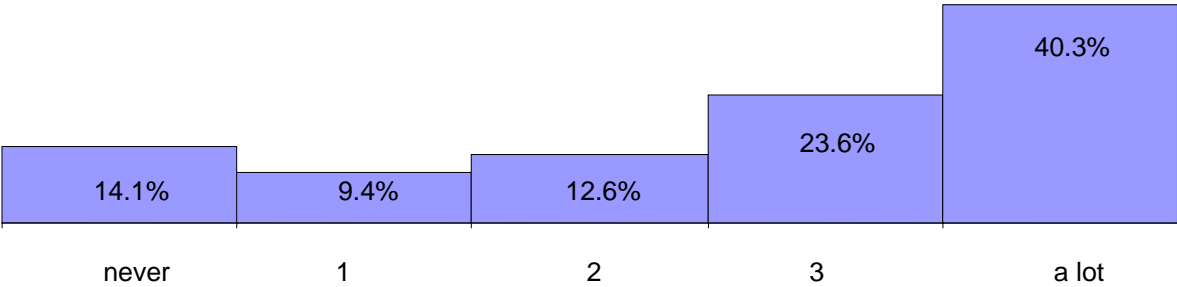


Figure E5. To what extent did your literacy coach provide feedback based on observation of students?
N=191

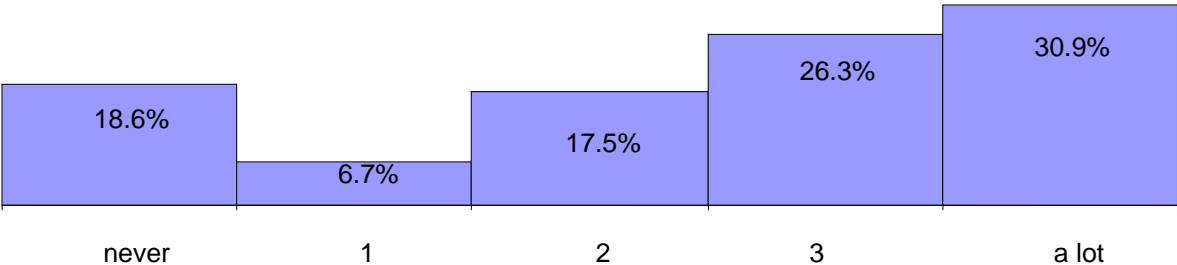


Figure E6. To what extent did your literacy coach model lessons?
N=194

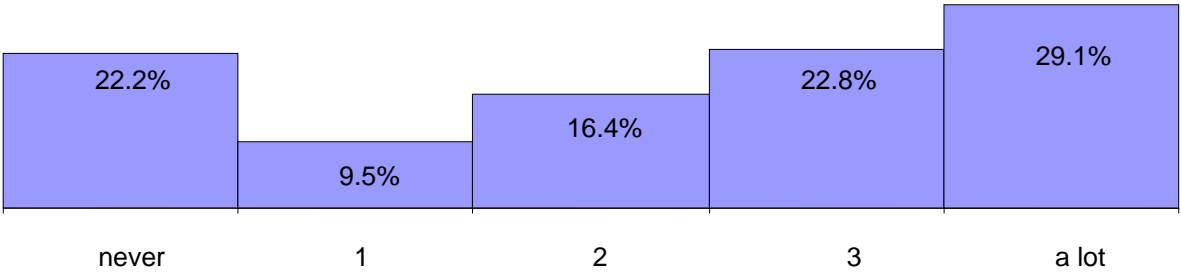


Figure E7. To what extent did your literacy coach provide feedback based on observing you?
N=189

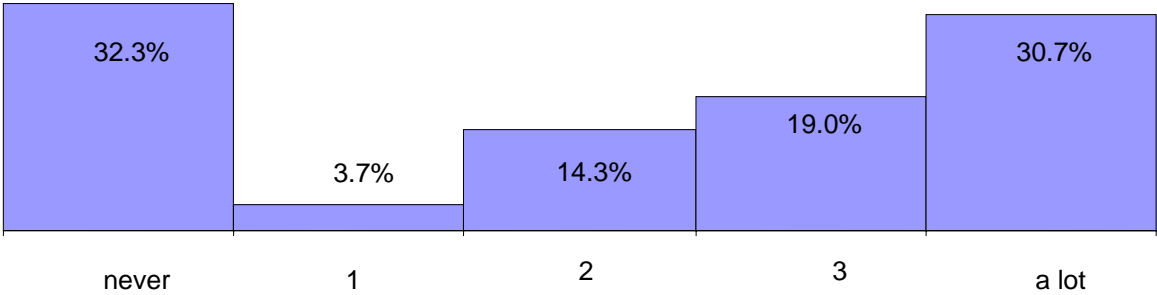


Figure E8. To what extent did your literacy coach facilitate teachers as readers professional book club?
N=189

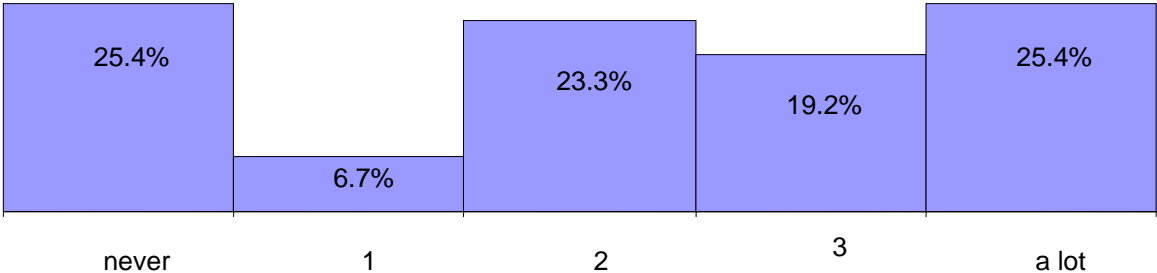


Figure E9. To what extent did your literacy coach present literacy information in a workshop format?
N=193

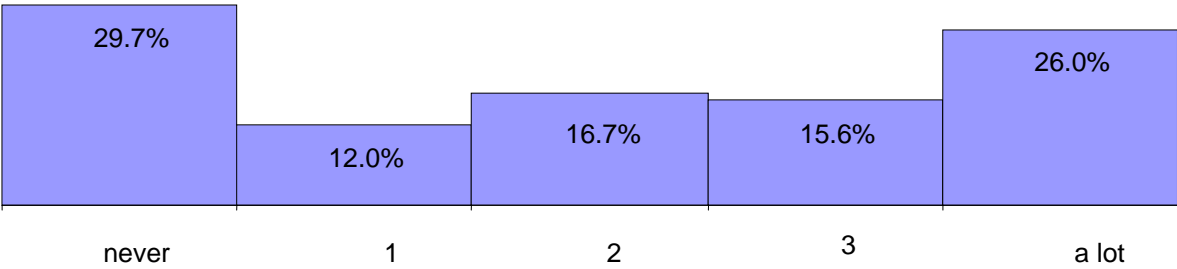


Figure E10. To what extent did your literacy coach co-teach lessons with you?
N=192

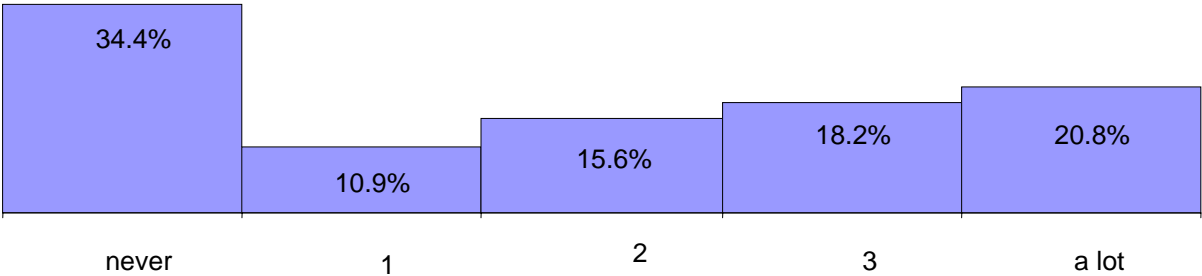


Figure E11. To what extent did your literacy coach facilitate colleague visits?
N=192

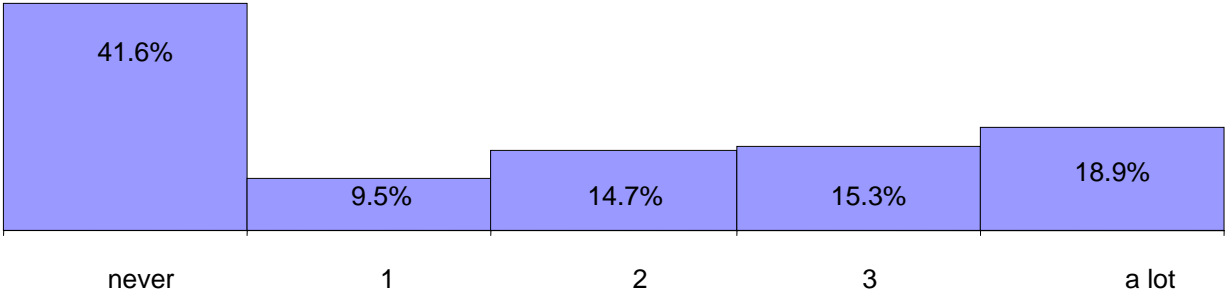


Figure E12. To what extent did your literacy coach facilitate discussions of video lessons?
N=190

Appendix F

Percent of Teachers Who Would or Did Find Literacy Coaching Helpful: Responses on Questionnaire to How Much Would such an Activity Help Improve Instructional Practice?

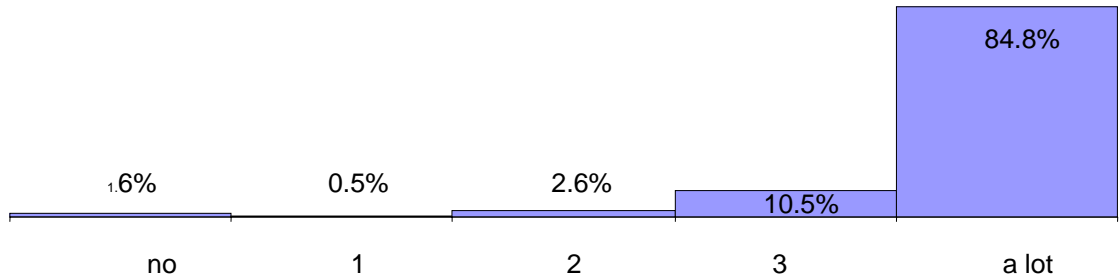


Figure F1. How much would your coach sharing resource materials help you improve instructional practice?
N=191

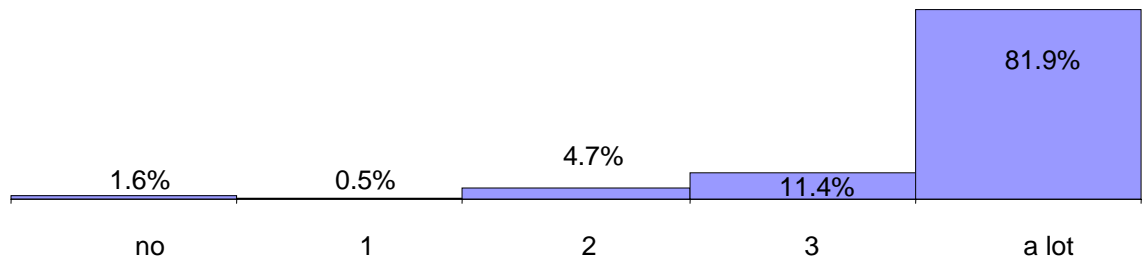


Figure F2. How much would your coach sharing resource materials to support your learning help you improve instructional practice?
N=193

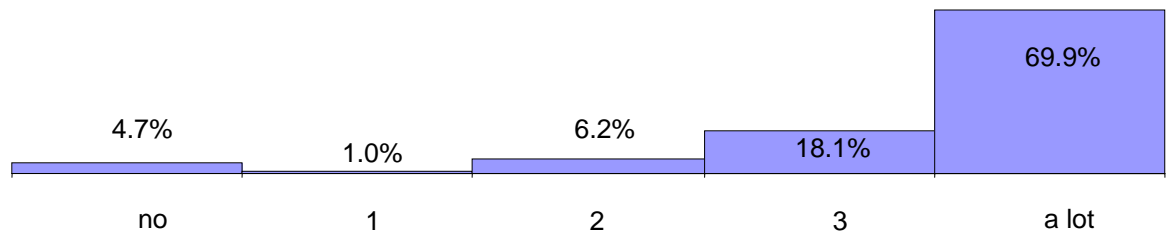


Figure F3. How much would modeling lessons by your coach help you improve instructional practice?
N=193

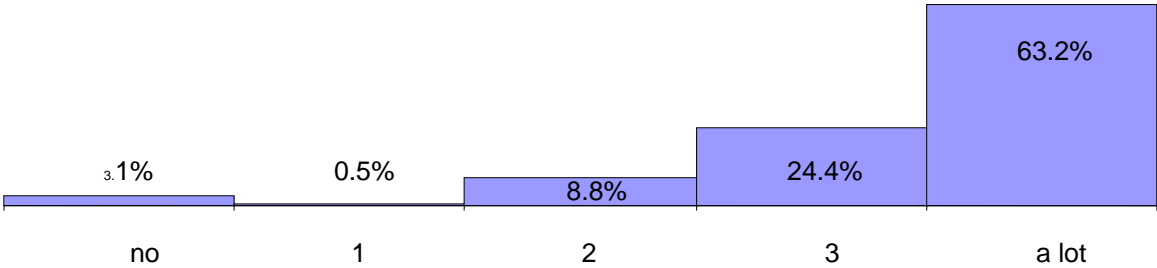


Figure F4. How much would facilitating analysis of student work by your coach help you improve instructional practice?
N=193

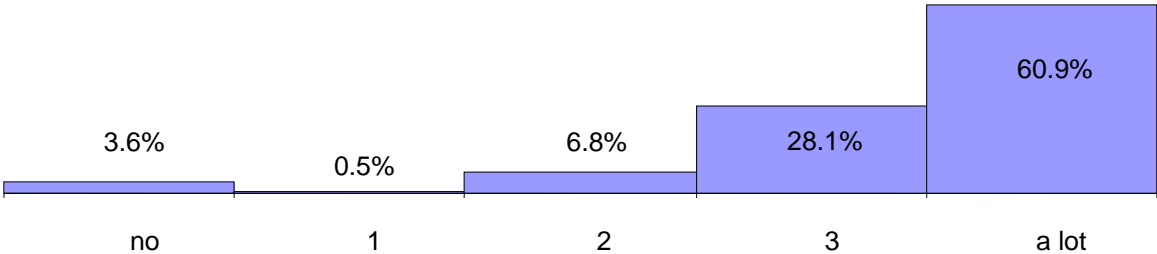


Figure F5. How much would feedback based on observations of students by your coach help you improve instructional practice?
N=192

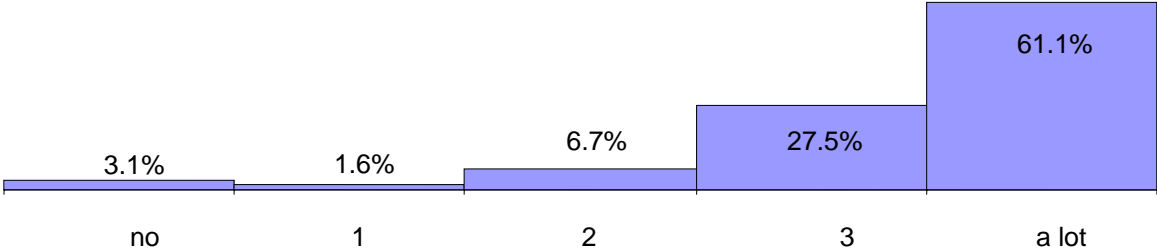


Figure F6. How much would problem solving facilitated by your coach help you improve instructional practice?
N=193

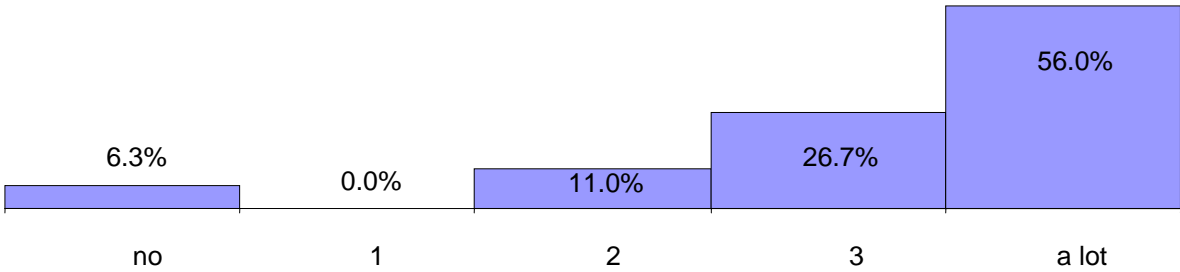


Figure F7. How much would feedback based on observations of you by your coach help you improve instructional practice?
N=191

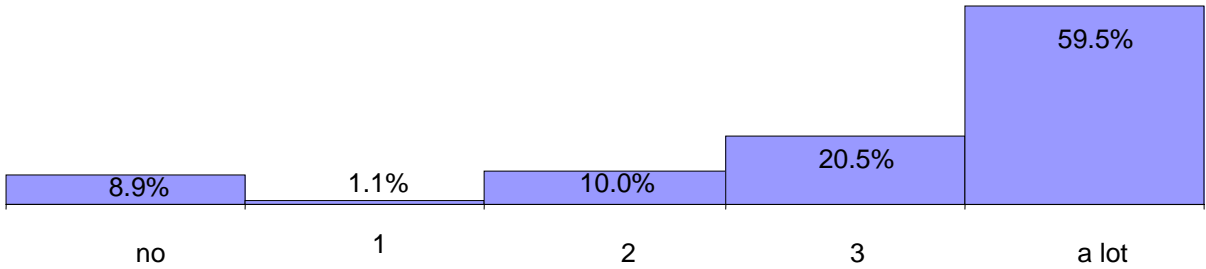


Figure F8. How much would co-teaching lessons with your coach help you improve instructional practice?
N=190

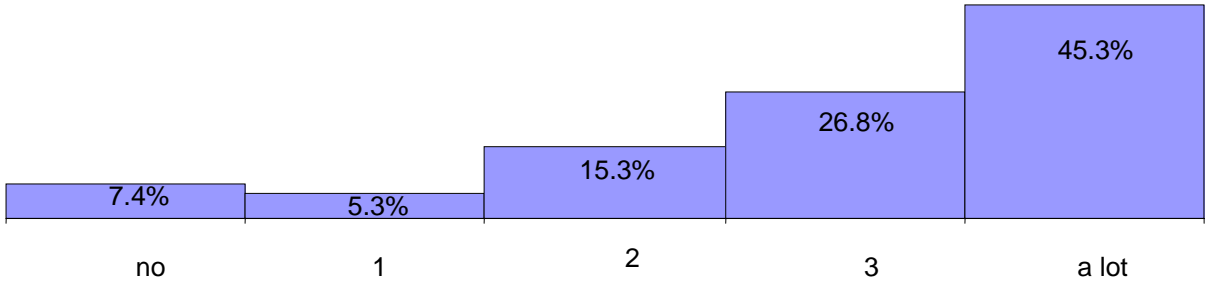


Figure F9. How much would presenting literacy information in a workshop format by your coach help you improve instructional practice?
N=190

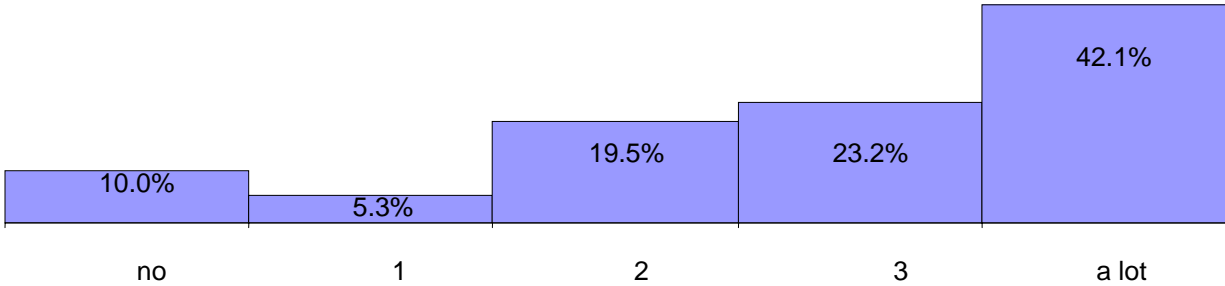


Figure F10. How much would colleague visits facilitated by your coach help you improve instructional practice?
N=190

n

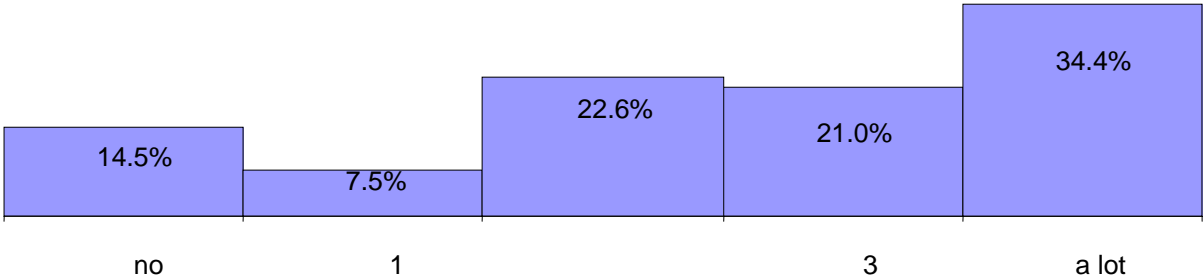


Figure F11. How much would professional book clubs facilitated by your coach help you improve instructional practice?
N=186

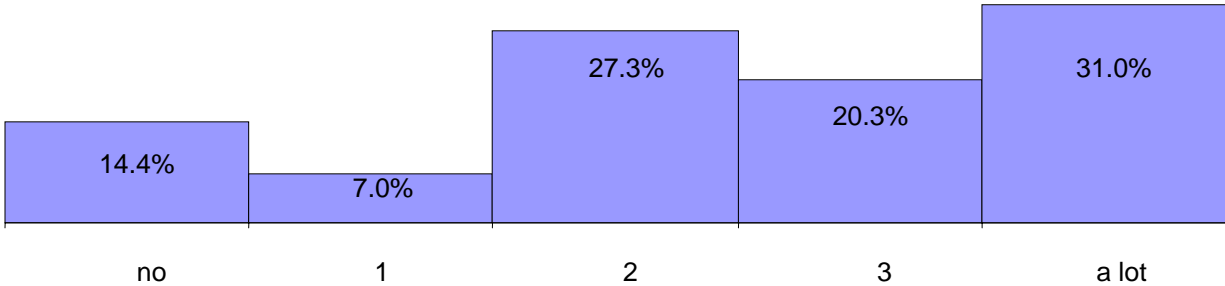


Figure F12. How much would discussions of video lessons facilitated by your coach help you improve instructional practice?
N=187

Appendix G

Percent of Teachers Experiencing their Coach Using Feedback Language: Responses on Questionnaire to How Often Did your Coach Use Words Like the Ones in Each Language Set?

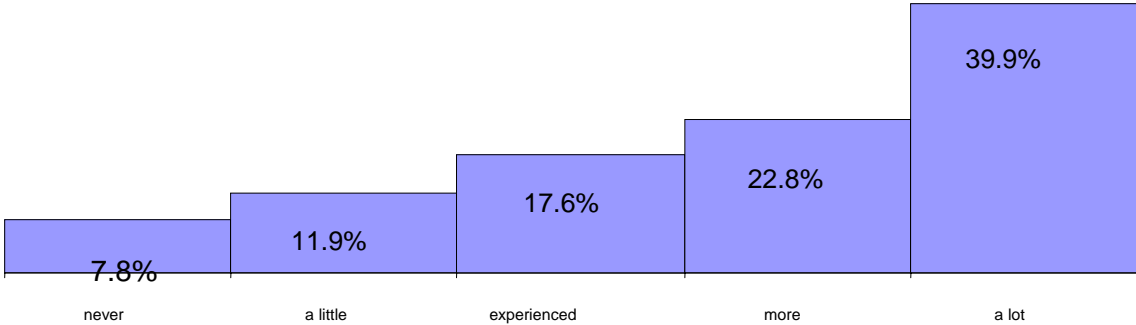


Figure G 1. Mirror Feedback Language
N=193

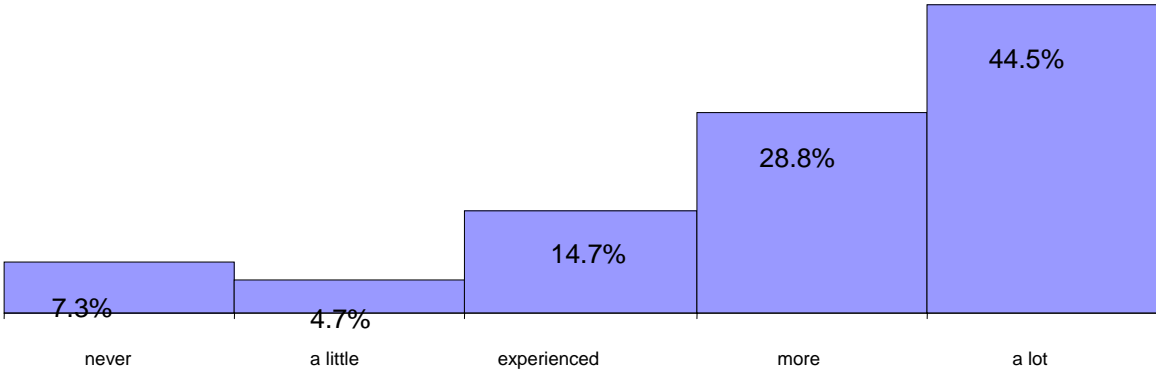


Figure G 2. Collaborative Feedback Language
N=191

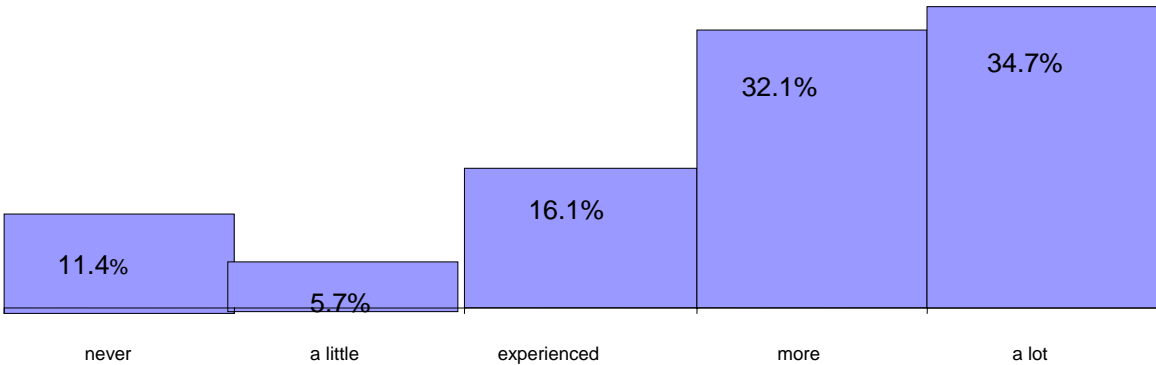
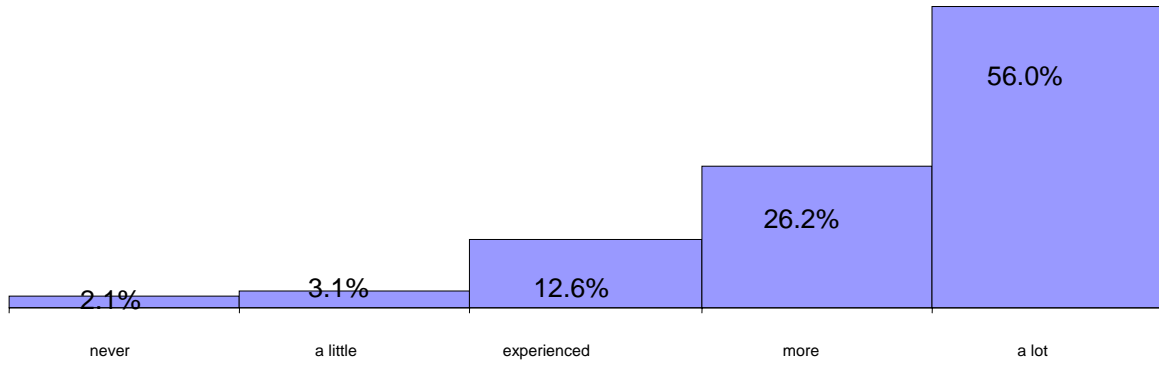


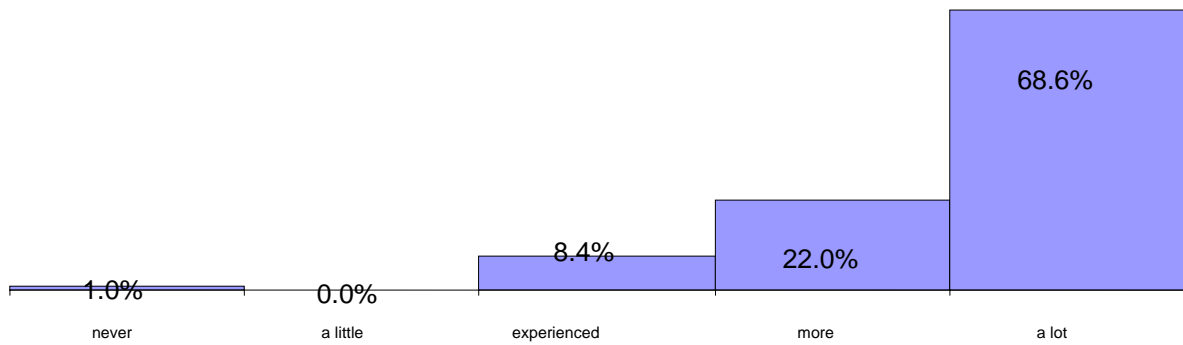
Figure G 3. Expert Feedback Language
N=193

Appendix H

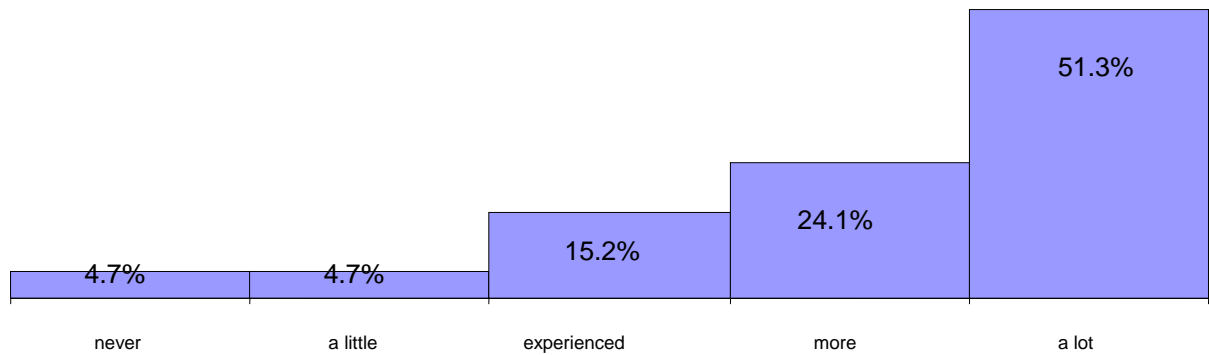
Percent of Teachers Who Would or Did Find their Coach Using Feedback Language Helpful: Responses on Questionnaire to How Helpful Each Language Set was or would be?



**Figure H 1. Mirror Feedback Language
N=191**



**Figure H 2. Collaborative Feedback Language
N=191**



**Figure H 3. Expert Feedback Language
N=191**

Appendix I

Results of Focus Group Discussion Chart^a
Types of Knowledge Fostered by Coaching Activities and Styles of Feedback Language

Coaching Activities	Type of Knowledge									
	Conceptual Knowledge					Procedural Knowledge				
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
Teacher materials	4	1	3	1	2	0	0	0	1	2
Student materials	3	2	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Book club	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Workshop	4	2	3	2	2	0	1	1	2	3
Analysis of student work	2	2	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Problem solve literacy issues	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0
Modeling	5	5	4	4	5	0	0	0	4	4
Video discussion	4	5	3	3	2	1	1	1	2	2
Co-teaching	5	4	3	1	2	4	3	2	1	2
Colleagues visits	4	4	2	4	5	5	2	1	4	2
Observation of teacher w/ feedback	4	4	3	0	2	1	1	1	0	0
Observation of student w/ feedback	4	2	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
Feedback Language										
Mirror	3	4	3	1	2	1	1	1	1	3
Collaborative	4	4	2	3	4	1	1	1	2	4
Expert	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1
^A Build awareness					^F Try new learning out					
^B Break pre-con theories					^G Problem solve and collaborate					
^C Learn literacy instructional language					^H Practice new learning					
^D Experience new info.					^I Value and adjust prior belief					
^E Form opinions					^J Part of teaching repertoire					

^aNumber of teachers who checked each coaching activity or style of feedback language as being helpful to foster a specific type of conceptual or procedural knowledge.

Appendix J

Coding Sheet used by Coders to Code Teachers' Discussion

Table J1

Coding Sheet used by Coders to Code Teachers' Discussion of Coaching Activities

Coaching Activities	Principles of Effective Professional Development				
	Teacher found helpful	On-going interactions with colleagues	Teacher autonomy	Teachers to actively construct their knowledge	Classroom coaching with practice and feedback
Teacher materials					
Student materials					
Book club					
Workshop					
Analysis of student work					
Problem solve literacy issues					
Modeling					
Video discussion					
Co-teaching					
Colleagues visits					
Observation of teacher w/ feedback					
Observation of student w/ feedback					

Table J2

Coding Sheet used by Coders to Code Teachers' Discussion of Coaching Styles of Feedback Language

		Principles of Effective Professional Development			
Styles of Feedback Language	Teacher found helpful	On-going interactions with colleagues	Teacher autonomy	Teachers to actively construct their knowledge	Classroom coaching with practice and feedback
Mirror feedback					
Collaborative feedback					
Expert feedback					

Appendix K

Summary and Teacher Quotes from Focus Group Discussion by 9 Coaching Activities

1. Coach Sharing Resource Materials to Support Teacher Learning

Summary of the Group Discussion	
On-going	Teachers agreed that the “collaborative nature” of their coach sharing resource materials “definitely” helped with “reviewing, revisiting, and trying materials out”.
Teacher Autonomy	The coach shared some core materials but teachers were encouraged to “pool” their knowledge and “come up with materials together”.
Teachers to actively construct knowledge	Teachers stated that their coach engaged them in reviewing their own materials and then trying them out with students.
Classroom environment with practice and feedback	Teacher collaborated using teacher resource materials shared by their coach as a “blue print” to “come up with materials together” to use in their instructional practice.
Other	No data available
Number of Teachers who Responded with Verbal and Non-verbal Responses	
On-going	All responded with affirmation to colleagues’ comments
Teacher Autonomy	All responded with affirmation to colleagues’ comments
Teachers to actively construct knowledge	All responded with affirmation to colleagues’ comments
Classroom environment	All responded with affirmation to colleagues’ comments

with practice and feedback	
	No data available
Teacher Quotes	
On-going	<p>There's definitely a difference when you just get materials versus materials with a literacy coach helping you go through the materials.</p> <p>We kind of pool our knowledge... And come up with materials together</p> <p>It really was absolutely that collaborative nature because we are always buying books but you talk about it and a lot of times you see it and you say, "aha and hmm" and then you hear someone talk about HOW (overly stressed voice) they used it and you say, "I LOVE that idea" and I've already tried this lesson but I need to go back, but we all need to go back sometimes to revisit and review and then you can try it out and its all so exciting.</p>
Teacher Autonomy	<p>We kind of pool our knowledge. And come up with materials together</p> <p>I didn't read the same books that they suggested in (the writing program) but I applied the books I had ...looking for the same objectives.</p>
Teachers to actively construct knowledge	<p>We kind of pool our knowledge. And come up with materials together</p> <p>you say, "I LOVE that idea" and I've already tried this lesson but I need to go back, but we all need to go back sometimes to revisit and review and then you can try it out and its all so exciting.</p>
Classroom environment with practice and feedback	<p>Come up with materials together and follow the blue print that (core materials) had but using these other material</p> <p>We in third grade used even books that were selected for 4th grade reading with the same idea of (the writing program) that illustrated certain aspects or objectives... and then sharing every Thursday morning what we had been doing (using professional writing books as a resource) was wonderful</p>
Other	No data available

2. Coach Sharing Resource Materials to Support Student Learning

Principles of Effective Professional Development	Summary of the Group Discussion
On-going	Teachers agreed that on-going collaboration and “hearing someone else talk about how they used” books with students” was a “valuable” experience.
Teacher Autonomy	Teachers had choice in which materials to use to support student learning.
Teachers to actively construct knowledge	Teachers were actively engaged in selecting additional materials for students by comparing, contrasting, and sorting books by select criteria found in “mentor text”.
Classroom environment with practice and feedback	Teachers used core materials shared by their coach as “mentor text” with their students. One teacher engaged her students to find “other texts that showed the same components”.
Other	No data available
Number of Teachers who Responded with Verbal and Non-verbal Responses	
On-going	All teachers responded
Teacher Autonomy	Two teachers responded
Teachers to actively construct knowledge	Three teachers responded
Classroom environment with practice and feedback	Three teachers responded
Other	No data available
Teacher Quotes	

On-going	<p>I buy books all the time, I get books for gifts, I have books all the time, but to hear someone else talk about how they used it with their students to make it a meaningful book rather than just a fun story to read makes it just that much more valuable</p> <p>We in third grade used even books that were selected for 4th grade reading with the same idea of (the writing program) that illustrated certain aspects or objectives... and then sharing every Thursday morning what we had been doing (with the books in the classroom) was wonderful.</p>
Teacher Autonomy	Come up with materials together
Teachers to actively construct knowledge	<p>Come up with materials together ...using (trade books) other material</p> <p>And that's a little different than how we've been looking at literature previously...yea we were looking at materials just a little bit differently too because they became mentor text.</p>
Classroom environment with practice and feedback	Now I've got another book to share with the children and it showed that same component. And then it really got exciting because the children themselves would start looking for it in their own reading and often you'd say, "Oh, I see an ellipse or I hear a come back line"...
Other	No data Available

3. Coach Presenting Literacy Information in a Workshop

Principles of Effective Professional Development	Summary of the Group Discussion
On-going	Teachers agreed that follow-up collaborative sharing sessions during a workshop format presented by their coach helped with solidifying new learning.
Teacher Autonomy	Teacher did not indicate from any of their responses that having a coach present literacy information in a workshops offered opportunities for teachers to have ownership or not in their learning process.
Teachers to actively construct	Teacher found engagement in activities during the workshop helped with building a common language of terms.

knowledge	
Classroom environment with practice and feedback	Teachers stated it was helpful when the coach offered teachers the opportunity to go into classrooms during the workshop to experience and try out new learning. It helped them to try out new learning in their own classrooms.
Other	All agree workshops were good for building awareness but did not find it helpful to build knowledge beyond a general understanding of planting language and only one thought it was helpful to break pre-conceived theories.

Number of Teachers who Responded with Verbal and Non-verbal Responses

On-going	Four teachers responded
Teacher Autonomy	N/A
Teachers to actively construct knowledge	Three teachers responded
Classroom environment with practice and feedback	All teachers responded
Other	Four teachers responded with a mix of agreement and disagreement to colleagues' comments about this topic

Teacher Quotes

On-going	<p>When we come for subsequent workshops , ...we meet every month we would come back and there would be a lot of feedback about how did that work for you, ah..., or what did you do that was a little different to make it work better for you versus for me...</p> <p>I liked coming back because some of the things we revisited you kind of have it, but sometimes you need a second dose to sort of help it gel.</p> <p>For what it's worth, it so big (the writing program kit of materials) when you first sit down and look at nine volumes and how much time you already don't have in the day and that you are a week or two in realizing that you are not facing it alone and so it truly becomes for me it has to become a "we". And I know I'll be a bit more on my own next year but that's fine because I've had nine months of a "we" and I hope that my literacy coaches will want to be up as part of the "we" as they can (next year)...</p> <p>I'd say no one can do it alone, I mean to reiterate it is a collaborative process .</p>
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Teacher Autonomy	N/A
Teachers to actively construct knowledge	<p>They had us do little activities where... so we weren't just sitting there listening...</p> <p>It definitely helps you plant the language because we were using common term</p> <p>It definitely does that(plant language)</p>
Classroom environment with practice and feedback	<p>We went into the classrooms and we tried it with other people's children...</p> <p>Oh, definitely sometimes we did and that was the part I was thinking about ... we would work in small groups too with the kids... helps you go back to your classroom and try it</p> <p>We went in to the classrooms and actually experienced it...</p> <p>It was just an enriching experience all the way around from the first day that we step into the classroom (as part of the workshop).</p>
Other	<p>I liked it because; um...it was one way of just kind of giving you an overview of what research was showing. And so it wasn't like oh, let's try this maybe it will work...there was actually a reason why we were willing to take the chance to do it...</p> <p>Break through preconceived notions? ...no</p> <p>Helps you with understandings, it didn't lead really to implementation</p>

4. Coach Facilitating Analysis of Student Work

Principles of Effective Professional Development	Summary of the Group Discussion
On-going	Teachers found it helpful to construct, use, and revise “assessment tools...as a group” that “would work best” with their students.
Teacher Autonomy	Teachers and coach together constructed a writing rubric that would be used to analyze student work specific to their students' needs.
Teachers to actively construct knowledge	Teachers actively used their knowledge to construct a writing rubric.
Classroom	Teachers used an assessment tool they constructed with their coach in their

environment with practice and feedback	instructional practice.
Other	
Number of Teachers who Responded with Verbal and Non-verbal Responses	
On-going	Three teachers responded
Teacher Autonomy	Two teachers responded
Teachers to actively construct knowledge	Two teacher responded
Classroom environment with practice and feedback	Two teacher responded
Other	
Teacher Quotes	
On-going	It was helpful with coming up with assessment tools, I thought that was neat...as a group we came up with the rubric that we thought would work best for our class and we'll tweak it for next year I'm sure.
Teacher Autonomy	We didn't actually go with the (writing program) rubric at the back (of the book) we used that as a starting point and... Used as a model... and went from there
Teachers to actively construct knowledge	We came up with the rubric that we thought would work best for our class...
Classroom	But it also lets us know what we'll be looking for in our conference when we

environment with practice and feedback	conferred with the kids so we actually knew what we could look for...
Other	

5. Coach Facilitating Problem Solving on Literacy Issues

Principles of Effective Professional Development	Summary of the Group Discussion
On-going	Teachers stated that “regular” opportunities for “problem-solving together”, collaboration, and “informal conversations” were helpful to “recharged” them.
Teacher Autonomy	One teacher reflected on the excitement of problem-solving and playing a role in her “staff development” by working “together” to “design” and “own it”.
Teachers to actively construct knowledge	One teacher shared her excitement in her role in coming together to problem solve and redesign a school-based writing initiative.
Classroom environment with practice and feedback	Teachers found it helpful to problem solve and “actually talk about what (they) we’re actually doing” in their “own classrooms”.
Other	One teacher found it helpful when her coach took on the role as an expert and “showed her how to manage” and work through instructional issues.

Number of Teachers who Responded with Verbal and Non-verbal Responses	
On-going	All teachers responded
Teacher Autonomy	One teacher responded

Teachers to actively construct knowledge	One teacher responded
Classroom environment with practice and feedback	Two teachers responded
Other	One teacher responded

Teacher Quotes

On-going	<p>They lived the successes and the joys and even some of the frustrations and helped us problem-solve together</p> <p>What's going on, what's going well, what's not working, just to be able to collaborate. Like Mary said before about having the learning community together just to talk about what's happening.</p> <p>Very informal conversations, it was structured so that we met regularly but it was informal enough that we could kind of bring what was happening.</p> <p>There's all that potential to say ah, I'm just tired today and its sometimes easier to fall back into old habits that are not necessarily better habits and by having somebody who you knew was going to be there and help you work through it...it recharge you and kept you fueled so that YOU COULD DO IT</p> <p>It wasn't like O.K we did one year and now we're done, move on to the next thing, like so often its just a one year thing and then boom (sound of hands clapped together) here's another thing we were reflecting every day every week and then at the end of that 1st year we really reflected and we thought about what really worked and how could we make it better</p> <p>Also to problem-solve things that perhaps were not going well and to just you know talking to other people about the same things that we're doing that they're doing is you know just helpful to the kids. I think as many people sharing their thoughts and their ideas makes everybody grow as educators.</p>
Teacher Autonomy	<p>I have to admit that first year I had a few reservations just like we often do with many staff developments activities but going back and really reflecting on it and working on it some more over the summer and then implementing it with a slightly new design that we had come together and design, it was ours, we owned it...it was so exciting</p>
Teachers to	<p>...Working on it some more over the summer and then implementing it with a</p>

actively construct knowledge	slightly new design that we had come together ...it was so exciting, it really was exciting that 2 nd year
Classroom environment with practice and feedback	We could talk about what was happening in our own classroom which is the most beneficial thing because hearing all the theory and this and that and the other thing is not as helpful as actually talking about what we're actually doing.
Other	Well, my coach showed me how to manage my time to begin with and how I can integrate things in order to get the reading across, how writing should benefit the reading part because I was managing the reading because we are tested in reading and not writing so I needed to get the reading more that the writing but she manifested my confidence that the writing was going to benefit the reading and so we kept going for more periods of time and I think that is the biggest thing and I hope it shows in the scores

6.Coach Modeling Lessons

Principles of Effective Professional Development	Summary of the Group Discussion
On-going	Modeling by coach that included discussion with the teacher during the demonstration was helpful to support inquiry and reflection.
Teacher Autonomy	One teacher shared that she had ownership in the process by decided and telling the coach what to model for her students
Teachers to actively construct knowledge	One teacher found it helpful for her coach to model practices that she had questions about.
Classroom environment with practice and feedback	Teachers perceived modeling by their coach in their classroom “tremendously” helpful to “value and adjust practice” in their classroom.

Other	
Number of Teachers who Responded with Verbal and Non-verbal Responses	
On-going	Two teachers responded
Teacher Autonomy	One teacher responded
Teachers to actively construct knowledge	One teacher responded
Classroom environment with practice and feedback	One teacher responded
Other	
Teacher Quotes	
On-going	Another thing I liked is...I would have a question about something and ask how would she (literacy coach) do it ... we would be discussing with the children (our point of view
Teacher Autonomy	I would tell (the coach) would you explain from your point of view what does "point of view" mean to the children? And she would get up and demonstrate
Teachers to actively construct knowledge	Once in a while I would have a question about something and ask how would she do it... would present it to the class

6. Coach Facilitating Discussion of Videos

Principles of Effective Professional Development	Summary of the Group Discussion
On-going	Teachers did not indicate from any of their responses that having a coach facilitating a discussion of videos offered them opportunities to learn or not from collaboration.
Teacher Autonomy	Teachers stated that watching a video facilitated by their coach “may break preconceived theories” of literacy instruction and be helpful to teacher to take ownership of learning.
Teachers to actively construct knowledge	One teacher stated that she found watching videos was helpful for procedural knowledge.
Classroom environment with practice and feedback	Teachers did not indicate from any of their responses that having a coach facilitating a discussion of videos offered them opportunities to learn or not in their classroom environment.
Other	Teachers stated that a discussion of videos “helps with breaking pre-conceived theories” and “with understandings “but it “didn’t lead really to implementation”.
Number of Teachers who Responded with Verbal and Non-verbal Responses	
On-going	
Teacher Autonomy	Three teachers responded
Teachers to actively construct knowledge	One teacher responded
Classroom environment with practice and feedback	

Other	Two teachers responded
Teacher Quotes	
On-going	
Teacher Autonomy	Just watching a video (of another teacher)... broke my preconceived notions that we had to be scripted...and be like (the author of the writing program)... because when I saw her (another classroom teacher in a video teaching in her classroom) ... it was completely her (that classroom teacher integrating her knowledge with the writing kit) and then I said O.K. gosh, whoosh, that just lifted that weight right off and from there on out we just sailed...so..(we knew we could make it our own not just follow the scripted program)
Teachers to actively construct knowledge	I get so much out of watching someone actual doing it. So I know exactly what I'm going to do or not to do... videos can be a model.
Classroom environment with practice and feedback	
Other	Helps you with understandings but it didn't lead really to implementation... it helped and it was nice to see Help you break preconceived theories... right.

7. Coach Co-teaching Lessons

Principles of Effective Professional Development	Summary of the Group Discussion
On-going	Teachers overwhelming agreed that the "collaborative " nature of co-teaching was helpful.
Teacher	Teachers stated that it was "really helpful" to share ownership of lessons with

Autonomy	their coach and “everyone” benefited.
Teachers to actively construct knowledge	Teachers agreed that “you always learn from someone else” when co-teaching lessons with their coach. They actively constructed knowledge by observing, applying, and refining new learning.
Classroom environment with practice and feedback	All five teachers agreed that Co-teaching was number one out of all 12 activities in supporting implementation of new ideas back in the classroom.
Other	Teachers commented “co-teaching keeps you on track”, unlike some other less helpful professional development.

Number of Teachers who Responded with Verbal and Non-verbal Responses

On-going	All teachers responded
Teacher Autonomy	All teachers responded
Teachers to actively construct knowledge	Three teachers responded
Classroom environment with practice and feedback	All teachers responded
Other	Two teachers responded

Teacher Quotes

On-going	<p>Having someone else in our classroom... And watching someone else’s style of teaching that might be different from ours... really nice to observe and then we were kind of just inserting pieces here and there</p> <p>I thought the co-teaching definitely the most helpful. Working with (my coach) ... no one can do it alone...it is a collaborative process .</p> <p>We could talk about what was happening in our own classroom which is the most beneficial thing because hearing all the theory and this and that and the other</p>
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	<p>thing is not as helpful as actually talking about what we're actually doing</p>
<p>Teacher Autonomy</p>	<p>That was really, really helpful when my coach came in and showed exactly what was expected of me. And then had me take ownership...</p> <p>Well this year was different for me... I had a lot of difference people in my room daily and so for me having to give up some ownership not by choice some of my teaching ... um it was good for me and good for the children... everybody was enriched by everybody else's experience and the children can see that we all work together ... all truly work together for everyone's benefit.</p> <p>(Co-teaching) ...and then we kind of took over...at least for our experience, I don't know about your experiences...</p> <p>(other teachers confirmed) a hum...yea..</p>
<p>Teachers to actively construct knowledge</p>	<p>Building confidence on yourself because now you know what works, what didn't, what to do better, but I definitely feel more comfortable and confident for next year and where to manage things and adjust to my students.</p> <p>The co-teaching was my favorite that really helped with implementation... to see how someone else did something, used the computer and instead of longhand, oh, I didn't think to use the computer ... streamlining things for myself and other were like, "oh, we didn't think about that" and I even shared some of that in some of our meetings that we had at the other schools. SO all of that. You know you always learn from someone else.</p>
<p>Classroom environment with practice and feedback</p>	<p>By having somebody who you knew was going to be there and help you through it...</p> <p>That was really; really helpful my coach came in and showed exactly what was expected...</p> <p>It was great to have a partner</p> <p>You know I'm the old dog that thought there was no new tricks , (but) that. And not just for one year but really long lasting meaningful way ...that was so important and it probably is the best staff development...</p> <p>Working with (my coach) she was able to just jump in if she thought I missed something and it wasn't a big deal but it was really cool. It made the lesson go really good and seamlessly keeping game on track, you know it was nice.</p> <p>Co-teaching and having colleagues that support you ... that helps you actual implement and change your practice. Really change it profoundly."</p>

Other	<p>Yeah and this is sort of like a shotgun (everyone laughs) where you get a shot and where you hope its going to stick with you before you say O.K. I'm too busy, I'm gonna go on to something else, this (pointing to co-teaching on chart) is what keeps you on track</p> <p>Having a coach coming into my room and who can do something really new that had never happened. Let's face it in the old days if something was going on you sent your children out to the reading teacher and she took care she weaved her magic and she did something AND NOW (emphasized it) we're the ones who get to weave the magic and we're learning from our literacy coaches. They are guiding us.</p>
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8. Coach Facilitating Colleagues Visits

Principles of Effective Professional Development	Summary of the Group Discussion
On-going	Teachers stated that the "collaborative nature "of colleague visits were helpful to socially construct knowledge by "problem-solving" and "sharing their thoughts and ideas" from visiting each others classrooms.
Teacher Autonomy	Teachers stated that visiting colleagues was helpful to validate their "own understandings" and encourage them in "taking ownership" of the writing program they were implementing in their classroom.
Teachers to actively construct knowledge	Teachers shared that a coach facilitating colleague visits created opportunities for them to "reflect and think "about their own practices. Specifically, "every time I went into somebody else's classroom I picked up new things that I could take back with me...for my own understanding and to help my kids with what they were working on."
Classroom environment with practice and feedback	Teachers stated that visiting colleagues in their classrooms helps with reflection on their practice and "at times challenges their prior beliefs" about instructional practices.
Other	All agree visiting colleagues was helpful to break pre-conceived and prior beliefs theories but was less helpful in problem-solving with feedback in regards to their own students

Number of Teachers who Responded with Verbal and Non-verbal Responses	
On-going	All teachers responded
Teacher Autonomy	Three teachers responded
Teachers to actively construct knowledge	Four teachers responded
Classroom environment with practice and feedback	All teachers responded
Other	Four teachers responded

Teacher Quotes	
On-going	<p>The literacy coach was helpful when we had our meetings through out the year whether here at Henderson or at our partner school... we got to go into other teachers' classrooms ...and (talk with them about) what they were doing with their kids</p> <p>It's neat to see the way somebody else did the same lesson that I was going to be doing or the same lesson I did yesterday. And to see how their kids responded. And what they might have said a little bit We had weekly meetings ...to talk about what we had seen at the other school ...</p> <p>Your colleagues at your school and at the other school... it was really an expanded community of learning.</p> <p>I agree definitely it is the collaborative nature of this program that makes its so successful and such a positive, um learning experience for me as a teacher because I am able to discuss what I 'm doing with other people who are doing the same thing. And so we're able to talk about um things that have worked out really well and share our triumphs and also to problem-solve things that perhaps were not going well and to just you know talking to other people about the same things that we're doing that they're doing is you know just helpful to the kids. I think as many people sharing their thoughts and their ideas makes everybody grow as educators.</p> <p>We had weekly meetings here too where we got to talk about what we had seen at the other school we were at or also about what we were doing in our</p>

	<p>classrooms. What was working, I put that with implementation part also, you know what's going on, what's going well, what's not working, just to be able to collaborate. Like Mary said before about having the learning community together just to talk about what's happening.</p>
Teacher Autonomy	<p>(Validated) my own understandings</p> <p>(Teacher's comment about watching a colleague's video lesson) O.K. well then we don't have to be little Lucys (author of school-based writing program) we can be ourselves. And so taking ownership... it was my program, you know with my name on it, just provided somewhat by this woman and go from there and what was going to work for my children and my class</p>
Teachers to actively construct knowledge	<p>Every time I went into somebody else's classroom I picked up new things that I could take back with me, um...for my own understanding and to help my kids with what they were working on.</p> <p>It helps you reflect and think (break through preconceived theories was topic of discussion)...</p> <p>...if I thought something wasn't working at all in my classroom and I went somewhere else and it did...</p>
Classroom environment with practice and feedback	<p>If you saw something really dynamic when you're visiting your colleagues, it could definitely impact upon your prior beliefs... For example, after teaching kindergarten for many, many years, I might have said, well this is not for kindergarten. But, ...you see how well its working in a kindergarten class and you know what these kindergarten they could do...(it impacts your prior beliefs)</p> <p>Also colleague visits...help me adjust my way of teaching ... I think those two (colleague visits and modeling) might have influenced tremendously my adjustments (in my classroom).</p> <p>They are all doing the same thing so to see how someone else is doing it and how their students respond...sometimes we think oh I'm glad I did it this way because my students seem to have gotten it more deeper than these kids or ... the opposite of that, my kids didn't get this at all but what this teacher just did is something I'm going to take back with me and try so that my students can understand it better.</p>
Other	<p>Builds awareness um,...it reinforces that language, that common language we all are using...</p> <p>I think it impacted and adjusted because I started doing things differently...</p> <p>Which activity would you choose next as most helpful following your first choice of Co-teaching?</p>

I think the colleague visits were very helpful with
implementation...

Definitely...

(All teachers): uh ha, yeah

For me too

Appendix L

Summary and Teacher Quotes from Focus Group Discussion by Three Styles of Feedback Language

1. Mirror Style of Feedback Language

Summary of the Group Discussion	
On-going	Teachers found having a coach use mirror style of feedback language offered opportunities for building awareness as they collaborated.
Teacher Autonomy	Teachers did not indicate from any of their responses that having a coach use mirror style of feedback language offered opportunities for teachers to have ownership or not in their process.
Teachers to actively construct knowledge	Teachers did not indicate from any of their responses that having a coach use mirror style of feedback language offered opportunities to actively construct or not their knowledge
Classroom environment with practice and feedback	Teachers found having a coach use mirror style of feedback language offered opportunities for them to affirm "what you do".
Other	No data available
Number of Teachers who Responded with Verbal and Non-verbal Responses	
On-going	Two teachers responded
Teacher Autonomy	
Teachers to actively construct knowledge	

Classroom environment with practice and feedback	Two teachers responded
other	No data available
Teacher Quotes	
On-going	Set A language would help build awareness I like A best
Teacher Autonomy	
Teachers to actively construct knowledge	
Classroom environment with practice and feedback	I really like set A because it almost approves what you do, it agree with you and complements what you did. It shows that you were listening (when they made suggestions)... you were captivated by what they did and whoever did the job, um, ah ...you are please with the success I like A... we (coach and teacher) were connected in the classroom and doing the lesson... and when I needed something ...I just feel that set A works for me. I liked it.

2. Collaborative Style of Feedback Language

Summary of the Group Discussion	
On-going	Teachers found having a coach use collaborative style of feedback language offered multiple opportunities for building procedural and conceptual knowledge. Teachers perceived the collaborative nature of this style of feedback to support learning in a partnership format that fostered reflective practice.
Teacher	Teachers found collaborative style of feedback language “more positive” and

Autonomy	“challenged” them to take ownership with self reflecting questions and comments.
Teachers to actively construct knowledge	Teachers found having a coach use collaborative style of feedback language “absolutely helped with implementation of the new practice” and offered them opportunities to be “reflective”.
Classroom environment with practice and feedback	Teachers found having a coach use collaborative style of feedback language as they worked together in classroom settings benefitted teachers and students.
Other	No data available

Number of Teachers who Responded with Verbal and Non-verbal Responses

On-going	All teachers responded
Teacher Autonomy	Three teachers responded
Teachers to actively construct knowledge	Three teachers responded
Classroom environment with practice and feedback	Three teachers responded
Other	No data available

Teacher Quotes

On-going	<p>Set B was good</p> <p>I like B best</p> <p>I like B better because I feel for me its more of the co-teaching rather that A and C...</p> <p>I thought B first originally was the most positive and collaborative and um the questions, the last two, “How did you think it went...” and “What would you like</p>
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your students..." are very reflective questions

Probably for taking the next step, B...but then again we kind of probably flow between those different sets...

Set B language would help build awareness

Set B would help experience the new practice

Set B would help (with) value and adjust prior beliefs... for what it's worth, it's so big (the writing kit of materials) this is so big, when you first sit down and look at nine volumes and how much time you already don't have in the day and that you are a week or two in realizing that you are not facing it alone and so it truly becomes for me it has to become a "we". And I know I'll be a bit more on my own next year but that's fine because I've had nine months of a "we" and I hope that my literacy coaches will want to be up as part of the "we" as they can (next year). I think it was especially helpful with having a new admin. this year, it was helpful to me for her to get to know what I'm about. It was helpful to the children to not be afraid of her so on and so forth...it was just an enriching experience all the way around from the first day that we step into the classroom.

Teacher
Autonomy

And I think for me set B is a more positive way of the language

Set B, it is a little more of a challenge ...someone is (having you) questioning what you have done.

Teachers to
actively
construct
knowledge

The two of us in a true co-teaching model of sharing ideas, the children are going to benefit twice

The questions, the last two, "How did you think it went..." and "What would you like your students..." are very reflective questions

Absolutely helped with implementation of the new practice

Classroom
environment
with practice
and feedback

The two of us (coach and teacher) in a true co-teaching model sharing ideas the children are going to benefit twice

Watching someone else's style of teaching that might be different from ours... that was really nice to observe and then we were kind of just inserting pieces here and there... just putting in a few suggestions or helpful hints or whatever to each other.

3. Expert Style of Feedback Language

Summary of the Group Discussion	
On-going	Teachers found it helpful to have their coach use expert style of feedback because it offered opportunities to experience new learning with language that served as a “model” .of “what is expected”.
Teacher Autonomy	Teachers had opposing views of their coach using an expert style of feedback language to support teachers’ taking ownership of their learning. One viewed expert language as” threatening” and another viewed it as a more knowledgeable colleague sharing “something that’s helpful to you”.
Teachers to actively construct knowledge	Teachers did not indicate from any of their responses that having a coach use expert style of feedback language offered opportunities or not to actively construct their knowledge.
Classroom environment with practice and feedback	One teacher found it helpful as her coach used expert style of feedback language to see “how other people do things.”
Other	No data available
Number of Teachers who Responded with Verbal and Non-verbal Responses	
On-going	Four teachers responded
Teacher Autonomy	Three teachers responded
Teachers to actively construct knowledge	
Classroom environment with practice	One teacher responded

and feedback	
	No data available
Teacher Quotes	
On-going	<p>Being a new teacher and having the experience literacy coach in there I LOVED (emphasized) getting things like set C, "Let me show you how to do this..." I love watching other people do things and show me things because I don't know everything, I don't proclaim to, I've only been teaching for 3 years, and I love seeing how other people do things</p> <p>And I had to have someone so I went straight down to see her and asked her to show me what is expected...</p> <p>When the coach models the words are implied or these imperatives are implied, you know...this is how I'm doing it and you can do it too.</p> <p>Set C would help experience the new practice</p>
Teacher Autonomy	<p>I like (all of them) better than C.</p> <p>Reflecting on that, I don't see that as someone coming down on me saying, "you need to do this you did it wrong...", I see it as "oh, I've done this before, this is what I tried last year and it might be something that's helpful to you..."</p> <p>(Response to above statement) I don't see that as...because some of us may have experience wording that someone having that attitude towards us, not necessarily in this building and it wasn't, and so you know what I'm saying is that we all bring experiences to the table...</p> <p>Threatening</p> <p>You're NOT going to TELL me...</p>
Teachers to actively construct knowledge	
Classroom environment with practice and feedback	And I love seeing how other people do things
other	No data available

Appendix M

Institutional Review Board Exempt Approval Letters for Research




Office of Research Compliance
Carmen T. Green, IRB Administrator
2000 Kraft Drive, Suite 2000 (0497)
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061
540/231-4358 Fax 540/231-0959
e-mail ctgreen@vt.edu
www.irb.vt.edu
FVA00000572 (expires 1/20/2010)
IRB # is IRB00000567

DATE: August 6, 2007

MEMORANDUM

TO: Rosary V. Lalik
Roberta Apostolakis

FROM: Carmen Green 

SUBJECT: **IRB Exempt Approval:** "Literacy Coaching & Feedback Language", IRB # 07-387

I have reviewed your request to the IRB for exemption for the above referenced project. I concur that the research falls within the exempt status. Approval is granted effective as of August 6, 2007.

As an investigator of human subjects, your responsibilities include the following:

1. Report promptly proposed changes in previously approved human subject research activities to the IRB, including changes to your study forms, procedures and investigators, regardless of how minor. The proposed changes must not be initiated without IRB review and approval, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects.
2. Report promptly to the IRB any injuries or other unanticipated or adverse events involving risks or harms to human research subjects or others.

cc: File

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Office of Research Compliance
 Institutional Review Board
 2000 Kraft Drive, Suite 2000 (0497)
 Blacksburg, Virginia 24061
 540/231-4991 Fax 540/231-0959
 e-mail moored@vt.edu
 www.irb.vt.edu


FWA00000572(expires 1/20/2010)
 IRB # is IRB00000667

DATE: May 27, 2008

MEMORANDUM

TO: Rosary V. Lalik
 Roberta Apostolakis

Approval date: 5/27/2008
 Continuing Review Due Date: 5/12/2009
 Expiration Date: 5/26/2009

FROM: David M. Moore 

SUBJECT: **IRB Expedited Approval:** "Teachers' Perspectives on Helpfulness of Approaches and Feedback Techniques Used by School-Based Literacy Coaches", IRB # 08-331

This memo is regarding the above-mentioned protocol. The proposed research is eligible for expedited review according to the specifications authorized by 45 CFR 46.110 and 21 CFR 56.110. As Chair of the Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board, I have granted approval to the study for a period of 12 months, effective May 27, 2008.

As an investigator of human subjects, your responsibilities include the following:

1. Report promptly proposed changes in previously approved human subject research activities to the IRB, including changes to your study forms, procedures and investigators, regardless of how minor. The proposed changes must not be initiated without IRB review and approval, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects.
2. Report promptly to the IRB any injuries or other unanticipated or adverse events involving risks or harms to human research subjects or others.
3. Report promptly to the IRB of the study's closing (i.e., data collecting and data analysis complete at Virginia Tech). If the study is to continue past the expiration date (listed above), investigators must submit a request for continuing review prior to the continuing review due date (listed above). It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain re-approval from the IRB before the study's expiration date.
4. If re-approval is not obtained (unless the study has been reported to the IRB as closed) prior to the expiration date, all activities involving human subjects and data analysis must cease immediately, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects.

Important:

If you are conducting **federally funded non-exempt research**, please send the applicable OSP/grant proposal to the IRB office, once available. OSP funds may not be released until the IRB has compared and found consistent the proposal and related IRB application.

cc: File

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