A TEACHER'S ROLE IN FEEDBACK AND INSTRUCTIONAL CONVERSATIONS IN A KINDERGARTEN ELA CLASSROOM

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Abstract

This teacher action research examines the role of the teacher and the use of feedback to support kindergarten students' language development. This study provides three emergent categories: A) Corrective feedback provided by the teacher with and without the option of the correct form of students' utterance. B) Student provided feedback: self-correction (no teacher influence) or correcting a classmate. C) Extending the conversation through teacher prompting and students collaborating in the meaning-making process. The findings showed providing feedback was beneficial to students' language development. The findings in this research study can be used to inform educators interested in the role feedback plays in language development as well as how they can most effectively provide feedback to student errors. Although educators' contexts may be different, the findings in this study may assist and guide them in discovering what methods and ways of providing feedback work best for them and their students.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

List of Excerpts

List of Appendices

Acknowledgements

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Growing up along the Kuskokwim River has shaped me into the person I am today and was what got me into the education field. Having a career that allowed me to live and work in Alaska has always been my goal, and teaching was the perfect option for me. Since becoming a teacher, I have always been interested in students' language development. I often wondered if I was providing enough support in helping them develop their language, especially because I was using different English Language Arts (ELA) programs that were new to me. Learning about feedback in my masters courses really triggered my interest even more and assisted me in developing this inquiry of the role feedback plays in students' language development that I am continually investigating and exploring in this thesis and in my daily instruction.

Growing up I spent the winter/school year in Bethel, Alaska and the summers at my family's homestead 300 miles upriver from Bethel on the Holitna River. I attended *Mikelnguut Elitnaurviat* for kindergarten through second grade in Bethel, Alaska and then was home schooled for third through fifth grade. For third and fourth grade I was in a private home school program with eight other students and then my mom home schooled my sister and me for the fifth grade. I then went back to public school for the rest of my schooling. During my three years of homeschool we did a lot of our learning in small groups, where we were allowed to converse a lot. This type of learning really made my learning experience enjoyable and meaningful. As hard as it was for my mom to get me to read, the one thing that really got me thinking about the texts was the conversations we had about the books. Also, being in a small, tight-knit learning environment allowed me to ask as many questions I needed to in order to understand the different topics and inquires I came across.

Given the opportunity to have discussions on the different subjects we were covering really helped me grow as a learner in elementary school, high school and into college. I have found that conversations and collaboration with others is one of the ways I learn best. In life and in our professions, we often look at what worked or works well, and we try to build on that. That is something I have been passionate about in my own teaching practices, because I had many positive learning experiences and outcomes from learning through conversing and collaborating with others interested in the same topics.

After graduating high school from Bethel Regional High School, I attended college at North Idaho Community College but knew I wanted to live and teach in rural Alaska, so I transferred to the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA). I graduated from UAA with a Bachelor of Arts in Early Childhood Education in 2014. My last year of college I was fortunate enough to move to Aniak, Alaska to do my yearlong internship and student teaching in Arnaq Morgan's first grade classroom at Auntie Mary Nicoli Elementary School (AMNES). I learned a lot through her mentorship and still do to this day. My time at AMNES started in 2013 with my yearlong internship and following that school year I was offered the kindergarten position and gratefully accepted it. I have been teaching kindergarten for five years and could not ask for a better school, staff and community to work with.

Education is constantly evolving in order to meet and support the needs of all students. As educators we play a very pivotal role in our students' success in language, literacy and assessments thought our instruction and relationships with them. Along with being up to date and informed on required curriculum, assessments and evolving theories, teachers' relationships and knowledge of their students is just as important, if not more. Having strong relationships with

my students plays a major role in their success in the classroom as well as guides me in my daily assessments and instruction.

I believe teachers should build strong, respectful and meaningful relationships with each student and teachers should be knowledgeable of each student's strengths, weaknesses and interests. According to Dyson (2015), "Teachers' constantly accumulating knowledge of their students' complex selves allows them to focus not on 'fixing' children, but on using that student knowledge to adapt or 'fix' their teaching efforts to connect with their children and support learning" (p. 205). In my class I do a lot of whole group instruction, collaborating with partners and group discussions. I have found that the stronger the relationships are, the more comfortable and supported students feel to share their knowledge, frustrations, confusions and share their successes.

Learning is primarily a meaning-making process and I am there to guide, provide the necessary materials, and scaffold students through this process in order to get them to become independent thinkers and lifelong learners. Learners strive to make sense of their experiences and through different lessons and activities I try to give them the opportunities to share their knowledge, experiences and understandings, through drawing, writing and collaborating with classmates.

The book *Choice Words* by Johnston (2004) provided many reminders and important information on how we as educators talk to our students and engage with them. One thing that stuck with me was, "indeed, the more we rely on expectations and standards, the harder it is to focus on what is going well" (p. 13). As educators we should find that line between following the required curriculum and standards as well as seeing through observations and authentic

assessments, what our students need, how we can best instruct them and help them notice what they are doing well and communicating how and why we are doing what we are doing.

Focus of my teacher action research

As educators our instruction and assessments need to be supportive and guided by cultural values and adapted for emergent bilinguals and their individual needs. Especially in Aniak where I live and teach, students do not speak Yugtun and/or Athabascan, but they do speak in a dialect of English specific to Aniak and the Mid-Kuskokwim. Directing my instruction towards their first language (L1) and culture is a part of my everyday instruction. Education and culture should be blended as often as possible. Students should be able to live and learn in a culturally relevant and respected environment and not see education and way of life as two separate things. By making connections between content and culture my instruction and assessment will be more valid and authentic. As a teacher and a researcher, I am constantly learning from my colleagues, students, community, adopted curriculums and the experiences I have in the classroom. The focus of this teacher action research (TAR) was a direct inquiry I developed working with my kindergarten students and wanting to know what would help their language development and how could I assist them better.

Just like in my own learning experiences, conversations and collaborating with others provided me the most significant and memorable leaning experiences and because of that I try to recreate those same learning experiences into my own classroom. When I started teaching I began to notice the way young students talk and communicate as they are beginning to develop more and more language. I noticed they often said things "wrong," omitted words in their sentences and struggled to come up with the right words when trying to explain something. Although most of students' errors in their oral language use are developmentally appropriate for

kindergarten age students, I was still curious about how I could assist them while still taking into consideration their developmental level.

My research questions

My inquiries on how students develop language and how I could best assist them in their learning is what led me to focusing my TAR on feedback. I knew in order to really help my students' language development that I would have to first focus on myself as the educator. I needed to look at how and when I provide feedback and the types of feedback I provide to assist students as well as my approach to the kinds of student errors I typically focus on. The following research questions guided me in my inquiry of the role of feedback in language development for kindergarten students:

1) When do I provide feedback?
2) What kind of utterance do I correct?
3) How do I provide feedback?

My research questions changed a few times throughout the process of this TAR, but this research study was conducted to see how I as the teacher use feedback to scaffold students' language development. I began this TAR with a few broader questions but as I got to know my data better, I began to focus my research on these specific questions because they were most appropriate to my context and my overarching curiosity. I was also curious to see how I play the role of the teacher and facilitator in creating and instructing classroom content and activities where all students are encouraged to collaborate and engage in conversations based on the content or subject being taught.

Importance of this TAR to the education field and teachers

Different researchers have conducted studies on language acquisition and feedback, some of which I will discuss in detail later in Chapter 2, but there is limited TAR about feedback in kindergarten, particularly in linguistic and cultural contexts similar to this one. Working with young children who are being introduced to the school structure and routines of learning environments is a very engaging and rewarding experience. Young children are constantly learning, developing and usually willing to engage in the learning environment. With more research conducted in the upper grades of primary and secondary education, I felt it was important to conduct this TAR in my kindergarten classroom. Language development is very important in the younger grades and being able to conduct research and provide my findings may be beneficial to others in the education field interested in or studying language development, as well as to early childhood educators interested in better supporting student's language development.

Conducting research on language development and including a range of age groups, while incorporating the role of feedback will be beneficial to the overall research and findings in this area of study. My TAR adds research and findings that not many other researchers have conducted, and overall helps to strengthen and expand on the subject of language development and the use of feedback, especially in a rural Alaska Native context. Not only has this TAR helped me grow in my understanding of the role of feedback and how I can best use it in my teaching practices, but I hope it can also help others in the field of education or those who are interested in the role of feedback and language development in Early Childhood Education.

The remainder of this thesis will dig deeper into the literature concerning the role of instructional conversations and feedback in Chapter 2. The methods of this study, including the

setting, participants, data collection and how it was analyzed is in Chapter 3. Findings from my data analysis are discussed in Chapter 4, and finally in Chapter 5 I will conclude my research and the implications as well as make recommendations to future researchers and educators.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The goal of this research was to investigate the *feedback* I provide to my kindergarten students during English Language Arts (ELA) instruction. All interactions in this teacher action research (TAR) occurred during ELA instruction and activities, where students engaged in instructional conversations with the whole group and amongst each other. I view feedback as a way to *scaffold* oral and written language use and structure. Through *instructional conversations* and communication during literacy events, students use their *funds of knowledge* and *prior knowledge* to make sense of the new content and to assist them in the meaning-making process in order to help build connections and achieve comprehension skills.

In this literature review, I will discuss the role instructional conversations play in supporting learning and language development in classrooms, as well as the strategies used to support instructional conversations. Scaffolding is an underlying principle in my daily teaching practice across all subject areas. It provides a platform for students to access their funds of knowledge and prior knowledge when addressing both old and new topics. Providing feedback to student errors assists in assessing how and why students produced the error and then allows the teacher to decide how to address the error. Feedback can be provided in different ways depending on the student's utterance and will be discussed in further detail later in this chapter.

Instructional conversations play an important role in teaching and learning through social activities and are critical for all stakeholders in the education system to engage in, because, as Tharp and Gallimore (1991) explain, "it is through instructional conversations that babies learn to speak, children to read, teachers to teach, researchers to discover, and all to become literate" (From Natural Teaching To Instructional Conversations section, para. 8). Instructional conversations promote supportive dialogue between teachers and learners as well as between

students. In instructional conversations, listening to understand what learners are saying is a key factor. Too often people listen with the sole purpose to provide a response based on their *own* understanding rather than the learner's. It takes time and practice to be a good listener, and to provide students with positive and supportive feedback.

What are instructional conversations?

In this literature review I will be referencing the definitions by both Tharp and Gallimore (1991) and Perez (1996) to help in explaining what instructional conversations are and how they play a role in language development. Instructional conversations do not take the same form of a conversation with a friend in the checkout line at the store; instead, instructional conversations are between teacher and student, or students, where all are in pursuit of new understanding. The academic topic or concept being discussed, and student participation are necessary elements of instructional conversations. Although the format of the conversations and amount of teacher involvement may vary depending on the age and ability of the speakers within the instructional conversation. The conversations taking place should be a mutual effort by all. Instructional conversations, as described by Perez (1996), focus on concepts and content required for academic success where the teacher creates the context or activity in which the instructional conversations take place. In particular, Perez (1996) notes, "when language arts education for elementary school children acquiring English shifts from conversational drills to child-relevant instructional conversations focused on concepts and content, children stand to benefit greatly" (p. 173).

Instructional conversations allow students to talk about what they are seeing, experiencing and thinking while engaging in classroom conversations. Conversations may have a direct focus but depending on students' knowledge, understanding and participation the

conversations can lead in different directions. Tharp and Gallimore (1991) discuss the fact that good instructional conversations may appear to be spontaneous to students, but they in fact are not spontaneous. They are purposeful. Student talk can be prompted by the teacher as the teacher addresses the content and students' language use and needs. Perez (1996) states that, "real instructional conversations can help learners establish connections between social worlds, prior experiences, and language to build meaningful new knowledge" (p. 181). They allow students to experiment with a variety of strategies to assist them in utilizing the language in a conversational manner among themselves, peers and their teacher. Students are engaging in meaningful conversations in which they are expressing their thoughts, gathering information needed by asking questions and listening and learning from adults and each other. In doing so, they are creating knowledge in the context in which they are learning and not being drilled on language features that are out of context and in an unnatural way. Table 2.1 displays what Perez (1996) describes the participants are doing within the context of conversations.

Table 2.1: What participants are doing within instructional conversations

Actions within Instructional Conversations	What participants are doing within instructional conversations (Perez, 1996, pp. 177-180)
Social Interactions	Students engaging in conversations and building upon each other's ideas, understandings, confusions and working together to develop language and understanding. The teacher can structure the social interactions to include students' culture and experiences as a way to engage students as active participants.
Scaffolding and Turn Taking	The teacher provides scaffolding to students in order to assist them in accomplishing the activity and to assist them in using the language skills they are working to acquire. The teacher also scaffolds and focuses students' attention to specific details or features necessary.
Language Experimentation and Approximation	Students are attempting to produce language and experimenting with the language they know as well as words their teacher has introduced in instruction in order to participate in conversations.
Making Connections and Meaning	Students are making connections with their own experiences as well as collaborating with peers to make meaning of new experiences.

As further described in Chapter 3, this research study followed the *Journeys* ELA program which provided all the topics and resources used in the lessons. Students' ideas, knowledge, interests, culture and inquiries were incorporated into the discussions and activities to help build language and make meaning. With that being said, students also played a major role in *steering* conversations and discussing what they felt were important or necessary to better make sense of the content. Tharp and Gallimore (1991) defined instructional conversations as "a dialogue between teacher and learners in which the teacher listens carefully to grasp the students' communicative intent, and tailors the dialogue to meet the emerging understanding of the learners" (Abstract section, para. 2). While the focus here is on the learners' meaning-making processes, the teacher has a role in creating the conditions under which instructional conversations can occur. This can be a difficult process for novice teachers who feel that they always need to provide feedback; additionally, not everything that takes place in classrooms has to be an instructional conversation. Along with creating the platform and providing the content for instructional conversations to take place, the teacher has many jobs within the delivery of the content. For example, the teacher is in charge of facilitating the instructional conversations as well as taking on a role as a listener in order to assist students in their language use and development.

The following example of Perez (1996) provided a real and contextualized conversation among students in a second/third grade language development class. Students were discussing their favorite places in the neighborhood and how to give directions to the specific place they would be visiting on the class walking field trip. Each student was going to act as a guide as they walked to each student's favorite place. Multiple students chose a nearby park as their favorite place, which stopped the discussion and led to each of the students talking about their favorite

thing at the park. Two students came up with the idea that each student would select their favorite spot at the park and give directions and guide the class to that specific location in the park during the walking field trip. Students in this class took part in instructional conversations daily and continued to use their developing English language skills as they actively engaged with one another and developed their oral English language conversational skills. This classroom was part of a second language program participating in

> an effort to find out what happens when teachers and students whose native language is not English are encouraged to engage in instructional conversations about concrete, contextualized learning experiences to form their own oral texts instead of being subjected merely to explicit lessons on "how to talk." (Perez, 1996, pp. 173-174)

The quote above gives a clear explanation of what teachers and students were trying to achieve through an interactive learning experience aimed to promote oral language conversational skills.

The example provided above, as well as others in Perez (1996), show that through instructional conversations, children were not only making connections with their own experiences, but they were also collaborating and constructing theories and understanding of new content and experiences. The teacher is not the only one who is actively engaging in listening carefully to students. Students also take on the role of active listeners in instructional conversations and tend to speak up and assist each other and even the teacher at times to help achieve understanding of the content being discussed. Perez (1996) elaborates on this by saying, "classroom instructional conversations must recreate true conversations in which both the teacher and students are engaged as partners in the pursuit of some new understanding" (p. 174). The example above did exactly that. The conversations students were having with each other and their teacher had them engaging with each other, problem solving and sharing information.

Conversations drew upon students' funds of knowledge and prior knowledge and allowed them to collaborate to better understand and make meaning when they needed to.

How do instructional conversations support learning?

Centering instruction of all subjects around meaningful conversations that assist in connecting students to the content through their prior experiences and new content allows them to acquire oral language as well as literacy skills. Whorrall and Cabell (2015) discussed the impact of oral language on reading and stated, "when teachers participate in and promote active listening, provide feedback to children's language, and model rich language, children are provided with opportunities to engage in conversations and increase their vocabulary knowledge" (p. 336). Instructional conversations focus on concepts and academic content, which are important factors in developing language, but must be done in a way that assists and supports students' learning.

The teacher plays an important role as the facilitator in order to assist students in thinking, repeating key ideas or things students have said in order to keep the communication clear. In playing the role of the facilitator, it is important for the teacher to use feedback to support students' development, but also to try and refrain from putting words in students' mouths. Teachers need to make sure the feedback they provide supports students in their thought process in order to assist them in communicating their message.

The teacher must create a supportive and engaging classroom where students feel safe and comfortable conversing and learning. Especially in early childhood, when students are developing their language and building a foundation for learning, it is crucial they feel comfortable using their language to converse and share their knowledge in meaningful ways. When students are engaged in meaningful conversations or activities created or facilitated by the

teacher, it shows them that what they bring to the conversation or activity is important and valued. It allows students to have a sense of belonging and ownership in the classroom. Creating meaningful conversations takes modeling and time because not all students are comfortable conversing or even used to conversing with others very often. Meaningful conversations take time and trust to develop, but once a teacher has developed strong relationships with their students and modeled conversational skills, rich and rewarding learning can take place.

What strategies are used to support instructional conversations?

Instructional conversations promote dialogue among the teacher and students and assist in conversations revolving around the content. By providing a setting where instructional conversations can occur, teachers can scaffold students' oral and written language development through meaningful activities where students are exposed to noticing their own utterances as well as their peers' utterances and using their understanding to make meaning. Johnston (2004) explains, "to notice—to become aware of—the possible things to observe about the literate world, about oneself, and about others can open conversations among students who are noticing different things" (p.13). Teachers' instruction and scaffolding assists students in the meaning-making process through opportunities to engage in classroom dialogue, which allows them to become more aware of their own language use and understanding. Johnston (2004) elaborates on the role of the teacher by saying, "the teacher has to make something of what children say and do. She makes sense for herself and offers a meaning for her students" (p. 5). Instructional conversations can occur during whole group activities where all learners participate in the discussions, between the teacher and the learners as well as when learners collaborate with each other.

Tharp and Gallimore (1991) provide seven strategies as displayed in Table 2.2 to assist performance, through modeling, feeding back, contingency managing, directing, questioning, explaining and task structuring (From Natural Teaching To Instructional Conversations section, para. 1).

Table 2.2: Seven ways to assist performance

Ways to assist performance thorough instructional conversations (Tharp & Gallimore, 1991, From Natural Teaching To Instructional Conversations)	Brief definition/description
Modeling	Teacher offers behavior for students to imitate.
Feeding back	Teacher provides information needed for student to perform and attempt to self-correct.
Contingency Managing	Applying principles of reinforcement and punishment on student behavior.
Directing	Teacher is requesting a specific action of student.
Questioning	Teacher assists student by giving information about students developing understanding.
Explaining	Teacher provides explanation to assist student learning.
Task Structuring	Teacher structures task to better fit students' zone of proximal development (ZPD)

When modeling, the teacher is offering behavior for imitation. Teachers are constantly modeling everything in the classroom from expected behaviors to the way we form letters and sentence structure. Modeling is a strategy that all good teachers use. Feeding back is when information is provided based on students' performance, which then allows students to self-correct or better understand. Teachers provide feedback in different ways, settings and contexts, and do so based on different focuses or beliefs. For example, Mackey and Oliver (2002) did a study on interactional feedback and children's L2 development because most of the existing

research at the time was on adults and the type and effectiveness of interactional feedback. Another example includes Lyster and Ranta (1997) and their study of corrective feedback and learner uptake in four primary level immersion classrooms. In their study they discussed the use of six different types of feedback and how learners responded to the types of feedback provided. Those specific types of feedback will be defined and discussed later in this paper.

A successful teacher is a good listener and is able to provide supportive feedback in order to help students develop the language and skills needed. According to Tharp and Gallimore (1991), when using contingency management, the teacher assists performance through rewards and punishment based on desired behavior. Providing students with positive reinforcement when doing something well helps promote the desired behaviors as well as helps students to understand what the undesired behaviors are in the classroom and during instruction. When creating a classroom community, it is important to model and set desired expectations from the first day in order for students to know what behaviors are expected of them as well as what they can expect from the teacher.

Another way to assist performance is through directing. As defined by Tharp and Gallimore (1991), "directing assists by specifying the correct response, providing clarify and information, and promoting decision-making" (From Natural Teaching to Instructional Conversations section, para. 1). Teachers often direct student learning as a way to lead them in the right direction but at times allow flexibility depending on students' needs. Along with directing is questioning to assist students' performance. Questioning assists students in a way that scaffolds them in producing what they cannot or would not produce on their own. Next is explaining, which assists students in organizing and understanding of new content. Teachers must gauge their ways of explaining things to students depending on the type of content being

explained and do so in a manner that will help students understand clearly. Lastly, Tharp and Gallimore (1991), discussed task structuring which is structuring a task to best fit students and their zone of proximal development (ZPD). Vygotsky defined the zone of proximal development (ZPD) as, "the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). Scaffolding of literacy events allows the teacher to enter the learners' ZPD and how they are interacting with the content and what type of assistance they may need in order to move towards independence.

These seven ways to assist performance, as defined and explained above, may look different among teachers and classrooms but all aim to assist teachers in instructional conversations so they can better assist student-performance. The strategies used to support instructional conversations are very important and can determine whether the learning outcome is positive and successful or negative and unsuccessful. This teacher action research (TAR) focuses on what Tharp and Gallimore (1991) call "feeding back," although throughout this TAR the term feedback will be used.

Ways teachers provide feedback within instructional conversations.

The different ways teachers provide feedback within instructional conversations that will be discussed in this section are through the following: scaffolding, accessing students' funds of knowledge and prior knowledge and through the use of the IRE and IRF structure.

Feedback and scaffolding.

Different researchers define scaffolding in different ways that make sense to their area of focus. One way a teacher can scaffold students' learning in instructional conversations is by

providing feedback. Jerome Bruner was the first person to use the term *scaffolding* and described it as a process that assists a child or novice in solving a problem, carrying out a task or achieving a goal which they would not be able to achieve on their own (Wood, Bruner & Ross, 1976, p. 90). For example, scaffolding students during literacy events allows teachers to assess what they know at the given time and helps direct the route of instruction to best fit their needs in learning new content.

The definition of scaffolding that best fits my ELA teaching practice and teacher action research is, "the teacher can assume a bigger role in shaping learner contributions by assisting them in what they want to say, asking for more details, and responding in meaningful ways to the message learners communicate" (Glisan & Donato, 2017, p. 48). This definition of scaffolding best relates to my teaching practices and my use of scaffolding students' oral and written language. For example, when doing a read aloud the teacher often stops and asks questions about the story. When doing so the teacher models turn taking and may develop different questions for different students depending on how well they may comprehend or retell stories. The teacher may also provide more time for certain students to stop, think and develop an answer or after asking a question where a student is noticeably struggling. The teacher may incorporate strategies that assist the student without drawing too much attention to them. Some strategies may be asking a friend to help out or through prompting to help guide the student through a few easier questions that may lead them back to the original question. During instructional conversations, one way to provide scaffolding is through feedback. In this study, I am focusing on my own practices relating to feedback.

Scaffolding can include teaching students' strategies to use when they are struggling to do something independently. For example, when teaching students letter recognition and sounds

the teacher can scaffold by modeling the way each sound is pronounced while directing their attention to picture cards and the alphabet strip, which most classrooms have displayed on a given wall in the room or on students' desks. In doing this the teacher is demonstrating a strategy students can eventually learn to do on their own. The theory is that by scaffolding, students are given the support needed when learning a new concept and to have a better chance at independently using their acquired knowledge.

When educators scaffold their students, they are providing students with the structure and support needed in learning something new, through modeling and demonstrating the necessary skills. The teacher then steps back and offers support as needed. This process helps students in their learning process and journey of becoming independent learners. Scaffolding occurs during the learning process and helps students bridge the gap between their current developmental level and their potential level of development.

Feedback and accessing funds of knowledge.

When scaffolding, it is important to have a strong relationship with each student in order to have a good grasp on their developmental level and what they can do independently verses what they can do with assistance. A second way teachers can provide feedback is by helping students to access their funds of knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992). ELA instruction in this teacher action research followed my school district's adopted ELA curriculum, *Journeys*, but the way I structured my lessons and presented the content incorporated students' *funds of knowledge* and how they best interact with the content, materials and each other in instructional conversations. I am able to do this through question and answers about vocabulary, sight words, texts and journaling, which I will go into more detail about later in my methodology chapter.

The term *funds of knowledge* is used to refer to cultural knowledge and acquired skills necessary for an individual's well-being that have been accumulated from life teachings and experiences (Moll et al., 1992, p. 133). The knowledge students bring to the classroom is important and valued and assists them in their personal meaning-making process of understanding different content. Not only do students' knowledge assist them in their learning, but it also assists the teacher in creating meaningful instruction that helps students connect their funds of knowledge to the content being taught. However, in Moll et al. (1992) the issue was brought up that teachers rarely utilize the funds of knowledge of their students' worlds outside of the classroom. One of the reasons was that teachers do not have a solid understanding of each and every student outside the context of the classroom. For this reason, drawing upon students' funds of knowledge played a major role in this TAR because it showed what students knew while supporting their learning through different literacy activities. Living in a small community where everyone knows each other and with social media it is fairly easy to see and know what students and their families are up to on a regular basis, whether I see them in the store and have a conversation or see pictures of a recent camping trip or vacation. Being able to know students and their families allows me to bring their out-of-school activities into the classroom.

Building strong relationships and having knowledge of students and their families is a very important aspect in teaching and can really assist in daily instruction. Moll et al. (1992) argue that "[the] teacher is the bridge between students' world, their and their family's funds of knowledge and the classroom experience" (p. 137). This is something that is the core of my teaching philosophy. As often as possible I try to draw upon my students' funds of knowledge in all subject areas as a way to guide them in making connections and meaning out of the content. Most often I draw upon students' funds of knowledge in the classroom based on the seasons and

the different activities students are participating in. For example, in the summer time students are fishing, berry picking and going to fish camp; in the fall they are moose hunting and putting away the last of their summer harvest of fish, berries, ducks and moose meat; during the winter they are snow machining, trapping, traveling on the ice road to nearby villages, gathering wood; and in the spring they are attending a lot of basketball tournaments and getting out of the house and doing more activities with the longer days and preparing for the river to break up.

Drawing upon students' funds of knowledge is easier when living a similar lifestyle and participating in the same activities as students year-round. Growing up in rural Alaska I feel I can connect my lifestyle and experiences with my students. I try to access students' funds of knowledge as much as possible because if they are able to connect what they know and understand with what they are learning in school they will better connect and enjoy learning. In my experience assisting students in accessing their funds of knowledge is a great way to get them to use their oral and writing language and they are a lot more willing and able to share when reflecting on things they are familiar with.

Feedback and prior knowledge.

Prior knowledge acts as a bridge between what students know and the new information being presented. A student's prior knowledge is everything they bring to understand something new. In this teacher action research study, funds of knowledge are referred to as the accumulated knowledge a student has acquired in their life time pertaining to their home life, community, culture and how they connect that knowledge to their education in school. The term prior knowledge in this research study is used to explain students' knowledge on a subject or topic previously covered in school and how they access that knowledge in their meaning making process of new content. Student's funds of knowledge and prior knowledge are accessed as often

as possible in instructional conversations and assist students in collaborating during ELA activities. In the following section a sequence strategy that supports teacher/student discourse in the classroom will be further discussed.

Feedback through IRE and IRF.

The focus and motivation behind this teacher action research came from an inquiry regarding the use of feedback, specifically with kindergarten students. I was interested in learning more about how teachers interact with students and more specifically how they respond to students either to evaluate, or to extend discourse. Many researchers have done studies on feedback and addressing students' errors produced in the target language. Of those researchers, as well as myself, many have followed the guiding questions as used by Hendrickson (1978) to help direct and address their specific research focus. Hendrickson (1978, p. 389) used a list of framing questions to address the issues of error correction in the classroom:

1. Should learners' errors be corrected?
2. If so, when should learners' errors be corrected?
3. Which learner errors should be corrected?
4. How should learner errors be corrected?
5. Who should correct learners' errors?

This list was used in one of the first comprehensive reviews regarding the issue of error correction in the classroom. Although some questions have received more attention than others it is dependent on the researcher's focus, concerns and what initial question they are seeking to answer.

Glisan and Donato (2017) discuss a commonly observed structure of classroom talk called IRE (initiates, responds, evaluates) and it is used to assess students' responses and

exchanges within the structure of classroom talk. IRE does not focus on meaning making, but more so on a specific grammatical structure or vocabulary. According to Glisan and Donato (2017), the IRE structure does not promote enough opportunity for collaboration, meaning-making and communication that occurs outside of the classroom world. For example, the IRE strategy would be beneficial if trying to elicit a particular grammatical form, such as verb tense or proper nouns. The teacher could use the IRE strategy to check if students have learned the particular grammatical item and then based on student responses the teacher would provide feedback to let the learner know if their response was correct or not and the exchange ends abruptly (Glisan & Donato, 2017).

Another strategy, called the IRF (initiates, responds, feedback,) was created as an alternate classroom strategy to the IRE classroom talk that occurred between the teacher and learners. IRF is a strategy used by Glisan and Donato (2017) and Wells (1993) to describe the discourse patterns between teachers and learners in language classrooms. The definition of IRF that is addressed in both Glisan and Donato (2017) and Wells (1993) is:

I: Initiation by the teacher usually in the form of a question

R: Response provided by the learner

F: Feedback provided by the teacher

Although some researchers support the use of IRF others feel it is not an effective strategy based on the fact that the discourse is too controlled by the teacher (Wells, 1993). The different views on this discourse format also stem from different theories and how educational goals can best be achieved. The difference and reason why some educators prefer to use the IRE structure according to Glisan and Donato (2017), is because it is, "motivated by the teacher's

desire to check whether the student has learned a particular grammatical structure or vocabulary item and then to inform the student whether his or her response was accurate or not" (p. 42). The difference between evaluation and feedback is, most of the questions the teacher asks have one correct or anticipated answer, which tends to take away from classroom conversations. In contrast, when a teacher provides feedback it provides learning experiences where students and teacher can be involved in communicative exchanges, with an end result of understanding, meaning-making and language development. Evaluation just lets the students know whether what they produced was "correct" or "incorrect" where feedback extends the conversation.

Another factor that plays into how much of the discourse is controlled by the teacher is the age and developmental level of the students. In my experience, the instructional conversations for young children need more controlling, but other times students can have more independence and collaborate more without the teacher's assistance. Conducting this TAR with young students it was necessary to control the structure in instructing and scaffolding students' language development and understanding of new content. The following section will cover another strategy used to provide specific types of feedback to student errors.

Should learner errors be corrected?

In the process of acquiring language, whether it be a first language (L1) or a second language (L2) (language) learners will produce errors in their utterances and that is part of the learning process. Hendrickson (1978) expressed, "teachers are reminded that people make mistakes when learning a new skill, but that people learn from their mistakes when they receive periodic, supportive feedback" (p. 388). Different researchers have presented different ideas on how and when feedback can and should be used, but ultimately more experimentation and

research will help validate the different ideas and claims. Hendrickson (1978) also states there has been a shift from preventing errors to learning from errors.

Feedback can be provided through the input and output strategies that will be further discussed in this section. In instructional conversations the input and output are through teacher provided feedback as well as students providing feedback to each other. The comprehensible output hypothesis was the work of Swain (1985) and was created in response to Krashen's (1982) input hypothesis. According to Krashen, comprehensible input, language input that can be understood by learners even if they cannot understand all the words, is the true way a learner acquires a second language. But acquisition happens only if the learner's affective filter, which facilitates or hinders language, is low enough to let language in. Another important aspect to note is that Krashen believed grammar did not need to be taught through a grammar sequence and he did not think explicit error correction was necessary. The focus was on input, the learners did not produce much language, so they did not make many errors, and if they did, they just needed more input (through recasting) according to this model. For Krashen and the input hypothesis it is more about learning mechanisms and subconsciously learning a language while Swain and the Output Hypothesis is more about becoming consciously aware or noticing the gap.

Swain (1985) states that even though "comprehensible input may be essential to the acquisition of second language, it is not enough to ensure the outcome will be nativelike performance" (p. 236). Swain believed that language learning occurs while speaking or writing the target language. Language learning occurs when the learner notices a gap in their language development and by noticing the gap, the learner can then modify their output in order to learn something new about the language and how to properly use the correct language. Swain and Lapkin (1998) noted three main functions of comprehensible output for second language

acquisition. Noticing is the first function; this is where language learners notice a gap in their language output and become aware of their use of language and how they produce it. Next, the hypothesis testing function is where language learners work to overcome the gap they are experiencing in their language acquisition and test out the language through trial and error. In this stage language learners may be provided corrective feedback through recasts and prompting, as presented by Lyster and Ranta (1997), to assist in their language development and output. Recasts and prompting will be further discussed in the next section.

The role of feedback can come into play when the learner is testing what they want to say or write in order to find if they are using the correct forms. The feedback provided can assist students in producing the correct utterance or to confirm the learners output. The next function is the metalinguistic function; this is where learners work towards closing the gap in their language acquisition. They develop metalinguistic knowledge and explicit understanding about how the language works. This is done through communication and also by learning the language system, in order to elicit the target language correctly. Learners are more aware of their output through their language fluency and through collaborating with others in the featured language.

Krashen (1982) and Swain (1985) take on different perspectives on language learning and how it is acquired. Krashen's focus on input rather than feedback is what he believed led to language acquisition. On the other hand, Swain's perspective added the importance of learners noticing the gap and hypothesis testing, which creates occasions for the teacher to provide feedback to learners. Teacher/student feedback as well as student/student feedback supports language development when students produce language.

Hendrickson's (1978) framing questions, as displayed above, found that overall correcting oral and written errors improves language learners' proficiency more than if their

errors were left uncorrected and although error correction is helpful it may not be an effective strategy for every student (p. 396). This all goes back to building strong relationships with students and being able to determine when and what type of feedback will assist students in their language development as well as what types of errors to address.

When addressing student errors, it is necessary to have a well-rounded understanding of the student, where they are in their language development and their background. Students will benefit from having their errors corrected in different ways. Knowing each student and where they are in their language development really plays a major role addressing if learner errors be corrected. Learner errors should be corrected in order to draw attention to the error produced and the feedback provided should be appropriate for the learner to understand an error was produced as well as how they can correct and learn from the error.

How do teachers provide feedback?

Corrective feedback has been studied and implemented in many studies over the years and there are many different beliefs about the use of corrective feedback among researchers. Many researchers who have studied the use of feedback in language acquisition have used the framing questions presented by Hendrickson (1978). Lyster and Ranta (1997) discuss error correction and communicative language teaching by providing different concerns and approaches taken by different researchers. The study of the use of corrective feedback and the effectiveness of it has been an ongoing process taken on by different researchers reflecting on different concerns.

When analyzing naturally occurring discourse back in immersion classrooms, Lyster and Ranta (1997) looked at the frequency and distribution of different types of responses the learners had in regard to the corrective feedback provided. Based on some of the previous research

conducted, Lyster and Ranta (1997) stated, "it is difficult to know just what relevance the findings of these studies have for the treatment of learner errors during communicative interactions in school settings, particularly with young learners" (p. 39). Up to that point, not much research had been conducted in early childhood classrooms, so Lyster and Ranta (1997) conducted a study with the focus on:

> 1. Developing an analytic model comprising the various moves in an error treatment sequence in L2 classrooms.
>
> 2. Applying the model to a database if interaction in four primary-level French immersion classrooms with a view to documenting the frequency and distribution of corrective feedback in relation to learner uptake (p. 40).

The study was done in four immersion classrooms at the primary level and data were taken and analyzed from 14 subject-matter lessons and 13 French language arts lessons. After extensive observation of naturally occurring classroom interactions, the study identified six different feedback types, *clarification requests, metalinguistic cues, elicitation, repetition of error, recasts and explicit corrections,* which are defined below.

Some researchers have discussed feedback through dividing the six types of feedback initially proposed by Lyster and Ranta (1997) into two categories: *prompts* and *reformulations*. Prompts are used to push the learners to self- repair and are provided in the form of *clarification requests, metalinguistic cues, elicitation* and *repetition of error* (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). These *requests* are when the teacher pretends they did not understand the student's utterance. This requires the student to repeat their utterance, which sometimes results in the student rephrasing what they said in order to make more sense, or it makes them think about what they said and provide a different response. An example of a *clarification request* could be asking the student, "excuse me?" or "what do you mean?" (Glisan & Donato, 2017). *Metalinguistic cues* are when the teacher provides comments, information or questions about the student's utterances without

providing the correct form. For example, the teacher might provide specific information about students' utterance, "you need a past-tense verb" or student, "she skip him" teacher, "skip, you need to use past tense" (Glisan & Donato, 2017). *Elicitations* are when the teacher directly provides the right form by asking a question. For example, the teacher might ask a student how to say something specific, and if the student does not provide the proper form the teacher might respond with, "what is a better word to use?" Another example of an *elicitation* provided by Lyster (2017), T: What's the emperor, of China? S: It's like the boss of all China.
T: Yes, but what's a better word than boss? *Repetition of error* is when the teacher repeats the student's error while adding intonation stress to highlight the error. For example, S: I goed to the gym this morning. T: I *goed*? (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). Using *prompts* allows students to engage in their language learning and work through acquiring the correct language and form.

Reformulations are used in reforming learners' non-target language and form. *Recasts* are when the teacher reformulates the students' utterance, minus the error. For example, S: I'm interesting in seeing the movie. T: Oh, you're interested in seeing the movie (Glisan & Donato, 2017). *Explicit Corrections* are when the teacher provides the correct form and clearly indicated that the students' utterance was incorrect. For example, S: For eat the fish. T: No. For the fish to eat (Lyster, 2017). *Reformulations* usually do not provide students with understanding or guidance of why their utterance was incorrect, but it does facilitate and scaffold student participation and focus on meaning.

The findings of Lyster and Ranta's (1997) study showed that the four teachers frequently used recasts even though they were ineffective in getting students to repair their errors. But they also used elicitations, metalinguistic feedback, clarification requests and repetition of errors and in those instances, students were able to repair their errors more successfully. Lyster and Ranta

(1997) did not address what types of errors the teachers tended to correct or how they decided what errors would be corrected. They did find that the teachers in this study provided feedback on 62% of students' turns that contained errors and that it is likely teachers may not provide as much corrective feedback on a regular basis as they did in their study. However, they do suggest that when teachers provide corrective feedback that they use a variety of techniques to assist students in their responses to corrective feedback and ensure more opportunities for students to respond to the feedback.

Another important consideration they noted was the importance of taking into account students' developmental level when making decisions about providing feedback. This is another reason why knowing students is very important in providing appropriate feedback. If the feedback provided is not appropriate to the students' education level it will not be efficient and beneficial. For example, when providing feedback to a kindergarten students' misuse of a grammatical feature, it would not make sense to go into the details of the use of prepositions, rather provide them with the correct word and explain why in an appropriate way. The study done by Lyster and Ranta (1997) showed that providing feedback engaged students and at times led to peer- or self-repair. Peer and/or self-repair occurred as additional feedback was provided in instances where students' utterances still needed repair. Overall, their study showed positive benefits for providing corrective feedback and that it enhances L2 learning in classroom settings.

Mackey and Oliver (2002) noticed that there had been little research that directly focused on the connection between children's interaction and their learning outcomes, so they chose to explore the effects of interactional feedback specifically on children's L2 development. Their research question, *Does interactional feedback, including negotiation and recasts, facilitate second language development in children?* was conducted on 22, eight to 12-year-olds in an

intensive ESL center in Perth, Australia. In the study they investigated communication breakdowns, and interactional feedback, feedback provided during conversational interactions, and included negotiating and recasts. Negotiating during conversational interactions allows students and teachers to obtain one another's utterance and meaning through feedback and discussion. Some types of feedback allow for more prompting, extending and conversing like clarification requests, metalinguistic cues, elicitation and repetition of error, whereas feedback in the form of recasts lead to fewer occasions where students are able to notice the error and repair (Lyster & Ranta, 1997, p. 461).

In Mackey and Oliver's (2002) study they concluded their prediction was confirmed and interactional feedback did facilitate second language development for the learners. Findings in this study state it may be possible that interactional feedback leads to language development faster for child learners than for adults, especially when the child interacts in dyads with an adult native speaker. After this study the authors believe there is a need for further research with children in different contexts. Also, it was mentioned that in an instructional setting children may not receive as much adult feedback as compared to the one-on-one interactions in this study.

Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) also looked at naturally occurring teacher/student interactions and developed a model based on what they observed, which is similar to this TAR. In analyzing tutor/tutee interactions during writing conferences, they developed what they called a regulatory scale (p. 471) classifying feedback according to how explicit/implicit it was. Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) make the claim about prompts and reformulations and state that, "both kinds of feedback are relevant for linguistic development, but their relevance must be negotiated between the novice learner and the expert knower of the language" (pp. 466-467). The

study discussed the importance that learning is not something an individual does alone, but that learning is a collaborative experience and that this research would be extended.

Conclusion

In this teacher action research, I sought to understand deeply when feedback was provided orally during literacy instruction and activities, as well as during writing activities where no specific type of feedback was provided during specific literacy events. Like other researchers interested in feedback (Hendrickson, 1978, Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994, Lyster & Ranta, 1997, Mackey & Oliver, 2002, Glisan & Donato, 2017) in this TAR I was interested in understanding what kinds of feedback I provided, without pre-planning the specific feedback type. Prior to conducting this TAR, I familiarized myself with the different types of corrective feedback and examined examples provided by Lyster and Ranta (1997) to get a better idea of how providing feedback looked in action. I then planned and implemented my research and as students' utterances contained errors I provided feedback in a way that was most natural to me and supported students.

As mentioned previously, different researchers have different views and uses of feedback. Wells (1993) argued that feedback is neither good nor bad and that it depends on the purpose in which it is used. Lyster (2017) had a similar result when using corrective feedback in classroom intervention studies and found that providing corrective feedback is more effective than not providing it. Hendrickson (1978) also stated a similar finding, "it appears that correcting oral and written errors produced by second language learners improves their proficiency in a foreign language more so than if their errors would have remained uncorrected" (p. 396). Different researchers and theorists tend to have various opinions and views on the different

strategies used in language and literacy development and that usually stems from their different areas of focus and how they view them.

Lyster (2007) discussed the importance of corrective feedback for young learners and how it can promote language development in important ways. When providing corrective feedback, it is extremely important for the teacher to really know their students, consider each student's developmental level and be able to scaffold their learning in order to provide feedback that promotes language learning. "What a child is able to do with assistance today she will be able to do by herself tomorrow" (Vygotsky, 1978, pp. 86-87). This is why teachers play such a pivotal role in setting the stage for classroom interactions and in doing so they can determine when and how corrective feedback can assist and improve learners' performance.

Providing feedback is important in early childhood because it allows students to learn from their errors when they are provided with feedback and it helps to ensure that students' errors do not become fossilized (Lyster, 2017). Throughout this TAR I analyzed students' interactions focusing on their utterances, the feedback I provided, how, why and what type and the learning process that unfolded from the interaction. For this reason, and others addressed in this literature review, I chose to investigate the feedback I provide to my students during literacy events. This study was conducted not only to see what happened when I provided feedback to my students, but also how, when and why I determined to provide feedback. The research procedures will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

The purpose of this teacher action research (TAR) was to gather more knowledge and understanding how I provide feedback as a way to scaffold students' oral and written language use through conversations during literacy events. In my kindergarten classroom, I researched, observed and collected data on my students' interactions and conversations in small groups and whole groups. These conversations stemmed from our district's adopted English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum, *Journeys*, which provided the content and materials used to base instructional conversations around (Anderson & Fountas, 2017). *Journeys* is a comprehensive K-6 grade English language arts program that is personalized, rigorous and scientific. This curriculum features complex anchor texts, lesson plans that allow teachers to target the needs of all students and is built on a deep foundation of scientific research (Anderson & Fountas, 2017). Using *Journeys* for this TAR allowed flexibility to draw upon students' funds of knowledge and prior knowledge while introducing stories and activities. This allowed students to collaborate and take ownership of the conversations and activities while making meaning of the new content.

This TAR gives me an opportunity to observe students' language and my feedback in a systematic way during regular ELA instruction and activities. I often wondered if the feedback I was providing to students was effective and if, through scaffolding and drawing attention to students' errors during literacy events, I could assist them in the meaning-making process and lead to better comprehension and language development.

Research Questions

The goal of this TAR was to try to determine what feedback strategies I used in my Kindergarten classroom and what happens when I use different feedback strategies. To allay confusion, in this thesis I will refer to "corrective feedback" when directly citing or discussing

the work of other researchers or theories as well as when and how corrective feedback played a role in my instruction. Otherwise, I will use the more generic term "feedback."

The following are the questions that guided my research:

1) When do I provide feedback?
2) What kinds of utterances do I correct?
3) How do I provide feedback?

Study Design

In this TAR, data were collected on when and how I provided feedback as well as the types of student utterances I corrected. This research was conducted in my kindergarten classroom and was based on my personal willingness to take the initiative to further educate myself on an area of inquiry that I had developed. This inquiry was based on my teaching experience, the knowledge acquired throughout this master's program and an area of development I found important in students' language and literacy development. This TAR was conducted in hope to grow as an educator as well as improve students' language and literacy development (Mills, 2018).

Teacher Action Research.

Teacher action research (TAR) is research done by teachers, principals or any other teaching/learning professionals as a way to gather information on one's personal teaching practices, students' learning, content and overall progression towards positive and effective learning outcomes. Teacher action research was appropriate for this research study because it is the direct inquiry of educational professionals, who are present in the classroom and school daily and see an area of need or interest they believe needs to be researched. We are the ones who plan, design, implement, record and analyze the data collected based on the inquiry formed and

see the need for further research and study. Mills (2018) states, "by now it should be evident that educational change that *enhances the lives of children* is a main goal of action research. But action research can also *enhance the lives of professionals"* (p.17). This research not only helps students grow and develop but also allows the researcher to learn and progress in their educational career and as a result, they can pass on their findings to others in the profession. From the research conducted they may find the answer to their inquiry, or they may find that further research is needed in order to answer their inquiries.

My first experience conducting teacher action research was in the spring of 2017 after reading and learning about the use of corrective feedback in second language acquisition, and then conducting a small research study in my own classroom. I found the experience to be valuable, not only to myself but also my students. After completing my first research study and going through the data I collected, I realized I needed to take on the role of the observer and really focus and listen to what my students were saying in order for the feedback to be effective and meaningful. My findings are what led me to expand and re-conduct this teacher action research with a clearer focus and over a longer period of time.

As educators, we are constantly learning and growing throughout our successes and mistakes in instruction and that is why conducting TAR is so beneficial to all involved. TAR is especially appropriate and adds credibility to my study because the research I conducted was a qualitative research study, meaning the research conducted and data collected was for a better understanding of the use of feedback and the role I played in providing it. This stemmed from an inquiry developed while teaching language arts and noticing the need to better support my students' language development. This approach for data collection brings more credibility to this research study and allowed for a more natural experience in student learning, presenting of

materials and collecting data in order to make my research credible (Mills, 2018). The credibility of this TAR is strengthened through the complex nature taken by developing a research study based on an inquiry developed and used in my own classroom, the different data collection methods and the analyzing of data from which patterns emerged and provided adequate findings.

My research questions focusing on providing feedback during English Language Arts (ELA) instruction as a way to scaffold my students' oral and written language are significant to my teaching and growth as an early childhood educator. It will help me as a teacher to design and implement more meaningful instruction. It is also significant because I will be able to share my findings and successes with other teachers who may be interested in language and literacy development in early childhood. Of course, there is always the chance the research findings will not be as conclusive as the researcher might like them to be, but that does not signify failure. It may, in fact, lead to further research in order to fully understand and instruct students in order to fully support them in their language and literacy development.

This teacher action research study is important for my professional growth as an educator and is helping me learn more about language acquisition, language development and how to scaffold and facilitate language learning in my classroom. This research study was also important for my students who I was working with and future students because the knowledge I gain from this study will allow me to better assess how to approach and implement my language arts instruction. Finally, I hope this research study will help fellow educators in teaching language and literacy in their own classrooms. Although their teaching context may be different from mine, they may be able to take ideas from my study and implement them into their own classrooms, just as I did. Table 3.1 addressed specific characteristics of TAR according to Mills (2018) and details that guided my TAR.

Table 3.1: Research-based characteristics of TAR and application in this TAR

Characteristics of TAR according to Mills (Mills, 2018, pp. 15-16)	Characteristics of TAR in my research
Teacher researchers are committed to the continued professional development and school improvement.	Learning is a life-long process and through interactions with my students I was able to notice a pattern among their oral and written language and saw I needed to further my understanding of language and literacy development in early childhood.
Teacher researchers have decision making authority.	The focus of my research stemmed from listening to student conversations in my classroom. As a teacher researcher in a kindergarten classroom, I was curious to see if there was a specific way to scaffold students' oral and written language during English Language Arts instruction.
Teacher researchers want to reflect on their practices.	This research study has allowed me to deeply reflect on my language and literacy teaching and interactions with students. After teaching for two years I noticed an area of language development that was unfamiliar to me and I felt it was necessary to further my education in the area of providing feedback to students' utterances.
Teacher researchers will choose an area of focus, determine data collection techniques, analyze and interpret data, and develop action plans.	The characteristics of teacher action research have guided me in my process of choosing an area of inquiry, conducting the research and making meaning of my collected data in order to answer my initial inquiry and further my understanding of language development in early childhood.

Teacher action research is a meaningful, flexible, information-gathering process with the goal of positive and effective learning outcomes for both the researcher and participants. The process of TAR is not linear, and the results are often guided by the data collected and analyzed. In the analysis stage of TAR, we begin to see the data emerge and findings are revealed which lead the researcher to theoretical understandings of the data.

Constructivist Grounded Theory.

Constructivist grounded theory (CGT) as described by Charmaz (2014) views learning and research as an interpretative and social process in which researchers work to establish a theory. Researchers then construct and interpret the data collected in order to determine how and why things happen. The findings in return lead the researcher to the theoretical understanding of their topic, or next steps needed to take in order to support theoretical claims related to the research focus (Charmaz, 2014, pp. 1-14). CGT methods consist of systematic and flexible guidelines which include the process of collecting and analyzing the data and constructing theoretical understandings from the findings within the data. The process of CGT is an analytic framework that can guide teacher action research as it goes back and forth between the data and analysis process. As Charmaz explains, "Grounded theory begins with inductive data, invokes iterative strategies of going back and forth between data and analysis, uses comparative methods, and keeps you interacting and involved with your data and emerging analysis" (2014, p. 1).

In following the teacher action research process of planning and conducting the research, we then move into the analyzing process where we begin to study our data and start making sense of it. In this open-minded process, researchers go back and forth looking at the data and analyzing it with the goal of creating grounded theories based on our findings. These grounded theories are then the themes or categories through which we organize and make sense of the data and relationships to the original inquiry. This process is open to change and can help researchers narrow in on themes and patterns that emerge.

In the process of conducting my teacher action research, I began to analyze my data as it was collected, this allowed me to see what was happening and determine what I needed to do in my instruction in order to gather rich data. As Charmaz (2014) explains, "gathering rich data will

give you solid material for building a significant analysis" (p. 23). Through gathering several types of data, such as video and audio recordings, students work samples, research journals, field notes and memos, I was able to build a strong foundation for my research through the process both of collecting data and documenting the process.

After conducting my research and collecting the data I went into the initial coding, where "coding means naming segments of data with a label that simultaneously categorizes, summarizes, and accounts for each piece of data" (Charmaz, 2014, p. 111). In this process, I was building my understanding and making sense of the interactions that took place during the data collection process. When interactions really caught my attention and patterns began to emerge, I would write memos about them to help detail the interactions and events as they unfolded. Following the initial coding, I had a good foundation of my data but there was more to unfold, so I went back and studied my initial codes to see emerging patterns and make more meaning of what I was noticing. In this focused coding I was going through my initial codes and coding them and in doing so I was beginning to create categories that made sense to me based on the knowledge I had acquired and what the data was presented to me. Charmaz mentions that "comparing codes with codes heightens your sense of the direction your analysis is going and clarifies the theoretical centrality of certain ideas" (2014, p. 140). This definitely was true and the findings in my data were beginning to unravel themselves and specific categories were becoming clearer.

Table 3.2: Steps of constructivism grounded theory in teacher action research (Charmaz, 2014)

Steps of conducting an analysis-based CGT	Steps I took in my Teacher Action Research
Gathering rich data	Collecting video and audio recordings, student work samples, TAR journals, field notes and memo writing.
Initial coding	Coding my transcriptions and seeing patterns emerge in the interactions.
Focused coding	Coding my initial codes and categorizing the emerging patterns. Categories were created based on what the data was presenting.
Memo-writing	Memo-writing occurred throughout the process. Anytime something in the data stood out to me or I thought patterns were emerging I would memo-write about them.

Table 3.2 above describes the data analysis process in this teacher action research, and the following will explain how the GCT framework looked in my study. After planning and implementing my own research I had a lot of data to process. I first transcribed instances I heard in the audio recordings where feedback was provided by myself or my students. In the transcription process, I put all my data into a table based on the six types of corrective feedback explained by Lyster and Ranta (1997) to keep it organized. Within my transcriptions specific symbols were used show students and myself speaking. A pause in the conversation was displayed with two round brackets around a period (.) and if two or more people were speaking at the same time their responses were displayed in brackets [ ]. After all my data was transcribed I began the initial coding process where I used a gerund to code each line of my transcript. I began to see patterns emerge in my responses and student responses, as well as the times I did not provide feedback. At this point, things began to stick out and I felt my research process was beginning to get more and more clear.

After my initial coding of the audio recordings, I did more focused coding and compared my codes while watching the video recordings, to see if there was anything I had missed or was

not able to see when just listening. In this coding process, I noticed more concrete patterns emerging, which then became my categories. The CGT framework helped me get started looking at my data, stay involved in my evolving analysis of my data and helped to guide me in the direction I needed to go in order to move forward with my teacher action research process.

Constructive grounded theory is an analytic framework that offers the tools for conducting successful research while giving focus and flexibility (Charmaz, 2014, p. 3). Through this framework, I was able to better analyze and make sense of my data, so I could show and explain it when writing the drafts of this thesis. Throughout this process, there was a lot of reflecting on my initial research inquiries, procedures and conducting the research, collecting the data, analyzing the data and then writing many drafts to clearly explain this teacher action research project and then finally conclude my findings and further questions that I acquired.

Setting

Aniak, Alaska is a small village located on the Kuskokwim River. The name Aniak comes from the Yup'ik word, Anyaraq, which is used in the Mid-Kuskokwim and means, "the place where it comes out." This name refers to the Aniak River coming out into the Kuskokwim River. Aniak is a small island with 6.5 square miles of land and surrounded by the Aniak Slough and the Kuskokwim River.

The community is laid out in a big circle and is about 3.6 miles around and surrounds the runway. The two main parts of town are known as downtown and the housing area. Each is on a separate side of the runway. The majority of the community lives on the island but there are some families that live across the Aniak Slough on the mainland. The majority of the families that live across the slough are Russian Orthodox and live a very traditional lifestyle. They are the leaders of the Russian Orthodox Church and maintain the church throughout the year. Being

located right on the water makes subsistence gathering more accessible and makes traveling to the hills, tundra and mountains easier. In the summer/fall fishing, moose and bird hunting and berry picking are the main subsistence activities and in the winter hunting, trapping and wood gathering are the main subsistence activities.

The downtown area is where the elementary school is located as well as the majority of the businesses, stores, gas stations, post office, and the Kuspuk School District office building. The Kuspuk School District serves the villages of Upper and Lower Kalskag (downriver of Aniak), Aniak, Chuathbaluk, Crooked Creek, Sleetmute and Stony River (which are all upriver from Aniak). Aniak is the hub for the mid- Kuskokwim Region and is located 92 air miles northeast of Bethel and 317 miles west of Anchorage. The Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation (YKHC) Clara Morgan Sub- Regional Clinic is also located in Aniak and supports and provides care to villages throughout the northeastern Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta as well as provides jobs in Aniak and surrounding villages. The Alaska State Troopers are stationed in Aniak and serve the community and surrounding villages. We have two grocery stores, the Alaska Commercial Co and the General Store and two gas stations.

The estimated population in Aniak is 539, according to the 2016 estimation done by the U.S. Census Population (City-data, 2016). In our community, the majority of people are a mix of Yup'ik, Athabascan, and Caucasian. A more precise break down of the different ethnicities is shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Ethnicity of Aniak's population

Ethnicity of Aniak Residence	Percentage
American Indian	72.4%
White	18.1%
Two or more races	7.8%
Hispanic	1.9%
Asian	1.7%

In Aniak, there are only a few members in our community, mainly elders, who speak a mixture of Yugtun, the Native language of the Yup'ik people. The main languages spoken in Aniak are English and Yugtun, although most speak English. Along with the English and Yugtun languages spoken, the people in Aniak speak in a Mid-Kuskokwim dialect of English. The reason so few people speak Yugtun is because the generation who speaks were sent to boarding schools where their Native language was not accepted, which created negative feeling towards the use of their L1 (Yugtun). This is a major factor that has played a huge role in why the generations after them do not know the Yugtun language.

There are two schools in Aniak, Auntie Mary Nicoli Elementary School (AMNES) which is Pre-kindergarten (Pre-K) through 6th Grade and Aniak Jr/Sr High School, which is sixth through twelfth grade. I am the only kindergarten teacher at AMNES, but due to hiring issues, I taught kindergarten and first grade this year. Second through fourth grade are single grade classrooms and fifth and sixth is a combined classroom. Each classroom has one all-day instructional aide. We have a special education teacher who goes back and forth between the two schools, depending on her caseload. As recorded in the 2016-2017 State of Alaska report card to the public, our school had 98 students enrolled Pre-K through sixth grade but because we are the

hub of the area our enrollment tends to change due to transfer students, in and out of the village (Alaska Department of Education & Early Development, 2016-2017).

In my classroom, the setting is very spacious and open with two big windows that provide lots of natural light. This year I had an instructional aide all day, but for parts of the day we would split up the kindergarten and 1st-grade students into two different rooms, so I could focus directly with each grade on ELA and math while she ran centers and reinforcement activities. Both grades were also separated during my recorded ELA lessons for this research study.

Participants

For this research study, I focused on seven of my eight kindergarten students, three male students, and four female students. I was only able to focus on seven students because one did not turn in their consent form, but he was still present for most of the lessons, although anything he contributed to the conversations was not transcribed or analyzed. Of my seven students, six were Yup'ik and one was white. None of them spoke Yugtun but they knew some words and could Yuraq, which means dance, to multiple songs sung in Yugtun. All of my students have lived in Aniak their whole lives, except for one who moved here when she was very young. English is the first language of each student. All of my students went to Pre-K for at least one year although most attended the full two years of preschool. All seven students started and ended the school year in my class.

At the time this research study was conducted, all students were in the late emergent reader stage. In this stage, students were able to name and identify most letters and sounds in the alphabet and through repeated readings of books they were building their vocabulary, listening

skills and understandings of print. Students in this stage were beginning to blend letters and sound out short words and gain meaning from texts.

I chose to include all students that returned consent forms because I felt it was important to collect data on each of their language development when teaching the adopted curriculum *Journeys*. All students involved participated, although some were more willing to participate in answering questions without having to be called on than others. One student would not speak or raise her hand, but when called on she would provide an answer relating to the topic. Table 3.4 provides more details of each student, their self-chosen pseudonym, gender, how many of the actual recordings they were present in.

Table 3.4: Research participants

Pseudonym	Gender	Participation in Recordings
MJ	Male	8 out of 8
Doc McStuffins	Female	8 out of 8
Kodie	Male	7 out of 8
Wonder Woman	Female	5 out of 8
Sarah	Female	3 out of 8
Charlie	Male	7 out of 8
Brittany	Female	8 out of 8

Instructional Plan

For this teacher action research, I chose to include all seven students because the lessons I conducted my research on were directly from our daily English Language Arts (ELA) lessons from our adopted curriculum *Journeys*. In order to have a better understanding of the *Journeys* curriculum in a kindergarten setting, it is important to have a clear idea of what is typically covered in a day of instruction. The following Figure 3.1 displays literacy events that occur in *Journeys* instruction that are covered on most days if not all days.

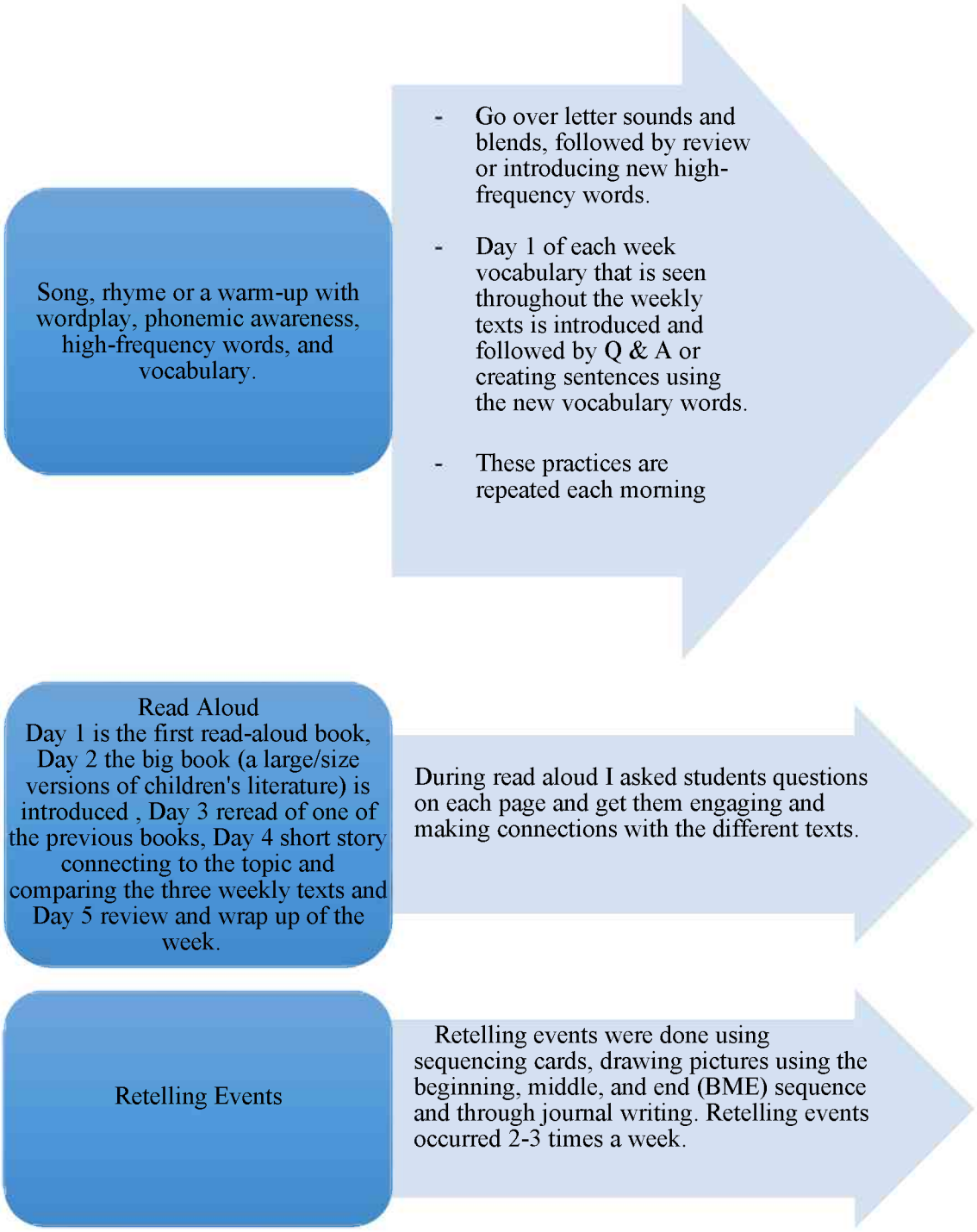


Figure 3.1: *Journeys* literacy events.

Every day ELA is taught in the morning in my classroom. As stated in the setting of this chapter, I taught kindergarten and first grade but chose to separate the two grades during ELA and math in order to teach the two grades their specific curriculum. For this research study, all recordings began between 9:45 am and 10:00 am and followed calendar time, morning movement activities and a water/bathroom break. I felt it was important to keep my students on their normal morning routine. After students took their water/bathroom break all first graders knew to go to the open classroom across the hall with our instructional aide and all kindergarten students knew to come back into the main classroom and take a seat at the table in front of the class. We call this table the bean table because it is shaped like a kidney bean. Students sit around the curved part of the table and I sit on the inside of the bean, which allows everyone to see me, the whiteboard and the bookstand.

Each research recording lasted between 20 and 35 minutes and covered our daily *Journeys* lessons. Originally, I planned to conduct my research in February and carry it out over four weeks, focusing on a different *Journeys* lesson each week. Each *Journeys* lesson expands over a week and is split up by days one through five, as shown below in Table 3.5 in my research procedures. By the time February came, I did not feel fully prepared in my daily instruction as well as in my master's courses I was taking. I decided it would be best to push back my research until I was prepared both in my instruction and coursework.

The following month, March was a very busy month with spring break and the Performance Evaluation for Alaska's Schools (PEAKS) Standardized testing, but I was able to get a full week of my research recordings completed before testing began. During my first week of recording, it was unclear if I would be proctoring the PEAKS testing or if I would have access to my second classroom that I had been using for instructing my first-grade students throughout

the day. I felt good about my full week of recording but felt I needed more in order to make my research study stronger and to see more any or more emerging patterns.

Fortunately, I was able to add three more days of recording the following week, even though standardized testing was going on. I did not have to proctor the test, so I was able to split up my first graders and kindergarteners by having my first-grade students go to the gym while I conducted my research with my kindergarten students. This slight change in the schedule allowed me to keep my kindergarten students on the same morning schedule as well as get in my daily ELA instruction with my first-grade students. In the end, I did not get the original four weeks recorded, as planned, but I was able to cover two weeks of *Journeys* instruction for a total of eight days. The first week I recorded all five days of *Journeys,* Lesson 15 and the second week I recorded the three main days of *Journeys,* Lesson 16, where I felt the most important instruction took place.

Research Procedures

The data collection timeline as shown in Table 3.5, displays the dates my research was implemented, and the individual *Journeys* day and lesson focused on. Each week is considered one lesson and a brief but detailed order in which each lesson followed along with the content covered is included as well as how the data was collected, and the amount of time recorded. All data were collected through audio recordings on my I pad as well as recorded on my video camera. Immediately following each recording, my class went to gym class which allowed me time to write my teacher reflection journals while the information was fresh. I also collected field notes throughout the lessons as well as when re-watching and listening to the recordings in the transcribing and coding process.

Table 3.5: Research timeline process

Day of Research Implementation	*Journeys* Day and Lesson	*Journeys* Lesson Order of Activities	Data Collected
(3/23/2018) Friday	Day 1 Lesson 15	Read short poem "Skyscraper" by Dennis Lee (2009) followed by questions. Introduced sight words and vocabulary. Read story, *How Many Stars In The Sky?* By Lenny Hort (2010) while asking questions throughout.	Audio [33:20] Video [33:28] TAR journal ½ page Field notes 1 pg
(3/26/2018) Monday	Day 2 Lesson 15	Reviewed sight words and vocabulary from day 1. Discussed and retold parts of *How Many Stars In The Sky?* By Lenny Hort (2010) Read new story, *What A Beautiful Sky!* By Yanitzia Canetti (2009) while asking questions throughout. Worked with sequencing cards to retell the story in the correct order of events.	Audio [31:39] Video [31:53] TAR journal ½ page Field notes 1 pg
(3/27/2018) Tuesday	Day 3 Lesson 15	Writing assignment using beginning, middle, and end to write a story of the chosen topic. Small group, only four students participated.	Audio [32:08] Video [32:25] TAR journal 1 page Field notes 1/2 pg Student Writing Samples
(3/28/2018) Wednesday	Day 4 Lesson 15	Introduction to endings –ed and –ing. Went over words that use the two endings and the correct tense.	Audio [12:44] journeys instruction [3:53] sharing work samples (drawings) Video [12:57] TAR journal 1 page Field notes 1/3 pg
(3/30/2018) Friday	Day 5 Lesson 15	Reviewed and retold the three weekly texts, *How Many Stars In The Sky?* By Lenny Hort (2010) *What A Beautiful Sky!* By Yanitzia Canetti (2009) *What will the Weather Be Like?* By Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (2009) Students then drew their favorite part of, *How Many Stars in The Sky?* By Lenny Hort (2010) on a black sheet of paper. Students then shared drawings with the class.	Audio [12:03] retelling [14:25] writing Video [17:35] No video recording of students' sharing their drawings, video camera died. TAR journal ½ page Field notes ½ pg
(4/4/2018) Wednesday	Day 1 Lesson 16	Read the story, *Dear Mr. Blueberry* by Simon James (1991) while asking questions throughout. Demonstrated how to write a letter to someone, and what words we use to ask different questions (who, what, when, where, why). Although we did not get to the actual letter writing due to time.	Audio [30:28] Video [30:25] TAR journal 1 page
(4/5/2018) Thursday	Day 2 Lesson 16	Writing of the letters that we didn't get to in the previous lesson. Reviewed the words we use when asking questions (who, what, when, where, why) and then went into the structure of writing a letter and then got to writing.	Audio [28:34] Video [28:25] TAR journal ½ page
(4/6/2018) Friday	Day 3 Lesson 16	Read the story, *What is Science?* By Rebecca Dotlich (2006) while asking questions throughout. Compared the two weekly texts, *Dear Mr. Blueberry* and *What is Science?* Worked with sequencing cards to retell the story, *What is Science?* in the correct order of events.	Audio [22:32] Video [22:37] TAR journal ½ page Field notes ½ pg

In the data analysis process, all recordings pertaining to feedback were transcribed and put into tables, which will be displayed later in Chapter 4. Actual student utterances containing an error, teacher feedback and a full transcription of the conversation were transcribed to better understand the conversation and its context. I also made a checklist following the types of feedback identified by Lyster and Ranta (1997). After I completed all my transcriptions and put them into tables to organize them. I then began the coding process to help find any emerging patterns as discussed above in my study design.

In the next chapter, Chapter 4, I will be focusing on three different categories that arose from my data collection and coding. Examples and further discussion about my data collection and analysis procedures will be discussed in more detail to guide the reader through the data analysis process. Displays of student interactions, work samples and literacy events and activities that took place in this study will also be discussed at length in the following data analysis chapter.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to gather more knowledge and understanding of when and how I provide feedback as well as what types of student utterances I correct. A major emphasis in this teacher action research (TAR) was to see the role feedback plays during English Language Arts (ELA) instruction and activities. During literacy events such as read aloud, Q&A, retelling events, sequencing and writing I provided feedback to address students' utterances that contained an error. In this data analysis I will provide examples from three different categories that emerged during the data analysis process. In Chapters 2 and 3, the literature and theories pertaining and connecting to this research were addressed as well as the methodology behind the organization, structure, setting and participants involved. In this data analysis chapter, I will briefly discuss the specific research questions this research was focused on, the data collection process, the actual data analysis steps taken, research findings and then I will readdress the research questions vis-à-vis those findings.

Research Questions

1. When do I provide feedback?

2. What kind of utterance do I correct?

3. How do I provide feedback?

Data Collection

After planning and organizing my research process and getting Institutional Review Board (IRB) (see Appendix A) approval, I sent a letter home to parents introducing them to the teacher action research I would be conducting in our kindergarten class. Along with the letter I sent the

consent forms. As students returned their consent forms I discussed the research study with them and then went over the oral assent form with each student individually. After going through the oral assent form students chose a pseudonym they wanted to use. Table 4.1 provides participants' pseudonyms, age during the study, ethnicity and home language.

Table 4.1: Participants

Participants (Pseudonym)	**Participants Information** **Age, Ethnicity, Home language**
MJ	6 years and 1 month old, Yupik, English
Doc McStuffins (DM)	6 years and 2 months old, White, English
Kodie (K)	5 years and 10 months old, Yupik, English
Wonder Woman (WW)	6 years and 3 months old, Yupik, English
Sarah (S)	6 years and 6 months old, Yupik, English
Charlie (C)	5 years and 6 months old, Yupik, English
Brittany (B)	5 years and 10 months old, Yupik, English

Once all consent and assent forms were turned in, I was able to see how many participants I would have and plan for a span of time where there would be few if no interruptions in our school. I was able to plan for a week in March 2018 and began my TAR. When I began conducting my research, students were already familiar with the *Journeys* instructional routines and practices, so I was able to jump right in. The only major explanation I had to give was about the use and placement of the video camera and voice recorder.

When conducting my research, I used a video camera and voice recorder to record all eight days of instruction and activities. Immediately following each day of recording, I uploaded both video and audio recordings onto my laptop and then wrote in my TAR journal to note what happened in the recordings. For this TAR I collected a total of eight days of instruction and activities. Once all data collection was completed I began the process of transcribing.

Data Analyzing Process

My data analysis process started by transcribing all the audio recordings. In that process I transcribed all occasions where I provided corrective feedback and then organized each transcription into a table using Lyster and Ranta (1997) distinction as an initial lens. See Table 4.2 for the structure used in organizing the data, and an example of the first transcription (see Appendix B) for an extended example of the table.

Table 4.2: Transcription table example

Name of Recording and Time of Feedback Provided	**Transcription of Student's Full Utterance and Actual Teacher/Student Feedback (focus of the feedback in BOLD)**	**Type of corrective feedback provided (Prompt or Reformulation)** **Was CF provided through an option?**	**Did student correctly fix utterance? Number of attempts?**	**Was Feedback to Extend Conversation Needed?** **Comments/Notes/** **Reminders**
(1) Day 1 Lesson 15 [0:23]	001 T: where is a place we might see a skyscraper (.) Brittany 002 B: **at Anchorage** 003 T: in Anchorage yeah	**Reformulation** Recast **Was CF provided through an option?** No	**Did student correctly fix utterance?** No	No

Table 4.2 was helpful in organizing and getting a good sense of my data and the different types of corrective feedback I was providing. The layout of the columns helped me to see the actual transcription, type of feedback provided and if feedback was provided in the form of an option, whether or not the student corrected their error and the number of attempts, and then whether feedback was needed to extend the conversation.

In the process of transcribing and organizing I created Table 4.3 to help keep track of the number of times I provided each type of corrective feedback (see Appendix C) for an extended example of the table. The reason I chose to include the column, *Feedback in the form of a question, repeating original question or help from a classmate to Assist/Extend/Continue the*

Conversation (not all transcribed due to non-verbal cues), was because the feedback provided was needed to extend or clarify students' responses. There were some instances where students were really collaborating and discussing the topic at hand and I used feedback to extend or clarify in order to scaffold the conversation. Adding that column, helped draw my attention to instances I felt were important to look back into later in my data analysis process.

Table 4.3: Corrective feedback checklist excerpt

Types of Corrective Feedback **Recording Name** **Time**	**Explicit Correction**	**Recast**	**Clarification Request**	**Metalinguistic Cue**	**Elicitation**	**Repetition of Error**	**Feedback in the form of a question, repeating original question or help from a classmate to Assist/Extend/Continue the Conversation (not all transcribed due to non-verbal cues)**	**Option of correct sentence or word provided in the CF?**
Day 1 Lesson 15 [0:23]		x						No
Day 1 Lesson 15 [3:21]			x				Question to extend (Details in Table)	No
Day 1 Lesson 15 [5:52]		x						Yes

After transcribing and creating Tables 4.2 and 4.3, I had a good grasp of my data but needed to get to know it even better. The next step in my data analysis process was my initial coding process. In the initial coding process, I provided a gerund, verbs usually ending in -ing, to address what was happening in each line of my transcriptions, as explained by Charmaz (2014). For example, some of the gerunds used were responding, extending, accessing prior knowledge, questioning etc. In my coding process I was beginning to see patterns emerging as well as themes that came from providing corrective feedback. Immediately following my initial coding, I went back and watched all my video recordings to make sure nothing was missed and so I could

take notes on any non-verbal errors and interactions. The focused coding, which uses the information acquired in the initial coding to develop themes or categories, allowed me to see even more concrete patterns and themes, through which I was able to determine my three categories.

My next step in analyzing my data was looking at all my compiled data and tables which led me to three main categories, which emerged in patterns and themes I was seeing in the coding. Throughout the initial and focused coding stages different things stood out to me and in each stage, I made more and more meaning of what I was seeing emerge. After analyzing the different patterns and themes I was able to create my three categories based on the things that were really standing out. I then put all transcriptions under the categories that best addressed what was happening in each. The three categories were:

1. Teacher provided corrective feedback: with option or without option of correct form.
2. Student provided feedback: self-correction (no teacher influence) or correcting a classmate.
3. Extending the conversation through teacher prompting and students collaborating in the meaning making process

As mentioned in Chapter 3, I refer to "corrective feedback" when directly citing or discussing the work of other researchers or theories as well as when and how corrective feedback played a role in my instruction. Other than those occurrences I will use the word feedback. The three categories listed above will be described in further detail below.

Findings by Categories

In total there were 54 transcriptions collected and analyzed in this data analysis. From those transcriptions, 42 instances were generated and used to help me explain the categories, as well as have a better understanding of what I was seeing and learning about feedback. The

reason all 54 transcriptions were not used is because after coding, analyzing and reflecting on some of the transcriptions I realized they were instances where feedback was not used, and I felt further analysis was not needed. The 42 instances used were put into the three categories in which I felt they best fit and made the most sense to me.

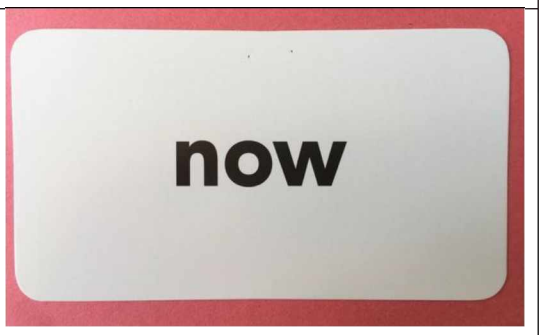
Teacher-provided corrective feedback: With option.

In the data analysis, the first category of feedback I noticed was, *teacher provided corrective feedback: with option or without option of correct form*. There was a total of 18 instances of student utterances of which corrective feedback was provided. In this category, corrective feedback with an option occurred eight times and corrective feedback without an option occurred ten times. I will first define and explain *teacher provided corrective feedback: with option* and then go into *teacher provided corrective feedback: without options.*

Students' errors were followed by corrective feedback provided by me, which was usually a repetition of error and then an option of the correct form. This provided students with their original utterance repeated exactly the way they said it followed by the correct form. Student errors were always repeated first and then the correct form was provided second in all instances in this category. This allowed them to make the decision of which utterance they thought was correct.

Excerpt 1 provides an example of how student utterances were addressed and the process of teacher and student interaction. Excerpt 1 occurred on Day 1 Lesson 15 of *Journeys*, while going over high frequency word cards (see Figure 4.1).

Excerpt 1: Corrective feedback with option of correct form, "go school"

Transcription (focus of feedback in bold)			Example
015	T:	alright so what is our first word (.) can you read it out loud MJ	 Figure 4.1: High frequency word card.
016	MJ:	nowww	
017	T:	now (.) can you use the word now in a sentence	
018	MJ:	mmhmm	
019	T:	MJ	
020		(4)	
021	K	now	
022	MJ:	now can I **go school**	
023	T:	nice and loud	
024	MJ:	now can I go school	
025	T:	now can I go school do we say go school or now can I go to school	
026	DM:	to school	
027	T:	yeah (.) so now can I go to [school]	
028	B:	[now can I go to the library]	
029	T:	perfect awesome job MJ	

Line 015- 020 shows the interaction that took place when I was holding up the high frequency word card with the word *now* on it. Line 016, MJ read the card aloud, "nowww" and then I asked him to use the word in a sentence. MJ paused and was showing non-verbal signs of thinking, by looking up and his facial expressions were visible on the video recording collected that day. Line 022 MJ provides his sentence, "now can I go school" and then repeats it when asked to say it louder (Line 24). Line 025 is where I address his utterance, "now can I go school

do we say go school or now can I go to school?" With a repetition of error followed by the option of the correct sentence structure. Doc McStuffins says the correct answer aloud, "to school" and MJ non-verbally agrees with a head nod. Then line 028 Brittany shows she has picked up on the correct sentence structure and provides another example, "now can I go to the library?"

Teacher provided feedback with an option of the correct form occurred eight times. Of those eight times, a repetition of error, was provided in seven of the interactions and in the eighth interactions the repetition of error was an explicit correction as shown below in Excerpt 2.

Excerpt 2: Repetition of error followed by an explicit correction

Transcription (focus of feedback in bold)		
325	T:	think of something that we do not know about whales yet think about something you might be curious about let's ask our person we're writing our letter to let's ask them something about whales so think about something
326	MJ:	how **does them** squirt the the water out the the hole
327	T:	how does them squirt the water out the hole or how do
328	DM:	**[they]**
329	MJ:	**[they]**
330	T:	how do they squirt water out of
331	K:	how do they

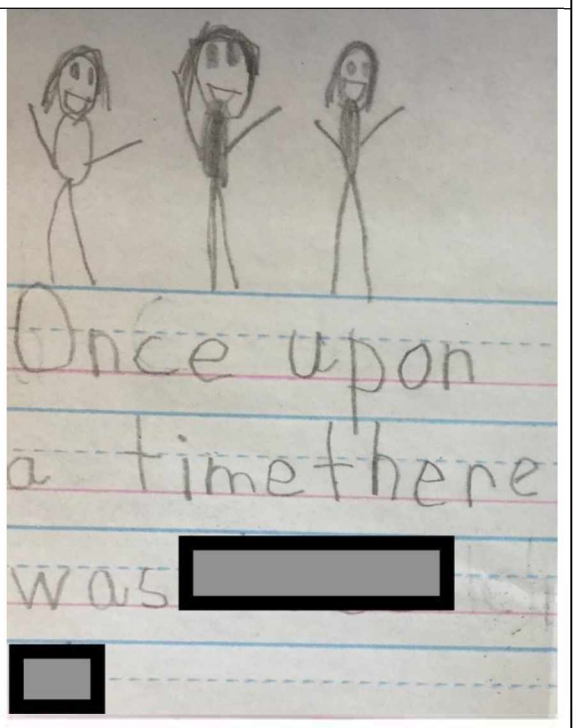
Excerpt 2 was a writing activity that took place after reading the story, *Dear Mr. Blueberry* by Simon James. Students were asked to write a letter to a person of their choice and ask them a question about whales. After I asked students to think of a question to ask MJ responded in line 326, "how does them squirt the the water out the the hole?" To which I responded with a repetition of error and as I was going to provide him with the correct form, Doc McStuffins and

MJ both respond, "they." I then provided an explicit correction in line 330 of the whole utterance that addressed the other error *does,* since they had only corrected the word *them.*

The transcriptions shown in Excerpt 3 and 4 occurred on Day 3 Lesson 15 and display what two students had written and how their utterances were developed. Both transcriptions came from students' writing a story using the beginning, middle and end sequence and they were both in the beginning stage of their sequence.

Excerpt 3 was the work of Brittany (see Figure 4.2) and displays the transcription of the event. In line 143-144 I am reading Brittany's writing as she reads along. She then pauses and comes up with the word *free* as the next word she was needing to write. Line 145 is where I provided corrective feedback in the form of repetition of error with an option of the correct pronunciation of *three*. She then repeated the word with the same error but added stress on the /f/ in line 146. Following her repetition of her error I provided instruction on the placement of tongue with teeth in order to correctly pronounce the /th/ sound in line 147. Lines 148-152 show Brittany's attempts to pronounce the word *three* and eventually she was able to correctly pronounce the word and then write it. Brittany has a little lisp and frequently has difficulty pronouncing some sounds, particularly her /th/ and /l/ sounds. She is very receptive when provided with corrective feedback and often times after she produces an error in her oral language she will say, "oh I mean" and then either correct herself or attempt to correct herself. This shows me she is aware of her errors even if she struggles to correct them every time.

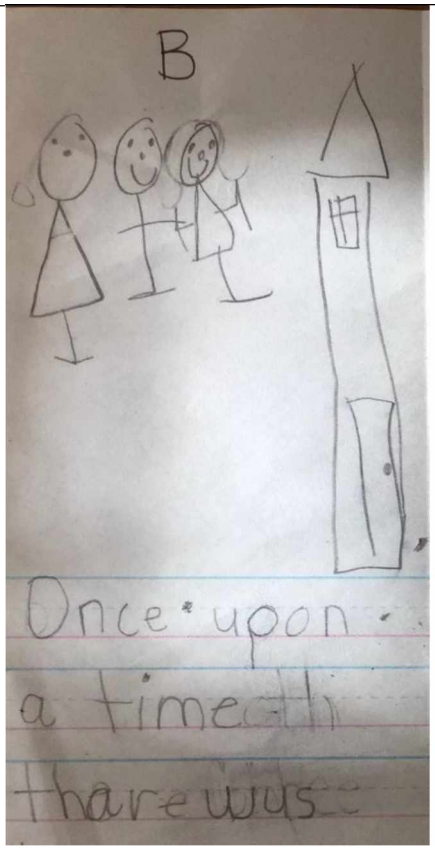
Excerpt 3: Beginning of sequence writing sample Brittany

Transcription (focus of feedback in bold)			Student work
143	T:	[once upon a time there was]	 Figure 4.2: Student writing sample.
144	B:	[once upon a time there was] (.) **free**	
145	T:	'kay do we say free or thhree	
146	B:	**fffreee**	
147	T:	stick your tongue out go like this in between your teeth and go three	
148	B:	**thhhh- fear I mean**	
149	T:	put your tongue like this watch how I do it (boys do your work) look how I do it thhree so keep your tongue in between your teeth three	
150	B:	three	
151	T:	yep try again	
152	B:	[thhhree]	

Excerpt 4 displays the transcription and work of Doc McStuffins (see Figure 4.3) and displays her drawing and the writing that was developed from referencing her drawing. Line 161 shows me asking her what needs to come next in her writing and then her responding by mispronouncing the word three, creating an error in line 162. In line 163 I address her error just as I did in line 145 addressing Brittany's non-conventional pronunciation, by repeating the error and then providing the correct pronunciation. Line 164 Doc McStuffins produced the error *free*

again just like in line 146 where Brittany produced the same error while adding stress in the /f/ sound. Then lines 165-166 were again similar to lines 147 and 149 where I provided instruction on how to position tongue with teeth in order to correctly produce the voiceless /th/ or theta /θ/ sound and both girls were able to produce the correct pronunciation of the word three. Doc McStuffins also struggles with pronouncing certain words, especially words with digraph –th, she often says things like free (three) and wiff (with). She is also receptive to corrective feedback, although more so to oral feedback and not written feedback. Sometimes she can get set in how she wants to write something and does not respond well when asked to think about how to write something or sound a word out. Both examples displayed in above show that students' utterances were developmental and although they produced errors in their writing process of creating a sentence and pronunciation it did not take away from the meaning of what they were trying to make. Both students struggled with pronouncing certain words and digraphs, but this was something we had been working on throughout the school year.

Excerpt 4: Beginning of sequence writing sample Doc McStuffins

Transcription (focus of feedback in bold)	Student work
161 T: what's the next wri- word we're writing 162 DM: **free** 163 T: alright does frr- do we say free or do we say three 164 DM: fffree 165 T: alright just like I had Brittany do go like this look put your tongue between your teeth like I am three keep your tongue in between three 166 DM: three	 Figure 4.3: Student writing sample.

The writing activities in this TAR stemmed from the focus texts, *How Many Stars In The Sky?* By Lenny Hort and *Dear Mr. Blueberry* by Simon James. Students also wrote a letter to a person of their choice, asking a question about whales that they were still curious about. Students also did another writing piece that focused on writing a story of their choice using the beginning, middle, and end sequence.

The examples provided below in Excerpt 5, are all of the student errors that occurred in the *Teacher provided feedback with an option of the correct form* category. The first column provides the student utterance containing the error and the second column shows the teacher

feedback. The third column provides the activity that was taking place in which the utterance occurred.

Excerpt 5: Student errors and teacher feedback

Student utterance containing error	Teacher feedback	Activity
go school	Do we say go school or go to school?	Introducing students to new High Frequency Word Cards and creating sentences using them.
does them	how do they squirt water out of	Writing letter
free	three (put your tongue here…)	Writing using the beginning, middle and end sequencing.
free	three	Writing using the beginning, middle and end sequencing.
payground	payground or playground	Writing using the beginning, middle and end sequencing.
far country	deep country	Retelling using sequencing cards.
wader	water	Writing letter asking a question about whales.

Reflection on Teacher Decision.

In the first category, *Teacher provided corrective feedback: with option,* I observed the way I provided feedback and noticed the reason I was repeating student errors and then followed them by the correct form or structure was to help them hear their utterance and then they had the

option of determine for themselves which was the correct form. The interactions collected and analyzed led me to conclude that students' utterances were developmentally appropriate because of their pronunciation and or structure. Once I repeated students' errors, through reading their writing and allowing them to hear what they had written, they were able to notice their error. These errors were developmentally appropriate because as kindergarten writers they have not been taught the skill of going back and re-reading their work to look for errors. So by me doing the reading of their work they were able to hear where they had produced an error.

In two of the interactions with two different students the error came from me reading their writing and them producing what came next. Also, a very interesting thing to note is that both girls' errors came from mispronouncing the word *three*. Some may wonder why even provide feedback if the error mispronounced is developmental, but I believe it is beneficial for students to hear their utterance as well as the correct way to say something in order to get them thinking about the word and use to hearing it pronounced the correct way. Another interesting interaction was in Excerpt 1 when MJ said, "now can I go school" as well as Excerpt 2 when he said, "how does them squirt the the water out the the hole?" Both interactions reflect how MJ frequently speaks and show his omission of a connecting word and the use of the incorrect form of the verb do and the incorrect pronoun they. I believe this is a result of his dialect as well as where he is in his language development, which I believe I appropriate for a kindergarten student. As I mentioned above, I was not expecting so many of the interactions to stem from the writing activities. This is something that really stood out to me and has allowed me to see the importance of having students reread their work as well as how important it is to provide scaffolding during the early stages of writing in order to teach students how to become writers.

A notable find in my data was that all but one of the *teacher provided corrective feedback* interactions were during writing activities and the repetition of error was through me reading what they had written or in asking what comes next. This is notable because I did not expect so many interactions during writing activities to prompt feedback. Going into this TAR I just figured all the feedback would be oral and during conversations about the topic at hand. I was not thinking of all the feedback and conversing back and forth that actually occurs during writing instruction and activities. Something that could have led to my students needing more scaffolding during writing was the fact that I did not use much of the writing instruction provided by *Journeys,* because I did not feel it was very supportive for beginning writers. Instead I took what I knew about writing instruction and had students focus on the grammar that *Journeys,* was teaching weekly, such as nouns, verbs and punctuations, and came up with my own writing activities I felt better supported my students, while still sticking to the stories and themes of the week. My decision to pull what I felt necessary from the *Journeys* writing and using it to create some of my own activities could have been the reason why so many interactions occurred during writing.

Teacher provided corrective feedback: With-out option.

The examples of *teacher provided corrective feedback* where no option was provided also provided solid patterns of the interactions. Of the 18 interactions in this category 10 of them occurred in this subsection where no option of the correct form was provided. Excerpt 6 displays a brief example of the interactions and the activity taking place. Although 10 interactions were originally analyzed I realized one of them was a result of my own error in what I was asking of my students and deemed the transcription did not show any errors on the students' part but on my choice of question asked. For this reason, that instance will not be included in Excerpt 6 and

this analysis, although it provided me with something to think about when addressing the questions, I ask my students and the types of responses I expect to hear verse what students actually say. It was a good reminder that questions need to be clear and understandable in order for students to produce an appropriate response.

Excerpt 6: Student errors and teacher feedback with no options

Student utterance containing error	Teacher feedback	Activity
at Anchorage	in Anchorage	Discussing weekly theme, *What Can We See In The Sky*?
jupeor	Jupiter	Discussing weekly theme, *What Can We See In The Sky*?
it (.) is an aminal	animal say animal	Discussing clouds read about in, *What a Beautiful Sky!* by Yanitzia Canetti
it would be lightning	there might be lightning	Discussing clouds read about in, *What a Beautiful Sky!* by Yanitzia Canetti
a	/i/ like inch	Writing using beginning, middle and end sequencing.
/g/	play /g/ not play round playground	Writing using beginning, middle and end sequencing.
inb	not imb in(.)g	Writing using beginning, middle and end sequencing.
a lowercase letter	we start a sentence with a lowercase letter	Writing using beginning, middle and end sequencing.
277 c 279 c	278 swing finger space what does swing start with 280 /s/	Writing using beginning, middle and end sequencing.

The prominent forms of corrective feedback were explicit corrections, where the teacher supplies the correct form and recasts where the teacher reformulates students' utterance minus the error. Although both provide students with the correct utterance explicit corrections clearly

indicate an error was made whereas when providing recasts, the teacher omits the students error and the conversation usually continues on with no more attention on the error. The interactions involving recasts stemmed from prompting students to draw upon their funds of knowledge and prior knowledge, by asking questions addressing the theme of the weekly lesson, *What Can We See In The Sky*? The first transcription as displayed in Excerpt 7 was collected on Day 1 Lesson 15 and includes lines 001-003 where the error took place while I was asking questions about the lessons theme.

Excerpt 7: At Anchorage

Transcription (focus of feedback in bold)		
001	T:	where is a place we might see a skyscraper (.) Brittany
002	B:	**at Anchorage**
003	T:	in Anchorage yeah

The utterance produced is an example of where Brittany is in her language development or could be a reflection of the Mid-Kuskokwim dialect in which she is immersed in. After Brittany produced the error I provided a recast and continued on with asking questions. This was done in order to keep the focus on the content and not the preposition usage. This example is similar to the example displayed in Excerpt 1, where the student said, "now can I go school?" In the two interactions provided, my feedback was focused on different things. In Excerpt 1, I was more focused on "form" the students use of the word in a sentence and having a clear sentence structure and in Excerpt 7 I was more focused on the meaning of the students' utterance.

The second example, displayed in Excerpt 8, took place on Day 2 Lesson 15 and was originally only lines 086-088 but I felt it was necessary to go back to the video in order to

understand the context of the interaction and in doing so I was able to get a lot more data than I originally thought.

Excerpt 8: Naming of planets

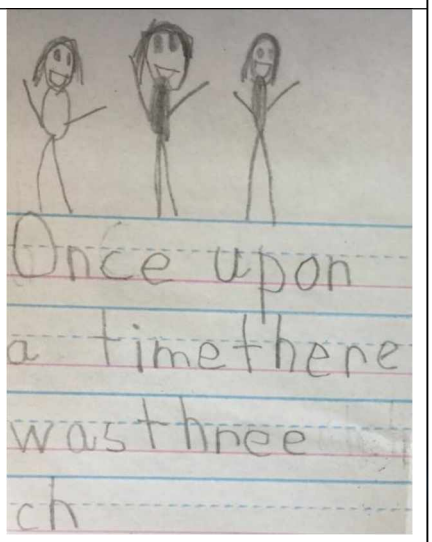
Transcription (focus of feedback in bold)
T: who can name one of our planets MJ
MJ: Aniak
T: is Aniak a planet?
K: no Aniak is on planet earth
T: Aniak is on a planet and that's planet Earth, so Aniak is a part of planet Earth.
086 T: ok another planet
087 WW: **jupeor**
088 T: Jupiter
MJ: the sun
K: Pluto

The transcription above provided students the opportunity to access their prior knowledge on planets and they did a great job collaborating and showing their knowledge. After asking the original question, "who can name one of our planets MJ?" MJ responded with, "Aniak" and I followed his answer with a clarification request, "is Aniak a planet?" Which then allowed Kodie to share his knowledge and understanding of Aniak in relation to the planets, "no Aniak is on planet earth." From there the conversation of the different planets really opened up and students did a great job collaborating and sharing their knowledge. In the discussion of the different planet names Wonder Woman produced an error in her utterance by mispronouncing planet Jupiter with, "jupeor." I responded with a recast, "Jupiter" and kept the conversation moving in order to keep students focused on meaning. Much like the examples provided in Excerpt 3 and 4,

the students' error did not change the meaning of the sentence, but I felt it was important for them to be aware of and hear the correct pronunciation of the words "three" and "Jupiter" for their own benefit and for future use of the words. The interactions where recasts were provided were short and the feedback provided was used to keep students focused on the content and not the error they had produced. In those interactions I felt it was more important for students focus to be on the content of the conversation rather than their pronunciation, because the errors they produced did not change the meaning of their utterance and I did not feel they were hindering students' language development at the time.

Aside from the occasions where recasts were provided, explicit corrections were the other most prominent forms of corrective feedback provided in this first category and out of the ten occasions, explicit corrections were provided four times. In analyzing all the transcriptions where *corrective feedback without the option of the correct form*, I noticed all the interactions helped draw students' attention to their error in their utterance. Excerpt 9 provides an example that took place on Day 3 Lesson 15 and examines an explicit correction provided to Brittany's utterance while sounding out the word *children* in her writing. Brittany's writing sample (see Figure 4.4) is displayed in Excerpt 9.

Excerpt 9: Explicit corrections to student error

Transcription (focus of feedback in bold)			Student writing sample
156	T:	what says /i/ ch- i/	 Figure 4.4: Writing sample.
157	B:	**a**	
158	T:	/i/ like inch ch /i/	
159	B:	i	
160	T:	good ch ill	

In the transcription shown in Excerpt 9 Brittany was in the beginning stage of writing her beginning, middle and end story. She had written, "Once upon a time there was three ch". This is when I began to assist her in sounding out the word *children*. I provided explicit corrections to her error and in the process, she was able to hear the correct letter sound and correct herself. Throughout the school year, Brittany had struggled with vowel sounds and determining which is which. I often had her reference the alphabet wall cards, so she could see which picture went with each vowel in order for her to determine which sound would fit in the word she was sounding out. In the video recording of this transcription, line 158, I am pointing up to the letter Ii card, which displays an inch on a ruler. This helped her to both see and hear the letter she was trying to write. In teaching students to reference the alphabet cards on the wall I am helping them develop a strategy they can use throughout kindergarten and until they have developed all the

sounds and can recognize which sound goes with which letter. In pointing up to the letter Ii card, I was explicitly directing her to the correct answer.

Reflection on Teacher Decision.

As a result of drawing students' attention to their errors or assisting them in sounding out, they were able to notice and correct themselves by determining the correct pronunciation, letter, sound, or meaning needed in order to understand and move on. Something that came as a surprise to me was the amount of teacher-provided feedback with and without options that occurred during writing instruction. This was not something I expected to see or even focus on originally, but after looking back at student work samples and analyzing the interactions I noticed how important it is to have students reread their writing or reread it with them in order for them to hear where they are producing errors. Before conducting this TAR, this was not something I really thought about or even considered important in students' writing process. Now after conducting this TAR I see how important it is to scaffold students as well as teach them strategies to use in writing and revising their writing in order to see where errors are occurring.

In this category of teacher-provided corrective feedback the most used forms of feedback were repetition of errors, explicit corrections and recasts used to draw attention to student utterances that produced errors. Most interactions were focused on the content except for the few interactions that focused on students' sounding out words. In those interactions, the focus was taken off the meaning and was directed towards the form of the word and sentence structure to help students compose a clear utterance. This was necessary to draw attention to because it assisted students in producing clear sentences as well as helped them to see and hear the correct way words are pronounced. A pattern that I began to notice was I provided different feedback to oral language than to written language and the feedback was dependent on where we were in the

lesson and the activity we were doing. The knowledge I gained of myself as well as my students in analyzing the instances that generated this category, *Teacher provided corrective feedback: with option or without option of correct form,* helped me to see and understand when and how feedback can be useful as well as when it may not make a big impact on student learning. Just like students, teachers produce errors and just like students, we learn from our errors. This category helped me to have a better sense of when to provide feedback as well as the types of errors I addressed and during what types of literacy activities feedback was more prominent.

Student-provided feedback: Self-correcting or correcting of a classmate.

In the data analysis, the second category of feedback I noticed was, *Student-provided feedback: self-correcting or correcting of a classmate.* In this category there were a total of 10 instances, four included students' self-correcting with some guiding and six involved teacher and student feedback with an end result of the students providing the correct answer or structure. All of the examples in this category stemmed from asking students questions about the topics with-in the weekly lessons, retelling of stories or writing activities. An interesting thing that I noticed in analyzing my data, was that all but two of the transcriptions from this category came from Day 5 Lesson 15 or after. Seeing this in the transcriptions as well as noticing students correcting each other while conducting my research made me wonder if students were picking up on my modeling and use of feedback or if it was just a natural way for them to respond to each other. Unfortunately, I was not able to see a strong enough pattern in my data in order to determine an answer. This category produced a total of ten interactions where students either self-corrected or corrected classmates.

Student-provided feedback: Self-correcting.

The instances of students' self-correcting helped me have a better understanding of the role feedback can play and showed me that I was not the only one who could provide the feedback. In this category there were a total of four instances analyzed, three of the instances where students self-corrected were during writing activities. During these activities I noticed students' self-correcting after or while I read their writing, or they read it with me. I believe this happened because students did not have the writing tools necessary to go back and read their work on their own. So, in allowing them to hear what they had written helped them to hear the errors they produced, which led them to self-correcting. Excerpt 10, lines 170- 174 took place on Day 3 Lesson 15, Doc McStuffins was working on her writing piece focusing on the beginning, middle and end sequence and she was in the beginning stage of her sequence. She omitted the word *was* but as soon as we read her sentence aloud she noticed it did not make sense and she added the word *was* while adding stress on the word while saying it.

Excerpt 10 (see Figure 4.3 as previously displayed above in Excerpt 4), shows Doc McStuffins writing, and although the figure shows her sentence with the correct structure, if you look closely it shows where she originally wrote, *once upon a time there three*. In the figure it shows the word *three* was written where the word *was* now is.

Excerpt 10: Beginning stage of writing sequence

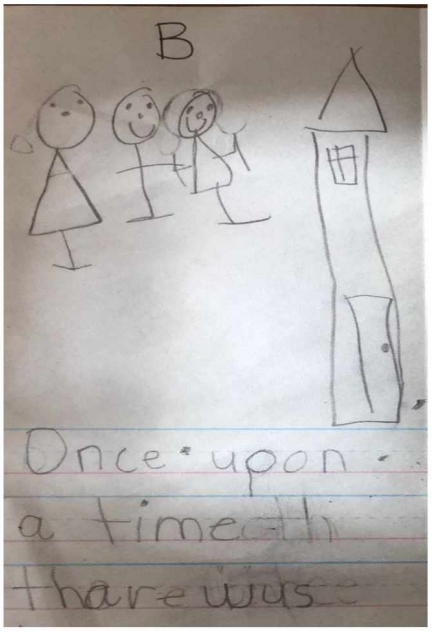
Transcription (focus on feedback in bold)			Student work
170	T:	once upon a time there	
171	DM:	**was**	
172	T:	we wrote there three	
173	DM:	there **waass**	
174	T:	we forgot was so hold on one second before we erase	

Figure 4.3: Student writing sample.

This error occurred because she was focusing on what to write and was not going back to re-read her writing. Doc McStuffins's error in her sentence structure did not change the meaning of her sentence and by drawing attention to her sentence she was able to self-correct and continue on. Students self-correcting was an indication of learning and students were becoming more aware of their oral and written language and how they were using it to communicate. As mentioned above my kindergarten students had not yet developed the writing strategy of going back and re-reading their work, so in the process of assisting them in reading their work they were able to notice their error and think about changing their writing.

Another example of a student self-correction came after we read the main text on Day 5 Lesson 15, *How Many Stars In The Sky?* by Lenny Hort. Excerpt 11 displays lines 223-226 when I was explaining our next activity to the class. MJ jumped in and said the name of the story we

had read, "how much how many stars in the sky." He first used the word *much* but immediately self-corrected and said *many*. I then drew attention to his utterance through providing a question, which Doc McStuffins then answered.

Excerpt 11: Story title

Transcription (focus of feedback in bold)		
223	T:	alright so next what we are going to do is we have read the story
224	MJ:	how **much** how many stars in the sky
225	T:	good how many stars in the sky good correction alright would it make sense if we had how much stars in the sky
226	DM:	noooo

The transcription above shows MJ self-correcting when he used a similar word, much, instead of the word many, but then he immediately corrected himself. This self-correction was the result of MJ hearing his error out loud and then quickly realizing he had used the wrong word.

The next example came during the beginning, middle and end writing sequence on Day 5 Lesson 15. Wonder Woman had already drawn her picture and was working on writing the middle part of her sequence. Excerpt 12 shows the transcription of the event and displays her work sample (see Figure 4.5).

Excerpt 12: Student self-correcting writing

Transcription (focus of feedback in bold)	Explanation of transcription
268 T: alright let's get writing me **and mom** 269 WW: me and myy mom 270 T: good correction	 Figure 4.5: Middle section of sequence writing.

The interaction begins on line 268 with me reading aloud what she had written on her own, "alright let's get writing me and mom." After I read her writing she immediately noticed the error in her writing and corrected her sentence, "me and myy mom" while adding stress on the word my, in which she had omitted. Looking closely at Figure 4.5 you can see where she had originally written the word *mom* and then erased it and replaced it with *my*.

This interaction was a result of Wonder Woman's ability to hear her writing read aloud and notice that it did not sound right because she was not including herself in her writing. In both MJ and Wonder Woman's examples they were able to self-correct and demonstrate the accurate wording and structure needed in their utterance. In drawing students' attention to their writing by

having them reread their work they are noticing their errors and self-correcting which is indicating learning and growth in their writing skills.

Reflection on Teacher Decision.

The instances in this category generated examples as shown in Excerpt 13, of students self-correcting their errors once attention was drawn to them or when they heard their error produced aloud. Some instances students caught their own error right away and self- corrected and others noticed their error when I read it aloud or when they re- read their work aloud to me.

Excerpt 13: Examples of students self-correcting

Student utterance containing error	Teacher feedback	Activity
once upon a time there three	we wrote there three	Teacher reading students writing aloud
Koby	good catch it's not Koby it's Ko-die good catch MJ	Writing
how much how many stars in the sky	good how many stars in the sky good correction alright would it make sense if we had how many stars in the sky	Getting ready to discuss the story we had been reading.
me and mom followed by me and myy mom	none needed	Writing

Students self-correcting was interesting and rewarding to see because it showed students were internalizing their language use, engaged in the writing process and moving towards more independence in their language use and understanding. One thing that made it so interesting was all the instances were from later in the *Journeys* lessons which made me reflect on what types of feedback I had been providing to students as well as how often I was drawing their attention to errors produced in their written and oral language. Something I mentioned previously was maybe students were beginning to pick up on my modeling of sentence structure as well as my feedback

provided to different students. It was very interesting to not only see what happened when I provided feedback but to see my students providing feedback to each other as well as self-correcting themselves when they realized they had produced an error.

Unfortunately, I was not able to come up with a strong enough pattern in the data to determine what led to students self-correcting. Although I did have some instances that did get me thinking and reflecting on students self-correcting the main thing that stood out to me as a possible answer was the fact that my students were in the early stages of their writing development and had not yet acquired the strategy of going back and re-reading their work without my assistance. So, in the process of assisting them in re-reading their work out loud they were able to hear and notice their error and make the corrections needed. This is a skill they will carry with them throughout their journey as writers as well as something I can further research in my use of feedback during writing instruction.

Student-provided feedback: Correcting of classmates.

The next set of excerpts are examples of students collaborating with me and classmates to provide feedback to each other during retelling of events and stories, as well as writing a letter asking someone a question about whales. The interactions in this category generated six instances where students provided feedback to each other in order to answer a question correctly or to come up with the correct sentence structure and wording. The event displayed in Excerpt 14 came after I read the story, *What a Beautiful Sky!* by Yanitzia Canetti, on Day 3 Lesson 15. In the story, pictures show the different things we see in the sky and detail why things in the sky look the way they do. The author shows and explains pictures of the sun, moon, different types of clouds and how they look depending on the weather. The following transcription displays students collaborating and providing each other with feedback.

Excerpt 14: Different things we see in the sky

Transcription (focus of feedback in bold)		
116	T:	so MJ tell me what happens after a storm
117	MJ:	there wa- **the** rainbow will come
118	T:	'kay
119	DM:	**a** rainbow does come
120	T:	'kay so hold on MJ said a rainbow will come (.) DM said a rainbow does come alright
121	C:	**a** rainbow will come (.) come out

Line 117 MJ is answering my question, "what happens after a storm?" with, "there wa- the rainbow will come." With almost no hesitation Doc McStuffins responds with an explicit correction, "a rainbow does come" while stressing the word does. I then responded by repeating what MJ said followed by what Doc McStuffins said but before I could go further into discussing the two responses Charlie jumped in with another explicit correction and said, "a rainbow will come (.) come out."

This transcription in Excerpt 14 shows students providing feedback to each other's response. Originally, I was looking for students to provide correct sentence structure in their response to make it clearer. I believe students were trying to come up with the correct sentence structure after hearing what their classmates said and then when they provided their responses. Each student's response did not change the meaning, but they all contributed a response to the best of their knowledge. Students were accessing their prior knowledge and collaborating as a way to make meaning by providing different responses to my question based on their understanding of the articles *a* an *the* and the verbs *will* and *does*. For this example, there was no exact response I was looking for, just one with clear sentence structure and that answered the

question. The reason I chose to correct this utterance was to get students use to using correct and complete sentences when conversing and writing. I feel the more attention that is drawn to their sentence structure and word use will help them as their language continues to develop.

Within this short transcription there were three different instances of feedback by three different students. My only interaction in the conversation was asking the initial question about the story and repeating what students said. I believe this conversation and student provided feedback is a result of students engaging in an instructional conversation where they are focusing on what they are saying rather than how they are saying it. This is important to note because it is showing student's language and use of language is developing and they are not only internalizing and focusing on their own language but others around them as well. This is a very important key in developing their already growing language repertoire. I thought this interaction would have generated more conversation among students, but we seemed to get hung up on how to clearly explain a rainbow appearing after a storm. This is just an example of how some conversations generate more discussion, collaboration and details to help extend the conversation than others.

The next example of student-provided feedback was also from a retelling event, but of the story, *How Many Stars In The Sky?* by Lenny Hort that took place on Day 5 Lesson 15. As shown in Excerpt 15 the original transcription was only lines 227-232 but I needed more of the transcript to better understand the conversation and the retelling sequence students went through. After I went back to the video recording and transcribed more of the conversation I noticed a lot of dialogue and details students were pointing out in their retelling that lead up to Brittany's utterance containing an error.

Excerpt 15: Retelling of *How Many Stars In The Sky?* By Lenny Hort

	Transcription (focus of feedback in bold)
	T: alright so we read this story first and what is this story about can someone quickly retell this story for me Doc McStuffins
	DM: They are tryna see the stars in town
	T: alright who is
	DM: the kid and the dad
	T: alright Wonder Women
	WW: and the dog
	T: and the dog kay Brittany
227	B: um and they went in the city but they **sawd none stars only one**
228	T: 'kay what's a better word you could say instead of they sawd none stars
229	B: i mean
230	DM: [no stars]
231	MJ: [saw]
232	B: no stars
	T: no stars good let's get into the habit of using those words so our sentences make complete sense
	C: I got one more
	T: alright Charlie
	C: they didn't see the stars

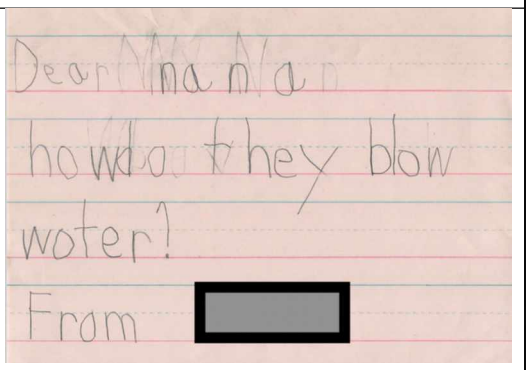
Line 227 shows Brittany's error, "um and they went in the city but they *sawd none stars only one*." In line 228 I provided an elicitation and then a repetition of error, "'kay what's a better word you could say instead of they sawd none stars" which helped Brittany realize she had produced an error in her utterance. Then line 230 and 231 Doc McStuffins corrects the error *none stars* with an explicit correction, *no stars*, while at the same time MJ corrected Brittany's error *sawd* with another explicit correction, *saw*. I thought this was very interesting that they

both provide feedback at the same time but they both chose a different error to focus on and respond to. Brittany was then able to hear the correct way to structure her utterance using the proper form of each word. I followed up the conversation by reminding students to get into the habit of producing sentences that make sense, because we are sense-making and meaning-making humans and by using standardized forms (with room for dialectical differences) we are fulfilling our role in the social contract.

Finally, following my response, Charlie spoke up and said he had one more example and provided another way to produce the sentence correctly. This transcription displayed students collaborating and showed that they were not only listening to each other's responses, but also were re-making their own meaning as they formed their own responses and understanding. This example showed the important role each student plays in contributing in instructional conversations as well as how they are understanding each other's utterances, making meaning of them and then producing correct utterances to assist in each other's language development.

The last example in this category is displayed in Excerpt 16 and was a student interaction while writing letters to someone asking them a question about whales on Day 2 Lesson 16.

Excerpt 16: Letter writing transcription

Transcription (focus of feedback in bold)	Student work sample
332 B: at the **end I'm gonna say to Nana** 333 DM: at the end you have to say love or from Brittany	 Figure 4.6: Letter writing.

Previously we had read the story *Dear Mr. Blueberry* by Simon James where the young girl Emily believes she has a blue whale living in her pond. Throughout the story, she and her teacher Mr. Blueberry write letters back and forth discussing the possible whale in her pond. Students were able to see the structure of a letter throughout the story as well as learn different facts about where blue whales live, what they eat and that they are migratory. After reading the story I told students they would be picking someone to write a letter to and in their letter, they would be asking a question they had about whales. Before students started thinking about who they would write to and what they would ask I modeled my own letter up on the whiteboard to show students the structure of a letter one last time and then I gave them their paper and let them get to work. In doing this I was providing whole group scaffolding and then when students began writing on their own, I provided individual scaffolding where and when needed.

Throughout the letter writing-activity, I helped students when needed but for the most part I let them construct their own question. The interaction between Brittany and Doc McStuffins displayed in Excerpt 16 did not catch my attention until I was going through the recordings looking for instances where feedback was provided. This is a great example of students collaborating with no teacher interaction. In this transcription Brittany was talking to herself as she worked through planning her letter and that is when she said, "at the end I'm gonna say to Nana." Doc McStuffins who was sitting two seats over from her overheard her utterance and responded with an explicit correction, "at the end you have to say love or from Brittany." After Doc McStuffins responded Brittany did not respond back to her and the two continued on with their work.

This interaction between the two girls showed Brittany's confusion of the structure of the letter but also showed Doc McStuffins's understanding of the correct structure of the letter and

she was able to share her understanding through specific feedback. When Brittany got to the end of her letter (see Figure 4.6) in Excerpt 16, she showed that she understood what she needed to write to end the letter and a big part of her understanding came from the explicit correction. Whether the feedback was a reminder to Brittany or if it was actually something she was struggling to understand was not clear to me, especially because I did not witness the interaction as it happened. At the end of the activity Brittany was able to complete her letter to her Nana, which is what she called her grandma. This collaboration between Brittany and Doc McStuffins is significant because it displays a student interaction where feedback was provided with no adult involvement or interaction.

Reflection on Teacher Decision.

The six instances in this category generated examples as shown in Excerpt 17 and display students' utterance containing an error and then the feedback by me and fellow classmates.

Excerpt 17: Student-provided feedback

Student utterance containing error	Teacher feedback/ Classmate feedback	Activity
MJ: there wa- the rainbow will come	DM: a rainbow does come C: **a** rainbow will come (.) come out	Retelling of story
B: um and they went in the city but they **sawd none stars** **only one**	T: 'kay what's a better word you could say instead of they sawd none stars B: i mean DM: [no stars] MJ: [saw]	Retelling

C: fuun	T: can you feel fun or do we have fun K: [have fun] MJ: [have fun] C: [have fun]	Q&A
WW: were going to home	T: does that make sense were going to home MJ: we are going Wonder Woman said we are going to home	Writing
B: at the **end I'm gonna say to Nana**	DM: at the end you have to say love or from Brittany	Writing letter
DM: what do you do with science	T: did she ask what we do with science MJ: uh what is science?	Q&A What question does the author ask in the story.

The interactions generated in this category included student utterances with errors followed by feedback by me or another student and often resulted with a student providing the correct form or answer. When looking through the interactions I noticed some could have fit well into the first category, *teacher provided corrective feedback: with option or without option of correct form,* but I thought it was interesting and important to put them into this category to highlight the students' role in providing feedback. It was interesting to me to see how they acquired the correct answers, structures and words through collaboration amongst each other. Out of the six interactions one resulted in students collaborating to come up with the correct sentence structure on their own and the other five were results of collaboration between myself and students, where students were able to provide the correct answer in the end.

In analyzing this category, I noticed my role of facilitating and scaffolding the conversations played a big role in helping students notice errors. Originally, I thought the

interactions that took place were a little more student driven and had less teacher interaction but the more I analyzed them I noticed I tended to start the conversations with a question and student responses following the question were when the errors occurred. These interactions tended to occur when asking questions about the stories we were reading and when I asked extending questions. Following students' errors, I provided either a clarification request or repetition of error. Following my feedback other students were able to provide the feedback correcting the error. Originally, I thought I played more of a role of the facilitator and kept the conversations moving and on topic but did not provide much feedback. After looking back at the transcriptions, I realized I was facilitating and providing some initial feedback which then led to students correcting each other. This got me wondering if eventually students would become more independent in these types of conversations or if because they are only in kindergarten if I would need to continue my role of both facilitating and providing feedback to keep the conversations going in the right direction.

Extending the conversation through teacher prompting and students collaborating in the meaning-making process.

In the data analysis, the third and final category I noticed was, *Extending the conversation through teacher prompting and students collaborating in the meaning-making process.* The interactions in this category address times when the conversations taking place were extended in order for students to make more meaning of the topic at hand. Conversations were extended through teacher prompting and by students' collaborating to make more meaning and acquire better understanding. A total of 14 instances were generated in developing this category. Throughout the two sub categories (teacher prompting and students collaborating for meaning), repetition of errors was the most prominent form of corrective feedback, followed by clarification requests.

Extending the conversation through teacher prompting.

The first example in *extending the conversation through teacher prompting* occurred on Day 1 Lesson 15 and is displayed in Excerpt 18. This interaction came from a question asked when reviewing the story, *How Many Stars In The Sky?* By Lenny Hort.

Excerpt 18: Extending conversation about sunsets

Transcription (focus of feedback in bold)		
030	T:	what does the sky look like early in the morning (.) think about what the sky looks like early in the morning (.) Wonder Women can you tell us what it looks like
031	WW:	black
032	T:	black alright can you tell us why it might look black
033	WW:	because it's early
034	T:	ok it's early
035	B:	orange
036	T:	the sky might look orange in the morning and why might it look orange
037	B:	because it's almost morning
038	T:	cause it's almost morning but what makes the sky orange
039	B:	(.) **the sunset**
040	T:	the sunset (.) does the sunset at night or in the morning
041	B:	in kinda like the night kinda like the morning
042	T:	ok we have two words for that so a sunset is when the sun is setting like when the sun is going to bed sun rise is when the sun is rising up its waking up jus like we wake up like we're rising out of our bed in the morning to come to school the sun is rising up into the sky (.) ok

As displayed above the question asked was, "what does the sky look like early in the morning (.) think about what the sky looks like early in the morning (.) Wonder Woman can you tell us what it looks like?" Wonder Woman responded, "black" and then I repeated her response,

"black alright can you tell us why it might look black?" Then asked her to tell us why as a way of extending the conversation to get her to explain her reasoning. She responded, "because it's early." Brittany then joined in the conversation saying "orange" to tell what the sky looks like in the early morning. I then repeated her response and asked, "why might it look orange?" She responded, "because it is almost morning." I again repeated her response and asked another extending question, "what makes the sky orange?" This is where her utterance showed her misunderstanding, confusion or possibly just her lack of knowledge on the topic, when she responded, "the sunset." Although she was not wrong about the colors the sky makes when the sun sets we were specifically discussing the sky in the early morning. I then responded, "the sunset (.) does the sun set at night or in the morning?" As a way to get her to think about her response. Then by responding, "in kinds like the night kinda like the morning" showed her in the meaning-making process and trying to explain her understanding. While explaining her understanding she was putting her hands up and down as if they were the sun setting and rising.

After witnessing Wonder Woman and Brittany accessing their prior knowledge to provide details about the sky early in the morning, I noticed Brittany understood the concept of the sun rising and setting but was not aware that they were two separate events that take place. This was when I went into a little more detail in explaining the sun setting and the sun rising, while providing hand gestures for all to see and make better sense of the two events. This example provided more feedback to extend the conversation to allow students to explain their answers and for me to get a better understanding of what they knew and did not know, than corrective feedback. This was because the conversation was building on previous responses of the two students and I was just repeating their responses and asking them to explain their responses in more details. I did however use corrective feedback in the form of a repetition of

error and a clarification request in line 040, but that was used in extending the conversation to help Brittany in explaining her response and meaning-making process.

The next example came during a writing activity on Day 3 Lesson 15, when MJ was using the beginning, middle and end sequencing in a story he chose to write. He was in the middle stage of writing his story and he was using his drawing to connect to his writing. He was referencing his drawing to help describe what he wanted to say and how to say it using the correct sentence structure. His drawing shown in Excerpt 19 (see Figure 4.7), helped him in deciding what he was wanting to write.

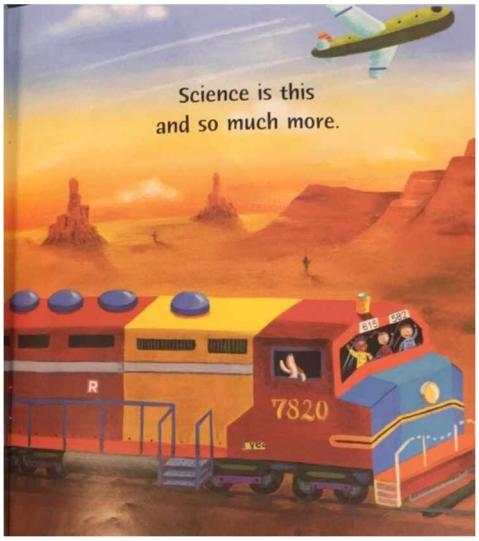
Excerpt 19: Extending conversation in a writing activity

Transcription (focus of feedback in bold)			Student writing sample
178	T:	me and Kodie are	
179	MJ:	**playin**	
180	T:	'kay and what are you playing	
181	MJ:	snowball fight	
182	T:	'kay and do we s- hold on let's say do we say playing snowball fight	
183	MJ:	play	
184	T:	what's a better way we could write that me and Kodie are	
185	MJ:	playing	
186	T:	playing snowball fight	
187	MJ:	playing	
188	T:	'kay how would be a good way to say we are (.) something snowball fight we are (..) me and Kodie are	
189	MJ:	Having snowball fight	Figure 4.7: Snowball fight.
190	T:	awesome that sounds a lot better doesn't it	

The transcription began with line 178 where I was reading what MJ had already written, "me and Kodie are." After I paused at the end of his writing he filled in the missing space in his sentence by responding, "playin." I then questioned him to extend his writing in order to describe all the details displayed in his drawing, by asking, "kay and what are you playing?" He answered my question with, "snowball fight." I then asked another question through a clarification request to help him in his sentence structure, by bringing the words together and not keeping them alone. Following that in line 183 he responded to my clarification request with, "play" to which I asked another question, "what's a better way we could write that me and Kodie are." MJ then repeated his utterance, *playing* a few times but each time I could tell by his body language and facial expressions of looking up, that he was really thinking of the correct wording and sentence structure until he got to "having snowball fight." Although his final sentence, "me and Kodie are having snowball fight" is missing the determiner a, I got pulled away helping another student and did not notice until after the lesson was over that it was missing. This example was a good one-on-one interaction with MJ as he referenced his drawing to help come up with the correct word choice and develop a clear sentence to explain what was going on. He went through the meaning-making process in developing his sentence and with the scaffolding I provided him with he was able to connect his writing to his drawing.

This next example came from Day 3 Lesson 16 and provides an extension of a question that was asked when students were looking at two pictures in the story, *What is Science?* By Rebecca Kai Dotlich. Excerpt 20 displays the page in the story, transcription from the conversation and the different roles students took within it.

Excerpt 20: Extending the conversation using photos from the story, *What is Science?*

Transcription	
379 B: trains 380 T: kay Sarah 381 S: plane 382 T: a plane MJ 383 MJ: uh uh castles 384 T: ok so are these castles 385 DM: sand castles 386 T: they are kinda like sand castles do you know what they are Kodie 387 K: um mountains? 388 T: they're kinda like mountains 389 DM: uh humans 390 T: Kodie 391 K: rocks 392 T: they're made of rocks and sand and clay and they're called monuments alright we're gonna turn the page ok	 Figure 4.8: Monuments

The conversation began with students' responding to the question, "what types of science do we see on these pages?" Students were looking at a picture in the story (see Figure 4.8) which introduced different fields of science on each page. Brittany was the first to respond and said, "trains" which is not a field of science but there was a train on the page. I then asked Sarah and she said, "plane." Again, not a field of science but shown in the pictures of the story. Next MJ

responded and said, "uh uh castles." I then responded with a clarification request, "ok so are these castles?" This is when students started collaborating and accessing their funds of knowledge and prior knowledge to better understand and explain what MJ was trying to name. Doc McStuffins joined in and said, "sand castles" to which I said, "they are kinda like sand castles do you know what they are Kodie?" While drawing Kodie into the conversation he responded, "um mountains?" Then Doc McStuffins said, "uh humans" I called on Kodie again and he said, "rocks."

At this point I realized students were providing appropriate answers based on their knowledge at that point, but they were not getting to the name used in the story, so I provided them the answer through an explicit correction, "they're made of rocks and sand and clay and they are called monuments alright we're gonna turn the page ok." At the time of the lesson I did not think too much about it aside from how many students participated in the discussion. After going back and transcribing the event I noticed a lot of collaboration among students searching for meaning that was going on with the help of my scaffolding to extend the conversation. Another really important aspect I realized when going back over this transcription was that my students were making sense of the monument based on their funds of knowledge and prior knowledge, which made sense because none of them had ever heard of a monument or seen one before reading the story. Monuments in the desert are not something familiar to them, so they were comparing it to things that were familiar to them, like sand castles, mountains and rocks.

Reflection on Teacher Decision.

The interactions that took place in their category really helped me learn about when and why I was providing feedback to extend conversations. This meaning-making process showed strengths in my students' abilities to collaborate in order to achieve meaning while accessing

their funds of knowledge and prior knowledge, while at the same time showed an area in instruction that I needed to improve on. Something I noticed in my feedback was at times my expectations of what I thought student responses should be were too exact, which then led to me providing feedback to help guide them to the response I was looking for. In the end this caused more confusion for students and myself and in some instances, I realized students were just getting confused, so I ended the discussion and moved onto another question. Some of the instances where I extended the conversation were due to students' utterances being unclear or their word choice was unclear to me. So, I repeated their utterance for my own understanding.

In the interaction displayed in Excerpt 20, I should have done a better job in introducing the story and the different details students would be learning about within the story. I should have also really looked through the story prior to reading it because even though it goes along with the *Journeys* lesson, I felt it was an inappropriate text and my students struggled to make connections to it. Especially since some of the fields of science and pictures displayed were of things my students were unfamiliar with, like the study of oil and gas, hurricanes and tornadoes. This example pointed out an area of my instruction that I will be improving in and I hope it allows other educators to reflect on their own instruction when teaching students in early childhood education. As this was my first full year of teaching *Journeys*, I was able to use all the stories and materials provided which allowed me to see what was useful and what was not. So that too will help in my instruction and the way I provide feedback in the future.

Another thing I noticed in my own instruction was the inconsistencies of when I chose to provide feedback. In some of the interactions I was very focused on what students were saying and assisting them in explaining their understanding and in other interactions one error produced would catch my attention and my focus would shift from meaning-making to form. I feel as the

teacher I need to determine from the beginning what my focus is going to be in providing feedback and try to stay as consistent as possible, especially with something like extending conversations to assist students in the meaning-making process. That was something that stood out to me in this category and I feel will be beneficial to keep in mind for future reference.

In this category the conversations that took place were a bit longer than ones in the other categories because of student responses and my responses in extending the conversation to clarify students' utterances and to understand each other's meaning-making process. Because of this I only included three interactions in this section. To see the remaining transcriptions that occurred in this category but were not used as examples in section, see Appendix D.

Extending the conversation through students collaborating in the meaning-making process.

The next part of this category was extending the conversation by allowing students to collaborate in the meaning-making process with less teacher involvement. In this section of the category students are collaborating to explain and understand other responses when retelling events from two of the stories we read. This first transcription displayed in Excerpt 21 occurred on Day 1 Lesson 15, when I was introducing students to the weekly topic.

Excerpt 21: Collaborating for meaning

Transcription		
004	T:	do we see any sort of animals in the sky
005	DM:	[noooo](…) birds
006	K:	[birds]
007	WW:	[no]
008	T:	birds in the sky good so we see lots of different things in the sky do not we
009	DM:	and we see cat and the hat
010	T:	in the sky (..)
011	MJ:	you know tha- you know that [thing]
012:	DM:	[ohhh]
013:	T:	in his flying mobile
014:	B:	I know that one kind of airplane that has a little like a flag on it

I had just read a poem called, *Skyscraper* by Dennis Lee, and was asking different questions about the sky and what we see in the sky. I began by asking, "do we see any sort of animals in the sky?" Doc McStuffins and Wonder Woman responded with "no" but after a short pause Doc McStuffins said, "birds." While the girls responded "no" Kodie said, "birds." I then responded to Kodie and Doc McStuffins' response with, "birds in the sky good so we see lots of different things in the sky do not we?" Doc McStuffins then said, "and we see cat and the hat." I then responded with a clarification request, "in the sky?" Because I was unsure what she meant. MJ then spoke up and said, "you know tha- you know that thing?" As he responded he put his hand flat and moved it as if it was flying. At that point I realized what they meant and asked, "in his flying mobile?"

After I responded Doc McStuffins began nodding her head in agreement. At first, I was very confused but then I realized she was talking about Dr. Seuss's flying mobile called the

Thinga- Ma- Jigger, that has wings and rocket boosters among other things. This example showed that she was accessing her prior knowledge she had gained from recently celebrating Dr. Seuss's birthday and reading many of his books. She was using the knowledge she had gained and was using it in her meaning-making process of different things we see in the sky. The final line in this transcription Brittany was sharing her prior knowledge of blimps when she said, "I know that one kind of airplane that has a little like a flag on it." Her response also shows she was really going through the meaning-making process to understand what her classmates were sharing as well as think about something she was familiar with and her classmates had not already said. In this transcription there were a few different occasions where students accessed their prior knowledge to assist them in their meaning making. The interaction between Doc McStuffins and MJ showed them collaborating in order to describe another thing that we see in the sky, even if it is a fictional thing they were still making connections to the original questions and their understanding.

The following transcription displayed in Excerpt 22 also came from Day 1 Lesson 15, while students were answering questions and retelling parts of the story, *What a Beautiful Sky* by Yanitzia Canetti. The story displays a picture of a flock of birds flying over a body of water at sun set and says, "what else can we see in the beautiful sky?"

Excerpt 22: Students sharing knowledge about birds

Transcription (focus of feedback in bold)		
043	T:	'kay think of what types of birds might fly in a pattern (.) Charlie can you share
044	C:	Unn
045	T:	what kinds of birds might you see fly in a pattern (.)
046	C:	arr rrraven and the white ones and the baby [ones]
047	K:	[the] white ones are seagulls
048	T:	seagulls or swans' maybe
049	K:	what no I meant those white ones are um
050	C:	with the long neck
051	K:	yeah their um
052	MJ:	swans
053	T:	swans fly in a pattern very good
054	B:	**goose**
055	T:	goose or do we say goose or geese
056	B:	geese

The original question in line 043 stems from that picture in the story but was open for students to share their knowledge of types of birds that might fly in a pattern. Charlie was the first student I called on to answer but was unable to come up with an answer, so I asked the question but made it more personal, "what kinds of birds might you see fly in a pattern?" Charlie then responded, "arr raven and the white ones and the baby ones." As Charlie was finishing his response Kodie interrupted and provided an explicit correction, "the white ones are seagulls." I then added, "seagulls or swans maybe" both of which are birds we see in Aniak. Kodie then responded again, "what no I meant those white ones are um" Charlie then assisted Kodie in his meaning making process by asking a specific question, "with the long neck" to help determine the bird he was trying to name. After hearing Kodie and Charlie's descriptions of the bird, MJ provided the name of the bird "swans" that made sense to him. I then confirmed that swans do

fly in a pattern. Then immediately after Brittany added, "goose" to which I responded with a repetition of error and then an option of the correct form, "goose or do we say goose or geese?" She quickly recognized her error and corrected herself.

This transcription provided good examples of students collaborating in order to make-meaning and assisting each other in their meaning making process. Students accessed their funds of knowledge and prior knowledge of local birds and provided accurate details about them. At the end of the transcription Brittany provided another good example of birds that fly in a flock, although she used the singular form of the wood it did not take away from her meaning. While analyzing this transcription I began to realize a pattern in some of Brittany's involvement in conversations. She tended to add to the conversations at the end right before we were about to move on. This recurrence of her interactions shows that even at the end of conversations she was still engaged and was still working and extending through her own meaning making process, in order to provide a response that helped her connect to the original question and conversations.

The final example as displayed in Excerpt 23 came from a retelling event after we read the story, *How Many Stars In The Sky?* by Lenny Hort. The original transcription did not include the first three lines provided by myself, Wonder Woman and Brittany, but I realized it was necessary to have the original question I asked as well as their responses to lead us into the rest of the conversation. Students were asked to, "think of a place where you might think is an easy place to count stars."

Excerpt 23: Student responses regarding locations to count stars

Transcription		
	T:	think of a place where you might think is an easy place to count stars Wonder Woman
	WW:	the lighthouse
	B:	um by mm at the beach where where the where you're on top of a lighthouse
057	T:	'kay at the beach on top of a lighthouse Charlie
058	C:	un (.) like there's a big chree and then there's that board
059	T:	there's a maching and a board
060	C:	no the board like the [wood]
061	B:	[uh diving board]
062	C:	[on the tree]
063	T:	mmkay
064	MJ:	uh tree house

Wonder Woman was the first to raise her hand and she said, "the light house" which was an interesting response because none of our stories or discussions talked about lighthouses. Her response showed she had prior knowledge about lighthouses and where they are located, and her knowledge allowed her to provide a very accurate answer. I then pointed to Brittany and she said, "um by mm at the beach where where the where you're on top of a light house." Although the structure of her response was not very smooth it was obvious she was thinking and trying to make meaning of what Wonder Woman said while at the same time trying to provide her own response. I then repeated what Brittany said but simplified it in order to get her meaning across to the rest of the group. I then called on Charlie and he said, "un (.) like there's a big chree and then there's that board." Unfortunately, I did not hear him clearly at the time because he had his thumb in his mouth and I thought he said something about a machine and a board, so the feedback I provided was a clarification request, hoping he would repeat himself to give me a

better understanding of what he was trying to say. As he responded to my misinterpretation he was putting his arm out as if it were a flat board while saying, "no the board like the wood." As he was saying wood Brittany jumped in and was trying to make sense of her own understanding while trying to help him in his explanation and she asked, "uh diving board." This showed she was processing what he was saying as well as trying to interpret his nonverbal gestures. After Brittany provided her response Charlie finished by saying, "on the tree." At this point I was still trying to make meaning of both Charlie and Brittany's responses and that is when MJ stepped in and said, "uh tree house" which then cleared up all the confusion. In this transcription students provided answers that were all accurate and made sense. They really showed they understood good places to look at and count the stars without things like buildings and lights blocking their view. Students also collaborated in the meaning-making process while listening to each other's responses and worked through the conversation in a positive and respectful way while sharing their prior knowledge about different things and places.

Reflection on Teacher Decision.

This category, *Extending the conversation through students collaborating in the meaning-making process* consists of five instances where students were able to share their prior knowledge and understanding of the stories. Through collaborating to better understand each other's responses and providing responses of their own, students were able to assist each other in providing more details in their responses, clarifying utterances and providing correct responses.

Although there were only five transcriptions in this category I felt I was able to get a good insight into the ways students collaborated with each other and assisted each other in their meaning-making process and in helping each other clarify what they were trying to explain or say. Students showed that they were not only listening to the questions I was asking but they

were really listening to their peers' responses and providing thoughtful and appropriate response in return. The transcriptions in this category also showed me how much my students were building off of each other's responses and adding their knowledge to the conversations. I felt all my students showed good collaboration and listening skills, but I was really excited to see some patterns in Brittany's involvement in conversations. She tended to add to the conversations at the end right before we were about to move on, but she provided thoughtful responses that showed she was engaged and focused on the topic at hand. As teachers it can be easy to overlook students like Brittany because they may not have provided answers or responses right away or they may be a little more reserved during conversations. I learned through analyzing some of interactions Brittany participated in that it is important to not rush conversations. To allow plenty of time for students to think about the questions asked or the topic being discussed in order for students to provide detailed responses and really show their understanding. The interactions observed and analyzed in this category got me excited to continue providing my students with opportunities to collaborate in the meaning-making process. They also helped me to see how I can better assist students in these conversations and the role I play in extending the conversation. Lastly these interactions helped me to see the importance of not getting hung up on a grammatical feature or trying to correct an utterance containing an error if it is something that exceeds my students understanding and will take away from the meaning-making taking place.

Excerpt 24 displays the remaining two transcriptions of the five total in the category, *Extending the conversation through students collaborating in the meaning-making process.* Both transcriptions show the conversations were extended to assist the students in developing clear sentences in their writing.

Excerpt 24: Extending the conversation through students collaborating in the meaning-making process

Transcriptions		
196	K:	I went to the store yesterday
197	T:	kay I went to the store that is in the past but it doesn't have the -ed s -ed ending Wonder Women you got an -ed ending
198	WW:	I drawed a picture and I give it to my mom b yesterday
199	T:	kay do we say I drawed a picture
200	DM:	drew a picture
201	T:	kay we'd say I drew a picture but does that have the -ed ending
202	DM:	nooo
293	B:	hers wondering is it hurt
294	T:	ok so do we say hers wondering or [what] would be a better
295	DM:	[she is]
296	B:	shur is her is wondering
297	T:	her is wondering or
298	DM:	no she is
299	C:	she
300	B:	hers hers is she wondering
301	T:	umhm she is wondering good very good

Findings

The data collected in this teacher action research assisted me in generating and understanding three categories which helped guide me through the data analysis and seek the findings presented above. Throughout this data analysis I began to see some patterns in the types of feedback I provided and the results following the feedback. I also noticed the role I played in extending conversations and how students responded to my extending feedback. Students' engagement in the activities and collaboration throughout made the instruction and implementation of this study achievable. In following the daily ELA routines and procedures developed with in the *Journeys* weekly lessons, students knew what to expect and what was expected of them which made this research study more natural and comfortable for them. The three categories presented in this chapter highlighted interactions where students' utterances contained an error or where I felt it was necessary to extend the conversation to better understand what students were saying and to scaffold them in their meaning making process.

The first category, *Teacher provided corrective feedback: with option or without option of correct form,* produced the most interactions between me and my students. I did not realize until going through and analyzing the data that providing students with corrective feedback with the option of the correct form was the most natural for me. Looking back, I believe the reason behind this is because working with students who are in early stages of language development in school, they may not know the correct way to say some words or the correct structure to say them in. So, in providing an option I am allowing them to hear their utterance as well as another way of saying it and then allowing them to make the decision on what sounds more accurate to them. This allows them to be more engaged as well as take ownership of their language learning. In this TAR a total 54 transcriptions were analyzed and in this specific category, *Teacher provided corrective feedback: with option or without option of correct form* a total of 18 interactions occurred.

Out of the 18 interactions during which I provided corrective feedback with an option of the correct form occurred eight times. Of those eight times students were able to notice their error and selected the correct form or structure in seven of the occasions. Students' corrections were either on their own or with some help from a classmate, in order to correct their error. Out of the 10 interactions I provided corrective feedback with no option, students were able to come up with the correct form of their utterance in seven of the ten interactions. Of the three interactions where students did not correct their utterance, two of them were because I provide corrective feedback in the form of recasts, where the correct form was provided, and we continued on with the conversation. The interesting thing I noticed in the one interaction where no option was provided as well as in the two interactions where students were provided an option, they were unable to correct their utterance, because of my fault in providing the feedback

and the type of error I was focusing on. I realized it was because of my error in providing feedback that either I was not clear enough in the way I provided the corrective feedback or the error I was focusing on was not taking into account what my students needed at the time and I was not properly scaffolding them in a way that took into account where they were developmentally or their natural dialect.

Taking a closer look at the interactions where feedback was provided, and errors were not corrected really helped me look at my instruction and when, why and how I provide feedback to my students. As stated previously I did not expect to provide as much feedback during writing activities as I actually did, but after analyzing the data I began to see why so much feedback was needed and how rereading students work out loud generated many rich interactions with students where they were able to hear and recognize their errors. The specific interactions within the data really made me think about my expectations of students as well as my expectations of myself as the teacher. Although teachers do make mistakes at times this helped open my eyes to some of the errors produced that do not need to be addressed because they are not yet developmentally appropriate errors to focus on or they take students away from the meaning. This is where having a good understanding of where each student is in their language development really comes into play. Providing feedback tends to be specific to each student and may differ depending on the type of activity as well as their knowledge and use of language.

The second category, *Student provided feedback: self-correction (no teacher influence) or correcting a classmate,* was enlightening and shows students collaborating with each other as well as internalizing their utterances and showing language development in their responses and reactions. In this category there were a total of ten interactions, four were self-corrections and six were instances where students were corrected by classmates. Within the four self-correcting

instances I started the conversation either reading students' written work or asking what their next steps were. In two of the interactions students immediately noticed their error when reading their sentences and self-corrected. The other two self-corrections came immediately after student noticed their spoken utterance contained an error based on the way it sounded and self-corrected.

The second part of this category *feedback provided by classmates,* provided six of the ten interactions in this category, four of which were explicit corrections provided by classmates to correct an error produced. The other two occasions where students provided corrective feedback to each other were in the process of making meaning of the speaker's utterance. Through having conversations with each other students were able to gather enough information about the speaker's utterance in order to provide feedback. As the teacher I played the role of the facilitator within instructional conversations, in which I began the conversation and added a few words here and there to keep the conversation focused, but the students were the ones collaborating, making meaning and providing the feedback once they had achieved understanding of their classmates' utterance. This whole category was enlightening and enjoyable for me to witness because students were showing their understanding of the modeling I had been doing as well as their engagement with the content and each other. The interactions shown in this category provide evidence that what we are doing on a daily basis is transferring to our students and not only are they students in the classroom, they are also little teachers capable of sharing their knowledge with others. After analyzing the data collected in this category I could not help wondering what it would be like to analyze similar conversations with older students. I imagine older students may not need as much facilitating and feedback provided in order to collaborate and converse with each other on a given topic.

The third and final category of this teacher action research was, *Extending the conversation through teacher prompting and students collaborating in the meaning making process.* In this category there were a total 14 interactions where the meaning making process was extended in order to achieve better comprehension of the content. Of the 14 interactions, nine of the conversations were extended through teacher prompting and five were extensions based on students' collaborating for meaning. Some of the examples selected for this category could have fit into the other categories based on options of the correct form provided or students correcting each other, but I felt the meaning-making process students took in the interactions would be better highlighted in this category. The interactions in this category produced a lot of dialogue between myself and my students as well as between students alone.

The extending of conversations through teacher prompting in this category revolved around the weekly *Journeys* topics and students' writing pieces. Each interaction began with me either asking a question or reading students' writing. Within the conversations in this category I tended to provide clarification requests and repetition of errors as ways to prompt students in the discussion in order to help them in the meaning making process. As often as possible I tried to draw upon students' funds of knowledge and prior knowledge to assist them in their own meaning making and to help them make connections to the topics and their writing. This category helped me as the teacher to see when extending the conversation was very beneficial to students' language development and overall comprehension of the topics, texts and writing they were producing. I noticed when I began to ask questions that were too specific on a particular word that was not highlighted, or reviewed students got confused and the conversations were not beneficial. When I stuck to the main parts of stories students were able to discuss them in more depth as well as work together to find and make meaning. This category also allowed me to see

times I provided feedback to address specific words or when I provided feedback with the intention of students providing a very exact response and when they did not provide the response expected the focus of the conversation was lost. I noticed when I expected a specific response from students I would extend the conversation in a way that directed them to the answer I was wanting, but in the end that only hindered students meaning-making process and caused confusion. I quickly realized I needed to focus on students' responses and understanding and then determine what direction the conversation needed to go, in order to benefit students' learning and meaning-making process.

The second part of this category where the meaning making process was extended through collaborative dialogue among students provided another rich experience for me to witness and for students to take part in. These interactions stemmed from questions about the lesson topics and retelling events. Students were engaged with each other and were respectful in assisting each other in their meaning making process. In the interactions there was usually one student confused or struggling to explain their understanding and the other students collaborated and assisted them in explaining or providing the right words to help them show and make meaning.

Overall this taught me a lot about myself as the teacher and how I can best scaffold my students in their language development and meaning-making processes. Each student learns at a different rate and it is very important to know and understand what each student needs and what kind of support they need to progress in their learning. One thing that is necessary in supporting each individual learner is a strong relationship and knowledge about each student. In doing so I can assist them in their learning by knowing when to provide them with corrective feedback, the type of feedback to provide and how to provide it in order to best address their utterances. In

conducting this research, I learned more about each one of my students as I engaged with them and examined their interactions throughout each lesson. In taking more time to work individually with students, during writing activities I was able to focus on them and converse with them. This was a way for them to show what they knew, and I was able to see exactly where their errors were being produced. Which led me to understanding why these errors were being produced and it turned out to be because they had not been taught the writing skill of going back and re-reading their work. They each made valuable contributions to the lessons and activities, which in return made for a very rich experience for all. This teacher action research has taught me a lot, but the learning process is not over. The knowledge and experience I have acquired will be carried with me into each new school year as I get new students, build new relationships and the more I engage with providing feedback to my students.

As stated in the beginning of this chapter and in previous chapters, the research questions I focused on in this TAR were:

1. When do I provide feedback?

2. What kind of utterance do I correct?

3. How do I provide feedback?

This teacher action research really taught me a lot about my use of feedback during instructional conversations and activities and helped me to see how students responded to the feedback provided. Through instructional conversations based on the content and the knowledge students were bringing into the discussions I was able to assess their meaning- making process and provide scaffolding where and when needed, either to the whole group or to individual students. All feedback was provided during instructional conversations and was provided by either me or

students. I provided students with feedback when I noticed their utterance contained an error or if I was unsure of what they were trying to say. During the instructional conversations, feedback was provided if I felt their error was developmentally appropriate to correct. There were a few instances where I provided feedback and then realized the error I was trying to correct was not developmentally appropriate which resulted in a conversation that led to no language correction and if anything led to more confusion. There were also instances where I was looking for a specific response and if students did not provide it, I tended to push them towards the response I was wanting. Which in the end did not pan out to be beneficial to students or the meaning-making process. The few instances where the feedback was not developmentally appropriate made it more apparent that knowing what students need and their developmental levels is very important when scaffolding students' language development and providing feedback.

Feedback in this TAR was provided orally and occurred during instructional conversations and during writing activities. The process of conducting this TAR and results found have widened my understanding and knowledge of the use of feedback. Feedback is beneficial to students' language development and use when provided in a positive and supportive way for each individual student. Feedback was used to assist students in correcting errors made in their utterances and to extend conversations in order to better understand and assist students in producing correct forms of words, sentence structures and meanings.

When answering my research questions: When do I provide feedback? What kind of utterance do I correct? and How do I provide feedback? I do not feel I can provide one solid answer. Feedback was based on who I was working with, what we were doing and if I felt feedback was necessary or needed at the time. In some interactions I provided a recast or an explicit correction and we moved on, in other interactions I provided a repetition of error,

followed by a clarification request in order to better understand students' utterances and to extend the conversation. In some interactions I simply read a student's writing out loud and that was all it took for the student to realize they had produced an error and it needed to be corrected.

When I first developed my research questions I thought I would have a definite and clear answer for each question after organizing and analyzing all the data. But I do not have a simple and concise answer for each. Instead I have a whole wealth of knowledge and understanding about feedback and how and when I can provide it to better assist my students in their written and oral language development. The interactions in this TAR helped me to see when feedback is appropriate and when I should step back and just allow my students to collaborate and make meaning amongst themselves. I learned that just because a student is not responding does not mean they are not listening and engaging in the topic of discussion taking place. From the data collected and analyzed I noticed I was not super consistent in the types of utterances I addressed, and, in the future, I need to determine if the feedback I am going to provide is going to be based on students' word choice, sentence structure, grammatical features or meaning. Consistency is important in all aspects of education and now that I have a better understanding of the use and role feedback plays in developing kindergarten student's language I feel I can better address students' utterances containing errors, in a way that will benefit them in their oral and written language, while still focusing on meaning-making.

Chapter 5: Conclusions, Implication and Future Research

This teacher action research (TAR) was an all-around learning experience and throughout the process I acquired a lot of valuable information and grew as a teacher. Planning, implementing and analyzing the data collected for this research study and doing so in my own classroom, made for a rich and authentic experience for myself and my students. While conducting this research I was able to strengthen my interactions with my students as well as acquire new strategies and ways to implement them into my English Language Arts (ELA) instruction. I also discovered ways I could more effectively scaffold my students' language development and expand their meaning-making process through the use of feedback during literacy instruction and activities.

For this research study I developed three questions based around my inquiry of using feedback with kindergarten students. My research questions were: When do I provide feedback? What kind of utterance do I correct? and How do I provide feedback? My inquiry began in the spring of 2017 when I went through the IRB process to conduct a small research study and to get familiarized with the process of the IRB protocol and teacher action research. In doing so I decided to further my inquiry and focus my study on, *Constructive Conversations.* At the time I was very interested in how young students used language and how I could better assist my students' in their language development. In planning for the research study, I learned more about the different types of corrective feedback as addressed by Lyster and Ranta (1997) as well as how I could use them in my ELA instruction. In planning and conducting my first research study, I addressed students' errors produced orally during ELA activities. In doing so I learned about the use of corrective feedback as well as how much I talked and directed the interactions and activities. The first research study I conducted taught me the importance of talking less and

listening more, in order to really understand my students and assist them in their language development.

After conducting my first research study in the spring of 2017 and gaining the knowledge and understanding of the role I played in my students' language use and development, I felt it was important to continue researching my role as the teacher as well as the use of corrective feedback and decided to further my research. My already growing inquiry grew even more after Dr. Roy Lyster did a two-day presentation for my graduate class at the University of Alaska Fairbanks in the summer of 2017. His focus was on oral interaction and corrective feedback. After listening to his presentation, I was very interested and immediately started wondering how I could apply this in my classroom and expand on my previous mini-research study. I have always been interested in how students' language develops, and his presentation helped me in developing and focusing my research around feedback and tying it into my districts adopted ELA curriculum, *Journeys.*

After conducting my current TAR and analyzing and thinking about my data and students, I began to shift away from the idea of corrective feedback, because I felt the word "corrective" brought with it a negative connotation and began referring to it as constructive feedback. I felt this was more appropriate because a lot of the instances generated in my TAR were constructive and showed students working together and with me to produce the correct wording, sentence structure and meaning during ELA activities. At this time, I was also noticing a lot of collaboration among students and was noticing that I was not always providing corrective feedback. At times I was extending conversations to help students and myself better understand each other's responses and at times students were collaborating and providing feedback to each other or self-correcting.

As I continued to analyze and think about what I was seeing emerge in my data, I started to notice that there were some instances where I provided corrective feedback in the form of the six types (clarification requests, metalinguistic clues, elicitation, repetition of error, explicit correction and recasts) as discussed by Lyster and Ranta (1997), as well as other instances where the feedback was more constructive feedback in the form of extending or simply drawing students' attention to their work when having them read it aloud with me. Because of this realization of the different types of feedback, I decided it would be best to refer to the feedback provided during ELA activities as just feedback, unless directly referring to the six types as discussed by Lyster and Ranta (1997).

This process helped me grow in my understanding and use of feedback in my instruction and daily interactions with students. In this process I also realized I am always providing feedback to my students throughout the day and it is not always in the same form or delivery, and because of this it is not necessary to refer to all feedback provided as corrective feedback or constructive feedback but simply feedback.

What I learned about feedback

In this teacher action research, I was focusing on my own practices relating to feedback. Feedback was used as a strategy to scaffold students oral and written language use. Creating a setting where instructional conversations could occur played a major role during English Language Arts (ELA) instruction and activities. In creating a platform where instructional conversations could take place, it provided instances for me to provide feedback to students' utterances. In the literature review I reference Tharp and Gallimore (1991) and Perez (1996) and their definitions of instructional conversations. Student talk was prompted by me as content was introduces and discussed as well as during activities. As stated in Chapter 2, Tharp and

Gallimore (1991) defined instructional conversations as, "a dialogue between teacher and learners in which the teacher listens carefully to grasp the students' communicative intent, and tailors the dialogue to meet the emerging understanding of the learners" (Abstract section, para. 2). A bit differently, Perez (1996) described instructional conversations as the focus on concepts and content required for academic success where the teacher creates the context or activity in which the instructional conversations take place. Both researchers define instructional conversations slightly differently but they both support student/teacher interactions that support dialogue and language development. Perez (1996, pp. 177-180) provides points to what participants are doing within the context of instructional conversations: Social Interactions, Scaffolding and Turn Taking, Language Experimentation and Approximation and Making connections and meaning. However, Tharp and Gallimore (1991, From Natural Teaching To Instructional Conversations section, para. 1) point out what teachers may do to assist students' performance in instructional conversations: Modeling, feeding back, contingency managing, directing, questioning, explaining and task structuring. In this TAR modeling, directing, questioning, explaining and task structuring all played roles in my daily ELA instruction, as well as "feeding back," although throughout this TAR the term feedback was used. Contingency Managing was not really necessary because reinforcement and punishment of student behavior is not something I practice in my teaching and classroom routines and behaviors were already established and no behavior issues came up throughout the study.

Creating a platform where instructional conversations could occur assisted me in providing feedback during ELA instruction and activities. It also allowed me to scaffold students while accessing their funds of knowledge and prior knowledge to help make sense of new content being taught. I was also able to provide feedback to students and facilitate the dialogue

throughout ELA instruction and activities by using the IRF (initiates, responds, feedback) classroom strategy as discussed by Gilsan and Donato (2017) and Wells (1993). The role of feedback helped scaffold instructional conversations through the use of the IRF classroom strategy as well as helped guide my instruction and knowledge of my students' language development. Glisan and Donato (2017) stated, "the teacher can assume a bigger role in shaping learner contributions by assisting them in what they want to say, asking for more details, and responding in meaningful ways to the message learners communicate" (p. 48). The preceding quote supports my belief about how I can scaffold students' language development through the use of instructional conversations and the IRF classroom strategy.

Based on the research conducted and literature, the IRF classroom strategy was more beneficial and fitting for this research study than the IRE (Initiates, Responds, Evaluates) classroom strategy. I noticed the IFR classroom strategy was most prominent in my third category, *Extending the conversation through teacher prompting and students collaborating in the meaning-making process.* In this category, I tended to start the conversations by asking a question which was followed by student responses. My role in the conversations following the initial question was to ask clarifying questions or extend the conversation to assist students in their explanations. The different views of this discourse format also stem from different theories and how educational goals can best be achieved. Through the use of the IRF discourse format and feedback in different forms, students' instructional conversations in meaning-making activities were scaffolded and feedback was provided to individual students when necessary.

As stated previously in this chapter, my process of learning about feedback has been emerging since the spring of 2017 and is continuing to grow. When my inquiry based on feedback began I was specifically focused on corrective feedback and the work of Lyster and

Ranta (1997) and their use of prompts and reformulations. When I began this TAR, I was very focused on corrective feedback and how I used it in scaffolding my students' language development. But the more I learned about feedback and how I was using it my view changed and my understanding of it grew. I began to see that feedback did not always have to be used to correct student errors, but it could help to extend conversations and provide more occasions for students to collaborate and make meaning. I also noticed in my daily teaching that I was always feeding back during oral and written interactions with my students and that the feedback I was providing was not always in the form of corrective feedback. At times the feedback I was providing was to assist students in explaining their response or in trying to help them clarify their response. Importantly, at times it was for *my own* understanding and at times it was for *their* understanding. For example, if I noticed a student had the right idea or details but was struggling to provide the right words, I would assist them in finding the right words to use or in producing a clear response.

Implications for Educators

As I engaged more deeply in my inquiry about the use of feedback in my kindergarten classroom, my knowledge and understanding of how and when to provide feedback grew. I learned that feedback provided in the wrong way could have a negative impact on students' language development as well as their personal feelings about their use of language. For example, if a student is shy and does not willingly share out in the group, it is important to give them praise for speaking up and sharing instead of focusing on their error. Once the student gets more comfortable speaking and sharing in a group then it may be more appropriate to start addressing their errors in front of the group or through one-on-one instruction in order to build up their confidence. I learned that it is crucial to know where each student is developmentally in

order to provide them with corrective feedback that is appropriate and beneficial. This is achieved over time and through working with students one on one as well as in whole group instruction. When you allow students to talk, share their knowledge and engage with each other, you really begin to see what they know and what they may be struggling with.

As a result of this TAR and my findings I would now be interested in digging deeper into the three categories that were generated from the data collected. In spending time focusing on each category individually I feel I could get an even stronger understanding of my role as the facilitator and also see a stronger pattern in the feedback I provide, students responses and language development. After conducting this research study, I have a better understanding of when I provide feedback to my students, the types of utterances I address and how I provide feedback. Taking the time to specifically focus on one category at a time would help in focusing on my role and the effects my feedback has on students and I may be able to see a stronger pattern in how their language is developing over a period of time. After conducting this research study and analyzing the data, I would be interested in focusing on the feedback provided during writing instruction and activities alone as well as the conversations and feedback provided when extending the conversations to make meaning. I could gain more understanding and knowledge of students' language development by focusing more time on those two areas.

Through using the content and materials provided by our school district's adopted ELA curriculum *Journeys*, I had a good platform to base my instruction and activities around, which made focusing on my research a lot easier. In using *Journeys,* I drew upon my students' funds of knowledge and prior knowledge while introducing stories and activities. This allowed students to collaborate and take ownership in the conversations and activities while making meaning of new content. Also, they were able to better understand the content as well as produce and practice

more language. I would suggest to anyone interested in this TAR or further research regarding feedback to try to base it around a well-developed program or activities, in order to be able to instruct and provide meaningful feedback throughout the process. I also feel it is necessary for the teacher to be the researcher because as teachers we are the ones who set up the classroom context, build the relationships and interact with the ELA materials. We are not an outside source viewing the interactions from afar. We are immersed and engaged on a daily basis. Teacher action research is a big task to take on, especially with our already busy schedules, but in the end, it is beneficial to students, others in the education field and the teacher conducting the research.

In this teacher action research my main focus was on educating myself about feedback and then transferring what I knew and learned to my ELA instruction. In the process of learning more about feedback I learned a lot of necessary steps and strategies that helped me grow in my understanding and instruction as well as assisted me in conducting my research in an effective way. This TAR helped me expand on my already growing inquiry about students' language development and communication skills. I learned that feedback can be provided to errors in students' utterances at any time and during any subject being taught. Now that I have the knowledge I do about using feedback I feel confident providing it to my students whenever I feel they will benefit from it and when it is appropriate. Educators of any subject area can incorporate feedback into their daily instruction and classroom activities, as long as there is language being used. The more familiar educators become with using feedback, the easier it is to determine when and how to provide feedback.

Looking back, I feel my research study started out fairly broad in the sense that I was looking at feedback as a whole but as I got into the research study my focus began to narrow

down into different findings and categories. Fortunately, my data helped me generate three categories that stood out to me. Now that I have concluded this TAR, I have more questions and things I would like to look into more deeply and that is what TAR is all about. So, educators who may be nervous to dive into teacher action research should know that the overall process may be intimidating at first but as you go through it, things will become moe clear and you will benefit greatly from the experience and the knowledge acquired along the way.

Something that stood out to me throughout this TAR was the fact that my students were not only accepting the feedback provided to them, but they were also beginning to provide each other with feedback and self-correcting their own errors more frequently. When students were providing feedback and self-correcting it showed they were internalizing their utterances and showing development and growth in their responses. I also learned that feedback can be used to scaffold student conversations by using prompting to extend students meaning-making process. It was impressive and exciting to see students engaging and collaborating with the different topics and working together to make meaning and understand not only for themselves but for their classmates as well.

In researching and learning about the different studies and researchers who focused on feedback (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994; Glisan & Donato, 2017; Hendrickson, 1978; Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Mackey & Oliver, 2002) I learned that feedback can be used in any class, any grade or language context. Although each classroom is different, and each teacher may have a different style of teaching, feedback can play a role in instruction and activities as long as the teacher is willing. From this TAR I learned the benefits not only in my instruction but also my student's language development that resulted from providing feedback and occasions for myself and students to provide feedback. After conducting this TAR there is still more I need to learn and

examine in my use of feedback and the effects it has on students' language development and that will increase my knowledge and application of feedback the more I engage with it in my instruction. For fellow educators interested in the role of feedback it is necessary to educate yourself and then jump right in and experiment and observe what happens when doing so. The best way to learn is to immerse yourself, observe and reflect on what you are seeing and hearing. I am definitely one who learns by doing and the more I provided feedback the more I realized when and how to provide it in order to best support my student's language development.

Future educators interested in the role and use of feedback need to keep in mind that they may not always find a clear answer to their inquiry and in the process of trying to find an answer, many more inquires will probably develop. In this TAR I was fairly specific as to what I was looking for and tried to stay on a clear path, but I often was taken down a different path as my data began to reveal itself and as I learned more about my use of feedback and how my students were reacting to it. Something I would have like to do in this TAR, but did not, was transcribe all the interactions I recorded. Even though I transcribed a good portion of my data, I feel by transcribing everything I would have found more instances where feedback played a role in the interactions that took place in the instruction and activities.

What I learned about TAR

This TAR process was not easy and had many ups and downs but having a plan and a framework to guide me in the research process made it doable. In conducting this TAR, I closely examined and followed the characteristics of TAR (Mills, 2018, pp.15-16) by:

1. being committed to my continued professional development and school improvement,
2. having decision-making authority in what I wanted to focus this TAR on,
3. reflecting on my practices, before, during and after conducting this study, and
4. choosing an area of focus, determining my data collection techniques, analyzing and interpreting my data and developing an action plan.

In doing so I was able to keep my focus and was often reminded that the work I was doing was not only to benefit myself, but also my students and others in the education field who are interested in the role feedback plays in language development. In conducting this TAR, I followed the steps of the constructivist grounded theory (CGT) framework as discussed by (Charmaz, 2014) which included gathering rich data, initial coding, focused coding and memo-writing to assist me in my research and data analysis process. The structure of TAR and framework of CGT assisted me in this research study immensely and although it was difficult, having a framework to follow made organizing, planning, conducting and analyzing my data possible. Being organized and having a well-planned but flexible agenda, I was able to focus on my research questions and really focus on when I provide feedback, what types of utterances I correct and how I provide feedback.

In conducting this teacher action research, I learned a lot of valuable information as well as the process of planning, designing, implementing, recording and analyzing the data collected based on the inquiry I formed. I learned that conducting TAR is extremely beneficial for educators because we are the ones in the classroom every day. We are constantly growing and acquiring knowledge of our students and education in general. We learn from our mistakes and struggles on a regular basis and we alter our teaching practices to best support our students and their needs. This TAR in particular was important for my professional growth in teaching English Language Arts and helped me learn more about language acquisition, language development and how to scaffold each individual student in my class through the use of feedback.

As educators we are committed to continuing our education in order to further our understanding of different subject areas and to continue to grow in our profession. For this TAR

I developed my research questions based on an inquiry I had, and I had the authority to plan and conduct my research in a way I felt would best benefit my students while teaching our district's ELA curriculum *Journeys*. Something I learned in conducting this TAR was that the process is not easy and there are a lot of ups and downs. When working with young children things are not always going to go smooth and as planned. I noticed a lot of instances in my recordings where I was having to refocus students, or I had to stop instructing and deal with behavior issues that would arise. Or I would get into an activity and realize it may not have been a good activity and have to end up scratching the whole thing and move on.

Things did not always go as planned, but as teachers we have to be flexible and take it one step at a time. I learned that it is best to have a clear and well-developed plan going in and to always take notes during and after on what went well as well as what did not go well. TAR is not a linear process and can take you on many different paths, but it is usually the data collected and analyzed that guide our results and help us to see the patterns and categories emerging.

As teacher action researchers we have to be open minded to the changes that may occur throughout the different stages of TAR. Fortunately for me my main focus was on feedback from the start and even though I did not stray too far from my original research questions, they were altered at different stages in my research to better reflect the patterns and results I was seeing in my data analysis. Also, as mentioned previously, my view on corrective feedback versus feedback went back and forth. I felt the word "corrective" signifies something wrong or undesired whereas "constructive" feedback comes with the idea of being helpful and building up students' language development. For these reasons I decided to go with the word feedback, unless directly referring to Lyster and Ranta (1997) and their definitions and uses of corrective feedback.

Teacher action research is not an easy process, but it is authentic and rewarding. Not only does it allow us as educators to plan, implement and analyze the data, but we are able to grow in our teaching practices and share our knowledge with others in the education field. There are many benefits in conducting TAR, but one of the most exciting things for me is I now have a whole new understanding on the role feedback plays in my instruction and students language development. I also have a new understanding of how it promotes oral and written language as well as assists students in the meaning making process. This is very exciting to me as a kindergarten teacher, because not only am I supporting my students in their language development, but I also get to assist them in their educational journey from a young age.

Conclusion and future research

When I first decided on how to focus this TAR, I was interested in learning how feedback would affect my students' language development and what I needed to do in order to successfully provide feedback. Through observing how I naturally provided feedback, I was able to scaffold my students' language development with the use of feedback, and I was able to analyze students' responses throughout the lessons and activities. In doing so, I began to see when and how to provide feedback to different students at different times. My understanding and use of feedback grew and changed throughout this TAR and I now feel I have a good understanding and platform to continue providing feedback to my students' utterances. The role feedback plays in my instruction is more research-based and my focus is clearer. As mentioned in Chapter 4, I thought going into this TAR I would conclude it with a clear and direct answer to my three research questions:

1) When do I provide feedback?
2) What kind of utterance do I correct?

3) How do I provide feedback?

But throughout the process of this TAR my views, understanding and use of feedback grew, shifted and developed. Although I cannot confidently say I have the exact answer to each of my research questions I was able to develop three categories to help me explain what my data was showing and what I was learning. The many instances that occurred in my ELA instruction and activities generated the three categories:

1) Teacher provided corrective feedback: with option or without option of correct form.
2) Student provided feedback: self-correction (no teacher influence) or correcting a classmate.
3) Extending the conversation through teacher prompting and students collaborating in the meaning-making process

These three categories helped me to see and understand what my data was showing and helped me see the influence feedback played on my instruction as well as my students' language development.

After conducting this TAR, I have a much better understanding of the role feedback plays in language development as well as a lot more questions and inquires I would like to explore in furthering my research. This TAR was a step in educating myself about feedback but now with the knowledge and understanding I have acquired, I can go forth and continue to learn and experiment with the use of feedback. Something that came as a surprise to me was the amount of teacher-provided feedback with and without options that occurred during writing instruction. Prior to this TAR, feedback during writing instruction and activities did not strike me as a very notable time that feedback would be used. The number of instances where feedback was provided during writing was fairly numerous and provided a lot of great learning for both me and my students.

Another area I would like to explore in furthering my research is looking into all utterances, not just ones where corrective feedback was provided. Like previously stated, corrective feedback was the main focus in the beginning of this TAR but as my understanding and use of feedback grew, I realized there was a lot more going on within my instruction and activities than just corrective feedback. Although the transcription tables I created to organize and help make sense of my data were based around occasions where I provided corrective feedback to students' utterances, I was able to observe more than just corrective feedback provided and students' responses. The three categories I created really helped me to see there was more beyond the corrective feedback as referred to by Lyster and Ranta (1997) and I was able to learn more about my students not only receiving feedback but being the ones to provide it, self- correct their errors and assist in extending conversations to better acquire meaning.

This TAR has definitely assisted me in my professional development and assisted me in exploring my inquiries about the role feedback plays in my instruction and students language development. The knowledge I have gained will allow me to further my use of feedback as well as further explore and observe feedback in my kindergarten classroom throughout my educational career. When I began this TAR, I thought I would be able to answer all of my research questions and I would conclude my research study with clear answers. I did not conclude this TAR with all the answers I was seeking, but I did acquire a wealth of knowledge about my teaching practices and the role I play in my students language development. I also have a better understanding of the role feedback plays in students language development and how I can best facilitate instructional conversations to promote collaboration and language development. Lastly, I take away better questions and skills to better address the use and role of feedback in my kindergarten classroom.

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Appendix A: Initial Review Board Approval

(907) 474-7800 (907) 474-5444 fax uaf-irb@alaska.edu www.uaf.edu/irb

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS

Institutional Review Board

909 N Koyukuk Dr. Suite 212, P.O. Box 757270, Fairbanks, Alaska 99775-7270

November 5, 2017

Thank you for submitting the New Project referenced below. The submission was handled by Expedited Review under the requirements of 45 CFR 46.110, which identifies the categories of research eligible for expedited review.

To: Maureen Hogan, Dr. Principal Investigator

From: University of Alaska Fairbanks IRB
Re: [1148727-1] The Effects of Corrective Feedback in Language Development

Title: Received:

Expedited Category:

Action: Effective Date: Expiration Date:

The Effects of Corrective Feedback in Language Development October 30, 2017

6 and 7

APPROVED November 5, 2017 November 5, 2018

This action is included on the December 6, 2017 IRB Agenda.

No changes may be made to this project without the prior review and approval of the IRB. This includes, but is not limited to, changes in research scope, research tools, consent documents, personnel, or record storage location.

America's Arctic University

Appendix B: Transcription Extended Example

Day 1 Lesson 15

[0:23]

001 T: where is a place we might see a skyscraper (.) Brittany
002 B: at Anchorage
003 T: in Anchorage yeah

[3:21]

004 T: do we see any sort of animals in the sky
005 DM: [noooo](…) birds
006 K: birds
007 WW: [no]
008 T: birds in the sky good so we see lots of different things in the sky do not we
009 DM: and we see cat and the hat
010 T: in the sky (..)
011 MJ: you know tha- you know that [thing]
012: DM: [ohhh]
013: T: in his flying mobile
014: B: I know that one kind of airplane that has a little like a flag on it

[5:52]

015 T: alright so what is our first word (.) can you read it out loud MJ
016 MJ: nowww
017 T: now (.) can you use the word now in a sentence
018 MJ: mmhmm
019 T: MJ
020 (4)
021 K now
022 MJ: now can I go school
023 T: nice and loud
024 MJ: now can I go school
025 T: now can I go school do we say go school or now can I go to school
026 DM: to school
027 T: yeah (.) so now can I go to [school]
028 B: [now can I go to the library]
029 T: perfect awesome job MJ

[12:10]

030 T: what does the sky look like early in the morning (.) think about what the sky looks like early in the morning (.) Wonder Women can you tell us what it looks like
031 WW: black
032 T: black alright can you tell us why it might look black
033 WW: because its early
034 T: ok its early
035 B: orange
036 T: the sky might look orange in the morning and why might it look orange
037 B: because it's almost morning

038 T: cause its almost morning but what makes the sky orange
039 B: (.) the sunset
040 T: the sun set (.) does the sun set at night or in the morning
041 B: in kinda like the night kinda like the morning
042 T: ok we have two words for that so a sun set is when the sun is setting like when the sun is going to bed sun rise is when the sun is rising up its waking up just like we wake up like were rising out of our bed in the morning to come to school the sun is rising up into the sky (.) ok

[16:19]

043 T: kay think of what types of birds might fly in a pattern (.) Charlie can you share
044 C: Unn
045 T: what kinds of birds might you see fly in a pattern (.)
046 C: arr rrraven and the white ones and the baby [ones]
047 K: [the] white ones are seagulls
048 T: seagulls or swans maybe
049 K: what no I meant those white ones are um
050 C: with the long neck
051 K: yeah their um
052 MJ: swans
053 T: swans fly in a pattern very good
054 B: goose
055 T: goose or do we say goose or geese
056 B: geese

[26:19]

057 T: kay at the beach on top of a light house Charlie
058 C: un (.) like there's a big chree and then there's that board
059 T: there's a maching and a board
060 C: no the board like the [wood]
061 B: [uh diving board]
062 C: [on the tree]
063 T: mmkay
064 MJ: uh tree house

[32:47]

065 T: an how does this picture show that the night is turning into day (.) Brittany
066 B: cuz there's none stars
067 T: there's no stars but is that a star
068 MJ [yeah]
069 K: [yeah]
070 T: yeah and what is that
071 K: sun
072 T: the sun and what is the sun doing
073 B: rising

Appendix C: Corrective Feedback Checklist Extended Example

Reformulations	Prompts

-Types of Corrective Feedback Recording Name -Time	Explicit Correction	Recast	Clarification Request	Metalinguistic Cue	Elicitation	Repetition of Error	Feedback in the form of a question, repeating original question or help from a classmate to Assist/Extend/Continue the Conversation (not all transcribed do to non-verbal cues)	Option of correct sentence or word provided in the CF?
Day 1 Lesson 15 [0:23]		x						No
Day 1 Lesson 15 [3:21]			x				Question to extend (Details in Table)	No
Day 1 Lesson 15 [5:52]		x						Yes
Day 1 Lesson 15 [7:36]							Assistance from a classmate to read HFW card (Details in Table)	No
Day 1 Lesson 15 [8:27]							Asked question to another student	No
Day 1 Lesson 15 [8:50]							Asked question to another students	No
Day 1 Lesson 15 [9:48]							Repeated question picked another student to answer, the two students worked out reading the HFW together then WW was able to come up with her own sentence "me and my sandwich."	No
Day 1 Lesson 15 [12:10]			x					Yes
Day 1 Lesson 15 [12:20]							Asked question to extend the conversation on how the sky looks.	No
Day 1 Lesson 15 [16:19]		x						Yes
Day 1 Lesson 15 [26:19]			x				Yes, I asked a clarifying question because I was unsure of what Charlie was trying to describe.	No
Day 1 Lesson 15 [32:47]		x						No

Day 2 Lesson 15 [0:01:31.8]			x					No
Day 2 Lesson 15 [0:02:47.9]							In this example the question "where did they go to see the stars better?" Brittany gave some good details to describe where the boy and his father went but could not come up with the exact name for the place do I asked Kodie if he could help her out and he was able to provide the exact answer, "deep into the country."	No
Day 2 Lesson 15 [0:06:11.2]		x						No
Day 2 Lesson 15 [0:06:30.3]							When discussing different planets, Wonder Women was trying to describe a planet and made the motion of a circle as she was trying to explain it and Kodie jumped in and asked her and motioned with his hands asking which way it went and she said while motioning in a circle and MJ said, "with a ring" and then Kodie asked if she was thinking of Saturn. Students did a great job co-constructing and collaborating to use their knowledge and figure out what Wonder Women was trying to explain/name/	No
Day 2 Lesson 15 [0:10:01.2]							After reading about the sun the text said it looked like a giant fireball, I asked students what they think of when hearing the word, fireball. I then had to ask more prompting questions to get them thinking about and describing what a fire ball might look like.	No

Appendix D: Extending the conversation through teacher prompting

Transcription (focus of feedback in bold)		
065	T:	an how does this picture show that the night is turning into day (.) Brittany
066	B:	**cuz there's none stars**
067	T:	there's no stars but is that a star
068	MJ	[yeah]
069	K:	[yeah]
070	T:	yeah and what is that
071	K:	sun
072	T:	the sun and what is the sun doing
073	B:	rising
074	T:	good and where is one place they go to look for stars Kodie
075	K:	in the city
076	T:	the city do they see the stars very well in the city
077	B:	[no]
078	C:	[mhm]
079	T:	no how come
080	B:	because all the um the liight and the buildings are covering em
081	T:	ok are the lights and the buildings covering the stars
082	C:	[nooo]
083	MJ:	[uhhh]
084	B:	i mean blocking stars
085	T:	good word there blocking the stars ok
124	T:	alright let's focus on our writing once upon a time
125	DM:	there is free children cuz of me
126	T:	kay there is three children
127	DM:	I mean there's one two free free children
128	T:	kay so once upon a time there is three children hold on does that sound right there is three children
129	DM:	no are free children
130	T:	kay so we'd have to say there are three children or there
131	DM:	is
132	T:	maybe were there were three children kay does that sound a little better alright so once upon a time there and what diagraph says -th it tickles your tongue
133	DM:	[thhhhhh]
134	MJ:	[thhhhhh]
135	T:	guys lets focus on our writing
203	T:	alright how bout what am I doing right now

204	DM:	jumping
205	T:	im jumping im doing it right now right kay right now im jumping yesterday I
206	MJ:	ran
207	DM:	jumping
208	T:	yesterday I jumping
209	DM:	you have to say yesterday [you]
210	K:	[we] jump
211	T:	say it nice and loud
212	K:	yesterday we jump
213	T:	yesterday we jump [yesterday we]
214	DM:	[yesterday]
215	MJ:	[jumped]
216	T:	oh jumped ok yesterday we jumped
217	MJ:	we

251	T:	me and Kodie are haf listen have have
252	MJ:	h ave have
253	T:	what says /v/
254	MJ:	v
255	T:	mhmm have and then what three letters say /ing/
256	MJ:	i n g
257	T:	kay (.) and if your having a snowball fight are you doing it right now or did you it yesterday
258	MJ:	yesterda
259	T:	yesterday remember what ing tell us (.) its something that's happening when
260	MJ:	right now
261	T:	right now, good

286	T:	alright and then you're going to write what next
287	WW:	me and my mom are going
288	T:	oh what does that say your already at the store you already went to the store so you already said me and my mom are going to the story (alright why do not you go back to the back table and when your ready to work with me you can come up here)
289	WW:	at the store we are at the store
290	T:	say the word were (in response to another student)
291	WW:	we are at the store
292	T:	alright so write the word store (i need you to hold your pencil the right way im just trying to help you with your writing alright- responding to DM deciding not to work)

311	T:	kay and what was that word that the special word he used meaning they travel
312	DM:	[travel along[(1) world
313	C:	[he can] read
314	T:	no Kodie
315	K:	distance

316	T:	kay so wha it the word that tells that wales travel long distances
317	B:	they travel really long
318	T:	kay does that make sense they travel really long
319	DM:	they travel far
320	T:	kay they travel far
321	DM:	away
322	T:	so remember it said he has decided to be migratory again so remember that word migratory means they travel
323	DM:	far
324	T:	far